International Journal of Education, Modern Management, Applied Science & Social Science (IJEMMASSS)
An International Quarterly bi-lingual Multidisciplinary Double Blind Open Access Peer Reviewed Refereed Journal
ISSN:2581-9925, Impact Factor (Cosmos: 7.555 & I2OR: 5.105), Volume 08, No. 03(IV)(Special Issue), July-September, 2026, pp. 139-143

E-Commerce and Digital Marketing Strategy in Today's Digital World

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DOI Citation: Alam, S. (2026). E-Commerce and Digital Marketing Strategy in Today's Digital World. International Journal of Education, Modern Management, Applied Science &Amp; Social Science, 08(03(IV)), 139–143. https://doi.org/10.62823/ijemmasss/8.3(iv).9599

ABSTRACT

E-commerce has changed how people buy and sell products. In today's generation, people can easily order items from home and receive them quickly. As the use of smartphones and internet services has increased, online shopping has become a part of daily life. Some platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, and Meesho offer many types of products but usually take a few days for delivery. In contrast instant delivery platforms like Blinkit, JioMart, and Instamart deliver products within minutes. This shows how fast and convenient online shopping has become. However, in today's competitive market, only having an online store is not enough. Businesses need effective online marketing methods to reach more customers, develop their business, and improve their performance. Digital tools including social media, search engines, and online advertising help businesses connect with more people and understand customer needs. This is also useful for women entrepreneurs, as digital platforms allow them to start and manage businesses from home with low investment. This study shows that small shopkeepers and local street vendors should join e-commerce platforms to stay updated and compete with larger businesses. If they fail to use digital methods, big companies may take more benefit from the online market, which can affect local street markets. A key idea discussed is the "3C Model" — Content, Conversion, and Customer Retention, where content attracts customers, conversion turns them into buyers, and retention helps in keeping them for a longer period. In conclusion, success in e-commerce depends on smart marketing, customer trust, and adapting to new technology. Businesses of all sizes must adopt digital strategies to grow.

***Keywords**: E-commerce, Digital Marketing, Online Shopping, Women Entrepreneurs, Customer Retention, 3C Model.*

Introduction

E-commerce means buying and selling goods through the internet. In earlier times, people depended on physical shops for purchasing goods. But now, as internet access and smartphone use have increased quickly, online shopping is now very common in India. People now find it simple to buy products online from home and receive them delivered quickly. E-commerce has improved the shopping habits of customers and opened many new business options. Nowadays, many people choose to start online businesses with low investment. Online marketplaces including Amazon, Flipkart, and Meesho have made it easier for sellers to reach customers throughout the country.

One major benefit of e-commerce is the opportunity it provides to women entrepreneurs. Many women who previously limited to household responsibilities can now start and manage businesses from

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* ***A Special Issue for the papers accepted for publication in the Two-Days Multidisciplinary National Seminar on Role of Entrepreneurship in Socio-Economic Upliftment of Women in India (22-23May 2026) Organized by Faculty of Commerce, The Graduate School College for Women, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand(A Constituent Unit of Kolhan University, Chaibasa, Jharkhand)in Collaboration with Jharkhand State Higher Education Council, Department of Higher and Technical Education, Govt. of Jharkhand & Punjab and Sind Bank, Sakchi, Jamshedpur.***

home. They can sell products like clothing, handmade items, and beauty products online. This allows them to earn their own income and become self-dependent and confident.

Digital marketing plays an important role in this process. It allows businesses to promote their products more efficiently using social media, websites, and online advertisements. By using online tools, even small businesses and women business owners are able to compete with larger companies.

E-commerce is also helping in reducing the gap between buyers and sellers. Earlier, small sellers were limited to local markets, however, they can now reach customers across different regions and even different states. This has increased both competition and opportunities. With proper use of digital tools, even a small business can become successful into a recognized brand over time.

Thus, e-commerce and digital marketing together are creating new opportunities for business development, especially for women along with owners of small businesses in the modern era.

Another important factor behind the expansion of online business is the increase in digital payment systems. Today, people are using UPI, mobile wallets, and online banking for making quick and secure payments. This has reduced the dependency on cash and made transactions faster and more convenient.

Digital payments also create trust as they are secure, simple, and convenient for users. Features like instant payment confirmation and refund options make the process smooth. During sales and offers, fast payment options help customers complete purchases quickly without any delay.

Overall, digital payment methods are now an important support for the development of online business and improving the overall shopping experience.

Objectives of the Study

- To understand how e-commerce is growing in India due to the increasing use of smartphones and internet services in cities and villages.
- To examine the digital marketing techniques adopted by businesses, including social media, SEO, and online advertising, to attract customers and increase sales.
- To analyse customer behaviour in online shopping, including their preferences for fast delivery, easy return policies, secure payment options, and product reviews.
- To examine the opportunities created by e-commerce for women entrepreneurs, especially how they can start and manage businesses from home with low investment.
- To analyse how e-commerce affects small businesses and local shopkeepers by identifying its challenges and future opportunities in today's digital market.
- To study how customer trust and satisfaction help businesses build long-lasting relationships in online platforms.

These objectives help in understanding the overall effect of digital transformation on business activities and customer behaviour.

Literature Review

Many researchers have examined the development of e-commerce and digital marketing in recent years. Their studies suggest that better technology and wider internet access have strongly supported this fast growth.

- The IAMAI (2023) report states that internet users across India have grown quickly during recent few years, which has directly supported the expansion of e-commerce platforms. The report further explains that people living across rural areas are also using online shopping more frequently.
- A study by Statista (2024) reported that India’s e-commerce market is growing rapidly and is expected to expand further in the coming years. This shows the increasing importance of online business in the Indian economy.
- Research by KPMG India (2022) highlighted that Business growth depends greatly on digital marketing methods like social media, SEO, and online advertising.. These digital methods help businesses reach more customers and improve their sales. Another study by NASSCOM (2021) explained that digital platforms have created several new business opportunities for small businesses and startups. It also mentioned that online marketplaces allow sellers to connect with customers in different areas without high investment.

- Regarding women entrepreneurs, a report by Google and Bain & Company (2023) reported that digital platforms are helping women become stronger in business by providing flexible business opportunities. Women are able to begin small businesses from home and use social media to market their products.
- Similarly, UN Women (2022) also stated that digital technology is supporting women in earning their own income and participate in economic activities.
- Many studies also show that customer trust, secure payment options, easy return policies, and fast delivery services play an important role in online shopping growth. Digital payment systems such as UPI have made transactions faster, safer, and more convenient for users.

Overall, the available studies indicate that e-commerce and digital marketing does more than transforming business but also creating new opportunities, mainly for women entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Methodology

The research uses only secondary data. Information was collected from various trusted sources such as websites, articles, research papers, reports, and online platforms related to e-commerce and digital marketing. These sources offer useful and updated information about current trends and developments in today's digital market.

The research follows a descriptive approach, which helps in understanding the growth, patterns, and impact of e-commerce and digital marketing practices in the modern era. The collected information was examined and analysed carefully to understand customer behavior, business practices, and the role of digital platforms in creating opportunities for entrepreneurs.

The research further compares different viewpoints from various reports to identify common trends and patterns. This helps in making the analysis more balanced and reliable.

Special attention has also been given to studying how digital tools are supporting women entrepreneurs and small businesses in expanding their reach. Since this study is based on already available information, it does not Comprehend any field survey or direct interaction with respondents. However, using several reliable and recent sources ensures that the analysis remains relevant and useful for the present situation.

Findings, Analysis and Discussion

- **Growth of E-commerce**

E-commerce in India is growing at a fast rate due to increased internet usage and digital awareness among people. Affordable smartphones along with low-cost internet services have helped make online shopping accessible even in small towns and rural areas. Customers now prefer online platforms because they offer convenience, many types of products, and better pricing options than traditional markets. Special offers and home delivery services further attract customers.

Another reason for this growth is the ability of customers to compare products easily. They can check prices, read reviews, and choose the best option without visiting multiple shops. This helps make online shopping more efficient and attractive.

- **Changing Customer Behaviour**

Customers' buying habits have changed a lot in recent years. Today, people feel safer while using online payments and digital transactions. They expect fast delivery, easy return policies, and secure payment options. Instant delivery services have increased customer expectations even more, as customers now want products delivered within hours or even minutes.

Customers are becoming more aware and careful while shopping online. They check product details, ratings, and reviews before making a purchase. This shows that customers have become making more informed and smart decisions compared to earlier times.

- **Role of Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing has a key role in the success of any online business. It helps businesses reach many customers in a short time. Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are widely used for promoting products and creating brand awareness. Businesses use attractive posts, videos, and advertisements to engage customers.

Search engines such as Google help customers find products easily through SEO and paid ads. Email marketing and influencer marketing are also becoming popular. Influencers help in building trust among customers while encouraging them to try new products. Many small businesses now using influencer marketing to grow quickly and increase their sales.

Importance of Customer Trust and Reviews

Customer trust is among the key important factors in online shopping. As customers cannot directly see the product, they depend on reviews, ratings, and feedback from other buyers. Products that receive better ratings are usually preferred by customers.

Positive reviews build confidence and increase the chances of customers buying the product, while negative reviews can reduce trust. Many platforms also provide verified purchase reviews, helping customers choose more wisely.

Businesses also try to maintain good ratings by providing quality products and good service. This shows that trust and transparency play a key role in long-term success in e-commerce.

- **Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs**

E-commerce has created new business opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs. Women are able to now start their own businesses from home with low investment and flexible working hours. This is especially helpful for those who cannot work outside due to family responsibilities.

For example, many women in small cities are using platforms like Meesho, WhatsApp, and Instagram to sell clothes, jewellery, and handmade products. Digital platforms give them access to a wider market without the need for a physical shop. This also helps in earning income but also increases their confidence and independence.

In many cases, women start small businesses with the support of family members and gradually expand their operations. This also creates employment opportunities and supports local economic growth.

- **Impact on Small Businesses**

Small businesses are facing strong competition from large online companies. Big companies offer heavy discounts and fast delivery, which attracts more customers. However, small businesses can also benefit from digital platforms if they adopt them properly.

By listing their products online and using digital marketing, they can reach a wider audience and increase their sales. Some small businesses are also using a hybrid model, where they operate both offline and online. This helps them maintain their local customer base while also expanding to new markets.

Challenges in E-commerce and Digital Marketing

Along with growth, e-commerce and digital marketing also face some challenges. One major challenge is the issue of trust, especially for new customers. Many people still hesitate to shop online because they are not sure about product quality or payment safety.

Another challenge is the high level of competition in the market. There are many sellers offering similar products, which makes it difficult for small businesses to stand out. Big companies often provide heavy discounts and faster delivery, which small businesses may not always be able to match. Logistics and delivery issues can also affect customer satisfaction. Late delivery or damaged products can reduce customer trust. In addition, handling returns and refunds can sometimes be difficult for sellers. Technical problems such as website errors or payment failures can also create a negative experience for customers.

Therefore, businesses need to focus on building trust, improving service quality, and using better digital strategies to deal with these challenges and succeed in the competitive market

- **3C Model Explanation**
  - **Content:** Content is what customers see first, so it should be clear and attractive. Good product images, simple descriptions, proper details, brand name, offers, and ratings help customers understand the product and build trust.

- **Conversion:** Conversion means turning visitors into buyers. This depends on price, brand trust, offers, easy payment options, and delivery time. A simple checkout process increases the chances of purchase.
- **Customer Retention:** Customer retention depends on overall experience. Timely delivery, good product quality, and easy return policy help in keeping customers satisfied. Good service builds long-term trust.

The 3C model helps businesses improve performance and customer satisfaction in a practical way.

Conclusion

E-commerce has now become a key part of modern business and daily life. It has made shopping easier, faster, and more convenient. Digital marketing supports businesses in reaching more customers and increasing sales.

Women entrepreneurs are benefiting greatly from digital platforms, as they can start and manage businesses from home. Small businesses also need to adopt digital methods to remain competitive.

Overall, the future of business will depend on how well individuals and companies adopt digital tools, understand customer needs, and build trust. Continuous learning and adaptation will be important for long-term success.

In addition, businesses should continuously improve their strategies to match changing customer needs. Technology is developing rapidly, and new trends like artificial intelligence, personalized marketing, and fast delivery services are becoming common.

Businesses that adopt these new trends and focus on customer satisfaction will have better chances of long-term success. However, businesses that fail to update themselves may fall behind in today's competitive market.

Therefore, adaptability and continuous learning are very essential in today's digital business environment.

Limitations

- This research uses only secondary data
- No primary survey has been conducted
- Market conditions may change over time
- Limited data av**ailable for small businesses**

Recommendations

- **Small** businesses should adopt e-commerce platforms
- Digital marketing skills should be improved
- Government should support women entrepreneurs
- Digital awareness should be increased in rural areas
- Training programs should be provided
- Businesses **should focus on customer satisfaction**

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