ADOPTING DIGITAL MARKETING AND COMPETITIVENESS: A PERSPECTIVE OF ENTERPRISES IN MEXICO

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ABSTRACT

The uncertainty of business and the changes demanded by an increasingly globalized and highly competitive market is making companies readjust or adopt new business strategies in a way that allows them not only to continue in their market but also to survive. For this reason, an increasing number of researchers and scholars in the current literature are considering digital marketing not only as an additional activity but as a strategy that can raise significantly the level of competitiveness of enterprises. Hence, the main goal of this empirical paper is to analyze and discuss the relation between digital marketing and competitiveness of enterprises in Aguascalientes, Mexico. The results obtained show that the adoption of digital marketing has significantly positive effects at the level of competitiveness of enterprises which brings important benefits for the enterprises that use it.

Keywords: Digital marketing, competitiveness, business.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of internet has created several changes in business; these changes can be observed in contemporary marketing along with the evolution of consumers about the way they buy, communicate and interact which emphasizes the fact that enterprises must adapt to these new ways so they can satisfy the market needs. Nowadays, internet has become a new important format for marketing and has replaced, to a certain extent, established stores (Evans, 1996; Van Tassel & Weitz, 1997). However, there is a consideration for every executive may consider using internet for their company which is the role this tool will have in the marketing of their enterprise.

Accordingly, as Hazel (1996) pointed out, internet is an important tool for the area of marketing of any enterprise because it helps to determine consumers’ demand regarding online shopping. Similarly, Mulhern (1997) claims that the beginning of the new century helped to provide a more integrated emphasis regarding the use of internet as a marketing tool,
especially about marketing activities of enterprises and interactive management with clients. One of the advantages obtained by marketing from the popularity of internet is the improvement of different means to obtain and communicate with consumers at a personal level as well as getting a final deal of products in an interactive way (Hart, Doherty & Ellis-Chadwick, 2000).

By analyzing the different ways in which internet has been used in marketing, it can be said that there are three main levels. In the basic level, internet has been used as a promoter of trading and as means of communication (broadcasting information about the organization, their products or services and trade) [Bruno, 1997]. The second level uses internet as a more active marketing tool as it promotes the interaction between consumers and the enterprise in the website so they obtain more information about the products offered by the enterprise as well as to ease the process of making a final decision (Hazel, 1996). Finally, in the third level of marketing in internet, consumers carry out the trading process in which they make the transactions or sales (Hoffman, Novak y Chatterjee, 1996).

On the other hand, Mohaptra (2012) mentions that the adoption of digital marketing takes place in three important processes. The first one is through the creation of production processes such as sales, orders, and payments among others. The second one takes place by focusing all the processes related to the client into the web such as special offers and trading, order and payment requests as well as customer service. Finally, the third process establishes the management of internal processes by making reference to employee services, exchanging internal information, training and recruiting, among others.

For this reason, the constant adoption of digital marketing has been recommended mostly to small and medium size enterprises for their higher flexibility along with limited resources even when this tool is not exclusive of this type of enterprises but still can create revenues and a higher level of competitiveness in big enterprises (Auger & Gallaugher, 1997; O’Keefe, O’Connor & Kung, 1998). Despite the benefits obtained by adopting digital marketing, there are relatively a few theoretical and empirical investigations that are published in contemporary literature. This highlights the need to analyze more deeply in the existing relation between digital marketing and the level of competitiveness of enterprises (Brodie, Winklhofer, Covielo & Johnston, 2007; Ciarniene & Stankeviciute, 2015).

Considering everything that has been mentioned above, this research paper presents the results of the analysis of adopting digital marketing in enterprises in Aguascalientes State (Mexico) with a sample of 208 enterprises. It is important to mention that one of the main contributions of this research is the analysis of adopting digital marketing and competitiveness in enterprises since there was little empirical evidence in the literature about the relation of these two variables. Similarly, it is important to establish that the proposed theoretical model was analyzed with the methodology of models of structural equations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

When analyzing the setting, it is possible to observe how organizations nowadays are trying to understand how globalization has influenced in the different activities (both social and economic) to which they get exposed to. An example of this has been the birth of internet and the different tools that are part of it; they have produced in enterprises the need to update and incorporate those technologies in their organizational activities in order to be integrated in internet at a local and national level as well as to be known in international markets (Bernal & Martínez, 2011; Tallud, 2014) and, at the same time, redesign their processes in a way that they strengthen their competitive advantages (Phan, 2003).
It is important to point out that adopting and implementing digital marketing in enterprises is increasingly evident since there are theoretical and empirical investigations that show the use of this tool in a higher number of companies (Santos & Vázquez, 1997; Martínez, Maldonado, García & Pinzón, 2012). This enables enterprises, firstly, to fulfill the organization goals about satisfying in the best possible way the needs and interests of clients as well as to become a more competitive enterprise (Phan, 2003; Chaffey, 2007; Ciarniene & Stankeviciute, 2015). Also, Moreau (1980) considered that there is a lack of interest from executives regarding marketing, which suggests that managers or owners of enterprises provide a higher importance to the implementation of marketing.

Similarly, it is important to mention that Peterson (1989) highlights the value given to marketing by managers as they consider it an attractive business strategy that promotes the creation of competitive advantages and an important part of such improvement is adopting new information and communication technologies (such as internet) that nowadays provide new possibilities to carry out marketing actions. It is by considering the importance given to marketing and the popularity that these new technologies are getting that the concept of digital marketing can be defined. Digital marketing refers to marketing that uses internet in order to exchange information (enterprise-clients, clients-enterprise) besides helping to maintain business relations (Zwass, 1998).

In this sense, if we assume that enterprises implement innovation by using information technologies as a marketing tool, then enterprises would develop some marketing abilities to improve their activities and, as a result, their level of competitiveness (Shin, 2001; Chaffey, 2007; Bernal & Martínez, 2011; Ciarniene & Stankeviciute, 2015). In a similar trend, Maldonado, Martínez, Aguilera and González (2012) mention that enterprises must give priority and use the information available from the market in the details and competitiveness. However, due to these new digital improvements, it is also convenient to take into account each piece of information that exists digitally in the web that can be useful for the achievement of targets and goals of the organization.

However, a more detailed analysis of the literature helped to identify a few investigations that discuss or have tried to explained the phenomenon of adopting digital marketing in enterprises; it is even more difficult to find difficult investigations that compare the effects of digital marketing in the competitiveness of enterprises. Within the researches that have focused in the adoption of digital marketing in enterprises we can find the papers of O'Keefe, O’Connor and Kung (1998); Hoffman, Novak and Chatterjee (1996); Cockburn and Wilson (1996); Auger and Gallaugher (1997); Spiller and Loshe (1997); Griffith and Krampf (1998); Jones and Biasiotto (1999).

In the case of literature that shows the existing relation between the study of adopting digital marketing and competitiveness, the following papers can be mentioned: Day and Bens (2005); Amor (1999); Amit and Zott (2001); Strauss and Frost (2001); Gatautis (2002); Gerstner (2002); Phan (2003); Auramo, Kauremaa and Tanskanen (2005); Chaffey (2007); Gatautis (2008) and Mohapatra (2012). However, it is important to remember the small relevance that has been given to the study of the relation between adopting digital marketing and competitiveness in enterprises from both researchers and scholars (Brodie, Winklhofer, Covielo & Johnston, 2007; Ciarniene & Stankeviciute, 2015).

On the other hand, despite the different benefits identified along with the adoption of digital marketing (Chaffey, 2007), there are concerns from executives to entirely adopt this new tool. Within these limitations, there are mainly the technological restrictions that enterprises have (Bell & Gemmell, 1996), along with the lack of security in the payment methods (Bhimani, 1996; Panurach, 1996), as well as the access-to-information restrictions (Hoffman & Novak, 1998). As a result of this, managers must acknowledge that for the
success and growth of their enterprise it is necessary to implement digital marketing strategies so they become more competitive and have better results (Gilmore, Carson & Grant, 2001).

Thus, it is common to find in the literature different factors that participate in the adoption of digital marketing; some of the main factors can be trading capacity y industry norms (Simmons, Durkin, McGowan & Armstrong, 2007); technological factors, human capital and changes in business (Warren, 2004); rise in sales (Downie, 2003; Jeffcoate, Chappell & Feindt, 1999; Poon & Swatman, 1997); benefits obtained (Downie, 2003; Poon & Swatman, 1997); CRM (Alam, 2009; Beatty, Shim & Jones, 2001); costs reduction (Beatty et al., 2001; Drew, 2003; Gilmore, Gallagher & Henry, 2007); management enthusiasm (Downie, 2003; Jeffcoate et al., 1999; Poon & Swatman, 1997); government roles to promote the adoption of technologies (Javalgi, Martin & Todd, 2004) and the pressure of competitors (Daniel & Wilson, 2002; Dongen, Maitland & Sadowski, 2002; Chang & Cheung, 2001).

Furthermore, Järvinen y Karjaluoto (2014) considered that adopting digital marketing is mostly achieved because of the available tools in internet, and it is possible to get them for free. Similarly, Dlodlo and Dhurup (2013), based on a detailed analysis of the literature and different theoretical and empirical investigations, determined concisely the factors that help to prove the adoption of digital marketing in enterprises. They specifically point out five factors: the ease of perceived use, external pressure and mission, job performance, availability of resources and compatibility. In addition, Dlodlo and Dhurup (2013) recommend taking into consideration the expertise of those involved in adopting digital marketing such as clients and executives of the organization because their behavior influences significantly in the competitiveness of the enterprise (Ghobakhloo, Arias-Aranda & Benítez-Amado, 2011).

Another research about adopting digital marketing shows as its main result the fact that enterprises put on display the need to develop, update and redo their websites. That is, they need to develop more their digital market activities in the web or the resources available through internet. In a similar trend, Hart, Doherty and Ellis-Chadwick (2000) came to the conclusion that adopting digital marketing varies depending on the economic activities or type of enterprise. Specifically, the adoption of digital marketing through interactive services such as email or the use of internet showed a difference because enterprises use such tools mostly to promote direct communication with clients, supply advertising (catalogues, brochures, samples and free gifts) or to encourage clients to provide information for market research.

On the other hand, there are in the literature generally a few theoretical and empirical that discuss deeply the analysis and discussion of the different ways to carry out how to measure the adoption of digital marketing in enterprises. One of the first published investigations in the literature is the one of Coviello, Brodie and Munro (1997), who developed a classification based on the theory of marketing practices that they validated empirically. From this study, Coviello, Brodie, Danaher and Johnston (2002) arrived to the final validation of such classification characterized mostly for considering digital marketing as a framework of multiple trading and complex processes that develop slowly and distinguishing four main aspects in the practice of digital marketing: transactions marketing, marketing database, interaction marketing and network marketing.

Similarly, Ciarniene and Stankeviciute (2015) concluded that in order to analyze the effects of digital marketing in the competitiveness of an enterprise it is necessary to consider four different levels: business, industry, country and world. Regarding this research, competitiveness is considered at the level of enterprise. Also, Ciarniene and Stankeviciute (2015) identify five important factors to take into consideration for the analysis of the relation between digital marketing and competitiveness which refer to the market, the socio-cultural environment, technology, macro-economy and the government. For these reasons, and considering the information presented above, it is possible to establish at this point the following hypothesis:
H1: Higher use of digital marketing, higher level of competitiveness in enterprises

METHODOLOGY

To answer the research hypothesis established in this paper, the directory of the System of Mexican Business Information was considered as the reference framework in its most recent update in 2014 and it has the registration of 4,929 firms that belong to the areas of industry, trade and services in micro, small, medium and big enterprises. The sample was selected by means of random sampling obtaining a total of 208 enterprises with a maximum error of 4.8%, a level of reliability of 95% and the surveys were administered between August and November of 2015. It is important to notice that the information was collected with a questionnaire aimed to managers or owners of enterprises.

Similarly, in order to measure the adoption of digital marketing, the scale developed by Dlodlo and Dhurup (2013) was considered. Such scale considers five dimensions: ease of perceived use, external pressure and mission, labour performance, availability of resources and compatibility, measured with a total of 13 through a Likert-type scale of five point where 1 (totally disagree) and 5 (totally agree) were used as the limits. Regarding the level of competitiveness, the scale proposed by Maldonado, Sánchez, Gaytán and García (2012) was used and it considers three dimensions: financial performance, costs reduction and technology, which were measured through a total of 16 items and with a Likert-type scale of five points where 1 (totally disagree) and 5 (totally agree) were used as the limits.

In a similar trend, in order to measure the reliability and validity of the theoretical model of adopting digital marketing and competitiveness, a Factorial Confirmatory Analysis (FCA) was carried out by using the method of maximum likelihood with the software EQS 6.1 (Bentler, 2005; Brown, 2006; Byrne, 2006). The reliability of the theoretical method was evaluated by means of Cronbach’s alpha and the Composite Reliability Index (CRI) (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). It is important to point out that robust statistics proposed by Satorra and Bentler (1988) were also considered in order to provide better evidence of the statistical adjustments of the model analyzed.

Regarding the adjustment indices used to prove the research hypothesis stated for the theoretical model of adopting digital marketing and competitiveness, the ones used were the Normed Fit Index (NFI), Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) as well as the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) [Bentler & Bonnet, 1980; Byrne, 1989; Bentler, 1990; Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998; Chau, 1997]. These results are acceptable if the NFI, NNFI and CFI indices are between 0.80 and 0.89, which represent a reasonable adjustment of the model (Bentler, 2005; Brown, 2006; Byrne, 2006) and if it is equal or higher to 0.90 it is considered a good adjustment of the model (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1986). Regarding RMSEA, the values under 0.08 are considered as acceptable (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1986; Hair et al., 1998). On the other hand, a high internal consistency can be seen in the constructs, as the eight factors analyzed got a Cronbach’s alpha higher to 0.70 suggested by Nunally and Berntein (1994).

In order to carry out the validity, some tests were developed to highlight the convergent validity and discriminant validity of the scales analyzed. Within the tests of convergent validity, the results obtained in the AFC were checked as it shown in Table 1, where it can be seen that the model of final measurement provides a good adjustment of data ($S-B_{CF}^2 = 506.969$; df= 349; $p = 0.000$; NFI= 0.849; NNFI= 0.938; CFI= 0.946 y RMSEA= 0.055). Similarly, the acceptable CRI value will have to be higher to 0.60 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). For the specific case of this research, this value is higher to the established parameter, which proves the
reliability (both internal and external) of the model. Finally, regarding the Extracted Variance Index (EVI), Formell and Larcker (1981) suggest something higher to 0.50 and the value of all the dimensions is above the established limit.

**Table 1. Internal consistency and convergent validity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Loading Factorial</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha</th>
<th>CRI</th>
<th>EVI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facility of Perceived use</td>
<td>UP1</td>
<td>0.896***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.850</td>
<td>0.862</td>
<td>0.619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UP2</td>
<td>0.796***</td>
<td>14.170</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UP3</td>
<td>0.881***</td>
<td>16.989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UP4</td>
<td>0.512***</td>
<td>5.911</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PE3</td>
<td>0.943***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.928</td>
<td>0.910</td>
<td>0.938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PE4</td>
<td>0.884***</td>
<td>18223</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Prison and Mission</td>
<td>PE3</td>
<td>0.943***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.928</td>
<td>0.910</td>
<td>0.938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PE4</td>
<td>0.884***</td>
<td>18223</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Performance</td>
<td>DL1</td>
<td>0.903***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.928</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td>0.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DL2</td>
<td>0.870***</td>
<td>13.998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DL3</td>
<td>0.892***</td>
<td>12.947</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources Disposition</td>
<td>DR1</td>
<td>0.749***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.730</td>
<td>0.729</td>
<td>0.574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DR2</td>
<td>0.766***</td>
<td>7.861</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compatibility</td>
<td>CO1</td>
<td>0.890***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.881</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO2</td>
<td>0.842***</td>
<td>10.227</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Performance</td>
<td>FP1</td>
<td>0.923***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.940</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>0.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FP2</td>
<td>0.911***</td>
<td>21.427</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FP3</td>
<td>0.926***</td>
<td>20.969</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FP4</td>
<td>0.950***</td>
<td>29.235</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FP5</td>
<td>0.665***</td>
<td>7.096</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs Reduction</td>
<td>PC2</td>
<td>0.801***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td>0.885</td>
<td>0.611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PC3</td>
<td>0.861***</td>
<td>11.194</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PC4</td>
<td>0.887***</td>
<td>11.949</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PC5</td>
<td>0.768***</td>
<td>11.303</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PC6</td>
<td>0.544***</td>
<td>6.036</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Use</td>
<td>TE1</td>
<td>0.857***</td>
<td>1.000a</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>0.938</td>
<td>0.718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TE2</td>
<td>0.887***</td>
<td>16.242</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TE3</td>
<td>0.918***</td>
<td>20.061</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TE4</td>
<td>0.848***</td>
<td>14.961</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TE5</td>
<td>0.753***</td>
<td>10.726</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TE6</td>
<td>0.810***</td>
<td>15.728</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[X^2 (df = 8) = 10.382; p < 0.000; NFI = 0.991; NNFI = 0.995; CFI = 0.998; RMSEA = 0.032\]

* = Parameters fixed to this value in the identification process.

*** = p < 0.001

Similarly, as part of the analysis of the convergent validity, the values in the factorial loads of the 29 items from the eight factors that belong to the model of adopting digital marketing and competitiveness were analyzed. It was proved that they are significant (p < 0.001) besides the fact that each value surpasses the minimum parameter established of 0.50 (Hair *et al*., 1988) as well as the average of standardized factorial loads for each dimension that is part of the model are higher to the recommended value of 0.70 (Hair *et al*., 1988).

The discriminant validity of the theoretical model is carried out with the implementation of test of confidence intervals and the test of extracted variance which can be observed in a
In a more detailed way in Table 2, it can be observed that none of the individual elements of the latent factors of the correlation matrix have the unit, that is, the value of 1.0 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). On the other hand, the values that are higher to the diagonal represent the test of extracted variance, where such value will have to be higher than the EVI (diagonal) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). This makes possible to observe that such requirement is fulfilled in the same way. Therefore, considering such criteria, it is possible to conclude that the scales used in this model have enough evidence of reliability and validity, both convergent and discriminant.

### Table 2. Discriminant validity of the theoretical model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Facility of Perceived use</td>
<td>0.619</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.291</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 External Prison and Mission</td>
<td>0.217-0.497</td>
<td>0.938</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Labour Performance</td>
<td>0.148-0.528</td>
<td>0.280-0.696</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.298</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Resources Disposition</td>
<td>0.351-0.727</td>
<td>0.231-0.479</td>
<td>0.145-0.509</td>
<td>0.574</td>
<td>0.373</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Compatibility</td>
<td>0.265-0.649</td>
<td>0.344-0.728</td>
<td>0.306-0.786</td>
<td>0.397-0.825</td>
<td>0.751</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Financial Performance</td>
<td>0.153-0.477</td>
<td>0.078-0.378</td>
<td>0.062-0.430</td>
<td>0.110-0.478</td>
<td>0.084-0.468</td>
<td>0.777</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Costs Reduction</td>
<td>0.076-0.372</td>
<td>0.017-0.333</td>
<td>0.110-0.294</td>
<td>0.039-0.261</td>
<td>0.056-0.272</td>
<td>0.140-0.536</td>
<td>0.611</td>
<td>0.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Technology Use</td>
<td>0.125-0.549</td>
<td>0.160-0.548</td>
<td>0.282-0.798</td>
<td>0.131-0.583</td>
<td>0.216-0.696</td>
<td>0.318-0.810</td>
<td>0.145-0.633</td>
<td>0.718</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diagonal represents the Extracted Variance Index (EVI) while above diagonal the variance part is shown. Below diagonal is the correlation estimation of factors with a confidence interval of 95%.

### RESULTS

The technique of structural equations with software EQS 6.1 (Bentler, 2005; Byrne, 2006; Brown, 2006) was used to analyze the theoretical model of adopting digital marketing and competitiveness in enterprises in Aguascalientes (Mexico). The results obtained will allow comparing the research hypothesis stated in this investigation by considering the same variables to prove the structure of the theoretical model in a complete way. Similarly, the nomological validity of the theoretical model of adopting digital marketing and competitiveness was examined through the square Chi test which compared the measurement of the theoretical model adjusted and the original theoretical model. In the results, the non-significant differences of the theoretical model are good in the explanation of the relations observed between the latent constructs (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Hatcher, 1994).

### Table 3. Results of the structural equations model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Structural relationship</th>
<th>Standardized coefficient</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: Higher use of digital marketing, higher level of competitiveness in enterprises.</td>
<td>Digital M. → Competitiveness</td>
<td>0.691**</td>
<td>9.773</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results obtained from the use of the model structural equations are presented in Table 3. Regarding the hypothesis of the research, it is possible to appreciate that the results obtained are: $\beta = 0.691$, $p < 0.001$, which indicates that adopting digital marketing has positive and significant effects about competitiveness in enterprises in Mexico.

DISCUSSION

The adoption of digital marketing in enterprises in Mexico presents important implications for both the management and the organization because the executives that decide to implement the adoption for this type of marketing needs determination and consistency because one it is present in their enterprise in this environment, the consumers that are interested will follow it. That is why managers will have to pay special attention to the development of plans and strategies of digital marketing in order to improve significantly the marketing activities as well as to identify the areas of opportunity provided by the digital market.

Regarding the implications at the organization level, those enterprises that decide to implement the adoption will have to count with the management’s objectives, goals, values and culture according to the opportunities and advantages that digital marketing can offer. Also, it will have to have the necessary resources to have all the necessary technological equipment to carry out the digital marketing such as internet, computers or mobile phones that can connect to the web along with the adequate human capital for the implementation of the required strategies or plans of digital marketing designed especially for the organization.

It is important to highlight that the results obtained in this research paper show positive and significant effects of adopting digital marketing in enterprises about competitiveness in Aguascalientes. This represents greater benefits for enterprises that use it nowadays because they help to keep the competitive position of enterprises inside the digital market and they also grow as they have the possibility to participate in markets they had not considered before, not only at a local level but also at national and international levels. This also promotes the decrease of costs about advertising and communication with the client. The use of free tools provided by internet help to have a more direct and faster contact with consumers or the target market as well as it reduces the number of intermediaries in the distribution channels because the client can contact directly the manufacturer or the desired enterprise.

On the other hand, talking about the limitations observed during the development of this research, one of them was the size of sample interviewed. Only 208 questionnaires were returned from the 300 ones sent that belong to micro, small, medium and big companies from Aguascalientes State (Mexico) in the areas of trade, industry and services. For further investigations it is considered important to broaden the size of the sample and even analyze the adoption of digital marketing in enterprises from other states. Similarly, another limitation was the collection of information because nowadays there is a lot of mistrust from executives to provide the information requested in the survey; many managers usually mentioned that the information needed was highly confidential and private which affected the process of obtaining the necessary information.

Finally, one of the most important limitations for the research was to find out that there are companies that have not adopted digital marketing as part of their marketing strategies or have preferred to ignore digital media and this made the collection of information difficult. Based on this, it is considered important to share the results of this research so executives or people interested in these issues know the relevance of digital marketing nowadays besides the implications in the competitiveness of enterprises. Also, it is important to invite scholars and
researchers to work deeper in the investigation, both theoretical and empirical, of digital marketing so it helps to prove its value that it has nowadays the adoption and use of digital marketing because the results obtained from this field could be very interesting and insightful for the community.

CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained in this research paper suggest the possibility of ratifying the measurement instrument in the adoption of digital marketing in enterprises in Mexico as there is enough empirical evidence to assume that the enterprises in the state have adopted digital marketing as part of their business activities since they have seen a higher effectiveness regarding the marketing that they implement in the market where they participate. Hence, it is possible to assert the importance that digital marketing is getting in business strategies of organizations as well as the unique opportunity that represent their use or application for the improvement of the competitive position of enterprises besides the favorable circumstances given for the rise of their participation in the market because the adoption of digital marketing breaks physical barriers and providing opportunities of an enterprise to local, national and international levels.

On the other hand, by analyzing the theoretical model of research of digital marketing and competitiveness in enterprises in Mexico and based on the statistical results, it is possible to conclude that it is feasible to carry out the measurement of the construct adoption of digital markers through the five dimensions and 13 items used since it has been demonstrated through the statistical process the existence of reliability of the scale and the validity of the content, construct and discriminant. Similarly, regarding the case of the construct of competitiveness, it also very feasible to measure it with the three dimensions and 16 items used as the existence of reliability was identified in the scale along with the validity of the content, construct and discriminant.

Regarding the actions that can be feasible to identify in a manager or enterprise that is willing to adopt digital marketing, it is recommended to make a previous analysis of the five dimensions used in the scale applied for this research: the ease of perceived use, external pressure and mission, labor performance, availability of resources and compatibility. About the first dimension (the ease of perceived use), the manager could analyze how easy or flexible is for him or the members of his organization to start using such strategy through internet as well as to choose from all the available tools which one is the best option for the enterprise and at the same time determine the level of enthusiasm from the top management or executives in the adoption of digital market.

Regarding the second dimension, external pressure and mission, it is considered important the analysis of the competition and the economic area of the enterprise along with the consistency of objectives, goals and values of the organization because this will determine mostly the decision of the management to adopt digital marketing. The third dimension, labor performance, means that the executive considers that this new way of marketing helps to improve the performance, productivity and effectiveness of the work done in their enterprise. On the other hand, the dimension of the availability of resources makes emphasis in the manager to determine if the enterprise has the technological conditions to carry out the adoption. The manager will have to determine if he or his personnel has the necessary skills for the implementation of a digital strategy such as the one of adopting digital marketing. Finally, the dimension of compatibility tries to match everything regarding the adoption of digital marketing with the culture and technological infrastructure of the enterprise.
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Ernst and Young (1999) *The Second Annual Ernst and Young Internet Shopping Study*. New York, NY: Ems and Young.


