



SEINÄJOEN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU
SEINÄJOKI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Jyoti Rani

Exploring McDonald's Adaptation to Changing Consumer Preferences and Trends

Thesis

Summer 2023

Degree Programme International Business



SEINÄJOKI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Thesis abstract

Degree Programme: International Business

Specialisation: Digitalization

Author: Jyoti Rani

Title of thesis: Exploring McDonald's Adaptation to Changing Consumer Preferences & trends

Supervisor: Juppi Katri

Year: 2023

Number of pages: 47

Number of appendices: 2

In light of shifting consumer tastes and prevailing business trends, this analysis examines McDonald's digital marketing techniques' evolutionary path. It offers a thorough examination of the idea of digital marketing, highlighting its significance in the fast-food industry, the strategies used by McDonald's and its major competitors, and the challenges and scopes of digital marketing in adapting to emerging consumer behavior patterns such as a shift towards healthier eating. McDonald's shift from more traditional to digital advertising reflects the industry as a whole. Customers benefit from greater ease of use and personalization possibilities provided by digital platforms (Chaffey, 2022). This, together with data-driven insights, paves the way for a more customized and immersive customer experience (Kannan & Hongshuang, 2021). How McDonald's has made use of these strengths and what this means for the company's market standing are the topics of this research. The fast-paced evolution of digital marketing technologies and consumer preferences presents both opportunities and threats for the fast-food industry, which is also something investigated here through interviews and surveys. The interview was done with the management of McDonald's whereas the survey responders were millennials and frequent digital media users. Therefore, the aim of this research is to help scholars and practitioners better understand the role of digital marketing in adjusting corporate strategies to meet the shifting tastes of consumers. The study results indicate that McDonald's has successfully promoted its brand and engaged with customers through digital channels like social media and its own mobile app, stayed relevant to the market through data-driven, customer-centric digital marketing initiatives. At the same time, McDonald's recognizes that consumers' tastes are shifting, particularly towards healthier and plant-based menu items.

¹ Keywords: McDonald's, Digital ,Delphi, Traditional marketing ,Data

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Terms and Abbreviations

KPI	Key Performance Indicator
FFI	Fast Food Industry
DMS	Digital Marketing Strategy
QSR	Quick Service Restaurant
SMS	Short Message Service

1 INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the previous several decades, the field of digital marketing has garnered nothing but praise within the context of the commercial world. When consumers have continual and unlimited access to digital media and technology, it is a great lot simpler to use online services and build effective marketing campaigns. This is because internet services and successful marketing campaigns can be designed more easily. This is due to the fact that technology and internet services are inextricably linked. The field of study known as digital marketing was developed so that businesses could take advantage of these newly available opportunities and adapt to the ever-evolving methods of advertising (Tetiana & Adeoluwa, 2022).

This research looks at McDonald's performance in the realm of social media marketing by concentrating on the methods that the firm use across a number of different networks. The N-Rel framework, along with a wide range of other indications and key performance indicators (KPIs), is used by the company in order to ascertain whether or not the social media marketing initiatives that they have implemented have been effective.

It's possible that the owners of many small businesses don't completely understand the potential benefits of using social media marketing; as a consequence, they're missing out on possibilities to capitalize on those benefits. Which social network is better for your company's needs: Facebook or Twitter? On the other hand, with the abundance of social media channels available, what is the most effective way for us to advertise our company? The purpose of this research was to perform an investigation on McDonald's usage of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram in order to evaluate its effectiveness.

Their ability to capitalize on the distinctive features of each platform within the framework of social marketing activities aimed at enormous audiences is what differentiates them from the other companies in their industry. Consider the function that Facebook plays as a central hub as an example. On the other hand, the fundamental objective of Twitter is to rapidly distribute and update information, while the primary objective of Instagram is to upload high-quality images. They perform a good job of recruiting

influential people and organizations to help promote McDonald's to new client bases. This helps ensure that McDonald's continues to be successful. McDonald's is currently implementing a digital marketing strategy as a direct result of the work done by this firm. With the intention of enhancing both the efficiency of the company's digital marketing and, by extension, the standing that the company now has in the industry. The execution of the plan has been allotted a period of time equal to one year.

The strategy will take into account data from McDonald's already established digital channels in addition to research on the company's key rivals in the market, which include Subway, KFC, Burger King, and Domino's. The plan will also take into account the company's overall market position. According to the findings of the investigation that came before this one, McDonald's had problems in two distinct areas: user-friendliness and information that was task-specific. Both of these facts presented challenges for McDonald's. The franchisees of McDonald's play an extremely major role in the operations of the company, and the content of the website is not properly localized to suit the demands of customers living in different parts of the world.

Consumers in Finland are unsatisfied as a direct consequence of the lack of seasonal social media sites and the infrequency of social media efforts, both of which have contributed to a decrease in the frequency of social media initiatives. McDonald's has a more difficult time competing in the fast-food business as a direct result of these shortcomings, and the firm is unable to fully realize the promise of some digital technologies.

The research will start by presenting a concise summary of the current market, and then it will go on to analyze McDonald's in Finland using a SWOT framework in order to determine the strategy that will be the most successful in resolving the issues that were discussed previously. Following that, the process of setting objectives for digital marketing will be approached via the lens of the 5S model. In addition to this, it will identify additional potential avenues for McDonald's to pursue in order to realize these objectives. We will also offer a full explanation of the procedure that will be followed when estimating resources and working through the plan in order to ensure that the plan is both feasible and achievable. This will be done so that we can ensure that the plan is both viable and attainable.

1.1 Significance of the study

The significance of the influence of the ever-shifting trend in digital marketing underscores the significance of the conduction of this research. McDonald's is one of the biggest food brands in the world, and the company employs both classic and modern marketing methods in its business. Even though conventional marketing methods are wide-spread, and everyone is aware of them, most academics have been caught off guard by McDonald's use of digital technology. As a result, taking advantage of this chance to learn new things about the digital marketing methods used by McDonald's will be possible.

1.2 Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this study is to:

- To understand the concept of digital marketing by changing consumer preferences and trends in fast-food industry.
- To study the digital marketing techniques used by McDonald's and its main competitors.
- To study the challenges and scopes of digital marketing to adapt to changing consumer habits like healthier eating.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions studied in the research are:

- How do McDonald's shift from traditional to digital marketing strategies keep up with changing consumer preferences and trends?
- How McDonald's has adapted to changing consumer preferences and trends, such as a growing interest in plant-based options or a shift towards healthier eating?

2 ANALYSIS OF MCDONALD'S

About 70 percent of all customers who eat at fast food restaurants in the United States do so at McDonald's. This statistic is based on customer surveys. The usage of digital advertising by McDonald's is causing fast-food restaurant chain problems. An effort to collect feedback from customers using social media, McDonald's posted a tweet from its official Twitter account, @McDonald's, stating, "'When u create something w/pride, folks can taste it:' McD potato supplier." This tweet was part of an initiative to collect feedback from customers. The tweet came from the official McDonald's account on the social media platform Twitter. This tweet was the one that started the trend of using the #McDStories hashtag, which has now been incorporated into an astonishing amount of customer testimonies about their experience at McDonald's (Desai, 2019). Customers at McDonald's expressed considerable concern in response to the tweet, despite the fact that it did not seem to contain any potentially harmful content. These consumers do not return to the fast food chain because of the high quality of the ingredients that are utilized; rather, they do so because the pricing is reasonable, the food is delicious, and there are several locations to choose from. Sceptics and critics were ready to grasp onto the hashtag in order to communicate with one another their mutual disapproval of the idea. A big number of people who were stunned by the information posted several comments on Twitter, including ones like "Hashtag: #McDStories- I've now learned that the chicken nuggets sold at McDonald's include a foaming agent, much to those found in items used in the construction industry." The catastrophe that took place on Twitter on Black Friday is only another illustration of the many drawbacks associated with using digital media.

The discounts that were going to be offered were included in the tweet that was accidentally published by the McDonald's account on Twitter due to my error about a promotion. People have, as was to be anticipated, ridiculed the omnipresent brand and swamped them with scathing memes. This was to be expected since it was inevitable. In addition to that, it promoted derogatory naming conventions for burgers via its "Create Your Taste" promotion. The name McDonald's is well-known and well-recognized in every region of the world.

In this literature review, we see how McDonald's intends to make use of input from customers in order to improve its brand in the years to come. In addition to this, it

disassembles the marketing process into its individual steps. Branding is the process through which corporate identities are developed. The image of a brand is reflective of the opinions that customers have about a certain business. For a company's branding efforts to be successful, the company's activities and messages need to be consistent at all times. The hues, patterns, and graphics associated with the brand are created via various marketing communication tactics, such as advertising and promotion. The Golden Arches are a representation of this concept in the context of McDonald's. In each and every one of its target foreign markets, McDonald's faces competition from other restaurants. The success of McDonald's in the market is also impacted by a broad range of other elements, such as those pertaining to the economy, the law, technology, society, and retail. The key to successful marketing is accurately predicting and meeting the needs and desires of customers in a way that is both more efficient and effective than that of competitors. In this manner, a company may win the undying loyalty of its customers. Because not everyone will be interested in the products and services that McDonald's provides, it is necessary to identify customers first. The individuals that McDonald's considers to be its "core audiences" are the ones who are most likely to purchase its products.

McDonald's has a high level of consumer awareness because of the fact that it is both the biggest and most well-known fast food corporation in the world. It has been a very long time. There are over 36,900 McDonald's restaurants located in 120 countries, and each day they cater to an estimated 68 million consumers. McDonald's has a straight-forward approach to their business plan. Every single one of its dining establishments provides food that is consistent with great quality and is served in a timely manner at a price that is affordable. It is possible to find a McDonald's restaurant that is managed by either the company directly, an affiliate, or a franchise owned and operated by McDonald's.

In addition to sales made to customers in company-operated restaurants and sales made to customers in the wider public, rent, royalties, and fees paid by franchisees are other sources of income for McDonald's Corporation. The great majority of McDonald's sites are franchised, which means that the owner of the company makes a financial commitment in return for the right to use the McDonald's name and sell McDonald's items. This is the case for the majority of McDonald's locations.

McDonald's offers its franchisees the opportunity to employ its tried-and-true system for manufacturing and selling meals, as well as its comprehensive arsenal of advertising and marketing tools.

2.1 What is marketing?

According to F. E. Clark, "Marketing is the actions performed to bring about a change in the legal ownership of items and the methods whereby such things are physically disseminated." Clark "Marketing is the activities undertaken to bring about a change in the legal ownership of products."

"Marketing is a whole system of commercial acts aimed to plan price," as stated by Stanton and others. It supports the achievement of company objectives by marketing and providing products that are tailored to the requirements of individual customers.

According to the American Society for Management (1985), "marketing is the act of planning and carrying out the development, promotion of prices, and distribution of ide-as, commodities, and services in order to produce exchanges that fit the goals of people and organizations." This understanding of what "Marketing" refers to is common knowledge (Herwade & Shendage, n.d.).

In light of this, marketing may be defined as the process of promoting and spreading information about a product or service to specific audiences in order to produce sales. The execution of business operations that are essential to the distribution of goods and services from their point of origin to their ultimate destination is referred to as "marketing," and the phrase is used to define the distribution of goods and services.

The goals of marketing are to ascertain consumer needs, convert them into ideas, products, or services, and move such ideas, products, or services to the final consumer or user, to satisfy certain needs and want of specific consumer segments with an emphasis on profitability, and to ensure that an organization makes the best possible use of the resources that are available to it.

According to one definition, "marketing" refers to "the action and process of developing, transmitting, delivering, and trading items that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large."

2.2 Marketing situation of McDonald's

This part of the literature review analyses the profiles of major competitors of McDonald's in terms of digital marketing.

Subway:

The foundation for the brand's activities in the fast-food industry is provided by the franchise owner. And the process is still in place throughout the full chain of significant retail establishments. Prior to the emergence of fast-food franchises and other rivals, as well as the ensuing changes in the Customers' preferences, the long history of the brand's successful development, and the steady decrease in the number of outlets over the previous several years all contributed to this decision.

Social media information (from the website):

Facebook = 23K (global) followers

Instagram = 20.6 thousand followers

Twitter = 9,357 followers

LinkedIn = 701 followers

Domino

The main franchisee of Domino's also controls the international business (which has more than 2600 locations globally) in Asian and European countries. The business now serves a wider range of consumers instead of only selling pizza. Consumers' willingness to pay the company's quoted pricing also gives it an advantage in boosting its MTV.

Social media information (from the website):

Facebook = 1,138,301 followers

Instagram = 101k followers

Twitter = 36.9k followers

LinkedIn = 19,878 followers

KFC

KFC is a completely owned subsidiary of Brands, which itself is the parent company. KFC's success as a corporation may be attributed, in part, to a large number of franchisee groups in the country as well as the large number of KFC outlets that can be found. It is possible that the long-running national marketing initiatives for the brand, which have captured the attention of customers by sponsoring important sports, have contributed to an increase in sales as well as the public profile of the firm.

Social media information (from the website):

Facebook = 55.8 million (global) followers

Instagram = 163K followers

Twitter = 29.4K followers

LinkedIn = 161,628 followers.

2.3 McDonalds' Marketing Strategy

To keep its dominant position in the fast-food sector, McDonald's has undergone tremendous change over the years, adapting its marketing approach to meet the needs of a wide range of customers. Product development, cultural awareness, technological incorporation, and consistent brand messaging are all part of this

approach (Turner & Endres, 2022). McDonald's marketing plan revolves around the constant development of new products. McDonald's has maintained its position as a market leader in fast food thanks to creative and flexible advertising. In light of shifting consumer preferences and trends, the corporation has turned its emphasis in recent years to digital marketing (Chaffey, 2022).

McDonald's new digital marketing approach adapts existing technologies for tech-savvy consumers. McDonald's uses traditional and digital marketing to grow its brand. McDonald's uses targeted social media, email, and mobile app promotions to engage and retain customers. McDonald's also makes use of data analytics to learn more about its customers and their preferences so it can better serve those (Kumar & Reinartz, 2022). McDonald's can improve its digital marketing efforts by using this data-driven method, allowing it to develop more targeted and engaging advertising campaigns.

McDonald's digital marketing plan prioritizes a uniform digital and in-store experience. By upgrading mobile ordering and integrating point-of-sale systems, McDonald's has made it easier for customers to buy and pay for food with their phones (Schultz & Block, 2023). The company has teamed with Uber Eats and DoorDash to satisfy increased meal delivery demand as part of its omni channel consumer experience.

Last but not least, McDonald's digital marketing approach still places a premium on interaction with customers. Participating in online competitions and interactive campaigns hosted by the company encourages customers to support the brand and spread the word (Perrey & Spillecke, 2023). These actions improve McDonald's online presence and foster a strong sense of community among the fast food chain's patrons.

2.4 Traditional and Digital Marketing Strategies of McDonald's

When describing and outlining the objectives or strategies that will be implemented in order to satisfy the requirements of a certain market segment, one uses the phrase "marketing strategy." Everyone in the company, including the sales department, the management team, the executive suite, and so on, has to be in close communication

with one another at all times. In point of fact, it is a set of strategies that the organization has used in order to push its development and expansion. The conventional strategies center on how the company works. The objectives of the organization are to improve customer satisfaction while simultaneously expanding financial gains. Some of the models used by this company are as follows:

2.4.1 Franchise Model

Just 15% of restaurants are owned by the corporation, which is a rather low number. Franchisees oversee the remaining 85 percent. Franchisees are taught and supervised in a methodical manner to guarantee adherence to the company's four core values: Quality, Service, Cleanliness, and Values, the business's product and service offerings. With the company's well-developed supplier networked operation and distribution infra-structure, the company has succeeded in maintaining consistent product quality and flavor throughout all of its locations. It is not just concerned with earnings in the near term, but it is also concerned with maintaining the company's status in the market. McDonald's is able to satisfy the whims of its customers because it takes into consideration their preferences about the food they eat, the language they speak, and other aspects of their personal lives.

Burgers made using beef and pork patties from McDonald's are gaining popularity all over the globe. However, in order to satisfy the religious requirements of a portion of its clients, it has been necessary to make some modifications. The introduction of chicken and fish burgers at McDonald's was a response to the shifting preferences of customers. There is a substantial number of vegetarians and vegans in the United Kingdom. McDonald's has developed a whole new menu of vegetarian alternatives in response to this demand. Some of the items on this menu include the McVeggie burger and the Spicy Veggie wrap, amongst other items. How customers feel about a product is one of the most important factors in determining its total sales success. There have been a lot of products that might have completely changed the game, but they didn't succeed because they couldn't make a favorable impression on the people who were supposed to buy them. Customers of the fast food business McDonald's have high expectations owing to the worldwide renown the brand has earned over the years.

A method of demographic segmentation that is based on age is used by McDonald's. One of the key target groups is the young urban family, and then children and teens come in second and third, respectively (as seen in table1). When taking into consideration children, it is reasonable to conclude that the most alluring objects, such as toys and excellent food, are the ones that grab the most attention. McDonald's is a popular choice among urban families for hosting special events such as birthday parties and other get-togethers, while the young people of today also like visiting there for entertainment. Owing to the fact that products geared at children are almost always at the top of shopping lists. The "Happy Meal" promotion that McDonald's uses to entice families with children by providing a little toy with each purchase is called the "Happy Meal." Examples of toys from the newest generation include those based on the movie Madagascar. To be more specific, they have formed a partnership with Walt Disney with the goal of achieving this. It also has "Playing Place" spaces at some of its sites, in which children may participate in a variety of enjoyable activities such as arcade games, air hockey, and other games. If they take this strategy, McDonald's will transform into a place where customers can enjoy themselves as they eat and play games at the same time. Because of this, McDonald's is able to entice families living in urban areas who are eager to spend quality time together while their children are occupied with activities that are fun for them. Wi-Fi is only one of the services that are being introduced to establishments in order to attract younger customers in today's market (Idrysheva et al., 2019).

The fact that McDonald's is a place where individuals of all ages can have a good time makes it a wonderful establishment. When McDonald's first opened its doors in the United Kingdom, the majority of its first customers were affluent city inhabitants. However, it currently markets itself as an affordable dining alternative that does not skimp on service, cleanliness, or the quality of the cuisine served. This relaxation is promised by McDonald's with words such as "YOU DESERVE A BREAK TODAY" and "FEED YOUR INNER CHILD," and the outlet's décor and gentle music reflect this promise of calm. Because it is committed to providing customers with high-quality meals and services in an atmosphere that is spotless, hygienic, and welcoming, McDonald's has been able to maintain a solid relationship with its clientele throughout the years. The first stage in building a marketing strategy that would enable those criteria to be handled in the target market is to conduct an analysis of the company's strengths and

shortcomings. Following that, the opportunities and threats presented by the market are added to the strengths and weaknesses. The process in question is referred to as a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. It is therefore possible to determine what actions need to be taken in order to enhance the marketing efforts of the organization. Different types of customers visit McDonald's which are listed below in Table 1:

A parent with Children	Visit McDonald's to give a treat to them
Children	A fun place to eat
Business consumer	Quick service, the best place for lunch after a business meeting
Teenagers	Service is affordable, teens are attracted to it, enjoy and spend time

Table 1: Different Types of Customers

Source: Author

2.4.2 Digital Marketing Environment of McDonald's

Digital is nothing more than a storage technique for things like digital music, digital photographs, and digital movies, and it's used by even the most complex media platforms, like the internet and mobile phones. The advent of digital marketing coincides with the fast proliferation of digital channels and their increasing pervasiveness in people's everyday lives. In the beginning, starting with digital in 2004, both "e-commerce" and "e-marketing" are well-known buzzwords in the marketing industry. Both the concept of "digital marketing" and the actual practice of it has seen significant upticks in popularity over the last few years.

According to Chaffey and Bosomworth (2015), the term "digital marketing" refers to any kind of advertising that is carried out via the use of digital platforms, most notably the World Wide Web. Digital marketers utilize promotional activities for goods and

services distributed via digital distribution channels in order to reach customers in a timely and cost-effective manner.

The dawn of the digital age brought about significant changes to the way McDonald's advertises its products. In an attempt to attract the attention of millennials and members of Generation Z, McDonald's is increasing the amount of money it spends on digital marketing. Through the use of efficient digital marketing tactics, McDonald's is lowering its dependence on conventional methods of promotion such as television advertisements, as stated by a McDonald's Marketing Specialist. At the moment, McDonald's is concentrating the bulk of its digital marketing efforts on mobile platforms, particularly social media, and smartphones. Through advertising on a variety of internet services, McDonald's was able to significantly increase the demand for its goods. In addition, the quick-service restaurant business makes use of the Internet in conjunction with social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. In addition, the digital marketing platform has been connected with the remainder of the organization, resulting in the formation of a unified whole. McDonald's is making a good move by capitalizing on the digital age we are now living in since customers spend just 4% of their time looking at print marketing, but they spend 24% of their time looking at technology. McDonald's is aware that during the typical mobile phone session that lasts for five minutes, users spend twenty seconds on social media. At the moment, there is a significant demand for quick-service restaurants such as McDonald's.

2.4.3 Digital Landscape

In the fast-developing sector of digital advertising in the United States, Facebook, and Google are often mentioned as examples of effective advertising partnerships. According to research conducted by Forrester, the market for advertising on the internet in the United States is expected to hit \$50 billion in 2014 and is forecast to expand to \$70 billion by 2019.

2021 was the year when this number reaches 100,000,000,000,000. The emergence of digital marketing may be attributed to a number of factors, including the increased use of mobile devices and personal computers, as well as advances in technology and novel approaches to advertising. It is anticipated that by the end of the year 2019,

mobile devices will account for 45 percent of all Internet traffic and 16 percent of the advertising market in the United States. There is potential for making significant quantities of money via the use of digital advertising. It is anticipated that digital marketing will have a meteoric rise in popularity over the next several years, provided that marketers improve the targeting and delivery of their advertisements (Herwade & Shendage, n.d.).

According to PwC, the total income generated by online advertising in the United States reached \$54.5 billion in 2014, representing an increase of almost 15% compared to 2013. Between 2010 and 2014, income generated from mobile advertising increased by 110 percent. In 2014, mobile media had a 37% share of the digital advertising industry in the United States.

Examples of display-related ads include product placements, instructional films, rich media commercials, and banner adverts. The forecasted growth in the digital marketing business in 2019 is expected to reach 103.3 billion dollars, with approximately 20 per-cent of it coming from an increase in mobile users. As consumers spend more time using digital devices, it is anticipated that digital advertising would flourish and grow to a considerable extent. The expenditures for digital advertising are expected to surpass \$46 billion this year, which is a significant milestone. According to research conducted by Flurry, the typical American now spends 2.80 fewer hours per day watching television as compared to the amount of time spent using their mobile devices. As a consequence of this, it is abundantly evident that McDonald's digital marketing effort, as well as online marketing in general, will profit from the rising prevalence of consumers' use of digital devices such as smartphones and computers(Khalayleh & Al-Hawary, 2022a).

McDonald's aspires to be the kind of place where people from all walks of life can come, relax, and enjoy themselves to the fullest. The dinner itself as well as the service that was provided were both quite good. It is common practice for McDonald's to direct its marketing efforts on individuals between the ages of 8 and 45, regardless of whether they are male or female, students or working professionals, and regardless of their level of income.

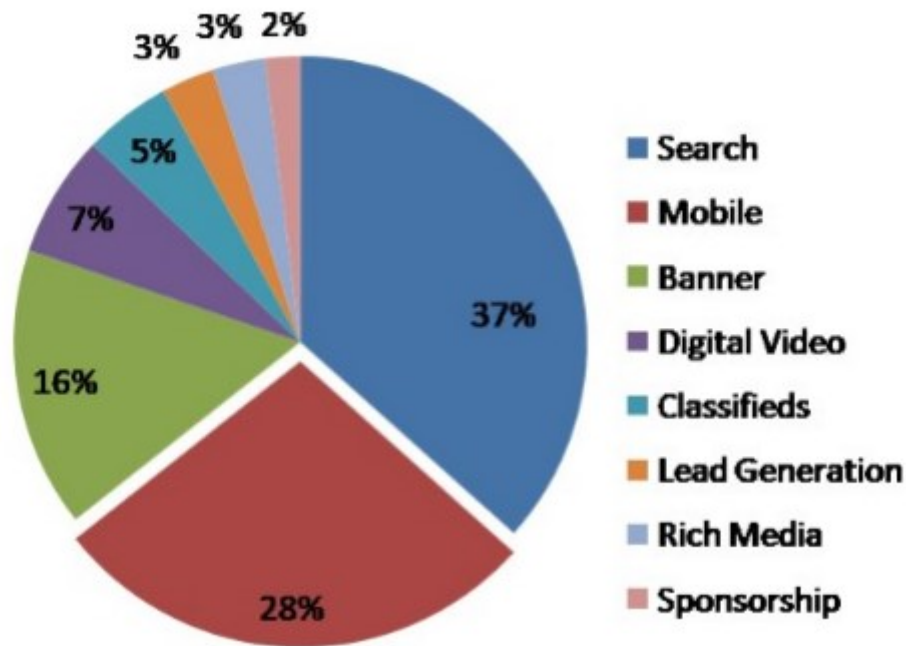


Figure 1 Digital Marketing in the U.S.A.

2.4.4 Advantages of Digital Marketing

The widespread and quick distribution of information is made possible thanks to the Internet. It's possible that McDonald's and other businesses like it may gain a lot by embracing digital marketing. There is potential for financial gain for companies who take concurrent strategic management actions on behalf of their customers through a variety of bilateral communication channels second, clients may access digital marketing at any time of the day or night. This is a significant advantage. Thirdly, businesses of all sizes and in all parts of the world may profit from digital marketing since it enables them to reduce the amount of money spent on conventional advertising while at the same time expanding their customer base to include customers in other parts of the world (Khalayleh & Al-Hawary, 2022b).

2.5 SWOT analysis for McDonald's to Find Digital Marketing Focus

Strengths

The superiority of McDonald's offerings is the company's greatest strength. Additionally, McDonald's has developed a significant presence in more advantages of the company's geographic expansion. Most people agree that McDonald's excellent brand reputation in the market serves as the company's major competitive advantage. The company's commitment to innovation and growth is an even more important advantage. People obviously have a need for fast food, and as a consequence, McDonald's, with its dependable quality and wide selection, rules the market.

Weakness

The fact that McDonald's prices are a little bit more than those of the company's rivals in the quick service restaurant business is one of McDonald's vulnerabilities. Because of this, sales go down, and McDonald's high worker turnover rate is another problem the company faces.

Opportunities

The population of the world reflects its status as a cosmopolitan melting pot. Consequently, the most glaring chance for McDonald's to expand is the aim to introduce new items with regionally specific tastes. Examples of such distinctions are Asian taste, European flavor, American flavor, and so on. McDonald's might also compete with local fast-food joints and overseas businesses by lowering its costs(Charlesworth, 2014).

Threats

The most significant threat to McDonald's comes from other companies operating in the same market as it does, such as Subway, KFC, Hungry Jack, and Domino. A possible threat for McDonald's in the event that the cost of its essential ingredients keeps going up. COVID-19 poses a threat to McDonald's since it discourages customers from entering the restaurant, which in turn lowers revenue(Kraak et al., 2020).

2.6 Digital Marketing Approaches by McDonald's

The marketing mix (4Ps) used by fast food giants like McDonald's, Subway, Domino's Pizza, KFC, and Hungry Jack Corporation encompasses a broad range of strategies tailored to address the unique needs of each international market. All of a company's tactics and techniques may be summed up in its "marketing mix." Strategies a business use to attract its ideal clientele by addressing product, location, pricing, and publicity (4Ps). In this business study scenario, the marketing strategies of McDonald's, Subway, Domino's, KFC, and Hungry Jack are uniform worldwide. Each company-owned and franchised site is managed according to the same set of corporate standards, such as the company's productivity metrics. Fast food chains like McDonald's, Subway, Domino's, KFC, and Hungry Jack all adapt their marketing strategies to the specific needs of each region. The organization's marketing efforts, for instance, could prioritize television in certain regions while putting more emphasis on print media in others. When it comes to implementing marketing plans and reaching associated strategic objectives, McDonald's, Subway, Domino's Pizza, KFC, and Hungry Jack all use somewhat different approaches, as defined by the 4P factors (Bala & Verma, 2018).

2.6.1 Methods used by McDonald's

The performance of McDonald's marketing mix is directly related to the company's best possible performance in the competitive global fast food restaurant market. To better understand how competitors like Starbucks Coffee Company, Domino's Pizza, Wendy's, Dunkin' Donuts, and Subway use the four Ps in their operations, strategic management examines their practices (LESTARI, 2022).

McDonald's is able to successfully draw in customers from a wide enough area because of the variety of brands it offers. This condition further solidifies McDonald's Corporation's dominant worldwide market standing and the power of its brand, despite the fierce competition shown by Porter's Five Forces analysis. The channels via which a product is sold and purchased are described below. But the firm also uses many domains comprising the 4P variable. It's safe to say that McDonald's is the most well-known of all the broadcasts on the following platforms:

1. Eating Places
2. Kiosks
3. Apps for McDonald's mobile devices.

The bulk of McDonald's profit comes from the chain's restaurants. Miniature ice cream sundaes and other treats are typical of the kind of things that may be found on the shelves of these eateries. Sweets other than those already mentioned. Such stands, like those in, pop up for a limited time only. Sporting activities at the professional level and other holiday-time celebrations. This section is McDonald's mobile apps are an integral part of the chain's overall advertising strategy. Prospective buyers may learn about the company's products and place orders via these fictitious locales. As an example, customers may make advantage of the discount coupons only available via the company's iOS and Android smartphone apps, Find nearby restaurants, make orders, and pay for food with ease. McDonald's locations that are taking part. In addition to placing orders through the Postmates mobile app and website. This part of the marketing mix helps McDonald's business plan and stated goals, particularly with regard to global consumers. In terms of pricing ranges, the company's food and drink offerings fall into the following categories: the component of the marketing mix that deals with positioning. Improving gross margins is the goal. and the total amount of money made by changing prices. In order to attract customers, McDonald's uses methods of pricing as follows:

2.6.2 Package Pricing Strategy

The pricing strategy that takes psychology into account McDonald's sells its meals and other packaged foods using the box selling strategy. Rates that are cheaper than if you had to purchase everything separately. For the best value and selection, choose a Happy Meal or an Extra Bonus Meal value (Singireddy, 2020). (Singireddy, 2020). However, under psychological pricing, the company uses more reasonable prices, such as \$.99, instead of rounding up dollar-for-dollar or as close as possible. In accordance with the company's current sales policy, purchasers may purchase the products based on their assumed cost-effectiveness. Thus, this McDonald's features the

importance of package pricing and psychological pricing in the marketing mix convincing customers to buy more products (Raj & Singh, 2021).

2.6.3 Search Engine Optimization

Quality Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is essential to rank highly on Google's search results pages. Google's Support Ads are quite effective. The firm will employ Google search advertising to entice new clients in order to increase its sales. People will get more interested in the business and be more inclined to visit its website as a consequence. A brand must have effective SEO. According to the SEO study, the domain has a Domain Score of 92. Meta title use is practical since crucial keywords are also included in the title (Sinha & Sheth, 2018). Because they made effective use of relevant keywords while making the nature of their offerings crystal clear, a Meta Description is also necessary. The websites of Domino's, Subway, 15 McDonald's, KFC, and Hungry Jack support both H1 and H2 headers, enhancing readability. The website now has a size chart. According to the SEO Audit report, these websites are all SEO-friendly, and the SEO staff works diligently to assure the success of their efforts. Similar to Domino's, Subway, McDonald, KFC, and Hungry Jack have prioritized optimizing their search functionality. After doing a web search for the products they offer, you may get a list of these firms that supply the needed services (Raj & Singh, 2021).

2.6.4 Social media campaign optimization

Fast food chains McDonald's and Domino's Australia employ targeted advertising on Facebook and Instagram. More advertisements are seen by the intended demographic, which increases traffic to the advertiser's website or app. Additionally, they provide a variety of material on social media and social networking sites on the internet. In January 2020, almost 234 thousand people were following Domino's Australia on Instagram. On Facebook, material from Domino's Australia was shared by seven million users. On Twitter, the business had a million followers. Domino's Australia has a noticeable social media presence (Sinha & Sheth, 2018). The middle finger string is a preferred method at Domino's Australia. The corporation engages

with its clients to make it relevant for them by employing everyday people in its advertising strategy or by using hashtags or symbols that might eventually create an emotional connection for its viewers. Domino's social media marketing stands out as being particularly successful when compared to its rivals. On social media, they continue to run a lot of Moment Promotions and have run aggressive campaigns (Saad & Badran, 2017). They keep posting videos in various languages to expand their following. Social media platforms will be used to market KFC's newest offering, lunch. Social media networks including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat helped the business reach more clients. The most recent advertisements for the stores launching in Brazil and Argentina will stimulate the curiosity of those who are interested in organic goods(Sawicki, 2016).

KFC may reach consumers in various regions with pay-per-click (PPC) advertisements that entice them to click through and discover more about the business's current products. There will be a link given to buy the newest range of healthy items, which will be promoted on numerous internet channels. The reader will be sent to the company's homepage by clicking that link(Santoki & Parekh, 2020a).

Event sponsorship will help KFC better fulfill its corporate social responsibility obligations. For instance, the positioning of the product and the marketing strategy is based on the tagline "Try Healthy, Be Healthy." Therefore, sponsoring programs and activities on health and wellness and reducing obesity may increase goodwill while also enhancing consumer loyalty and revenue.

KFC will offer a forum where patrons and supporters may share their admiration for cutting-edge products and services. Or to put it another way, this will assist to improve the relationships between your business and its customers. Weblogs and social media posts may be used to carry out KFC's promotional initiatives. In the fast-food industry, Subway is now a rival to McDonald's and Hungry Jack's. By using direct marketing and promotional techniques, Subway has boosted foot traffic in a normal market, resulting in a higher percentage of impulsive sales. The West Coast Eagle, Perth's first AFL club, contributed significantly to the popularity of Hungry Jacks in Australia. Hungry Jack is a business that has a strong commitment to the environment and collaborates closely with charities. Currently, the Taronga Zoo and the University of

Sydney are collaborating on projects to maximize the beneficial benefits of captive breeding on genetic diversity and to establish those beneficial effects, respectively. The second organization I'm a part of is called "R U Ok?" and it's a non-profit that promotes asking one another how they're doing in order to make sure that everyone is secure (Yasmin et al., 2015).

One must contend with rivals in order to keep success. These advertising strategies guarantee that your business is accessible on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter and that your website is current. You may reach a call center or the menu at any moment. Each social media platform used by the business to promote its products and services has more than 100,000 followers. The company also conducts advertising campaigns via items by just shaking their device. The intention was to raise (Santoki & Parekh, 2020b). Numerous platforms due to its big fan base.

In order to increase brand recognition and boost sales, Hungry Jack has traditionally depended on marketing. Employees at Hungry Jack are taught to cross-sell clients on more items, so they could recommend other meals that go well with the one they've expressly requested. Additionally, there was the "Shake and Win" campaign, which allowed iOS smartphone users within a one-kilometer radius of any Hungry Jack's outlet to enter to win free food.

2.6.5 Website optimization

Businesses with specific goals, like McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Hungry Jack, and Domino's Pizza, must customize their websites to appeal to certain demographics. Using the standards outlined by Lee and Kozar (2005), we may evaluate the service quality and knowledge quality of The Companies' (McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Hungry Jack, and Domino Pizza) website need to be improved. This is based on an examination of The Companies' websites in comparison to rival websites and the effectiveness of e-business websites. To achieve the requirements for service quality, one needs a caring, understanding, and trustworthy website. A lack of empathy on the part of the corporations (McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Hungry Jack, and Domino Pizza) was considered to be the biggest issue with their service efficiency, as these businesses failed to provide their clients with user-friendly web applications. The target

market is more likely to be interested in a company's benefits, such as the most recent and relevant information on fashion and trends, if they are easy to use. By making it easier for users to find pertinent information and pertinent features, ease of use boosts the effectiveness of consumers. For consumers to spend less time and effort obtaining these advantages, simplicity of use is essential (Kannan, 2017).

If both the benefits and the cost savings were improved, a higher customer value may be anticipated. Although their execution of these jobs has a negative impact on the monetary benefits connected with these positions, consumers have a bigger part in the value generation phase and are required to possess extra skills to fulfill specific activities, similar to self-service procedures (Hilton et al., 2013).

These specific changes would make McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Hungry Jack, and Domino Pizza's websites more user-friendly. Users should be able to enter directly into search fields and, based on their input, be forwarded to the search result page rather than being transferred to the current search page, as seen in the image below taken from the website for McDonald's. Additionally, the user should be given options from drop-down lists that are pertinent to the phrases they have entered (Tariq et al., 2022a).

2.6.6 Email and SMS marketing

Domino's does not prioritize email marketing. They will sometimes send retargeting emails once a transaction has been authorized through email marketing. The use of a one-time password (OTP), order confirmation (order confirmation), and acceptance or offer notification. Customers who signed up for the email advertising campaign on the websites of McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Hungry Jack, and Domino Pizza would be the only ones to get it. Email marketing serves three goals in this planning phase: (i) directly informing customers about the launch of new social media pages for Australian customers; (ii) precisely reaching the companies' target audience and providing current and relevant content about new products and promotions, such as the new social media campaigns; and (iii) cultivating customer relationships. You must find the sweet spot to prevent upsetting your consumers with too many emails or jeopardizing your brand's image by sending too few. The deal with McDonald's would initially be for

four months, once a week. According to Chaffey (2017), companies such as McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Hungry Jack, and Domino's 23 Pizza are changing their attention away from programmatic timed promotions and toward more focused types of advertising such as triggered and behavioral ads. As a result, anytime new items or discounts are unveiled, or new social media activities are launched, the volume will rise. Email marketing data such as open and click rates, as well as their frequency, should be observed and recorded so that adjustments can be made based on what is learned. The frequency with which emails are sent has an impact on the effectiveness of email marketing. McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Hungry Jack, and Domino Pizza would likewise transmit their emails during a time of highest availability and click-through rates (Tariq et al., 2022b).

2.7 Challenges in digital marketing

McDonald's digital marketing efforts have been unsuccessful because the corporation places an insufficient amount of attention on its consumers and an excessive amount on its goods. McDonald's "name your own" digital marketing campaign was a stunning failure, despite the company's best efforts to bolster its brand with the initiative (Bala & Verma, 2018).

In the end, the "make your taste" campaign was given labels that were objectionable to certain people. Due to the fact that the firm did not devote a sufficient amount of time and effort to doing market research and creating consumer profiles, it was unable to obtain a solid understanding of the priorities, worries, and desires of its target market. Understanding the needs and wants of your target audience is essential to having any kind of success with digital marketing. The failure may be attributed, in large part, to a lack of honesty on the side of the participants. There is a percentage of the company's material, although a very little one, that goes beyond obfuscation and into open dishonesty. The fact that the moms in the issue don't seem to be acting in any of the films calls into doubt the veracity of the material produced by the McDonald's Moms Quality Correspondents. The company is incapable of recognizing its own shortcomings. The company is completely clueless about how to interact with its clientele on social media, and its television advertising isn't nearly as successful as it might be in reaching potential clients. Any social media marketing plan worth its salt

should revolve around the behaviors and interactions of its target audience. The performance metrics used by the organization were not applicable in real life. When preparing for success, it is essential to develop goals that are not only acceptable but also within one's ability to achieve. The timing of the distribution of some pieces of information was incorrect, and certain messages did not provide enough specificity to address the challenges that were experienced by the population that was being targeted. The professionals, families, and parents of young children as well as youngsters, college students, and teens make up the target demographic for this particular brand (Tariq et al., 2022c).

A common way for parents to spend time with their children is by taking them to McDonald's for a treat. Customers love the restaurant's cartoon-themed décor as well as the complimentary toys that come with their children's meals. On the weekends, the families now have access to an exciting new place to hang out and dine that also has a takeaway, delivery, and drive-through option. Many individuals working in the corporate sector are looking for a place that is not only relaxing and enjoyable to visit with friends and coworkers after a long day but also has a reputation for consistently providing high-quality food. The cuisine of Vaudeville is another reason why it is popular among young people. Offers both a social and an academic focal point for the children. Customers have the opportunity to relax and enjoy themselves while completing errands related to their careers at the café.

Because the company does not have a sophisticated strategy for reaching out to parents, teens, and young adults, it is unable to fulfill the demands and wishes of its target audience while operating in a digital environment. Both teenagers and their parents have quite different expectations about technology. It is more probable that young people would pay attention to advertisements that make reference to current trends. Parents are objective individuals who would prefer it if social networking sites gave information about the cost, ingredients, advantages, and discounts associated with a product (Verma & Nagpal, 2021a).

3 METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The intent of this research is to examine how McDonald's has responded to shifting consumer tastes and preferences through the use of digital marketing tactics. Mixed-method research, integrating qualitative and quantitative techniques, was used to accomplish this goal.

The first phase was to read widely on the topic of digital marketing and its theoretical foundations in light of the rapidly shifting tastes of fast-food patrons. The problems, opportunities, and emerging trends in digital marketing in this industry were better understood after reviewing the relevant literature. It also compared McDonald's digital marketing tactics with those of its main rivals. During this stage, numerous research tools and academic journals were used.

Second, a mixed research strategy was used in this study to gather primary data. **Interview** was administered to key McDonald's marketing department workers to get an insider's view of McDonald's digital marketing strategies. The ten key areas of McDonald's digital marketing were covered in the survey's ten questions which are, a) current digital marketing strategies; b) digital marketing channels; c) campaign success measurement; d) data and analytics use; e) customer engagement and interaction; f) integration of digital and traditional marketing; g) automation and technology use, data privacy; and h) future digital marketing plans.

A survey strategy was also employed with millennials as target demographic in order to draw inferences on McDonalds' way of modifying its digital marketing strategies in response to evolving consumer preferences. Structured surveys were carried out to people who frequently use social networks in a mass consumer market. According to Dimock (2019), the term "millennial" refers to those who were born between the early 1980s and the middle to late 1990s. Millennials are also sometimes referred to as "Generation Y." The term "millennial" comes from the fact that members of the millennial generation were the first to achieve maturity in the 21st century.

There are several reasons why this group of people is noteworthy. They are the first generation to have the internet and other forms of technology permeate every aspect

of their lives (Prensky, 2001). Even though they are usually well educated and have seen major global events like the financial crisis of 2008, they nevertheless confront considerable economic concerns. There are certain distinctive features of millennials' purchasing habits. Value-conscious consumers are loyal to brands that share their beliefs on issues like environmental friendliness and social responsibility (Nielsen, 2015). Even more importantly for industries like tourism and hospitality, millennials value experiences above possessions (Barton et al., 2012).

According to studies, millennials rely mostly on digital mediums for news and information dissemination. Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are all popular among this demographic, and they routinely consult online evaluations and recommendations from friends and family before making a purchase (Smith & Nichols, 2015). It has also been observed that millennials are more susceptible to advertising via the internet and mobile platforms than prior generations were (Kumar & Lim, 2008).

Despite these similarities, it is essential to acknowledge that millennials as a whole represent a diverse range of individuals that adhere to a variety of habits and have a variety of preferences. They may be the same age and have certain things in common with one another, but that does not make them a uniform bunch in any way. According to (Bolton et al., 2013), in order for marketers to connect with millennials, they need to personalize the messages they send to this generation so that the communications are congruent with who millennials are and the things that are important to them.

Therefore, the digital marketing strategy of McDonald's and its response to altering customer preferences and trends were explored using a mixed-methods approach that merged theoretical insights from the literature with practical viewpoints from the survey. This allowed for both theoretical and practical perspectives to be taken into account. For the literature review, recent scientific sources were utilized, and participants in the survey were assured to maintain their anonymity. As a result, the validity and reliability of the study were not compromised.

3.1 Research Sources and Techniques

For the participants who represent millennials in the mass consumer market, a convenience sample was used through a virtual platform in Seinajoki Finland. The sample chosen for the development of the interviews was 80% digital marketing consumers and 20% entrepreneurs who establish themselves as current millennials with business ideas and project approaches in development.

Primary sources

The primary information presented in this project originates from the survey mentioned above, as well as the interviews made with the management of McDonald's, in order to know their own perception of the problem to be investigated and their interest in evaluating if it is a reality for their company to implement a digital marketing service for client companies or for individual advertising buyers. With this information, it is intended to carry out a diagnosis, through which the critical points can be identified, which allows determining aspects to be taken into account in the design of the proposal.

Secondary sources

As secondary sources, union information, books, theses, monographs, articles, and other documents provide scientific bases and the business context for the development of the research, some of which are presented as annexes. The documentary research served as support and complement for the design of the proposal and improve the perspective of the market research carried out.

The project continued in a second phase, with qualitative research, with two focus groups carried out with young people, mainly from the Millennial Generation, in order to have a better perspective of the consumption habits of young Millennials and Centennials in the face of digital marketing and the use of the internet (see annexes focus group grids). The in-depth interview conducted with the manager of McDonald's Seinajoki Impressers also corresponds to this type of qualitative research.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Interview Results

Results from the interviews have provided insight into McDonald's current digital marketing strategy, the digital channels it uses, how success is measured, how it keeps up with digital marketing trends and changes in technology, the significance of data and analytics, customer engagement and interaction, the merging of digital and traditional marketing strategies, the application of automation and technology, and the protection of customers' personal information, among other things. The outcomes of the survey will be evaluated to assess the current state of McDonald's digital marketing strategy and its potential for growth and change. These concepts are broken down into a few sections in Table 2.

Emerging Concepts	Interview Responses	Analysis
Digital Marketing Approaches	<p><i>"Digital marketing is one of our key strategies in marketing generally. Marketing have over the years focused more and more on digital platforms. There is multiple partners to ensure our success in this."</i></p> <p><i>"All mentioned. In social media we are on every relevant platforms. (Jodel, TikTok,</i></p>	<p>McDonald's sees online promotion as an important part of its overall marketing plan. The fast-food behemoth has gradually moved its attention to digital platforms, using a wide variety of ways to reach its target demographic. The organization communicates with its audience through TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. McDonald's uses the app as a central component of its digital marketing strategy (Manko, 2022). The app acts as a point of contact with the company and is constantly updated to provide better service.</p>

	<p><i>FB, Instagram, Twitter). We also have our app that we continue to develop. That plays a key role in digital field of customer experience.”</i></p>	
<p>Measuring the Results</p>	<p><i>“Golden arches are one of the worlds most recognized logos of the word. So, our approach to marketing is more like maintaining brand image and revealing new campaigns. People would still know McDonald’s as a brand even if we would stop all marketing for one year.”</i></p> <p><i>“How we measure success depends of the marketing campaigns. We don’t only seek for</i></p>	<p>Instead of focusing just on product sales, McDonald's evaluates the performance of its digital marketing efforts based on the goals of the campaign. The success of a recruiting drive, for instance, may be measured by looking at KPIs like the number of applications received (Sychrová and Šimberová, 2012). McDonald's sees marketing as crucial to the upkeep of its brand image, the promotion of its environmental initiatives, and the promotion of its employees' image (Vrontis and Pavlou, 2008).</p>

	<p><i>direct product sales with marketing. We also try to maintain our brand image, employee and sustainability image. For example: If we launch a campaign about recruiting, rising in job applications could be and KPI of success.”</i></p>	
<p>Digital Marketing Trends and Changes</p>	<p><i>“We follow trends and try to be relevant. Our crew in restaurant’s is quite young. That keeps our mindset “fresh”. We also have great partners in field of marketing who are experts in their field”</i></p>	<p>McDonald's marketing plan calls on the fast-food chain to keep up with the newest developments in digital marketing. Following trends and collaborating with knowledgeable partners in the marketing industry, the firm strives to maintain its place in the rapidly changing digital world (Mujtaba and Patel, 2017). McDonald's has a young and innovative culture, in part because of the young people that work there.</p>
<p>Making Use of Data and Analytics</p>	<p><i>“We rely on data and analytics also in every marketing campaigns. After every campaign we also follow the analytics and measure success accordingly to campaign goals.”</i></p>	<p>McDonald's relies heavily on data and analytics for its online advertising. Following each campaign, the firm evaluates its efficacy by looking at a number of measures used to measure success. McDonald's is able to gauge the success of their marketing efforts and change accordingly because of this data-driven strategy (Bean, 2022).</p>

<p>Interaction and customer engagement</p>	<p><i>“We have specific role to this. Brand/customer experience coordinator. Restaurants takes care of own digital platform feedbacks”</i></p>	<p>McDonald's employs a brand/consumer experience coordinator specifically to oversee digital consumer engagement and interaction. This demonstrates McDonald's commitment to fostering digital relationships with its clientele. The decentralized nature of the company's customer contact management is reflected in the fact that restaurants are responsible for handling feedback on their own digital platforms.</p>
<p>Integration of Digital and Traditional Marketing Techniques</p>	<p><i>“We modified previous traditional videos into various digital platform such as from TV ads to mobile phone because most of the users use social medias. So we try to combine traditional way of ads into digital.”</i></p>	<p>McDonald's uses integrated marketing, which involves coordinating its offline and online strategies. The business adapts classic works for use in modern media. Advertisements on television, for instance, are adapted for viewers on social media and mobile devices. The firm is adapting to consumers' changing media consumption patterns by focusing on reaching them where they already spend time.</p>
<p>Use of Automation and High-Tech Technology</p>	<p><i>“Various ways, but for example our app can tailor personalized offers for our customers based on their location or made purchases.”</i></p>	<p>McDonald's digital marketing strategy relies heavily on the use of automated processes and technological aids. The McDonald's app, for instance, tracks users' whereabouts and purchase histories to tailor advertisements to each individual's preferences. Improved client engagement and increased</p>

		revenue are the results of this personalized strategy.
Privacy and Data Security	<i>“We do everything based on GDPR. Also, we take our customers privacy seriously. For example, our app requires MFA-identification, in order to use it. This is because it consists lot of personal data.”</i>	Data security and client privacy are important to McDonald's. The company's data processing procedures are in line with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation. To protect the privacy of its customers, McDonald's, for example, implements multi-factor authentication (MFA) for its mobile app users.
Concentrating on Forthcoming Marketing Strategies	<i>“We aim to create influential marketing and in this world, we need adjust and adapt and stay curious to new options too. Main focus is on digital for sure.”</i>	McDonald's upcoming marketing tactics will concentrate on creating compelling advertisements and adapting to the rapidly changing digital landscape. The company has taken into account the importance of flexibility and maintaining a central focus on digital advertising (Vignali, 2001). Despite consumers' shifting tastes, McDonald's will continue to dominate the fast-food industry because of its creative strategy.

Table 2: Themes Generated from Interview Results

4.2 Survey Results

McDonald's conducted the study to learn more about how customers feel about the company's digital marketing campaigns and how well they feel they are keeping up with shifting tastes and trends. Insight on the efficacy and influence of McDonald's digital marketing initiatives may be gained from the survey responses.

McDonald's Brand Recognition: McDonald's is a well-known brand, since all respondents to the study said they had heard of it. Almost all of those who participated said they eat at McDonald's at least once a month, and many said they go there many times each week. This demonstrates McDonald's massive reach and client base.

Use of McDonald's Digital Platforms: Many respondents admitted to placing online orders using the McDonald's mobile app, showcasing the widespread acceptance of digital channels due to their convenience and simplicity. However, some respondents said they didn't use the app or place orders online, so there may be potential for further publicity and instruction on the advantages of the digital platform.

Conscious Usage of Non-Animal Products: A small percentage of respondents reported having tried McDonald's meat-free or animal-free choices, indicating rising interest in vegetarian and vegan options. This may indicate that some McDonald's customers have taken note of the fast-food giant's efforts to expand its menu to meet the needs of consumers with varying dietary choices.

Empathy for Environment and a Promise to Do the Right Thing: The value that survey respondents placed on McDonald's dedication to social and environmental awareness when making dining decisions was, perhaps unsurprisingly, all over the map. Some customers praised and acknowledged McDonald's eco-friendly efforts, while others focused on other issues, such as cost or a lack of familiarity with the chain's environmental stance. This suggests that McDonald's might improve its brand image through increased publicity about its attempts to improve sustainability.

Satisfaction with Service Quality: Almost all of those who answered the survey said they were pleased with the service they receive at McDonald's. Fast service and high-quality food were cited as examples of how McDonald's is meeting customers' expectations for a positive dining experience.

Placing Orders Online or Via Mobile Apps: Participants reported placing orders on McDonald's website or mobile app anywhere from never to many times per week. Some respondents said they placed orders frequently, while others said they did it once a month. In order to grow digital platform usage and retain existing customers, it

is crucial to keep them actively engaged and offer them a smooth online shopping process.

Preferences for Customization: Many respondents wanted additional options to tailor their McDonald's meals to their tastes. This might be a precursor to McDonald's introducing more bespoke products, catering to individual tastes and dietary requirements.

Usage of Drive-Thru: The poll found that several respondents used drive-thru regularly, especially late at night. This highlights the need to keep drive-thru+ running smoothly and conveniently to accommodate consumers' preferences and habits about how they want to place their orders.

The outcomes of the study as a whole show strong evidence that McDonald's has effectively adopted digital marketing strategies, most notably through its mobile application, to boost brand awareness and customer involvement. This is supported by the findings of a previous survey that was conducted. Nevertheless, the company could be able to enhance its brand image and adjust to the shifting preferences of customers if it increases its marketing of digital platforms, expands its customizing options, and clearly conveys its environmental principles.

4.3 Key Findings

The goal of this study was to investigate McDonald's digital marketing strategy and how it has developed over time to accommodate the requirements of a clientele that is both more numerous and more varied. Several significant discoveries were made as a result of exploring these regions:

The Foundation of Digital Marketing McDonald's has turned its marketing efforts to digital platforms, such as social media and its mobile app, in order to reach its global client base. This shift occurred because of the expanding digital landscape and changing preferences of consumers (Jung, 2022). McDonald's recognition of the importance of the mobile app as a major touchpoint for customers is evidence of the company's commitment to meeting those customers' demands for ease of use and customization (Kumar et al., 2019).

All-Inclusive Reporting on the Results of a Campaign: McDonald's digital marketing efforts are evaluated using an in-depth methodology. Marketing encompasses more than just making a profit; it also seeks to uphold a positive reputation in the eyes of customers and staff alike (Kumar & Rajan, 2022). This all-encompassing strategy demonstrates an awareness of the far-reaching effects that good marketing may have.

Flexibility in Response to Shifts in Digital Marketing: McDonald's marketing approach has become distinguished by its flexibility in light of the rapid development of digital advertising. The business stays current by keeping its staff youthful and creative and by forming strategic alliances with leaders in the field (Royle & Laing, 2014). McDonald's adaptability and willingness to adapt to the ever-evolving nature of digital marketing is on full display in this proactive strategy.

Decision Making Based on Data: Data analytics is shown to play a crucial part in guiding McDonald's advertising strategies. To ensure that future marketing efforts are continuously adjusted based on data-backed insights, it is important to do post-campaign analysis (Wedel & Kannan, 2016). This exemplifies a deliberate, evidence-based approach to making choices.

Emphasis on Participation from Customers: Managing digital client contacts and feedback through digital platforms are two examples of the company's emphasis on customer engagement (Kumar et al., 2019). McDonald's dedication to customer feedback shows how seriously the company takes their suggestions for improving the McDonald's experience.

Merge Online and Offline Marketing Efforts McDonald's integrates digital and conventional marketing tactics well, creating content for many digital channels. This multi-pronged strategy demonstrates McDonald's dedication to expanding its reach (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016).

Make Use of Automation and Customization: McDonald's emphasis on individual customers is reflected in their marketing practices, which emphasize automation and customization. Customers are more engaged and businesses make more money when they use this technology (Martin, 2018).

Dedication to Data Protection: McDonald's clearly values its customers' right to privacy and the protection of their personal information. McDonald's emphasizes its accountability in handling consumer data by implementing data processing methods in line with GDPR and requiring multi-factor authentication for mobile app users (Pauwels et al., 2021).

Future Digital Marketing Strategies: McDonald's has said that it intends to boost its spending in digital advertising in the future (Deans, 2022). This move will demonstrate McDonald's comprehension of the relevance of digital channels in contemporary advertising.

These significant findings demonstrate that McDonald's has taken full advantage of the benefits that come with advertising online. It is possible for the corporation to do a better job of advertising its digital platforms, increasing its customizing options, and explaining to the public the influence that its operations have on the environment. By concentrating on these aspects, McDonald's may be able to improve the image of its brand and adapt to changing preferences among customers. In summary, these significant discoveries shed light on the importance of continuously modifying digital marketing tactics to reflect the ever-changing tastes of customers. As McDonald's continues to polish its approach, the company's trials and failures can serve as illuminating examples for other firms that are navigating the difficult world of digital advertising. This is because McDonald's is one of the world's largest fast food chains.

5 DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Digital Marketing Approach of McDonald's

McDonald's digital marketing strategy is an interesting case study in how modern corporations respond to shifting consumer tastes and market conditions. Over time, the corporation has shifted its focus from conventional advertising methods to digital marketing (Kumar & Rajan, 2022). McDonald's works with a wide variety of partners, each of whom contributes unique skills and knowledge to the company's digital marketing strategy. Scholars like (Deans, 2022) have observed the growing complexity and interconnection of digital marketing, and this is indicative of that.

Email marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), and social media platforms like TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are only some of the digital channels used by McDonald's (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016). A growing trend in the use of mobile applications for brand engagement and customer retention (Jung, 2022) is confirmed by the McDonald's app's central position in the digital customer experience. McDonald's uses a variety of metrics to gauge the performance of its digital marketing initiatives, illustrating the need for a holistic approach to measuring the impact of digital marketing. McDonald's tracks a variety of metrics, including revenue success but also brand perception, environmental impact, and staff enthusiasm. McDonald's impressive ability to adapt to the ever-changing demands of the digital marketplace is particularly noteworthy. McDonald's creates an approachable and modern image by hiring mostly young people. In addition, the use of outside marketing professionals guarantees that the business will always have access to the most recent insights and methods.

McDonald's digital marketing heavily relies on analytics and data collection. The results of each campaign are evaluated by comparing actual performance to predetermined KPIs. That's further evidence that data and analytics are becoming more important to marketing decisions (Wedel & Kannan, 2016). It's intriguing how the corporation plans to use digital channels to communicate with and engage its customers. Brand and customer experience coordinators are deployed, which is indicative of the growing significance of specialized positions dedicated to fostering digital consumer interaction in modern businesses (Kumar et al., 2019). McDonald's uses both digital and conventional forms of advertising, despite the rise of the latter.

One method is adapting commercials from standard television to more mobile-friendly layouts. The fact that both digital and conventional marketing methods are being used together demonstrates an awareness of the need to strike a balance between them (Royle & Laing, 2014). The capacity of the McDonald's app to provide customized experiences for individual customers is in line with the trend towards further individualization in digital advertising (Li & Kannan, 2014). McDonald's app incorporates multi-factor authentication (MFA), demonstrating the company's commitment to data security and the rising relevance of privacy issues in digital marketing campaigns (Martin, 2018). McDonald's desires to continue refining its approach to digital marketing by focusing on the art of persuasion in order to stay ahead of the curve in the rapidly evolving digital world. This is because the company is committed to remaining competitive in this environment. In other words, McDonald's hopes to improve its ability to persuade customers.

In summary, McDonald's approach to digital marketing demonstrates an awareness of shifting marketing standards as well as the capacity to adapt to those norms, a devotion to the privacy of customers, and a dedication to technological innovation.

5.2 Changing Consumer Trends and Digital Marketing at McDonald's

The results of the survey shed light on how McDonald's has adjusted its digital marketing methods in response to shifting customer tastes and preferences. There are a number of significant ramifications for McDonald's future advertising campaigns based on these results.

Firstly, McDonald's has created strong brand recognition and presence, as seen by the high degree of awareness among survey participants. The company's lengthy history, worldwide presence, and iconic branding all contribute to its name being known and trusted by people throughout the world. McDonald's already has a sizable consumer base, so this accolade provides a good platform for its digital marketing endeavors. McDonald's online ordering technology has been a success, as seen by the popularity of the company's mobile app. According to the results of the poll, the app's convenience and simplicity have struck a chord with a large number of users. McDonald's should keep pouring resources into its digital platforms so it can provide

customers with a consistent and individualized experience, increasing the likelihood that they will download and use the app.

The poll also showed that consumers are more curious about plant-based and vegan alternatives. Some responders have acknowledged McDonald's attempts to promote plant-based options, suggesting the company's approach of broadening its menu to suit shifting dietary tastes has found some success. McDonald's may increase its portion of the burgeoning market for alternative protein sources by continuing to develop its plant-based products and promoting them via its digital marketing channels.

One interesting conclusion is that people place different amounts of weight on McDonald's environmental responsibilities when making restaurant choices. Some respondents praised McDonald's green efforts, while others cited price or a lack of familiarity with the chain's environmental stance as reasons for not eating there. In light of this, it's clear that McDonald's has to do a better job of communicating and promoting its sustainability activities if it wants to increase customer knowledge and perception. McDonald's will boost its brand image as an ecologically responsible and sustainable option by integrating these activities into its digital marketing campaigns.

McDonald's success depends on its ability to reliably satisfy its customers, and that success can be measured by how satisfied those customers are with the level of service they get there. Respondents to the poll cited factors like fast service and high-quality food as reasons to return. This demonstrates McDonald's dedication to customer satisfaction and their ability to run efficiently. McDonald's has to keep focusing on service quality and finding new ways to use digital platforms to boost customer engagement and happiness.

There was a wide range in how often people said they placed orders via McDonald's digital channels, highlighting the necessity for sustained promotion of the service. McDonald's can improve the effectiveness of its digital marketing by providing more personalized promotions, discounts, and suggestions to its consumers through the use of data-driven insights. McDonald's might expand its menu offerings to better meet the demands of its consumers by responding to their requests for new ways to tailor their meals to their tastes and dietary restrictions. Digital marketing efforts that

showcase the flexibility of the app or website and the many available alternatives may help accomplish this goal.

Drive-through service is quite popular, particularly late at night; hence, it is crucial that it continues to work smoothly and respond to the requirements of customers without any interruptions. Drive-thru upgrades must remain a primary focus for McDonald's, and this obligation extends to both the company's technological infrastructure and its business practices. Automated order-taking systems, digital menu boards, and ability to place orders in advance are a few examples of technological advances that have the potential to boost both productivity and the overall level of pleasure that consumers feel with a company's offerings.

In summary, the findings of the survey provide insight into how McDonald's has adapted its digital advertising in order to stay up with the changing tastes and preferences of its customers. The findings indicate that McDonald's digital initiatives, such as its mobile app, have been effective and that there is space for expansion and optimization in areas such as customization.

6 CONCLUSION

In essence, investigation has shown McDonald's flexible techniques in light of changing consumer preferences and trends, such as the growth of digital marketing and the popularity of healthier meal options. Deep analysis shows that McDonald's has come a long way in its quest to replace conventional advertising with digital methods. The business has successfully promoted its brand and engaged with customers through many digital channels, such as social media and its own mobile app. McDonald's has been able to stay relevant in the face of a fast-digitizing consumer marketplace thanks to data-driven, customer-centric digital marketing initiatives.

At the same time, McDonald's recognizes that consumers' tastes are shifting, particularly towards healthier and plant-based menu items. The fast-food business has proven its dedication to satisfying its customers' wide range of tastes and preferences by responding positively and effectively to these shifts in consumer preferences.

As a result, other firms may learn from McDonald's techniques for adapting to shifting consumer tastes and trends in the fast-food market. The firm has shown promise as a model for retaining market relevance and customer happiness by successfully mixing traditional and digital marketing methods and by adapting to changing consumer tastes in food.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Survey Questions

Appendix 2. Interview Questions

Appendix 1. Survey Questions

Place - Seinajoki

Date- 28.3.2023

Age

Gender

Do you know about McDonald's?

How often you visit McDonald's?

Do you order online via Mcdonlds App?

Which McDonald's advertising campaigns have caught your attention on social media?

Do you feel influenced by the McDonald's commercials on Internet?

Have you ever sampled the meat-free or animal-free options that McDonald's has to offer?

Have you ever utilised their services before?

When considering where to eat, how much weight do you give the commitment that McDonald's has made to being environmentally responsible?

What proportion of McDonald's patrons are content with the quality of the service they receive?

How frequently do you place an order with McDonald's using either their website or their mobile app?

Would you like to see more ways that McDonald's cuisine can be customised to your preferences?

How frequently do you place an order at the drive-thru of McDonald's?

Appendix 2. Interview Questions

Interview was conducted with restaurant management on 28.3.2023 at McDonald's Jouppi Seinajoki. For further investigation a discussion was done with Marketing department (Digital Consultant) in Helsinki with Jan Surapha.

2. What specific digital channels does McDonald's use for marketing (e.g. social media, email, search engines, etc.)?
3. How do you measure the success of your digital marketing campaigns?
4. How does McDonald's stay current with digital marketing trends and changes in technology?
5. How does McDonald's use data and analytics in your digital marketing strategy?
6. How does McDonald's handle customer engagement and interaction through digital channels?
7. How does McDonald's integrate digital marketing with traditional marketing efforts?
8. How does McDonald's use automation and technology in your digital marketing process?
9. How does McDonald's ensure the security and privacy of customer data in your digital marketing efforts?
10. How does McDonald's plan to evolve and adapt its digital marketing strategy in the future?