



ЎЗБЕКИСТОНДА КИЧИК БИЗНЕС КОРХОНАЛАРИДА ҚЎЛЛАНИЛАЁТГАН РАҚАМЛИ МАРКЕТИНГ СТРАТЕГИЯЛАРИ

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Аннотация. Рақамли маркетинг бутун дунё бўйлаб кичик корхоналарнинг рақобатбардошлиги ва ўсишини белгилаб берувчи асосий омиллардан бирига айланди. Ўзбекистонда рақамли технологияларнинг жадал жорий этилиши, интернет қамровининг кенгайиши ҳамда ижтимоий тармоқлар оммалашувининг ортиши маркетинг соҳасида туб ўзгаришларга олиб келди. Кичик ва ўрта бизнес субъектлари (КЎБ) маҳсулотларини тарғиб қилиш, мижозлар билан алоқа ўрнатиш ва бозор қамровини кенгайтириш мақсадида рақамли воситалардан тобора кўпроқ фойдаланмоқда. Ушбу тадқиқот Ўзбекистондаги кичик бизнес корхоналари томонидан қўлланилаётган асосий рақамли маркетинг стратегияларини таҳлил қилади ҳамда уларнинг бизнес самарадорлигини оширишдаги таъсирини баҳолайди. Тадқиқот сифат усулига асосланган бўлиб, Ўзбекистон Республикасига оид илмий мақолалар, соҳавий ҳисоботлар ва рақамли маркетинг бўйича тадқиқотлар таҳлилинини ўз ичига олади. Натижалар шуни кўрсатадики, ижтимоий тармоқларда маркетинг, қидирув тизимларини оптималлаштириш (SEO), инфлюенсер маркетинг ва электрон тижорат платформалари Ўзбекистондаги КЎБ томонидан энг кенг қўлланилаётган стратегиялар ҳисобланади. Шунга қарамасдан, рақамли маркетинг кенг тарқалган бўлса-да, кўплаб кичик корхоналар рақамли саводхонлик, молиявий ресурслар ва стратегик режаслаштириш билан боғлиқ муаммоларга дуч келмоқда. Тадқиқот хулосасига кўра, рақамли кўникмаларни ошириш, таҳлил воситаларига сармоя киритиш ва интеграциялашган маркетинг стратегияларини ишлаб чиқиш Ўзбекистон бозорида КЎБ рақобатбардошлигини сезиларли даражада ошириши мумкин.

Калит сўзлар: рақамли маркетинг, Ўзбекистон ижтимоий тармоқларда маркетинг, электрон тижорат, қидирув тизимларини оптималлаштириш, рақамли трансформация.

ЦИФРОВЫЕ МАРКЕТИНГОВЫЕ СТРАТЕГИИ, ПРИМЕНЯЕМЫЕ МАЛЫМИ ПРЕДПРИЯТИЯМИ В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ

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Аннотация. Цифровой маркетинг стал ключевым фактором, определяющим конкурентоспособность и рост малых предприятий во всём мире. В Узбекистане стремительное внедрение цифровых технологий, рост уровня интернет-проникновения и увеличивающаяся популярность социальных сетей привели к значительным

изменениям в маркетинговой среде. Малые и средние предприятия (МСП) всё активнее используют цифровые инструменты для продвижения своей продукции, взаимодействия с клиентами и расширения рыночного охвата. Данное исследование рассматривает основные цифровые маркетинговые стратегии, применяемые малыми предприятиями в Узбекистане, а также оценивает их эффективность с точки зрения повышения бизнес-показателей. Исследование основано на качественной методологии, включающей анализ научных публикаций, отраслевых отчётов и исследований в области цифрового маркетинга, относящихся к Республике Узбекистан. Результаты показывают, что наиболее распространёнными стратегиями среди МСП являются маркетинг в социальных сетях, поисковая оптимизация (SEO), инфлюенсер-маркетинг и использование платформ электронной коммерции. Несмотря на широкое распространение цифрового маркетинга, многие малые предприятия сталкиваются с рядом проблем, связанных с недостаточным уровнем цифровой грамотности, ограниченными финансовыми ресурсами и отсутствием стратегического планирования. В заключение отмечается, что развитие цифровых навыков, инвестиции в аналитические инструменты и формирование интегрированных маркетинговых стратегий могут существенно повысить конкурентоспособность МСП на рынке Узбекистана.

Ключевые слова: цифровой маркетинг, МСП, Узбекистан, маркетинг в социальных сетях, электронная коммерция, поисковая оптимизация, цифровая трансформация.

DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES DEPLOYED BY SMALL BUSINESSES COMPANIES IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract. Digital marketing has become a key factor that determines the competitiveness and growth of small enterprises across the world. Within Uzbekistan, the phenomenal adoption of digital technologies, the growth of internet penetration, and the growing popularity social media platforms, have fueled a revolutionary change in the marketing landscape. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are also increasingly using digital tools to help them promote their products, engage with their customers and expand their market reach. This investigation examines key digital marketing approaches that are used by small businesses in Uzbekistan and assesses their effectiveness in improving business performance. Drawing upon a qualitative methodology, combining the analysis of academic publications, industry reports, digital marketing studies relevant to the Republic of Uzbekistan, the results show that social media marketing, search engine optimisation (SEO), influencer marketing and e-commerce platforms are the most widely used methods among SMEs in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Notwithstanding the ubiquitous use of digital marketing, many small enterprises face challenges related to digital literacy, financial resources, and strategic planning. The study concludes that augmentation of digital competencies, investment in analytics tools as well as development of integrated marketing strategies can play a significant role in boosting SME competitiveness in the Uzbek market.

Keywords: digital marketing, SMEs, social media marketing in Uzbekistan, e-commerce, search engine optimization, digital transformation.

Introduction.

The digital transformation of economies has significantly changed how all businesses operate, how consumers behave and the marketing strategies.

Digital marketing involves the application of online platforms, search engines, social media networks and digital communication technologies to promote products and services whilst building relationships with consumers. Over the past 10 years, digital marketing has become an irreplaceable part of today's business strategy, especially among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In emerging economies such as Uzbekistan, digital technologies have provided new ways for firms to access consumers in a more efficient manner and at lower costs than conventional marketing methods. Internet penetration in Uzbekistan has increased significantly over the past couple of years and has created favourable conditions for the development of digital marketing. According to the latest statistics, over 30 million people now access the internet in Uzbekistan, representing over 80 percent of the population. Concurrently, the number of social media users is still increasing at a fast rate, giving businesses new opportunities for promoting their products online. Digital marketing is particularly useful for small businesses because they can compete against larger corporations with limited marketing budgets. Unlike traditional advertising channels, such as television or print media, digital marketing gives SMEs the ability to target specific audiences, track the performance of their marketing efforts, and adjust campaigns in real time. SMEs play a critical role in the Uzbek economy by making significant contributions to employment generation and entrepreneurial development, and also to regional economic growth. Nevertheless, SMEs often encounter numerous challenges, such as inadequate financial resources, marketing expertise, and access to wider markets. The rise of digital technology has provided SMEs with cheap and easy-to-use marketing tools. Platforms such as telegram, Instagram and TikTok have become an important means of communication between businesses and consumers. These platforms allow firms to promote their products, offer customer support and foster brand loyalty through direct interaction with users. Despite the rise in the importance of digital marketing in Uzbekistan, many SMEs are still left without a structured digital strategy. Empirical evidence indicates that although a significant proportion of small businesses do use social media to advertise their business, a minority do so with formal marketing strategies or use advanced digital analytics tools to measure the success of a marketing campaign. Against this background, it becomes imperative to investigate the implementation of digital marketing used by SMEs in Uzbekistan and what strategies are most effective in helping to boost their competitiveness. Gaining insight into these practices will provide valuable knowledge for entrepreneurs, policymakers, and scholars who are interested in the digital transformation of the SME sector. Consequently, this study aims to scrutinize the digital marketing strategies used by small businesses in Uzbekistan and to analyze the impact of such strategies on the development of businesses and customer engagement.

Literature review.

Recent literature shows that digital marketing is no longer just an optional tool for small businesses, but a necessary part of their growth and competitiveness, especially in developing economies like Uzbekistan. Researchers consistently highlight that the rapid expansion of internet access and social media platforms has significantly changed how SMEs interact with customers and promote their products.

Many studies focus on the role of social media marketing, which appears to be the most accessible and widely used strategy among small businesses. Avezova (2024) emphasizes that platforms like Telegram and Instagram are particularly attractive because they require minimal financial investment while allowing direct communication with customers. Similarly, Kobulov (2025) points out that Uzbek SMEs actively use these platforms not only for advertising but also for building long-term relationships with their audience. What stands out across these studies is the idea that social media is often the first and sometimes the only digital marketing tool small businesses rely on.

At the same time, search engine optimization (SEO) is increasingly recognized as an important strategy, although its adoption is still relatively limited. Ilxomjonova (2025) notes that businesses understand the value of appearing in search results, especially on Google, but many struggle with the technical side of SEO. This creates a gap between awareness and actual implementation, which is a common theme in the literature on SMEs in emerging markets.

Another trend that is gaining attention is influencer marketing. According to Rakhimova (2025), collaboration with local bloggers and content creators allows businesses to reach more targeted audiences in a more natural and trusted way. This is particularly effective in industries like fashion, beauty, and food, where customer decisions are often influenced by social proof. What makes this strategy appealing for SMEs is that it can deliver strong results without requiring the large budgets associated with traditional advertising.

The development of e-commerce platforms has also been widely discussed in recent studies. Tursunxodjaev (2025) highlights that online marketplaces provide small businesses with an opportunity to expand beyond their local markets and operate on a national level. These platforms also simplify the sales process and integrate marketing tools, making them especially useful for businesses with limited resources. This reflects a broader shift towards digital ecosystems, where marketing and sales functions are closely interconnected.

Content marketing is another area that researchers increasingly pay attention to. Studies show that creating simple but engaging content, especially in the Uzbek language, helps businesses connect more effectively with local audiences. The growing popularity of short-form video content further reinforces this trend, as businesses adapt their marketing approaches to changing consumer preferences.

Despite these positive developments, the literature does not ignore the challenges. One of the most frequently mentioned issues is the lack of digital skills. The OECD (2023) report clearly states that many SME owners do not have sufficient knowledge to use advanced marketing tools or analyze their performance. In addition, financial limitations make it difficult for businesses to invest in professional marketing services or long-term strategies.

Another important issue discussed in the literature is the lack of structured planning. While many SMEs are active on social media, their efforts are often uncoordinated and lack clear objectives. This reduces the overall effectiveness of their marketing activities and limits their potential for sustainable growth.

Overall, the existing research suggests that digital marketing plays a crucial role in the development of SMEs in Uzbekistan. However, its full potential is not yet realized due to gaps in knowledge, resources, and strategic thinking. Most authors agree that improving digital literacy, encouraging the use of analytics tools, and promoting a more systematic approach to marketing could significantly strengthen the position of small businesses in the market.

Research methodology.

This research is based on a qualitative approach based on the analysis of secondary data related to digital marketing and the development of SMEs in Uzbekistan. The research aims at determining the main digital marketing strategies that are adopted by SMEs and assess their effectiveness on the basis of research findings. Research Design The inquiry uses descriptive research design with the aim of analysing the existing literature and empirical studies on the subject matter of digital marketing practices in Uzbekistan. The investigation scrutinises the academic publications, reports from international organisations and industry analyses that shed light on the digital marketing trends among SMEs.

Data Sources. The data for this research was collated from a variety of sources: Academic journal articles related to digital marketing and SME development - Reports published by international organizations, the OEO, development institutions. - Research papers analyzing digital transformation of business in Uzbekistan. - Statistical reports about Internet usage, social media penetration, and e - commerce development. These sources provide information

about the digital environment, marketing practices, and the use of technology by businesses in Uzbekistan.

The data collected were analyzed using the qualitative technique of content analysis. The process was the identification of key themes and patterns related to digital marketing strategies used by the SMEs. The categories that subsequently followed were used to sort digital marketing strategies:

- *Social media marketing*
- *The optimization of search engines (SEO)*
- *Influencer marketing*
- *E-Commerce and Online Marketplaces*
- *Content marketing*
- *Mobile marketing*

The analysis also considered the main challenges faced by SMEs to implement digital marketing strategies.

Analysis and discussion of results.

The literature review found few major strategies of digital marketing that are widely used by small business in Uzbekistan. These strategies help SMEs to attract new customers, increase brand awareness and customer engagement. Social Media Marketing Social media marketing is the most common form of digital marketing used by small businesses in Uzbekistan. Platforms like telegram, instagram, facebook and tiksay give the chance to business to communicate directly with consumers and advertise their products through visual and entertaining content. Empirical studies show that over 70 per cent of SMEs in Uzbekistan use social media platforms in their marketing and communication with customers. These platforms give businesses the ability to advertise, share promotional content, and get real-time feedback from consumers. Telegram occupies a certain dominant position in the digital marketing ecosystem of Uzbekistan. Many companies have channels in the telegram app, or bots, that act as an online storefront for customers to peruse products, place orders, and receive promotional messages. Instagram is also widely used for marketing purposes, especially in areas like fashion, beauty, food services and tourism. Companies often use Instagram to promote product images, share customer testimonials, and work with influencers. The popularity of social media marketing can be attributed to a number of advantages: -

- -Lower marketing costs
- Direct communication with the consumers
- Fast dissemination of promotional content
- Ability to be targeted to specific audiences.

These benefits make social media marketing especially appealing for small businesses that have limited financial resources.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). Search engine optimization is another important digital marketing technique used by SMEs in Uzbekistan. SEO is optimizing websites in order to get increased placement in search engine results in order to increase visibility and attract potential customers. Google dominates the search engine marketplace in Uzbekistan with around 74 percent of search usage and Yandex following, with around 24 percent of search usage. Businesses use SEO techniques like keyword optimization, content boosts, and link building to increase search rankings. These techniques help firms to attract the organic traffic without the cost of advertising. SEO is particularly important for businesses that have stores or service platforms online. When consumers are searching for products or services online, companies with optimized websites are more likely to appear in search results and attract potential buyers. Nevertheless, many SMEs in Uzbekistan still lack the technical expertise needed to implement effective SEO strategies, and they often depend on the services of digital marketing agencies or freelancers to manage their SEO efforts.

Influencer Marketing. Influencer marketing has been used to a greater extent by small businesses in Uzbekistan. This strategy involves working with bloggers, social media personalities, or content creators who have large audiences on digital platforms. Influencers influence people to promote products or services by sharing reviews, demonstrations, or recommendations with their followers. Given the close rapport influencers have with their audiences, their endorsements can significantly affect the behavior of consumers. Influencer marketing is especially common in industries such as: - Fashion and apparel - Cosmetics and beauty products - Food and dining - Tourism and entertainment Small companies often collaborate with the local influencers who have thousands of followers on Instagram or Telegram. Compared to traditional advertising campaigns, influencer marketing is relatively affordable while still reaching a wide audience. E-Commerce Platforms and Online Marketplaces The emergence of numerous e-comm platforms has also increased the scope of possibilities for digital marketing for SMEs in Uzbekistan. Online marketplaces like OLX, ZoodMall, and Uzum Market help small businesses to sell their products online and reach customers all around the country. These platforms provide businesses with a host of digital marketing tools, such as product listings, customer reviews, and promotional advertising features. Many SME's combine their social media marketing efforts with online marketplaces in order to boost sales and customer convenience. The rapid growth of e-commerce in Uzbekistan has led to the importance of digital marketing for business development. Market forecasts suggest that the sector is set for substantial growth during the next few years due to rising internet penetration and mobile device utilization.

Content Marketing. Content marketing has become another great digital marketing used by small businesses. This method involves the creation of valuable and educational material (blog posts, videos, tutorials, social media posts, etc.) to attract and engage customers. In Uzbekistan, video content has become especially popular due to the development of video content platforms such as TikTok and YouTube. Firms use short video clips to showcase products, highlight customer experiences and explain product features. Content created in the Uzbek language has been particularly effective at reaching local audiences. Studies show that local language material boosts consumer trust and engagement in digital marketing campaigns.

Discussion. The results highlight the decisive importance of digital marketing in the development and competitiveness of SMEs in Uzbekistan. Social media marketing, SEO, influencer marketing and e-com platforms turn out to be the most common strategies used by SMEs. One of the primary reasons for the widespread use of digital marketing is that it is cost-effective. Traditional advertising channels - such as television or print media - can be prohibitively expensive, being out of reach for many small firms. In contrast, digital marketing enables SMEs to market their offerings with little budgets and to large audiences. Another salient advantage of digital marketing is the ability to measure performance using analytics tools. Companies can track website traffic, consumer interaction, and sales conversions, and thus assess the effectiveness of their campaigns. Nonetheless, the study identifies a number of challenges which limit the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in Uzbekistan. **Digital Skills Deficit** A substantial percentage of small business owners do not have the digital marketing skills needed to correctly use advanced tools. Research shows that many companies are relying on primitive digital channels (e.g. simple social media pages) and are being under-equipped in e.g. analytics platform, customer relation management and targeted advertising. **Financial Constraints** Fiscal restrictions also affect the ability of SMEs to invest in professional digital marketing services. Some firms use informal marketing practices instead of creating comprehensive marketing strategies. **Lack of Strategic Planning** Some firms do not have a structured marketing strategy. Although many businesses are using social media, too often they are doing so haphazardly, lacking clear planning and defined objectives, which reduces campaign effectiveness. Despite these impediments, the digital transformation of the Uzbek economy is still creating new opportunities for SMEs. Government initiatives - for example, the

Digital Uzbekistan 2030 strategy - are designed to strengthen digital innovation and improve the technological abilities of businesses. To maximize the advantages of digital marketing, SMEs should invest in digital education, develop integrated marketing strategies, and leverage data analytics to optimize performance.

Conclusion and suggestions.

Digital marketing is now an irreplaceable part of business development for small enterprises in Uzbekistan. The growing availability of internet access, mobile devices and social media platforms has established good conditions for the multiplication of digital marketing practices. The present study has identified major digital marketing techniques used by SMEs in Uzbekistan - namely social media marketing, SEO, influencer marketing and engagement with e commerce platforms. These strategies help empower firms to attract new customers, increase brand awareness, and increase consumer engagement. The investigation also shows some of the challenges that are hindering the adoption of digital marketing: the lack of digital skills, financial constraints, and lack of strategic planning. To overcome these challenges, small businesses should invest in digital marketing training, implement integrated marketing strategies, and use analytics tools to measure effectiveness. Concurrently, policymakers and educational institutions should support the development of SMEs through nurturing digital literacy and entrepreneurial education. Strengthening digital marketing capabilities will allow small business to supplement their competitiveness, market access and help sustainable development of the economy of Uzbekistan.

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