

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN BUILDING BRAND AWARENESS AMONG SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

(1) Ali Faron Abd

College of Science

University of Al-Qadisiyah

ali.faron@qu.edu.iq

(2) Kareem Salman Jebur

College of Science Research Summary

University of Al-Qadisiyah

kareem.salman.jebur@qu.edu.iq

### Abstract:

The following question serves as the foundation for this study: What impact does the usage of digital platforms have on small and medium-sized businesses' (SMEs) brand awareness? The study aims to examine how, in the rapidly changing digital economy, SMEs may increase their brand awareness by utilizing digital channels. the threats and opportunities the digital economy has presented to this crucial sector. The study utilized a descriptive -analytical study design in which a questionnaire was used to gather data from a target population of 250 marketing managers and executives working in SMEs. The study showed that there is a statistically significant positive effect on using digital platform (Social Media, content marketing, and paid advertising). In terms of brand awareness, the findings also indicated that the best tools were perceived to be social media platforms, followed by content marketing instruments, and then by paid

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

advertising. The study makes a case for an integrated digital approach, including a combination of the three instruments, to increase brand awareness and the competitiveness of SMEs.

**Keywords:** Digital platforms, Brand awareness, SMEs, Digital marketing, Social media, Information technology.

### First: Introduction

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

In the past twenty years, the global business environment has experienced dramatic changes under the impact of the information and communication technology revolution that has dramatically reshaped the nature of marketing and its instruments. Digital platforms have become an essential aspect of marketing strategies for businesses of all kinds, especially small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), which are the foundation of both developed and emerging economies. These businesses can engage with large consumer groups at a fraction of the expense of old methods thanks to digital platforms, which also provide accurate analytical data that helps with marketing decision-making. Raising brand awareness through digital platforms is becoming essential for any project to seek sustainability and market expansion as social media usage rises and the internet becomes more widely used.

#### 1.2 Study Problem

Even though everyone can access the digital world and there are many platform possibilities, many small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are still developing their digital maturity. As a result, their brand visibility and competitiveness are suffering and their digital strategies are fragmented. "Do digital platforms positively influence the brand awareness of SMEs?" is the main issue this paper attempts to answer.

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

### 1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of this work was maintained by two primary pillars:

- **Theoretical Importance:** A national study examining digital platforms and brand awareness in small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) adds to the body of academic knowledge.
- **Usefulness:** It provides decision-makers and businesses with useful guidance on how to improve their digital strategies.
- **Relevance to the Economy:** The competitiveness of the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector is vital to the economy, as it provides employment for over 60% of the labour force in a number of countries.

### 1.4 Study Objectives

The following goals are the focus of this study:

- To determine which digital platforms small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) utilize most frequently for marketing purposes.
- To gauge how each digital channel affects brand recognition.
- To determine the modifying elements that affect the connection between brand awareness and digital platforms.
- To present a proposed model for an integrated digital strategy that maximizes brand awareness.

### 1.5 Research Questions

- What digital channels do small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) most frequently utilize to advertise their brands?
- Does brand awareness and social media use have a statistically significant relationship?
- How does brand recognition get affected by digital content marketing?
- What role do pay digital advertisements play in raising brand awareness?

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

- Does the effectiveness of digital platforms vary depending on the size of the company and the nature of its business?

### 1.6 Study Hypotheses

The following theories are developed in light of the questions that came before them:

- H1: Social media use has a statistically significant beneficial impact on brand awareness ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ).
- H2: Digital content marketing has a statistically significant beneficial impact on brand recognition.
- H3: Paid digital advertising has a statistically significant beneficial impact on brand recognition.
- H4: There are statistically significant differences in the effectiveness of digital platforms attributable to the variables of company size and nature of business.

### 1.7 Study Limitations

- Subject Matter Limitations: The study is limited to three categories of digital platforms: social media, content marketing, and paid digital advertising.
- Human Resources Limitations: Marketing managers and executives in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- Timeframe Limitations: The period from 2022 to 2024.
- Geographical restrictions: SMEs operating in the retail, services and technology industries.

## Second: Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Digital Platforms – Concept and Types

Digital platforms have been regarded as an electronic space where interaction and interchange are conducted between multiple groups of users, including individuals and organizations, over the Internet by exploiting advanced

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

technological tools (Eisenmann et al., 2006). These platforms also have the “network effect,” which means the more users a platform has, the more valuable it becomes.

### First: Social Media

Social media platforms, which include Facebook (Meta), Instagram, Twitter/X, TikTok, LinkedIn, and YouTube, are the most widely used category of digital marketing platforms. Social media is a hunting ground for identifying target audiences, with over 4.9 billion users globally as of 2024 (Statista, 2024).

These channels allow businesses to meet a variety of marketing goals, including: creating digital communities around the brand, increasing the level of direct customer interaction, sharing creative content in diverse formats (text, images, videos, live streaming), and precisely segmenting the audience by socio-demographic and behavioral characteristics.

### Second: Digital Content Marketing

Content marketing is the planning, development and management of content within digital channels to attract and retain customers (Content Marketing Institute, 2023). This includes blogs, reports and white papers, videos, podcasts, and info graphics.

Studies indicate that organizations adopting a consistent content strategy achieve a six times higher customer acquisition rate compared to those that do not (Demand Metric, 2022). Furthermore, content marketing contributes to improved search engine optimization (SEO) and builds brand credibility.

### Third: Paid Digital Advertising

Paid digital advertising includes a range of methods, most notably: pay-per-click (PPC) ads via search engines (Google Ads), paid ads on social media, display ads, and influencer marketing.

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

### 2.2 Brand Awareness

One of the most important ideas in the literature on brand management is brand awareness. According to Keller (1993), it is "the amount to which a consumer can recognize or recall a brand under varied conditions." There are two primary components to brand awareness:

- Brand Recall: When talking about a certain product or service category, a consumer's ability to remember the brand name without any prior signal.
- Brand Recognition: The ability of a consumer to recognize the brand when presented with it in different forms, such as the logo, colors, or sound.

Models of brand equity, of which the Aaker (1991) and Keller (2001) models are the most well-known, suggest that brand awareness serves as the baseline upon which other brand dimensions like mental image, perceived quality and loyalty are constructed.

### Digital Brand Awareness Measurement Indicators

The following are some of benchmarks that the effectiveness of digital platforms for awareness building can be measured against:

Indicator	Definition
Reach	Number of users who viewed the content
Impressions	Total content impressions
Engagement Rate	Ratio of likes, comments, and shares
Brand Mentions	Number of times the brand was mentioned
Direct Search Traffic	Number of direct searches for the brand name
Organic Reach	Reach without advertising expenditure

### 2.3 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as companies with less than 250 employees, while national definitions differ. These entities account for more than

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

90 percent of all enterprises in most national economies and between 50 and 60 percent of GDP in the developing world (World Bank, 2023).

SMEs are confronted with multiple marketing difficulties, including very restricted marketing expenditure, lack of specialized human resources, and fierce competition from big companies. Therefore, digital platforms are an excellent strategic choice since they give them wide exposure with minimal expense and a quantifiable return on investment (ROI).

### 2.4 The Relationship Between Digital Platforms and Brand Awareness

Consistent online activity leads to greater brand awareness via multiple vectors, including the "mere exposure effect" which states that repeated exposure to a stimulus leads to positive affective responses (Zajonc, 1968).

The term digital marketing also relates to building a "brand awareness pyramid" starting at the bottom with unsupported awareness and moving up the pyramid to recall and then on to the brand being the "top of mind" brand. This level lays out a way to understand how the effect of digital on brand awareness builds.

### Third: Previous Studies

Several studies have investigated the association between digital platform usage and brand awareness. The most relevant studies are summarized as follows in chronological order:

#### Kim & Ko's study (2012):

The purpose of this article is to examine how social media marketing initiatives for luxury brands affect brand value. A sample of 384 Korean consumers participated in the survey. The findings showed a strong positive correlation between brand awareness and brand image and social marketing activities.

Source: Journal of Business Research

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

### **Tuten & Solomon (2017) Study:**

This research established a general framework for social media marketing strategies and revealed that strategically deploying companies in digital platforms increases brand awareness by as much as 40% compared to nonstrategically.

Source: Social Media Marketing

### **Stelzner (2019) Study:**

The study of the quarterly industry report reveals that 87% of marketers agree that social media has enhanced their brand exposure and 78% indicated that it led to more traffic towards their website.

Source: Social Media Examiner

### **Alalwan et al. (2019) study:**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the determinants of intention to use social media for shopping among customers in Jordan. It was concluded that content quality and interactivity are the best predictors of brand awareness.

Source: Information Systems Frontiers

### **Godey et al. (2016) study:**

The goal of this cross-national study is to examine how social media marketing affects brand equity in four different countries: France, China, India, and the United States. In a multicultural setting, brand awareness was found to be primarily driven by interaction and personalization.

Journal of Business Research is the source.

According to a study by Shareef et al. (2020), trust enhances the connection between digital presence and brand awareness. The study looks at the mediating role of trust in the relationship between social media use and brand equity. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services is the source.

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eureka.com/index.php/6>

### **The Position of the Current Study in Relation to Previous Studies**

The study at hands is different from previous studies based in some aspects: first, it focuses on the context of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which is a rather scarce researched field. Second, it combines three aspects of digital marketing into one unified model. Third, a number of moderating variables related to company size and business type are also included to provide more precise and generalizable findings.

### **Fourth: Study Methodology**

#### **4.1 Research Methodology**

The research followed the descriptive-analytical approach which is the best suited approach for analyzing social and marketing issues. This method enables the description of a phenomenon, the analysis of its relations and the measurement of its effects in the natural context of the phenomenon with no manipulation by the researcher of any of the involved variables. 3 Research type  
The present study is a quantitative explanatory research as it statistically examines hypotheses to confirm or deny the relationships between variables.

#### **4.2 Study Population and Sample**

Marketing managers and executives from small and medium-sized businesses (SMES) in the retail, services, and technology sectors make up the study sample. A stratified random sampling technique was employed, accounting for various industries and sizes. The sample size was (250) participants, as follows:

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eureka.com/index.php/6>

Percentage	Number	Sector
Retail and Retail	85	34%
Professional and Consulting Services	75	30%
Technology and Software	55	22%
Hospitality and Tourism	35	14%
Total	250	100%

### 4.3 Measurement Instrument (Questionnaire)

Based on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree... 5 = Strongly Agree), the measurement tool's four primary dimensions were as follows:

- Axis 1: Social Media Use: Eight questions about posting frequency, content quality, audience engagement, and digital community management.
- Axis 2: Digital content marketing, which consists of seven components (impact measurement, content variety, posting schedule, and search engine optimization).
- Axis 3: Paid Digital Advertising: Six elements (money for advertising, accuracy of targeting, ad testing, and conversion tracking).
- Nine items make up Axis 4: Brand Awareness (Recognition, Recall, Reach, Consumer involvement, Preference).

### 4.4 Reliability and Validity

Cronbach's Alpha for the entire scale was determined to be 0.887 in order to confirm good instrument reliability. High reliability is indicated by this high coefficient. The complete questionnaire was forwarded to twelve knowledgeable reviewers in the domains of information technology, digital marketing, and business administration to ensure content validity. Additionally, a preliminary pilot research was conducted with thirty participants to evaluate the items' and phrasing's intelligibility.

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaopenaccess.com/index.php/6>

### Fifth: Results and Analysis

#### 5.1 Analysis of Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage %
64.8%	162	Male	Gender
35.2%	88	Female	
44.0%	110	25-34 years	Age
36.0%	90	35-44 years	
20.0%	50	45 years and older	Educational Level
56.0%	140	Bachelor's	
34.0%	85	Master's	
10.0%	25	PhD	Years of Experience Percentage
32.0%	80	Less than 5 years	
42.0%	105	5-10 years	
26.0%	65	More than 10 years	

#### 5.2 Hypothesis Testing

After verifying that the analysis's underlying assumptions—normality, homoscedasticity, and independence—were met, the hypotheses were validated using simple regression analysis and Pearson's *r*. The following table provides an overview of the test results:

Decision	Value of p	Value of t/F	$\beta/\eta$	Tested Relationship	Hypothesis
H1	Social Media → Brand Awareness	0.72	18.4	0.000	Accepted ✓
H2	Digital Content Marketing → Brand Awareness	0.65	14.7	0.000	Accepted ✓
H3	Paid Digital Advertising → Brand Awareness	0.58	11.3	0.000	Accepted ✓
H4	Differences by Company Size/Sector	—	4.21*	0.016	Partially Accepted ✓

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaopenaccess.com/index.php/6>

### 5.3 Multiple Regression Model

To determine if independent variables had an impact on brand awareness while keeping the other variables constant, a multi-regression analysis was performed. The three digital channels together explained 61.4% of the variation in brand awareness, according to the adjusted R-squared ( $R^2$ ) of 0.614.

The whole model was statistically significant, as evidenced by the calculated F-value of 131.7 at a significance level of ( $p < 0.001$ ). Social media has the biggest impact on building brand awareness, according to the standard  $\beta$  for social media ( $\beta = 0.43$ ), content marketing ( $\beta = 0.31$ ), and paid advertising ( $\beta = 0.22$ ).

### Sixth: Discussion and Recommendations

#### 6.1 Discussion of Results

The current study's results are consistent with those of earlier research, especially Kim & Ko (2012) and Godey et al. (2016), which demonstrated the importance of social media in building brand equity. Social media's popularity ( $\beta = 0.43$ ) can be attributed to its ability to facilitate instantaneous two-way connection between the company and its customers, which improves the brand's emotional perception. At a time when many people are experiencing "ad fatigue," the moderate effect of content marketing ( $\beta = 0.31$ ) shows how crucial this tactic is in building a brand's credibility over time. This supports the assertion made by Pulizzi (2014) that "excellent content generates a profound emotional connection between the consumer and brand."

Although it is crucial for gaining early traction, the modest influence of paid advertising ( $\beta = 0.22$ ) indicates that this kind of marketing may not have as much potential to contribute to long-lasting brand awareness as user-generated content and social media platforms.

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

### 6.2 Recommendations

As a result, the researcher offers the following suggestions based on the study's findings:

- Establish an integrated digital approach (social, content, paid), dedicating at least 60% of the digital budget to social.
- Hire digital marketing experts or outsource digital agencies with the knowledge of SME industry.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the platforms and provide feedback for further development using digital analytics tools (Google Analytics, MetaBusiness Suite, Hootsuite).
- Create an editorial calendar to help you maintain a regular schedule of diverse content. Publish more visual and interactive content – these achieve the most reach.
- Tap into micro-influencers, who offer focused reach at low costs, as opposed to paid advertising.
- Create a cohesive digital visual identity across all platforms (colors, fonts, tone) to increase brand recognition.
- Use AI tools to segment social data and customize content to increase engagement and brand recognition.

### 6.3 Proposals for Future Research

- Assess the effect of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) on brand familiarity in content creation.
- Perform a cross-national analysis of cultural variations in consumers' reactions to electronic marketing.
- Perform a longitudinal research monitoring the progression of brand awareness for three years.
- Investigate the influence of augmented reality (AR), and Metaverse platform in branding on small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

### References

1. Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name*. New York: Free Press.
2. Alalwan, A. A., Rana, N. P., Dwivedi, Y. K., & Algharabat, R. (2019). Social media in marketing: A review and analysis of the existing literature. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(7), 1177–1190.
3. Content Marketing Institute. (2023). *B2B Content Marketing Report: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends*. Cleveland, OH: Content Marketing Institute.
4. Demand Metric. (2022). *Content Marketing: The Power of Consistency*. Demand Metric Research.
5. Eisenmann, T., Parker, G., & Van Alstyne, M. W. (2006). Strategies for two-sided markets. *Harvard Business Review*, 84(10), 92–101.
6. Godey, B., Manthiou, A., Pederzoli, D., Rokka, J., Aiello, G., Donvito, R., & Singh, R. (2016). Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(12), 5833–5841.
7. Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 1–22.
8. Keller, K. L. (2001). *Building Customer-Based Brand Equity: A Blueprint for Creating Strong Brands*. Marketing Science Institute Working Paper Series.
9. Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), 1480–1486.
10. Pulizzi, J. (2014). *Epic Content Marketing: How to Tell a Different Story, Break through the Clutter, and Win More Customers by Marketing Less*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.

## Eureka Journal of Business, Economics & Innovation Studies (EJBEIS)

ISSN 2760-4950 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 6, June 2026



This article/work is licensed under CC by 4.0 Attribution

<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/6>

11. Shareef, M. A., Mukerji, B., Dwivedi, Y. K., Rana, N. P., & Islam, R. (2020). Social media marketing: Comparative effect of advertisement sources. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 46, 58–69.
12. Statista. (2024). Global social networks ranked by number of users. Statista Research Department. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com>
13. Stelzner, M. A. (2019). 2019 Social Media Marketing Industry Report. *Social Media Examiner*.
14. Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, M. R. (2017). *Social Media Marketing* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
15. World Bank. (2023). *Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Finance*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank Group.
16. Zajonc, R. B. (1968). Attitudinal effects of mere exposure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 9(2), 1–27.