

# MAKING OPTIMAL DECISIONS BY CONSUMERS IN THE MARKET IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITAL MARKETING DEVELOPMENT

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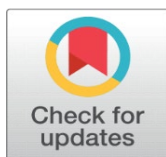
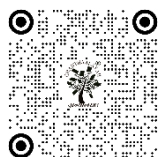
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work is to study the influence of digital marketing channels on consumer purchasing decisions. The first part included demographic issues. The second part included the impact of the use of the Internet and digital marketing channels on the purchase of goods, in order to determine the impact of these channels on consumer decision-making. Of the 290 respondents who use the Internet daily, more than 63% said they are connected to social media and marketing emails. 93 participants expressed their opinion about websites that have a greater impact on consumer decision-making. 190 participants also stated that they often buy products using digital marketing channels. The scientific novelty of the study is that consumer decision-making in the digital economy is characterized by reduced information costs, high speed of comparing prices and goods, as well as the use of big data and AI recommendations. The consumer gets access to a wide range of choices, but is faced with manipulative strategies of companies such as "obfuscation". At the same time, factors such as access to information, the role of platforms and data, optimization and manipulation, network effects, etc. are considered key aspects of the decision-making process in the digital age. Therefore, professionals should carefully study their target audience and act in accordance with consumer behavior in order to gain a competitive advantage when placing their products or services on websites and social media accounts. From a practical point of view, the research results can be useful to marketers and specialists working in this field. The research also specifies the principles of consumer choice when making optimal decisions. In addition, it helps customers determine which approach to digital marketing strategy is needed. This approach allows companies to develop their digital strategies with more precise targeting.

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**Keywords:** Digital Economics, Consumers, Optimal Behavior, Key Aspects, Influencing Factors, Decision-Making Process



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Almost a quarter of a century has passed since the commercial use of the Internet began. During this time, the business landscape has changed very quickly. Large multinational corporations such as Google, Facebook, Alibaba, HUAWEI, and others, which were unknown in the world 20 years ago, have become key players in the modern economy. By 2020, experts predict the availability of 50 billion devices with Internet access. These 50 billion devices will become

interconnected in the Internet of Things and smart home network. In the current environment, the internet has opened up vast opportunities for firms to leverage the advantages of digital marketing. By utilizing various digital marketing channels, companies can share their products and services online, increase the number of their customers, attract them to their channels, and improve their return on investment (ROI). With the use of the internet, digital marketing strategies have replaced traditional marketing strategies in the development of highly competitive markets and technologies [Cengiz \(2019\)](#).

Additionally, digital marketing covers a broad area in the global market and includes business models that use digital technologies to reduce costs and grow businesses worldwide. Nowadays, digital marketing offers greater opportunities for the future development of trade sectors since customers are satisfied with online shopping and consider it safer than traditional marketing [Deniz and Erciş \(2008\)](#). In this regard, consumer behavior evolves in parallel with changing generations. Brands that wish to keep up with changing consumer behavior benefit from digital marketing methods.

Consumer behavior is one of the main subjects of the marketing field, and it is expressed as a discipline that combines human behavior with consumption types. More broadly, consumer behavior is defined as “the field of study that examines the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences” [Ege \(2020\)](#). The article investigates whether the marketing tools that consumers encounter on the internet are related to their purchasing decisions. It also examines the significance of these marketing tools to consumers, the value they provide, the extent of their usage of different tools, and the relationship between these factors and purchasing decisions. Many studies in this direction have discussed the impact of digital marketing on consumer purchasing decisions [CCSENET \(2024\)](#). Therefore, the methodology of this research is thought to be guided by and beneficial for other studies conducted in the field of digital marketing.

Before examining consumer behavior, it is necessary to investigate the concepts of consumption and consumers [TML \(2024\)](#). Consumption is a process that begins at birth and continues until death. The concept of consumption can be defined as the expenditure or depletion of an item. The consumer is the person who consumes this item and performs the act of consumption [Yasmin et al. \(2015\)](#). Another definition states that the consumer is the individual who decides to purchase products or services that meet their needs [Research Publish \(2023\)](#). In a broader sense, consumer behavior is defined as “the field of study that examines the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences” [Abdel \(2021\)](#). Although there are multiple definitions of consumer behavior, no universally accepted definition exists. Therefore, the principle of considering consumer behavior as a branch of human behavior has been accepted. Consumer purchasing behavior varies depending on different demands and needs. What is important is the satisfaction that arises after consumption [Ismayilov et al. \(2021\)](#). Consumer behavior is influenced by social, cultural, psychological, and several other factors. Consumer decision-making in digital marketing is characterized by increased choice awareness through easy access to information, reviews, and price comparisons in real time by ADA Global. Digital marketing, including personalization, content strategies, and social media, helps consumers find the best deals, but at the same time enhances the influence of brands on customer behavior.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METODS

Both primary data and previously conducted research in this field were used in the preparation of the article. The research data methodology included relevant legislation, articles, books, theses, etc., related to the subject of the study. The data collection, systematization, and analysis method used in the research was the most common in marketing research: the survey method. The survey used in the research was divided into two parts. In the first part of the survey, questions were included to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants, such as gender, age groups, and education level. In the second part, questions were asked to identify the impact of digital marketing channels on consumers' purchasing decisions. The questions covered topics such as internet usage frequency, use of digital marketing channels, satisfaction with the quality of the purchased product, the effect of digital marketing channels on purchasing decisions, the factors influencing consumers' purchasing decisions, etc.

During the sample selection in the research, various demographic and psychographic factors were taken into account. Demographic factors determine the buyer of branded products, while psychographic factors clarify whether customers purchase a specific product or not. The respondents' age, gender, income, and behaviors in the digital environment were systematically analyzed to increase the reliability of the research results. Additionally, further statistical tests were conducted to assess the extent to which the results could be generalized to a larger population.

### 3. RESULTS

Behavioral models help to understand consumers' purchasing behavior. These models aim to better understand consumer behavior. Consumer behavior models are divided into two categories: explanatory (classical) behavior models and descriptive (modern) behavior models [Baycan \(2017\)](#).

Classical behavior models were not initially created to explain consumer behavior. These models were adapted to consumer behavior by specialists who sought to understand individual behavior. They explore consumer behavior in terms of motivation, explaining why one product is preferred over others through motivation [Agarwal \(2015\)](#). The most famous of the classical behavior models is Marshall's economic model. Additionally, Pavlov's learning model, Freud's psychoanalytic models, and Veblen's social (spiritual) model exist. Recognizing that classical behavior models are insufficient to explain social behavior, new models were developed. As a result of these studies, descriptive (modern) consumer behavior models were created. The first of these is the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) model. Other models include the Nicosia (N) model, the Howard-Sheth model, and Henry Assael's models [Akar \(2019\)](#).

A company aiming to gain a competitive advantage through marketing activities should analyze consumers' behaviors and needs to meet them. Therefore, careful attention should be given to understanding consumers' purchasing decisions. During the purchasing process, consumers' emotions, attitudes, and contextual factors are studied. Various biological and psychological factors influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Additionally, other factors such as social classes, families, gender, socio-cultural factors, material factors, and motivation can be included. The decision-making process for consumer behavior, influenced by these factors, will be studied through the following five-step process [Figure 1](#).

**Figure 1**



**Figure 1** Evaluation of the Consumer Purchase Decision Process

Source Compiled on the Basis of [Research Publish \(2023\)](#)

As seen in the figure, consumers' purchasing decisions are carried out in five stages. Below are the opinions of researchers who have conducted studies on these stages:

**Need Recognition:** The purchase decision process begins with the consumer's recognition of a desire or need for a product or service. The consumer can first identify the need or problem. This identification arises from a necessity, change in lifestyle, or replacement scenario. Thus, the consumer becomes aware of the problem that needs to be solved [Tekvar \(2016\)](#).

**Information Search:** After the need is clearly identified, the consumer may start searching for relevant information. The consumer looks for information that can offer choices to solve the identified problem, including product alternatives and other purchasable options.

**Evaluation of Alternatives:** Consumers then evaluate the information gathered from various sources to determine its relevance to their needs. Here, all advantages and disadvantages are considered, and alternatives are evaluated using various standards [Bulunmaz \(2016\)](#). Price, quality, warranties, and other objective criteria may or may not be used to evaluate alternatives [Chizmeci and Ercan \(2015\)](#).

**Purchase Decision:** After reviewing the options, the consumer can decide on the product they will purchase. The actual transaction takes place at this stage. After evaluating the alternatives, consumers make their final decisions, selecting one of the evaluated alternatives or choosing not to purchase anything at all [Chaffey and Smith \(2013\)](#).

**Post-Purchase Evaluation:** In the final stage, the consumer assesses whether their needs were adequately met and whether the purchase was satisfactory. If the need is met, customers may recommend the purchase to others [Baltes \(2016\)](#). Feedback from customers becomes a key driver for other customers' purchase decisions. Consumers can be

divided into three different groups after a purchase: those who are satisfied and will shop again from the same brand, those who are partially satisfied but have doubts, and those who are dissatisfied and will not purchase the product again [Chizmeçi and Ercan \(2015\)](#).

Existing marketing models in this field have certain limitations in explaining consumer behavior comprehensively in the digital environment. For example, the traditional AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model demonstrates that consumers make purchasing decisions in stages, yet in the modern digital ecosystem, since consumers are interacting across multiple channels, this process becomes more complex. Furthermore, although the STP (Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning) model justifies the segmentation of the audience, it does not sufficiently account for the changing digital habits of individual consumers.

Therefore, the integration of fields such as psychology, neuromarketing, social network analytics, and others can enable the development of more accurate and contextually relevant models.

The topic of the research was analyzed on the basis of survey materials prepared by the authors, taking into account the lack of materials that will determine the impact of digital marketing, which has been widely applied in recent times, on the purchasing decisions of consumers.

In order to obtain detailed information about the survey participants, demographic questions are asked that include the respondents' gender, age, education level, average monthly income of their family and their social status [Dijilopedi \(2019\)](#). The answers to the demographic questions, age groups and education level given in the first part of the survey were checked through Frequency analysis and the results are given in [Table 1](#) below.

As a result of the analysis of the gender of the respondents, it was found that 226 participants (70.2%) were women and 96 (29.8%) were men. The obtained result shows that female participants were the majority in the survey.

While the minimum age of 16 was mentioned in the survey participants covering the age groups of the respondents, there was no limit for the maximum age.

**Table 1**

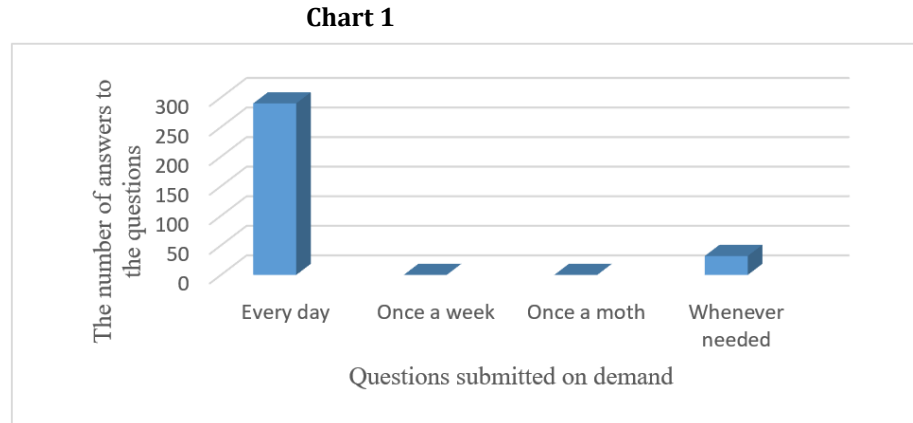
Table 1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender, Age Groups and Education Level		
Gender	Frequency	%
male	96	29.8
female	226	70.2
Age groups		
16-25	180	55.9
26-35	97	30.1
36-45	34	10.6
46-55	8	2.5
56 and above	3	0.9
Education level		
Complete high school education	28	8.7
Professional college	36	11.2
Bachelor	148	46
Master	93	28.9
PhD student	17	5.2
total	322	100

**Source:** Prepared By The Authors, Based On Survey Materials

As can be seen from the analysis data, 55.9% of the participants are the young generation covering the age range of 16-25 years. The age group of consumers with the least place in the survey is 56 years and older, which consists of only 3 people, making up 0.9%. The main reason for this can be explained by the fact that the survey is conducted online, so it is spread more among the younger generation, or the older generation does not have much interest in this type of survey. The 26-35 age group, which ranks second, covers 30.1% of 97 places. Participants in the age range of 36-45 made up 10.6% of the survey, and the age range of 46-55 made up 2.5%.

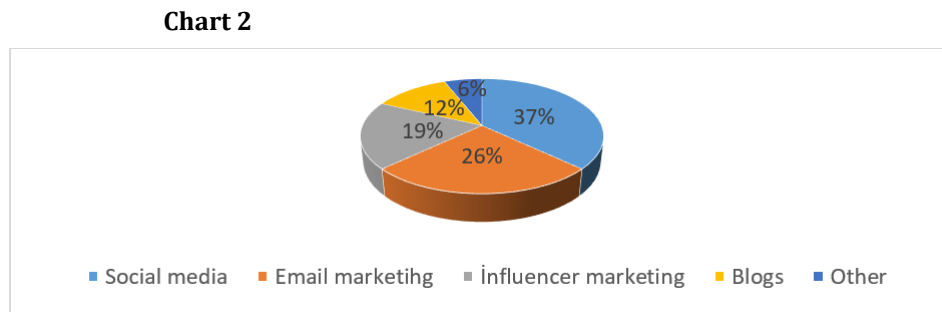
Frequency analysis was carried out in SPSS program to study the data of the survey reflecting the educational levels of the participants. 80.1% of the participants are bachelor's, master's and doctoral students. According to the results, 8.7% of people with complete secondary education and 11.2% of vocational/college education participated in the survey.

Another question of the survey is about the frequency of Internet use. Based on the received data, it was determined that 290 of the participants are respondents who use the Internet regularly, and 32 are respondents who use it only when necessary [Chart 1](#).



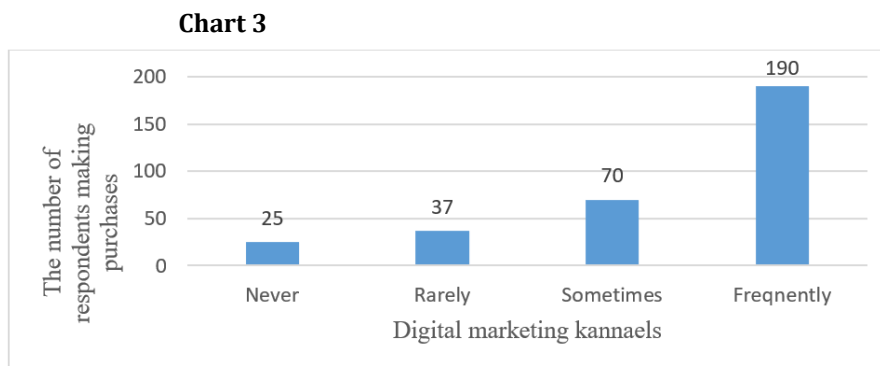
**Chart 1** Degree of Internet Usage  
**Source:** Compiled Based on Demand Data

One of the survey questions was designed to determine which digital marketing channel respondents were most aware of. According to the received data, most of the respondents - 37% are aware of social media marketing, 26% of e-mail marketing. Other groups and interest rates are detailed in [Chart 2](#).



**Chart 2** Digital Marketing Channels

The next question covers how often they shop using digital marketing channels. As shown in [Chart 3](#), the majority of respondents (260) are those who use digital marketing channels frequently and occasionally. 25 people stated that they never used digital marketing channels to make a purchase.



**Chart 3** The Number of Purchases Using Digital Marketing Channels

The data in [Chart 4](#) below shows that 54% (174) of the total respondents are always satisfied with the product they buy using digital channels, 40.1% (129) are sometimes satisfied, and 5.9% (19) are satisfied with the products does not agree.

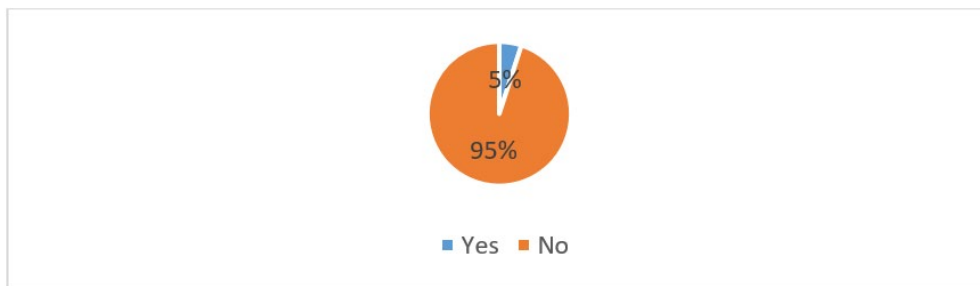
**Chart 4**



**Chart 4** Satisfaction of Respondents with A Product Purchased Through Digital Channels

The data of [Chart 5](#) shows that 95% (305) of the total respondents think that technology has changed the buying pattern of people in the coming days, while 5% (17) of the respondents do not think so.

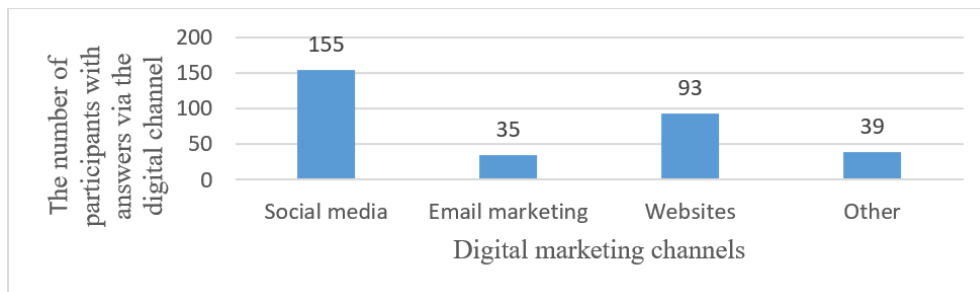
**Chart 5**



**Chart 5** Respondents Who Consider Changing Technologies in the Habit of Shopping

The next question aims to determine which digital marketing channel has the most influence on the respondents. According to the responses, a group of 155 people, who make up the highest percentage of social media marketers, and a group of 93 people, who make up the next majority, said that websites influence their purchase decisions, and the influence rates of other digital marketing channels are indicated.

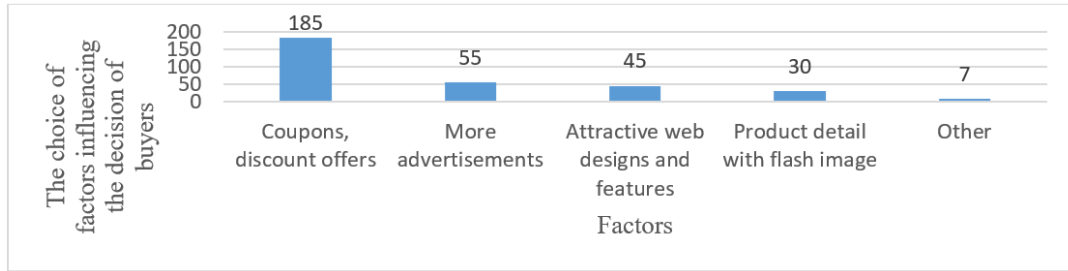
**Chart 6**



**Chart 6** Digital Marketing Channels That Influence the Purchase Decision the Most

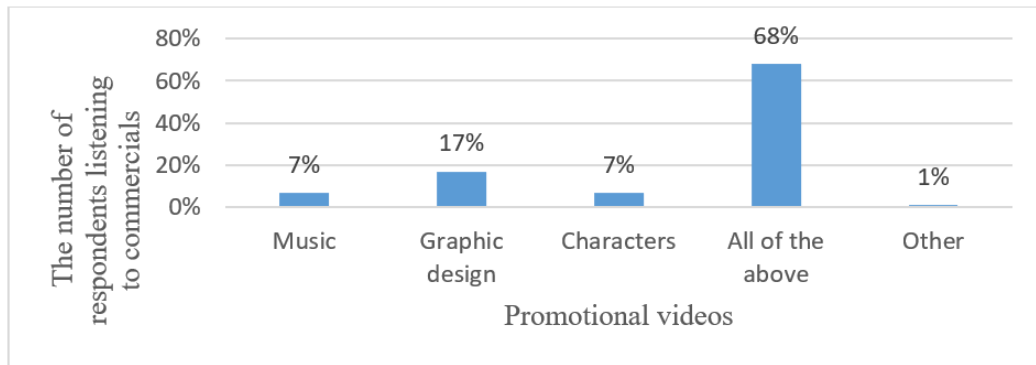
The data in [Chart 7](#) shows that 185 of the total respondents believe that coupons, discount offers influence their purchase decisions, 55 more advertise their decisions, 45 find attractive website design and features influence their purchase decisions, and 30 find effective product descriptions influence their purchase decisions. purchase decisions, and the remaining 7 people stated that it influenced their purchase decisions for reasons not mentioned in the question.

**Chart 7**



**Chart 7** Factors Influencing a Customer's Decision to Purchase Through Digital Marketing

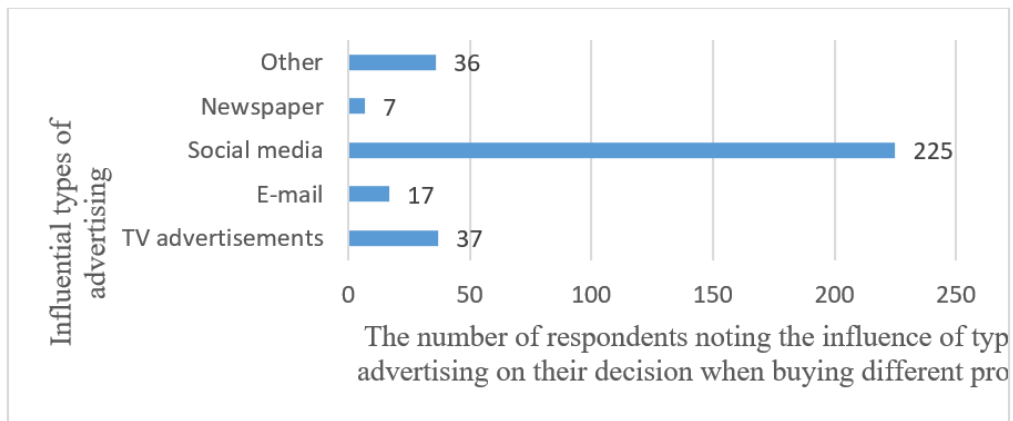
**Chart 8**



**Chart 8** Features of Some Commercials Broadcast on Digital Channels That Lag Behind in Memory

The data of graph 8 shows that 74% (241 people) remember all advertisements, 24% (78 people) all graphic design and characters, and 1% (3 people) remember most of the characteristics of the given advertisements in digital channels, noted that he remained.

**Chart 9**



**Chart 9** The Influence of Types of Advertising on the Decision to Purchase Different Products

As can be seen from the data of graph 9, when the customer decided to become a product, the influence of social media ads was 225 people (70%), TV ads were 37 people (11.5%), the influence of e-mail, newspaper and other ads was 60 people (18.5%).

In order to reduce the impact of the detailed explanation of the questions on the volume of the article, the answers to the other 8 questions given to the participants are combined and given in [Table 2](#).

It is clearly seen from the survey results that digital marketing services have a direct impact on the decisions consumers will make. Therefore, from the responses of the participants to questions 10-17, it is clearly seen that consumers are already interested in doing detailed research to obtain any product/service. Because it is important for them that the product they buy is of good quality and meets their needs. In particular, the participants' responses regarding doing research on the internet before purchasing the product (question 14) were recorded. The fact that 300 participants (93%) participated in the questions confirms the above-mentioned view once again.

Based on the results of the research survey conducted by the authors, it can be concluded that according to the respondents, the factors that most affect the purchasing power of manufacturers can be attributed to the following: social media, e-mail marketing, the impact of technology on people's purchasing patterns, the impact of digital marketing channels on purchasing decisions, effectiveness of digital marketing over other advertising, coupons and discount offers, influence of social media, etc.

**Table 2**

Table 2 Respondents' Answers to the Last 8 Questions ("yes" and "no"), the Number and Percentage of Participants in the Demand					
№	Questions	Results			
		Yes	%	No	%
10	Do you think it is important to have an effective website to attract customers?	280	87	42	13
11	Are you comparing a product you purchased from one website with another?	242	75	80	25
12	Do you think online advertising through digital marketing on a company's website gives customers more choice?	251	78	71	22
13	Do you research a product/service online before buying it?	300	93	22	7
14	Are digital ads encouraging me to buy products I don't want?	251	78	71	22
15	Considering that the seller cannot always give me accurate information about the product/service, I believe that I can get objective information in this area from the Internet.	296	92	26	8
16	Digital marketing ads are different from traditional banner, paper, radio, etc. is it more effective than ads like?	286	89	36	11
17	If the information on the Internet about the product/service I will buy is created by the consumer, I trust that information.	274	85	48	15

Source: Compiled Based on the Responses of the Respondents in the Questionnaire

## 4. DISCUSSION

### 4.1. DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO CONSUMER BEHAVIOR THEORIES IN DIGITAL MARKETING

An analysis of the application of consumer behavior theories to digital marketing shows that these theories identify constraints on what consumers base their purchasing decisions on [IJEFM \(2024\)](#). These theories help marketers predict consumer behavior on online platforms, etc. For example, let's consider an analysis of theoretical models of consumer behavior and their application to digital marketing:

Engel-kollat-blackwell (EKB) model. The EKB model focuses on the consumer decision-making process. This process consists of the stages of problem solving; information search; evaluation of alternatives; purchase decision and buyer behavior after the decision. The strengths of the model include comprehensiveness, flexibility, post-purchase focus, and weaknesses include linear approximation, simplification, digital disruption, etc.

Theory of planned behavior-TPB. TPB theory was developed by Isaac Ajzen and proposes that three factors influence an individual's behavior: attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral control. The strengths of the theory include psychological depth, prediction of behavior, and social influence.

Maslow's pyramid of needs. This theory suggests that human needs are hierarchical. These include physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization. The strengths of the theory include its person-centered approach, broad applicability, and segmentation. The weaknesses of the model include hierarchical expectations, cultural constraints, and oversimplification of difficult decisions.

The influence of cultural and social factors on consumer behavior in the digital environment. Consumer behavior in the digital environment is shaped not only by individual preferences and psychological factors, but also by broader cultural and social influences. The Internet and digital technologies have changed the way consumers interact with products, services and brands. Here, the influence of cultural and social factors on consumer behavior in the digital

environment is undeniable. Cultural factors include: language and communication styles, consumer trust and technology acceptance, cultural preferences, etc., while social factors include social media and peer influence, influencer marketing, etc.

Cultural and social factors significantly influence consumer behavior. These factors manifest in different forms in the digital environment: social influence, normative expectations, and individual values. For example, social media platforms influence the formation of cultural and social trends through user interactions. Additionally, consumers in different regions respond differently to digital marketing messages. Taking these differences into account is crucial for developing more effective marketing strategies.

Empirical studies prove the impact of digital marketing on consumer purchasing behavior. For example, based on a study conducted in 2022, it was concluded that 78% of consumers make purchasing decisions under the influence of social media advertisements. Another study shows that personalized email campaigns lead to a 29% increase in open rates and a 41% increase in click-through rates. Additionally, companies using Google Ads have an average ROI (Return on Investment) ratio of 8:1, meaning every \$1 spent generates \$8 in revenue. As a result, effective digital marketing strategies directly influence consumer behavior and increase the profitability of companies [31].

Empirical evidence on the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior. Digital marketing is changing consumers' purchasing decisions, regulating interest in products, attention, and buying behavior. Empirical research on these changes is ongoing, and the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior is presented in valuable data. Let's take a look at the main conclusions reached in relation to this problem:

The impact of social media on consumer behavior. Social media marketing (SMM) is a combination of tactics such as paid advertising, influencer recommendations, user-generated content, and organic engagement with brands. Empirical research shows that social media, through a combination of these factors, strongly influences consumer attitudes toward products and purchasing decisions.

Social media engagement and purchase intentions. A study by [Liu et al. \(2020\)](#) found that consumers who interact with brands on social media have higher purchase intentions and are more likely to purchase products. Interaction with consumers on social media platforms builds trust and loyalty in consumers about the brand, which influences their purchasing decisions.

Influencer marketing. [Freberg K. et al. \(2010\)](#) found that influencers have a strong influence on consumer behavior. Influencers can build trust with their followers, leading to more positive evaluations of products or brands.

User-generated reviews and social proof. [Cheung et al. \(2009\)](#) found that social media and customer reviews influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Consumers rely heavily on online reviews and ratings, and products recommended by other consumers are more likely to be sold.

The impact of search engine marketing (SEM) on consumer behavior. Search engine marketing (SEM), which encompasses both SEO (search engine optimization) and paid search advertising, influences how consumers search for products and make decisions.

Search behavior and decision making. [Jansen et al. \(2007\)](#) study shows how search engine advertising influences consumer decisions and notes that consumers trust the highest quality brands more in search engines, which influences their purchasing decisions.

Click-through rate (CTR) and conversion. A study by [Chong et al. \(2017\)](#) showed that digital ads placed on search engines lead to high click-through rates (CTR) and increased conversion rates. Quality ads lead to higher sales that match user intent.

The impact of email marketing on consumer behavior. Email marketing is still one of the most effective and cost-effective digital marketing strategies. Many studies have empirically examined the impact of email marketing on consumer behavior.

Personalization and opening rates. A study by [Chen et al. \(2019\)](#) found that personalized email ads (e.g., discount offers based on past purchases or browsing history) generated higher open and click-through rates (CTR) than non-personalized emails. Personalization generates greater interest and purchase intent in consumers.

Abandoned cart reminders and purchases. A study by [Srinivasan et al. \(2017\)](#) found that reminder emails sent to consumers who abandoned their shopping carts increased the likelihood that they would complete their purchases. The study found that 20-30% of abandoned cart emails encouraged repurchases.

The impact of mobile marketing on consumer behavior. The widespread use of smartphones has made mobile marketing an important part of digital marketing strategies. Mobile devices allow consumers to connect with brands and make purchases at any time [MMA Global \(2024\)](#).

Mobile ads and impulsive purchases. A study by [Ladhari et al. \(2019\)](#) found that mobile advertising reinforces impulsive buying behavior in consumers, especially through mobile apps and mobile-optimized websites. The convenience offered by mobile devices reduces barriers to the shopping process and increases the number of spontaneous purchases, especially in sectors such as e-commerce, food delivery, and entertainment [Elektronik Ticaret Rehberi \(2024\)](#).

Mobile payments and consumer convenience. A study by [Yoo and Kim \(2017\)](#) found that mobile payment systems provide greater convenience to consumers, thereby increasing their shopping frequency. The ease of transactions via mobile devices encourages impulsive purchases, leading to more purchases, especially in markets prone to impulsive shopping.

The impact of video marketing on consumer behavior. With video marketing becoming one of the main tools of modern digital marketing, platforms such as YouTube, etc. are key channels that increase the effectiveness of marketing campaigns.

Visual content and emotional connection. A study by [Hutter et al. \(2013\)](#) showed that consumers who interact with video content become more emotionally attached to brands, which increases their brand loyalty and purchase intentions.

Video product reviews and trust. [Chung et al. \(2020\)](#) found that video product reviews posted on platforms such as YouTube have a strong influence on consumer purchasing behavior. Consumers trust video reviews more because such reviews provide more detailed information about the product's features and usage.

## 4.2. DIGITAL MARKETING: CONCEPT AND DIFFERENCE FROM TRADITIONAL MARKETING

In recent times, with the increasing use of social media and the internet and their growing significance in human life, the concept of digital marketing has evolved. Traditional one-way marketing activities carried out through communication channels like radio and television may not be sufficient to meet individuals' needs [Hyolmo \(2024\)](#). In the digital age, which encompasses the internet and social media, it has become inevitable for businesses to operate in the digital environment. As a result of the development and widespread use of internet technologies, consumers now seek to meet many of their needs through virtual means [Alnsour \(2018\)](#). Digital marketing is also of great importance to consumers. Through digital marketing tools, consumers can access information about desired products or services anytime and anywhere using digital platforms, and if desired, they can obtain them at a much lower cost. One of the greatest advantages of digital marketing over other marketing channels is its low cost. Without paying for rent or incurring additional expenses, you can promote your products or services to customers who visit your website or virtual store, thereby increasing your sales [Bektash \(2012\)](#). However, when promoting products or services in digital environments, companies should avoid using long descriptive texts and large images, as they may not be appealing to customers. Due to the rapid development of technology and the integration of the internet into human life, digital marketing is now widely used by businesses. However, engaging in digital marketing activities does not prevent businesses from using traditional marketing methods. Marketing specialists in companies aim to increase profitability and competitiveness by combining traditional and digital marketing methods. Digital marketing aims to create a connection between the customer and the brand by promoting, supporting, and directing the customer toward making a purchase decision, either directly or indirectly, through the internet [Ismayilov et al. \(2021\)](#).

**Below is a comparison of digital marketing with traditional marketing, designed to show the differences between the two:**

**Cost:** The primary tools of traditional marketing are television and newspapers. It is well known that print media and professional advertising require large budgets. In digital marketing, however, many of the marketing processes require little to no payment, or if you do need to pay, it requires only a small budget. For instance, you only pay for advertising on social media. Instead of paying for an entire team of actors, scriptwriters, directors, and copywriters, you may only pay one influencer.

**Time and Continuity:** With traditional marketing methods, your advertisements are shown to consumers during specific periods, and potential customers may miss seeing your ads during that time. Since it is difficult to ensure

continuity, it is also challenging to increase the number of followers of the brand, and the process is slow. In digital marketing, however, your advertisement can run 24/7. A viral ad can rapidly increase brand awareness.

**Communication and Interaction:** In traditional marketing, which allows one-way communication, you cannot measure the reactions of potential customers to your advertisement. It is impossible to know how a customer will react when they see or hear the advertisement. In contrast, digital marketing, particularly social media marketing, offers communication options such as comments and messaging. Those who see the ad can express their opinions, resolve their questions quickly, and turn into real customers.

**Reaching the Target Audience:** In traditional marketing, you need to rely more on chance. Sometimes, those who see your advertisements may not be your potential customers. In digital marketing, however, you have the ability to control who sees your ads. This allows you to directly connect with people who are genuinely interested in your products or services.

### 4.3. DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS

Targeting consumers digitally using technologies such as websites, email marketing, social media marketing, affiliate marketing, SEO, and SEM is called digital marketing. There are many digital marketing tools under this heading and they all serve different purposes. But if a common goal of specialists is maximum efficiency at minimum cost, they must know very well the characteristics, differences and purposes of these techniques in order to achieve their goals effectively and quickly. Although there are many differences between the techniques, ultimately businesses aim to manage all these channels in the most efficient and effective way. Regardless of which technique they use, businesses must plan, test, and optimize these processes. Below is detailed information about digital marketing channels.

Email marketing, a branch of direct marketing, is considered one of the most powerful digital marketing channels because it is cost-effective and easily measurable in delivering targeted messages to target customers. There are four main advantages of email marketing. These include low cost, high response rate, ensuring customer loyalty and directing purchasing behavior [Chadwick and Doherty \(2012\)](#).

With the changing and developing technology, smartphones, which almost everyone has, are determined as one of the digital marketing methods. Activities such as brand promotion and advertising are carried out through text messages and video messages sent to smartphones. The fact that mobile devices play a big role in our lives and are almost always with us has led to the inclusion of these tools in marketing activities. Since mobile devices are personal, they provide direct access to customers. Video or voice calls can be made via mobile devices. This has created a personalized marketing approach and has become attractive to customers [Altunşik et al. \(2016\)](#).

User experience plays an important role on websites. The better the user experience, the higher the purchase rate. The colors used in the website design and the menu design on the website play an important role in attracting the user to the website and turning them into a real consumer. In the website design, the user should be able to easily find what they are looking for. The site should be made suitable for the users and unnecessary information should not be given. In order to easily find the product you are looking for, categories and subcategories should be defined correctly, and users who have questions should be able to easily find answers to their questions with the help of chat. Websites are considered an advertising platform in themselves. Unlike other types of advertising, visitors to websites are volunteers. The website they come from also attracts attention with its perception of persuasion and awareness [Omar and Atteya \(2020\)](#).

It is becoming easier every day to find the product you are looking for and compare products with other sellers online. What brands need to do at this point is to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Being ranked at the top in search engines is a great advantage for brands to stand out from their competitors. SEO is an advertising model designed to increase user traffic to companies' websites and gain new customers in the light of the data obtained from search engines. Keywords emerge at this stage. Determining the relevance of keywords used in search engines is very important. The processes carried out in line with all these goals are called SEO (search engine optimization). Search engines use automatic programs called "bots" or "spiders" to scan hundreds of thousands of websites and collect data in order to suggest the best keywords to companies. They do this to ensure good SEO management [Aksoy \(2017\)](#). In-site code errors, alignment and alignment of visuals and content for search engines are SEO studies for web pages. Companies should adjust their websites and social media channels to be SEO-friendly. At this point, brands aim to create an environment where search engine bots can crawl the site correctly and determine target keywords by evaluating the site

content well. At this point, it is imperative for brands to produce original content on the site [Bulunmaz \(2016\)](#). SEO research is not a channel that can provide quick results, and at this point you need to wait a bit. When adding content to a website that can be useful for SEO studies, care should be taken to ensure that the content is sincere and useful to users. Otherwise, these studies may create a bad impression on the site.

SEM stands for Search Engine Marketing, which is the name given to the practice of getting your brand name or products to appear at the top of search engines for a fee. SEM is more permanent than SEO. SEM is done for a budget and as the fee decreases, so will the impact of SEM. But SEO is a work that needs to be done continuously as it requires patience and its durability is longer [Dagher et al. \(2015\)](#).

One of the modern marketing techniques is buying behavior as a result of increased trust in the product by the comment of someone who has used the product. At this stage, social media phenomena called opinion leaders and influencers come into play. As technology advances, some brands struggle to keep up with this change, while others struggle to keep up. As customers turn to different channels, it has become almost mandatory for brands to be on these channels. Brands struggling to keep up with digital marketing tools got help from influencer marketing in this era. By using influencer marketing, they can expand their market size and reach more consumers with link and banner ads. It is a tool used within marketing activities to explore customer opinions, create brand perception, benefit from active social media users, deliver messages via the Internet, and positively impact brand recognition. By monitoring social media, it is possible to monitor what customers are talking about the brand. Nowadays, brands and even institutions respond to user complaints through social media channels, sending the message that they are always ready to support their users. After the advertising campaign, brands can monitor the impact of the advertising campaign on the target audience through social media monitoring [Alzyoud \(2018\)](#).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

When developing marketing strategies, a company should first analyze the behaviors and attitudes of consumers and implement the marketing strategy and activities according to the behaviors shown by consumers. It is very important for marketing professionals to understand why and how consumers buy a product/service, how they behave during the purchasing process, and which personal or environmental factors affect their behavior. Especially due to developing technology and increasing internet use, consumers have started to act as producers on online platforms. This situation causes the company to conduct digital marketing activities along with traditional marketing activities. The number of businesses conducting digital marketing activities is increasing in the globalizing world. For this reason, businesses have to give importance to digital marketing activities in order to maintain their competitive environment and even gain competitive advantage.

The study aims to reveal the impact of digital marketing channels on consumers' purchasing decisions. To this end, 290 of the 322 people who took part in the survey said they use the Internet every day, more than 63% (155 people) they are conscious about social media and email marketing. While 190 participants stated that they often make purchases using digital marketing channels, the majority of participants stated that digital marketing advertising differs from traditional advertising on banners, newspapers, and radio and confirmed that it is more effective than similar advertising. When asked what influences your purchasing decision through digital marketing, 185 people answered coupons and discount offers, while 55 people answered more advertising. When looking at the results of the survey conducted to collect information, it can be said that digital marketing is actually quite effective on consumers' purchasing decisions. Therefore, experts need to carefully examine their target audience and act according to consumer behavior in order to gain a competitive advantage when placing their products or services on websites and social media accounts.

The conducted research characterizes the contribution that the study of digital marketing's impact on consumer behavior can make to scientific knowledge. Specifically, it provides new insights into the effectiveness of channels such as social media and email marketing. From a practical perspective, the findings of the research could be useful for marketers, as this study helps identify which digital marketing strategies consumers are more sensitive to. This enables companies to design their digital strategies with relatively precise targeting.

The scientific novelty lies in the fact that correct consumer decision-making in the digital economy is characterized by a reduction in information costs, a high rate of price and product changes, as well as the use of big data and AI recommendations. In this way, the consumer gets access to a wide range of choices, but is faced with manipulative strategies of companies such as "obfuscation". At the same time, factors such as access to information, the role of

platforms and data, optimization and manipulation, network effects, etc., are considered key aspects of the decision-making process in the digital age.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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