FACTORS OF ONLINE MARKETING STRATEGIES INFLUENCING THE BUSINESS SUCCESS OF FOOD MANUFACTURING SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN THE LOWER NORTHERN REGION OF THAILAND*

Pornchanok Singdet[1], Wipawan Pisitwej[2] and Kajornatthapol Pongwiritthon[3]

[1-2]Faculty of Business Administration, Northern College, Thailand

[3]Faculty of Business Administration, Northern College, Thailand

and IQRA Business School, University of Geomatika, Malaysia

Corresponding author E-mail: tok2029@gmail.com

Received 23 June 2026; Revised 3 July 2026; Accepted 5 July 2026

Abstract

This study was motivated by the limited empirical evidence explaining how specific online marketing strategy dimensions influence business success among food manufacturing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in regional Thailand, particularly in the lower northern region where SMEs face increasing digital competition and resource constraints. The objectives of this research were to assess the level of adoption of online marketing strategies, examine their effects on business success, and develop a structural equation model explaining the relationship between online marketing strategies and SME business success. This quantitative research collected data from 350 food manufacturing SME entrepreneurs using a structured questionnaire. The research

* Pornchanok Singdet, Wipawan Pisitwej and Kajornatthapol Pongwiritthon. (2026). Factors Of Online Marketing Strategies Influencing The Business Success Of Food Manufacturing Small And Medium Enterprises In The Lower Northern Region Of Thailand. Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Development, 4(5), 580-605.;

DOI: https://doi.org/10.

Website: https://so12.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/JISDIADP/

instrument measured six dimensions of online marketing strategies: customer communication channel focus, product diversity, competitor learning capability, timely market responsiveness, privacy protection, and personalized services. Business success was measured based on the Balanced Scorecard framework, comprising financial performance, customer perspective, internal business processes, and learning and growth. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings revealed that all six online marketing strategy dimensions had positive and statistically significant effects on business success. Personalized services exerted the strongest influence (β = 0.34, $p < .001$), followed by customer communication channel focus (β = 0.29, $p < .001$), competitor learning capability (β = 0.25, $p < .001$), timely market responsiveness (β = 0.22, $p < .001$), product diversity (β = 0.18, $p < .01$), and privacy protection (β = 0.16, $p < .05$). The structural model demonstrated good fit with the empirical data (χ^2/df = 2.18, CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.054). The findings suggest that integrated online marketing strategies, particularly personalized services and effective digital communication, are essential mechanisms for enhancing competitiveness and sustainable business success among food manufacturing SMEs. This study contributes empirical evidence to the digital marketing and SME performance literature in the Thai regional context and provides practical implications for entrepreneurs, policymakers, and business support agencies in strengthening SME competitiveness in the digital economy.

Keywords: Online Marketing strategies, Business Success, Food Manufacturing SMEs, Balanced Scorecard, Market Orientation

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed the global business landscape, particularly in marketing practices and consumer behavior. In recent years, online marketing has emerged as a

strategic mechanism for enhancing business performance by enabling firms to reach broader markets, strengthen customer engagement, and establish sustainable competitive advantages. This transformation is particularly significant for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which often encounter constraints in financial resources, market access, and technological capabilities. In Thailand, SMEs play a vital role in driving economic growth, employment, and regional development, particularly within the food manufacturing industry, which has been recognized as one of the country's strategic economic sectors (Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion [OSMEP], 2021).

The lower northern region of Thailand, comprising provinces with abundant agricultural resources, distinctive local food products, and expanding agro-industrial activities, provides a favorable environment for food manufacturing SMEs. Nevertheless, enterprises operating in this region face increasing competition from both domestic and international markets while simultaneously adapting to rapidly changing consumer behaviors driven by digital technologies. Consequently, the effective adoption of online marketing strategies has become increasingly important for improving competitiveness and ensuring long-term business sustainability. According to Porter (1985), competitive advantage is achieved through the creation of superior customer value, and in the digital economy, such value creation is increasingly supported by the effective utilization of online marketing channels. Therefore, the lower northern region provides an appropriate context for examining how online marketing strategies contribute to SME business success.

Online marketing strategies encompass various components, including social media marketing, content marketing, customer relationship management, and digital communication channels. The rapid growth of social media platforms has transformed business communication from traditional one-way promotion into interactive customer engagement. Mangold and Faulds (2009) describe social media as a hybrid element of the promotional mix that enables businesses and

consumers to co-create information and influence brand perception. Similarly, Eisingerich et al. (2014) emphasize that customer participation and electronic word-of-mouth communication significantly contribute to value co-creation, customer satisfaction, and improved business performance.

Customer engagement represents a critical determinant of online marketing success. Effective engagement strategies strengthen customer trust, increase loyalty, and encourage repeat purchases. The Commitment-Trust Theory proposed by Morgan and Hunt (1994) suggests that trust and relationship commitment are fundamental elements of successful long-term business relationships. Within online environments, customer trust is influenced by secure transactions, privacy protection, and transparent communication (Aiken & Boush, 2006). Consequently, SMEs must adopt customer-oriented online marketing strategies that reinforce trust and long-term customer relationships.

Market orientation is another important determinant of business success. Organizations adopting a market-oriented philosophy are better able to understand customer needs, monitor competitor activities, and respond effectively to market changes (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Narver & Slater, 1990). In digital environments, market orientation is strengthened through the use of social media analytics, customer databases, and real-time market intelligence, enabling SMEs to continuously improve products, services, and marketing strategies while maintaining competitive positioning.

Technological adoption further enhances the effectiveness of online marketing strategies. The Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 2003) explains that technology adoption depends largely on users' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use, concepts that are also central to the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989). For SMEs, digital marketing technologies improve communication efficiency, operational effectiveness, and organizational innovation. Nevertheless, implementation remains constrained by limited

technological capability, insufficient financial resources, and inadequate strategic planning (Siyaphat et al., 2024).

Furthermore, integrated marketing strategies have become increasingly important in the digital economy. Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasize that organizations should coordinate marketing activities across multiple digital platforms to create a seamless customer experience. Websites, social media platforms, mobile applications, and other online channels provide SMEs with multiple opportunities to engage customers throughout the purchasing journey. Likewise, Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) identify information quality, website design, and security as essential characteristics influencing online consumer decision-making.

Innovation and organizational learning capability also contribute substantially to sustainable business performance. SMEs that continuously acquire knowledge, adapt to changing market conditions, and innovate products and business processes are more likely to achieve long-term competitiveness (Song & Di Benedetto, 2001). Within digital marketing environments, innovation includes adopting emerging technologies, developing creative digital content, personalizing customer experiences, and continuously monitoring competitor strategies to respond proactively to market changes.

Despite the growing importance of online marketing, empirical evidence explaining how specific dimensions of online marketing strategies influence business success among food manufacturing SMEs remains limited, particularly in the lower northern region of Thailand. Existing studies have predominantly concentrated on general digital marketing practices, large organizations, or metropolitan areas, providing relatively limited evidence regarding SMEs operating in regional agricultural economies. Moreover, the food manufacturing industry possesses unique characteristics including product perishability, quality assurance requirements, and the necessity of maintaining consumer trust that require specialized online marketing strategies. These research gaps justify further

investigation into the determinants of business success among regional food manufacturing SMEs.

Therefore, this study investigates the influence of online marketing strategies on the business success of food manufacturing SMEs in the lower northern region of Thailand. By integrating theories of market orientation, customer engagement, technological adoption, and competitive advantage, this research develops a structural model explaining how online marketing strategies contribute to business success. The findings are expected to provide both theoretical contributions to the online marketing literature and practical recommendations for SME entrepreneurs, policymakers, and other stakeholders seeking to strengthen regional competitiveness and sustainable economic development.

In conclusion, the rapidly evolving digital marketplace requires SMEs to continuously adapt and innovate their marketing practices. Online marketing has become an essential strategic capability rather than merely an optional promotional tool. By effectively leveraging digital technologies, strengthening customer relationships, and adopting market-oriented strategies, food manufacturing SMEs in the lower northern region of Thailand can enhance business performance while contributing to sustainable regional and national economic development.

Objectives

1. To evaluate the level of adoption of online marketing strategies among food manufacturing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the lower northern region of Thailand.

2. To investigate the influence of online marketing strategy dimensions on the business success of food manufacturing SMEs.

3. To determine the relative effects of customer communication channel focus, product diversity, competitor learning capability, timely market responsiveness, privacy protection, and personalized services on business success.

4. To develop and validate a structural equation model explaining the relationships between online marketing strategies and business success among food manufacturing SMEs.

Research

Based on the conceptual framework, this study proposes that each dimension of online marketing strategies has a positive influence on the business success of food manufacturing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the lower northern region of Thailand. The hypotheses are formulated as follows:

H1: Customer communication channel focus has a positive effect on the business success of food manufacturing SMEs.

H2: Product diversity has a positive effect on the business success of food manufacturing SMEs.

H3: Competitor learning capability has a positive effect on the business success of food manufacturing SMEs.

H4: Timely market responsiveness has a positive effect on the business success of food manufacturing SMEs.

H5: Privacy protection has a positive effect on the business success of food manufacturing SMEs.

H6: Personalized services have a positive effect on the business success of food manufacturing SMEs.

Literature Review

The rapid integration of digital technologies into business operations has fundamentally transformed marketing practices, particularly among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Online marketing strategies have evolved from supplementary promotional tools into strategic capabilities that enable firms to expand market reach, strengthen customer engagement, and enhance competitive performance. For SMEs, which frequently face limitations in financial resources, technological infrastructure, and market accessibility, digital marketing provides cost-effective opportunities to improve organizational performance and market competitiveness (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014). Nevertheless, although previous studies consistently acknowledge the benefits of digital marketing, the extent to which specific online marketing dimensions contribute to business success remains inconclusive, particularly among regional food manufacturing SMEs.

1. Market Orientation and Business Success

Market orientation represents one of the most influential theoretical perspectives explaining organizational performance. Narver and Slater (1990) argue that organizations achieving superior business performance are characterized by customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional coordination. Likewise, Jaworski and Kohli (1993) emphasize that firms capable of systematically generating, disseminating, and responding to market intelligence are more likely to achieve sustainable competitive advantages. Within digital business environments, market orientation is further strengthened through customer analytics, social media interactions, and real-time market intelligence, enabling SMEs to respond more rapidly to evolving customer preferences.

Although previous studies generally support the positive relationship between market orientation and organizational performance, relatively few have

examined how individual online marketing dimensions operationalize market orientation within regional food manufacturing SMEs. Consequently, further empirical investigation is required to determine which dimensions contribute most significantly to business success in this specific industrial context.

2. Resource-Based View and Online Marketing Capability

The Resource-Based View (RBV) proposes that sustainable competitive advantage originates from valuable, rare, inimitable, and organizationally embedded resources (Barney, 1991). Within online marketing environments, organizational capabilities such as digital communication, customer relationship management, information management, and personalized service represent strategic resources that are difficult for competitors to replicate. Porter (1985) similarly argues that firms create competitive advantage by delivering superior customer value through differentiated strategies.

While RBV provides a strong theoretical explanation for competitive advantage, previous studies have largely examined digital capability from a broad organizational perspective rather than investigating how specific online marketing capabilities individually influence SME business success. This limitation indicates the need to examine the relative contribution of each online marketing strategy dimension.

3. Customer Communication Channel Focus

Customer communication has become a central component of online marketing strategies. Social media platforms have transformed business communication from one-way promotional activities into interactive relationships between firms and customers. Mangold and Faulds (2009) describe social media as a hybrid element of the promotional mix that facilitates customer participation in brand communication. Likewise, Eisingerich et al. (2014) demonstrate that customer interaction and electronic word-of-mouth enhance value co-creation, customer satisfaction, and organizational performance.

Despite broad agreement regarding the importance of customer communication, empirical findings remain concentrated primarily in urban markets and large organizations. Limited evidence is available regarding the effectiveness of digital communication channels among food manufacturing SMEs operating within regional economies.

4. Privacy Protection and Customer Trust

The Commitment-Trust Theory developed by Morgan and Hunt (1994) emphasizes that trust and relationship commitment constitute the foundation of successful long-term business relationships. In online environments, customer trust is closely associated with privacy protection, transaction security, and transparent communication. Similarly, Aiken and Boush (2006) demonstrate that online trust mechanisms positively influence customer confidence and purchasing behavior.

Although the literature consistently recognizes privacy protection as an important determinant of customer trust, previous studies report varying levels of influence on business performance depending on industrial context and customer characteristics. Consequently, additional investigation is necessary to determine the contribution of privacy protection within food manufacturing SMEs.

5. Product Diversity

Product diversity is widely recognized as a strategic mechanism for enhancing customer satisfaction and competitive positioning. Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that differentiated product offerings improve organizational competitiveness by addressing diverse customer needs. Furthermore, Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) suggest that information quality, website design, and product presentation significantly influence online purchasing decisions.

However, previous studies have generally examined product diversity within retail or large-scale e-commerce environments. Comparatively little evidence exists regarding how product diversity contributes to business success among regional food manufacturing SMEs, where product characteristics such as freshness, quality assurance, and local identity influence purchasing decisions.

6. Competitor Learning Capability

Competitor learning capability enables organizations to acquire strategic knowledge through continuous observation and analysis of competitors' activities. Jaworski and Kohli (1993) argue that monitoring competitors enhances organizational responsiveness and strategic decision-making. Similarly, Song and Di Benedetto (2001) emphasize that knowledge acquisition and organizational learning promote innovation and improve business performance.

Although previous research generally supports competitor learning as a source of competitive advantage, empirical evidence remains limited regarding its direct contribution to SME business success, particularly within regional food manufacturing industries characterized by rapidly changing consumer preferences.

7. Technological Adoption and Market Responsiveness

Technological adoption represents another important determinant of online marketing effectiveness. Rogers (2003) explains that technology adoption depends on innovation characteristics and organizational readiness, while Davis (1989) proposes that perceived usefulness and ease of use significantly influence technology acceptance. The adoption of social media platforms, e-commerce systems, and digital analytics enables SMEs to improve operational efficiency and strengthen customer engagement. Nevertheless, technological adoption among SMEs often remains constrained by limited technical expertise and financial resources (Wanyoike et al., 2012).

Similarly, market responsiveness reflects an organization's ability to rapidly respond to changing customer needs and competitive conditions.

Although technological capability facilitates organizational responsiveness, previous studies report inconsistent findings regarding the magnitude of its influence across industries and organizational contexts, suggesting the need for further empirical validation.

8. Personalized Services

Personalized services have become increasingly important within digital marketing strategies. Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasize that integrated digital communication enables organizations to deliver customized customer experiences across multiple platforms. Peppers and Rogers (2011) further argue that personalized marketing strengthens customer satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term relationships by providing products and services tailored to individual customer preferences.

Despite broad theoretical support, previous studies have primarily examined personalization within large digital platforms and service industries. Evidence regarding its effectiveness among food manufacturing SMEs remains relatively scarce, particularly in regional markets where customer relationships often combine both traditional and digital interactions.

9. Research Gap and Literature Synthesis

Overall, previous studies consistently support the importance of online marketing strategies in improving organizational performance. However, three important gaps remain evident. First, existing research has predominantly focused on general digital marketing practices rather than examining the individual effects of specific online marketing strategy dimensions. Second, most empirical evidence has been derived from large organizations or metropolitan business environments, leaving regional food manufacturing SMEs substantially underrepresented. Third, relatively limited research has integrated multiple dimensions of online marketing strategies within a single structural model to explain business success comprehensively. Addressing these gaps, the present

study develops and empirically validates a structural equation model to investigate how customer communication channel focus, product diversity, competitor learning capability, timely market responsiveness, privacy protection, and personalized services collectively influence the business success of food manufacturing SMEs in the lower northern region of Thailand.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach to investigate the influence of online marketing strategies on the business success of food manufacturing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the lower northern region of Thailand. A quantitative research design was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic measurement of relationships among variables and facilitates statistical generalization through hypothesis testing (Hair et al., 2010). The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design using structured questionnaires administered to SME entrepreneurs and managers.

Research Design and Population

The target population consisted of food manufacturing SMEs operating in the lower northern region of Thailand. These enterprises were selected because they play an important role in regional economic development while increasingly relying on digital marketing technologies to enhance their competitiveness.

The sampling frame comprised registered food manufacturing SMEs operating within the study area that met the definition of SMEs according to the national classification and were actively engaged in business operations during the data collection period. To ensure that respondents possessed sufficient knowledge and practical experience regarding online marketing implementation, purposive sampling was employed. Only entrepreneurs or managers who were directly responsible for marketing activities or business management and who

had experience using online marketing tools in their business operations were invited to participate in the study.

The sample size was determined based on the recommendation for multivariate statistical analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which recommends a minimum sample size of 200 observations to ensure stable parameter estimation (Hair et al., 2010). Accordingly, 400 questionnaires were distributed to eligible SMEs, yielding 350 completed and usable questionnaires, representing an effective response rate of 87.50%, which exceeded the minimum sample size required for SEM analysis.

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument was a structured questionnaire developed through an extensive review of the relevant literature. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section collected respondents' demographic information, including gender, age, educational level, and business experience. The second section measured six dimensions of online marketing strategies: customer communication channel focus, product diversity, competitor learning capability, timely market responsiveness, privacy protection, and personalized services. These measurement items were adapted from established studies in digital marketing and market orientation (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Narver & Slater, 1990; Mangold & Faulds, 2009). The third section measured business success using the Balanced Scorecard framework, including financial performance, customer perspective, internal business processes, and learning and growth (Kaplan & Norton, 1996, 2001). All questionnaire items employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which is widely accepted for measuring respondents' perceptions in social science research (Likert, 1961).

Validity and Reliability

To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in marketing and research methodology before data collection. A pilot study involving 30 respondents was conducted to evaluate the clarity, comprehensibility, and reliability of the instrument. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with coefficients exceeding 0.70 considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Item-total correlation values greater than 0.30 further confirmed satisfactory discrimination among questionnaire items.

Construct validity was subsequently evaluated using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The measurement model was assessed based on standardized factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Following established recommendations, factor loadings greater than 0.50, CR values above 0.70, and AVE values exceeding 0.50 were considered evidence of acceptable convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010).

Data Collection

Data were collected using both online and offline survey methods. Online questionnaires were distributed via email and social media platforms, whereas offline questionnaires were administered through direct visits to food manufacturing SME establishments located within the study area. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the research objectives before completing the questionnaire. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to reduce response bias and encourage honest responses.

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical research principles. All participants received information regarding the objectives of the study, their rights as research participants, and the voluntary nature of participation before providing informed consent. Respondents were assured that all information would remain confidential and be used exclusively for academic

purposes. No personally identifiable information was collected or disclosed. Throughout the research process, the study adhered to the principles of honesty, transparency, confidentiality, and respect for research participants.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were employed to describe respondents' characteristics. Inferential statistical analyses were subsequently performed to test the proposed hypotheses. SEM was selected because it enables the simultaneous examination of multiple relationships among latent constructs while accounting for measurement error (Henseler et al., 2016). Model adequacy was evaluated using established goodness-of-fit indices, including chi-square (χ^2), comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), following the recommended threshold values reported in the literature.

Results

Model Fit Assessment

The structural equation model demonstrated a satisfactory fit with the empirical data. As presented in Table 1, all goodness-of-fit indices satisfied the recommended criteria. Specifically, the chi-square divided by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) was 2.18, which was below the recommended threshold of 3.00. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was 0.95, exceeding the recommended value of 0.90, while the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.054, which was below the acceptable threshold of 0.08. These findings indicate that the proposed structural model adequately represents the observed data.

Table 1 Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
χ^2/df	2.18	< 3.00	Good
CFI	0.95	> 0.90	Excellent
RMSEA	0.054	< 0.08	Good

Hypothesis Testing

The proposed hypotheses were examined using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). As presented in Table 2, all six hypothesized relationships were statistically supported.

Personalized services exerted the strongest positive effect on business success (β = 0.34, t = 5.25), followed by customer communication channel focus (β = 0.29, t = 4.45), competitor learning capability (β = 0.25, t = 3.96), timely market responsiveness (β = 0.22, t = 3.58), product diversity (β = 0.18, t = 3.12), and privacy protection (β = 0.16, t = 2.87). Accordingly, H1–H6 were all supported.

Table 2 Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-value	Result
H1	Customer Communication ⟶ Success	0.29	4.45	Supported
H2	Product Diversity ⟶ Success	0.18	3.12	Supported
H3	Competitor Learning ⟶ Success	0.25	3.96	Supported
H4	Market Responsiveness ⟶ Success	0.22	3.58	Supported
H5	Privacy Protection ⟶ Success	0.16	2.87	Supported

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-value	Result
H6	Personalized Services ⟶ Success	0.34	5.25	Supported

Interpretation of Results

The findings indicate that all six dimensions of online marketing strategies positively and significantly influence the business success of food manufacturing SMEs.

Among the six predictors, personalized services demonstrated the strongest standardized effect (β = 0.34), suggesting that providing customized products, services, and communications substantially enhances business performance. Customer communication channel focus represented the second strongest predictor (β = 0.29), emphasizing the importance of effective digital communication and customer interaction. Competitor learning capability (β = 0.25) and timely market responsiveness (β = 0.22) also showed meaningful positive effects, indicating that organizations capable of monitoring competitors and responding promptly to market changes achieve superior business outcomes. Although product diversity (β = 0.18) and privacy protection (β = 0.16) exhibited comparatively smaller effects, both variables remained statistically significant determinants of business success. Overall, these findings are consistent with theoretical perspectives emphasizing market orientation, customer engagement, and organizational capability as drivers of organizational performance.

Structural Equation Model

The structural equation model further confirmed that all hypothesized relationships between online marketing strategy dimensions and business success were positive and statistically significant among food manufacturing SMEs in the lower northern region of Thailand.

Customer communication channel focus positively influenced business success (β = 0.29, p < .001), followed by product diversity (β = 0.18, p < .01), competitor learning capability (β = 0.25, p < .001), timely market responsiveness (β = 0.22, p < .001), privacy protection (β = 0.16, p < .05), and personalized services (β = 0.34, p < .001). These findings support all proposed hypotheses (H1–H6) and demonstrate that integrated online marketing strategies significantly contribute to business success.

Furthermore, the overall structural model demonstrated satisfactory goodness-of-fit indices (χ^2/df = 2.18, CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.054), confirming that the proposed model adequately fits the empirical data and provides a valid explanation of business success among food manufacturing SMEs in the lower northern region of Thailand. As shown in Figure 1.

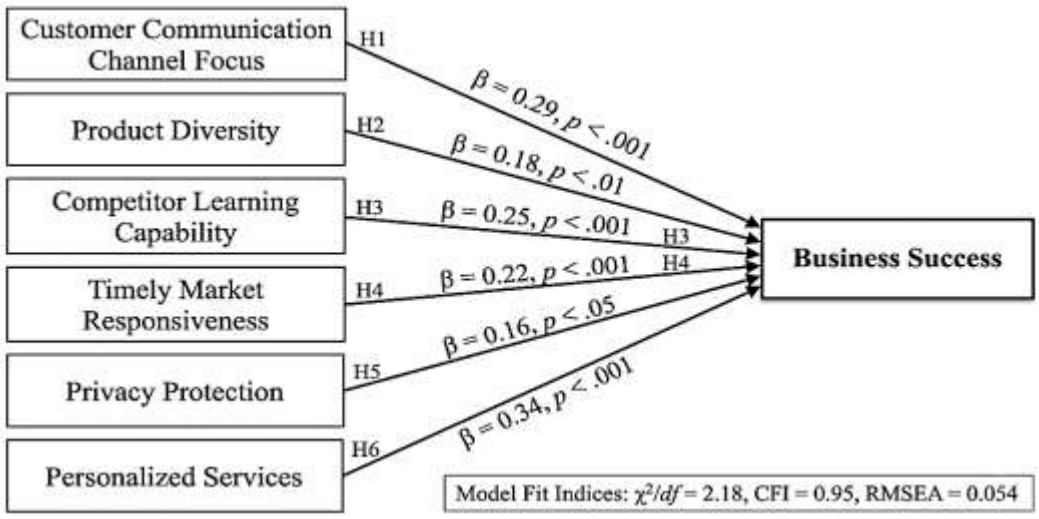


Figure 1 Structural Equation Model of Online Marketing Strategies and Business Success.

Discussion

This study examined the causal relationships between online marketing strategies and business success among food manufacturing SMEs in the lower northern region of Thailand using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings demonstrate that all six dimensions of online marketing strategies—customer communication channel focus, product diversity, competitor learning capability, timely market responsiveness, privacy protection, and personalized services—have positive and statistically significant effects on business success. These findings support the principles of digital marketing and the Resource-Based View (RBV), which suggests that organizational capabilities related to information management, digital technologies, and customer relationship management constitute valuable strategic resources that enhance sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991).

First, customer communication channel focus positively influences business success. This finding highlights the importance of utilizing digital communication platforms, including social media, websites, and mobile applications, to strengthen customer engagement and relationship development. The result is consistent with Kotler and Keller (2016), who emphasize integrated marketing communications as a mechanism for building customer loyalty and brand equity. Likewise, Mangold and Faulds (2009) argue that social media has transformed marketing communication into an interactive process between firms and consumers. Empirical evidence from Thailand similarly demonstrates that online communication significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions (Maneelerlert, 2010; Tippayapornkul, 2016).

Second, product diversity significantly contributes to business success. This finding supports Porter's (1985) competitive strategy framework, which identifies product differentiation as an important source of competitive advantage. Furthermore, Song and Di Benedetto (2001) argue that continuous

product development based on market intelligence enables firms to respond more effectively to changing customer preferences. For food manufacturing SMEs, diversified product offerings may enhance customer satisfaction while strengthening market competitiveness.

Third, competitor learning capability has a significant positive influence on overall business success. This finding suggests that SMEs benefit from continuously monitoring competitors' strategies, market trends, and industry developments to improve strategic decision-making and organizational adaptability. Rather than generating immediate operational improvements, competitor learning capability strengthens firms' strategic knowledge, enabling managers to make more informed marketing decisions and respond proactively to competitive market conditions. This interpretation is consistent with Pongwiritthon et al. (2024), who emphasize that competitor intelligence enhances organizational performance when integrated with broader strategic capabilities.

Fourth, timely market responsiveness positively affects business success. This finding supports Market Orientation Theory, which emphasizes that organizations capable of rapidly responding to customer needs and market changes achieve superior performance (Narver & Slater, 1990). Similarly, Jaworski and Kohli (1993) argue that responsiveness to market intelligence enables firms to maintain competitiveness in dynamic business environments. For food manufacturing SMEs, timely responses to changing consumer preferences and market conditions represent an important source of sustainable competitive advantage.

Fifth, privacy protection significantly contributes to business success, emphasizing the importance of customer trust in digital business environments. This finding is consistent with Eisingerich et al. (2014), who demonstrate that customer trust positively influences loyalty and long-term relationships. Morgan and Hunt (1994) likewise identify trust and commitment as essential components

of successful relationship marketing. Within the Thai context, increasing awareness of personal data protection further reinforces the strategic importance of protecting customer information during online transactions.

Finally, personalized services exhibit the strongest influence on business success among all online marketing strategy dimensions. This finding indicates that customized communication, personalized recommendations, and tailored customer experiences significantly enhance organizational performance. The result supports Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002), who emphasize that interactive online services improve customer experiences, and Peppers and Rogers (2011), who advocate personalized marketing as an effective strategy for strengthening customer loyalty. Previous evidence from Thailand similarly confirms that personalized services significantly influence consumers' online purchasing decisions (Phothaipratong, 2013).

Overall, these findings demonstrate that business success among food manufacturing SMEs in the lower northern region of Thailand depends on the integration of multiple online marketing capabilities rather than the implementation of individual digital marketing activities. SMEs that effectively combine customer communication, market responsiveness, competitor learning, product diversity, privacy protection, and personalized services are more likely to strengthen their competitiveness and achieve sustainable business growth in the digital economy.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its significant contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the sample was limited to food manufacturing SMEs operating in the lower northern region of Thailand, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other industries or geographical regions. Second, data were collected using self-administered questionnaires, which may be subject to common method bias

and may not fully capture respondents' in-depth perspectives. Third, the study examined only six dimensions of online marketing strategies, whereas other factors, such as consumer behavior, digital technology capability, organizational innovation, and external economic conditions, may also influence business success. Finally, although the sample size satisfied the statistical requirements for Structural Equation Modeling, future studies employing larger and more geographically diverse samples may provide broader generalizability.

Recommendation

1. Practical Implications

Food manufacturing SMEs should strengthen integrated online marketing by utilizing multiple digital channels to enhance customer engagement and market responsiveness. Businesses should emphasize product quality, packaging, branding, food safety standards, and product traceability to build customer trust. In addition, firms should monitor competitors, protect customer data, and implement personalized marketing to improve customer satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term competitiveness.

2. Managerial Applications

Managers should integrate online marketing into strategic planning by using customer data, CRM systems, and digital analytics to support product development, pricing, and market segmentation. Marketing activities should be aligned with inventory management, production scheduling, shelf-life management, and food safety compliance to improve operational efficiency and sustainable business performance.

3. Future Research Directions

Future studies should examine SMEs across different regions and industries, employ longitudinal and mixed-methods designs, and investigate additional variables such as digital capability, food safety management, consumer

trust, and regulatory compliance. Future research may also apply multi-group SEM to compare the effectiveness of online marketing strategies across different SME characteristics and regional contexts.

References

Aiken, K. D., & Boush, D. M. (2006). Trustmarks, objective-source ratings, and implied investments in advertising: Investigating online trust and the context-specific nature of internet signals. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 34(3), 308–323.

Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. Journal of Management, 17(1), 99–120.

Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019). Digital marketing (7th ed.). Pearson.

Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. MIS Quarterly, 13(3), 319–340.

Eisingerich, A. B., Auh, S., & Merlo, O. (2014). Acta non verba? The role of customer participation and word of mouth in value co-creation. Journal of Service Research, 17(4), 362–375.

Eisingerich, A. B., Chun, H. H., Liu, Y., Jia, H., & Bell, S. J. (2014). Why recommend a brand face-to-face but not on Facebook? Journal of Consumer Psychology, 25(1), 120–128.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). Multivariate data analysis (7th ed.). Pearson.

Henseler, J., Hubona, G., & Ray, P. A. (2016). Using PLS path modeling in new technology research: Updated guidelines. Industrial Management & Data Systems, 116(1), 2–20. https://doi.org/10.1108/IMDS-09-2015-0382

Jaworski, B. J., & Kohli, A. K. (1993). Market orientation: Antecedents and consequences. Journal of Marketing, 57(3), 53–70.

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (1996). Using the balanced scorecard as a strategic management system. Harvard Business Review, 74(1), 75–85.

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (2001). The strategy-focused organization: How balanced scorecard companies thrive in the new business environment. Harvard Business School Press.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). Marketing management (15th ed.). Pearson.

Likert, R. (1961). New patterns of management. McGraw-Hill.

Maneelerlert, K. (2010). Consumer behavior in online purchasing in Thailand [Unpublished manuscript].

Mangold, W. G., & Faulds, D. J. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. Business Horizons, 52(4), 357–365.

Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, S. D. (1994). The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. Journal of Marketing, 58(3), 20–38.

Narver, J. C., & Slater, S. F. (1990). The effect of a market orientation on business profitability. Journal of Marketing, 54(4), 20–35.

Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). Psychometric theory (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion (OSMEP). (2021). SME situation report in Thailand. https://www.sme.go.th

Peppers, D., & Rogers, M. (2011). Managing customer relationships: A strategic framework (2nd ed.). Wiley.

Phothaipratong, W. (2013). Factors affecting consumer behavior in online purchasing. Phuket Rajabhat University Academic Journal, 16(1), 209–229.

Pongwiritthon, K., Pudjaiyo, N., Asakan, P., Tangmungmee, H., & Suthithananchai, S. (2024). The implementation of management accounting practices influencing the success of construction enterprises within the medium and small business sector in the Northeastern Region. Journal of Nakhon Ratchasima College (Humanities and Social Sciences), 18(1), 96–111.

Porter, M. E. (1985). Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior performance. Free Press.

Ranganathan, C., & Ganapathy, S. (2002). Key dimensions of business-to-consumer websites. Information & Management, 39(6), 457–465.

Rogers, E. M. (2003). Diffusion of innovations (5th ed.). Free Press.

Siyaphat, S., Kajornatthapol, P., & Patra, A. (2024). Model of characteristics of high-performance organizations influencing the performance of small and medium enterprises in the central region of Thailand. International Journal of Professional Business Review, 9(10), e05030.

Song, X. M., & Di Benedetto, C. A. (2001). Cooperation in new product development: The role of information sharing and strategic alignment. Journal of Product Innovation Management, 18(2), 110–120.

Tiago, M. T. P. M. B., & Veríssimo, J. M. C. (2014). Digital marketing and social media: Why bother? Business Horizons, 57(6), 703–708.

Tippayapornkul, P. (2016). The Influence of Online Marketing on Online Purchasing Decisions. Interdisciplinary Academic and Research Journal, 3(6), 1005–1020.