

**THE FACTOR OF EFFECTIVENESS DIGITAL
CONTENT MARKETING AMONG
CONSUMER IN MALAYSIA SME FOOD AND
BEVERAGE**



NUR QHAIRUNNISHA BINTI ZAMREE

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

APPROVAL

I hereby declare that I have read this thesis research and in my opinion this thesis is sufficient in terms of scope and quality for the award of Bachelor of Technopreneurship with Honors (BTech)



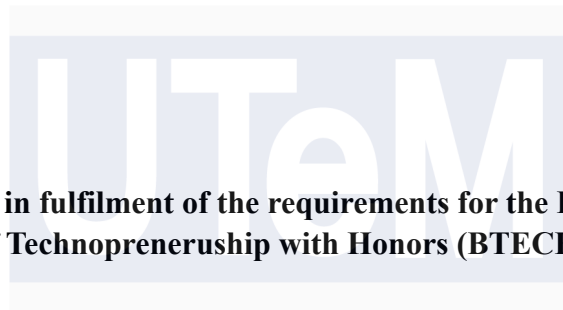
Signature :

Panel Name : DR. ASLINA BINTI SIMAN

Date : 13 FEBRUARY 2025

**THE FACTOR OF EFFECTIVENESS DIGITAL CONTENT
MARKETING AMONG CONSUMERS IN MALAYSIA SME FOOD AND
BEVERAGE**

NUR QHAIRUNNISHA BINTI ZAMREE



**Report submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor's
Degree of Technopreneurship with Honors (BTECH)**

اونيورسيتي تيكنيكل مليسيا ملاك

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship (FPTT)

Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM)

2024/2025

DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

I hereby declare that this final year project with the title

**THE FACTOR OF EFFECTIVENESS DIGITAL CONTENT
MARKETING AMONG CONSUMERS IN MALAYSIA SME FOOD AND
BEVERAGE**

Is the result with my research expert as cited in the reference

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

Signature :

Name of student : NUR QHAIRUNNISHA BINTI ZAMREE

Date : 13 FEBRUARY 2025

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Allah S.W.T, whose guidance and strength haven been my sources of motivation throughout this journey. His presence has reminded me never to give up, even in the face of challenges. I would want to express my appreciation to my cherished family as well as my friends, lecturers, and supervisor for their encouragement and support. Their constant motivation has been the driving force behind my ability to complete this study and I truly appreciate their presence in my life.

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Compassionate. Thank you for giving me the courage, health, and motivation I needed to start and complete my paper. I'd also want to thank the following people for their help and support in carrying out this research.

To begin, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to my supervisor, Sir Mukhiffun bin Mukapit, who has offered continual direction, support, and patience that has enabled me to reach this stage. I am also thankful for the support of my panel Dr. Aslina binti Siman for her advice and motivation. To my beloved family, particularly my mother Rozee binti A.Rahman, father Zamree bin Abdul Aziz, sister Fatin Aqilah and my two brother Muhammad Afiq and Muhammad Aiman. Their incredible tolerance and genuine love in supporting my journey and understanding my predicament has been incredible.

A particular recognition and thanks to all the teachers at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), from whose committed instruction and insightful lectures I have profited much and intellectually prepared for the thesis.

I would want to show my appreciation to my fellow classmates and lecturers who have always helped me out of jams and supported me without complaint. I'd also want to thank them for sharing their knowledge pearls with me throughout this task, which allowed the research to be completed swiftly. Perhaps most importantly, the writer obtained a wide range of knowledge and experience through this effort.

Last but not least, I want to thank me, I want to thank me for believing in me, I want to thank me for doing all of this hard work, I want to thank me for having no days off, I want to thank me for never quitting, I want to thank me for always being a giver and trying to give more than I received, I want to thank me for trying to do more right than wrong, I want to thank me for just being me at all times.

ABSTRAK

Keberkesanan pemasaran kandungan digital telah dikaji secara meluas secara global, namun penyelidikan terhad memfokuskan pada aplikasinya dalam PKS Malaysia, khususnya dalam sektor makanan dan minuman (F&B). Apabila pemasaran digital berkembang, PKS Malaysia menghadapi cabaran dalam memanfaatkan strategi ini untuk bersaing secara berkesan dan memupuk penglibatan pengguna.

Di sebalik pertumbuhan pemasaran digital, PKS di Malaysia bergelut untuk memaksimumkan potensinya kerana sumber yang terhad, kekurangan kepakaran dan pemahaman yang tidak mencukupi tentang kesannya terhadap tingkah laku pengguna. Jurang sedia ada dalam menilai keberkesanan pemasaran kandungan digital menimbulkan cabaran bagi PKS dalam membuat keputusan berasaskan data untuk meningkatkan interaksi pengguna dan kesedaran jenama.

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menilai keberkesanan pemasaran kandungan digital dalam kalangan pengguna PKS Malaysia dalam sektor F&B dengan menganalisis pengaruhnya terhadap kesedaran jenama, penglibatan pengguna, word-of-mouth (WOM), dan kadar penukaran. Kajian kes mengenai Empire Sushi berfungsi untuk menyerlahkan strategi yang boleh memupuk pertumbuhan dan kesetiaan pengguna.

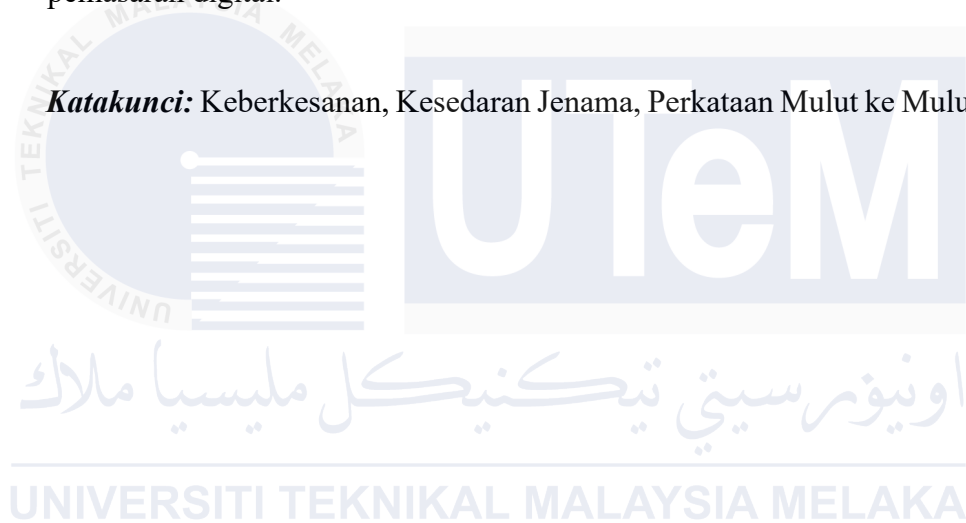
Kaedah penyelidikan kuantitatif telah digunakan, menggunakan tinjauan untuk mengumpul data utama daripada pengguna yang berinteraksi dengan usaha pemasaran digital. Analisis regresi berbilang dan kaedah statistik deskriptif digunakan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara pembolehubah bersandar dan tidak bersandar, memfokuskan pada peranan media sosial dalam tingkah laku pengguna.

Kajian itu mendapati hubungan positif antara pemasaran kandungan digital dan pembolehubah seperti kesedaran jenama, WOM, dan penglibatan pengguna. Walau bagaimanapun, hubungan negatif diperhatikan antara kadar penukaran pengguna dan strategi pemasaran digital tertentu. Penemuan ini menekankan keperluan untuk

pendekatan pemasaran yang disesuaikan dan inovatif untuk meningkatkan interaksi pengguna dan hasil perniagaan.

Kajian itu mengesyorkan agar PKS mengguna pakai strategi pemasaran digital yang komprehensif yang menekankan penceritaan yang tulen, membuat keputusan berasaskan data dan kempen yang disasarkan. Pembuat dasar juga harus memudahkan pertumbuhan PKS dengan menyediakan sumber dan latihan untuk kecekapan pemasaran digital. Penyelidikan masa depan harus meneroka teknologi baru muncul seperti kecerdasan buatan dan realiti tambahan untuk meningkatkan lagi keberkesanan pemasaran digital.

Katakunci: Keberkesanan, Kesedaran Jenama, Perkataan Mulut ke Mulut, Penukaran.



ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of digital content marketing has been extensively studied globally, yet limited research focuses on its application within Malaysian SMEs, particularly in the food and beverage (F&B) sector. As digital marketing evolves, Malaysian SMEs face challenges in leveraging these strategies to compete effectively and foster consumer engagement.

Despite the growth of digital marketing, SMEs in Malaysia struggle to maximize its potential due to limited resources, lack of expertise, and insufficient understanding of its impact on consumer behaviour. The existing gap in evaluating digital content marketing's effectiveness poses challenges for SMEs in making data-driven decisions to enhance consumer interaction and brand awareness.

This study aims to assess the effectiveness of digital content marketing among Malaysian SME consumers in the F&B sector by analyzing its influence on brand awareness, consumer engagement, word-of-mouth (WOM), and conversion rates. A case study on Empire Sushi serves to highlight strategies that can foster growth and consumer loyalty.

A quantitative research method was employed, utilizing surveys to collect primary data from consumers interacting with digital marketing efforts. Multiple regression analysis and descriptive statistical methods were applied to examine relationships between dependent and independent variables, focusing on social media's role in consumer behaviour.

The study found a positive relationship between digital content marketing and variables such as brand awareness, WOM, and consumer engagement. However, a negative relationship was observed between consumer conversion rates and certain digital marketing strategies. These findings underscore the need for tailored and innovative marketing approaches to improve consumer interaction and business outcomes.

The study recommends that SMEs adopt comprehensive digital marketing strategies that emphasize authentic storytelling, data-driven decision-making, and targeted campaigns. Policymakers should also facilitate SME growth by providing resources and training for digital marketing proficiency. Future research should explore emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and augmented reality to further enhance digital marketing effectiveness.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Brand Awareness, Engagement, WOM, Conversion.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	CONTENT	PAGES
	DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK	iv
	DEDICATION	v
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
	ABSTRAK	vii
	ABSTRACT	ix
	TABLE OF CONTENT	xi
	LIST OF TABLES	xvii
	LIST OF FIGURES	xx
	LIST OF ABBREVIATION	xxii
	LIST OF APPENDIXES	xxiii
CHAPTER 1	BACKGROUND STUDY	
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Background of The Study	1
	1.3 Problem Statement	5
	1.4 Research Question	7
	1.5 Research Objective	8
	1.6 Scope of The Study	9
	1.7 Significant of The Study	10
	1.8 Definition Key Terms	11
	1.9 Summary	13

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction	14
2.0 Concept	
2.2.1 Content Marketing's History	14
2.2.2 Digital Content Marketing (DCM)	18
2.2.3 Content Marketing as Fundamental of Digital Marketing	19
2.2.4 Social Media and Content Marketing	20
2.2.5 Small Medium Enterprise (SME)	22
2.2.6 Food & Beverages Small Medium Enterprises	27
2.2.7 Consumer	28
2.2.8 Empire Sushi	29
2.3 Concept Independent Variable	
2.3.1 Brand Awareness	32
2.3.2 Word of Mouth	36
2.3.3 Engagement	40
2.3.4 Conversion	46

2.4 Concept Dependent Variable	
2.4.1 The Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing	48
2.5 Model and Theory	54
2.6 Research framework	55
2.7 Research Hypotheses	57
2.8 Summary	57
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Introduction	58
3.2 Research Design	58
3.3 Research Methodology	
3.3.1 Quantitative Research	59
3.4 Data Collection	
3.4.1 Primary Data and Secondary Data Sources	61
3.5 Population And Sampling	62
3.5.1 Population	
3.5.2 Sampling Method	
3.5.3 Sample Size	
3.6 Location Research	67
3.7 Research Strategy	67

3.8 Survey Instruments-Questionnaire Design	68
3.8.1 Section A: Demographic Profile/Organizational Profile	
3.8.2 Section B: Factor Influenced Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SME F&B	
3.8.3 Section C: The Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SME F&B	
3.8.4 Dependent Variable and Independent Variables	
3.9 Data Analysis	71
3.9.1 Descriptive Analysis	
3.10 Pilot Test	73
3.11 Reliability	74
3.12 Validity	79
3.13 Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	80
3.14 Multiple Regression Analysis	80
3.15 Statistical Package For Social Scientists (SPSS)	81
3.16 Summary	81
CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	
4.1 Introduction	82
4.2 Reliability Analysis	82
4.3 Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Background	84

4.4 Descriptive Statistics on Dependent Variable and Independent Variable	91
4.5 Normality Test	101
4.6 Validity Test	106
4.7 Multiple Regression Analysis (Model Summary)	108
4.7.1 Anova	110
4.8 Hypothesis	117
4.9 Summary	118
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	
5.1 Introduction	118
5.2 Summary of Study	118
5.3 Discussion on the Demographic Background	119
5.4 Discussion on Research Objective	120
5.5 Discussion on Hypothesis Testing	128
5.6 Implication of Study	130
5.7 Limitation of Research	132
5.8 Recommendation for Research Study	133
5.9 Summary	135
REFERENCE	137
APPENDIX A	153

APPENDIX B	154
APPENDIX C	156
APPENDIX D	170



LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	TITLE	PAGES
2.1	SME definitions (SMIDEC, 2004)	24
2.2	Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) of Manufacturing Sector in Malaysia	27
2.3	SMEs share in the Manufacturing Sector by Sub-sector	28
2.4	Phases in Social Media Measurement Process	51
3.1	5-Point Likert Scale	71
3.2	Variables Measured	71
3.3	Mean Score	73
3.4	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Range	74
3.5	Reliability Statistics for Independent Variable 1 (Brand Awareness)	75
3.6	Reliability Statistics for Independent Variable 2 (Word of mouth)	75
3.7	Reliability Statistics for Independent Variable 3 (Engagement)	76

3.8	Reliability Statistics for Independent Variable 4 (Conversion)	77
3.9	Reliability Statistics for Dependent Variable (the effectiveness of digital content marketing)	78
3.10	Reliability Statistics for All Items (Overall)	78
3.11	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	80
3.12	Equation of Multiple Regression Analysis	81
4.1	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	83
	Range	
4.2	Reliability Analysis of Each Variable	83
4.3	Reliability Statistics for All Items (Overall)	84
4.4	Total Respondents	85
4.5	Frequency and Percentage of Gender	85
4.6	Frequency and Percentage of Age	86
4.7	Frequency and Percentage of Race	88
4.8	Frequency and Percentage of Highest educational level	89

4.9	Frequency and Percentage of respondent's experiences	90
4.10	Descriptive Analysis Independent Variables and Dependent Variable	91
4.11	Descriptive Statistics of Brand Awareness (BA)	92
4.12	Descriptive Statistics of Word of Mouth (WOM)	94
4.13	Descriptive Statistics of Engagement	96
4.14	Descriptive Statistics of Conversion (C)	98
4.15	Descriptive Statistics of the effectiveness of digital content marketing	100
4.16	Results of Normality Test	102
4.17	Range of Pearson's Correlation Coefficients and the Interpretation	106
4.18	Correlations between variables	106
4.19	Model Summary of Multiple Regression	108
4.20	ANOVA Table	109
4.21	Coefficients Table	111
4.22	Summary of Hypothesis Testing	116
5.1	Summary of Hypothesis Testing	128

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES	TITLE	PAGES
1.1	Worldwide social media users (2017-2025)	2
1.2	Daily time spent on social networking by internet users worldwide from 2012 to 2024 (in minutes)	3
2.1	The history of content marketing.	18
2.2	Key dimensions of content marketing	20
2.3	4I's Customer Engagement Components	44
2.4	Social media measurement process	50
2.5	Research Framework	56
3.1	Location of Empire Sushi in Melaka	67
4.1	The Pie Chart of Respondent's Gender	86
4.2	The Pie Chart of Respondent's Age	87
4.3	The Pie Chart of Respondent's Race	88
4.4	The Pie Chart of Respondent's Education level	89
4.5	The Pie Chart of Respondent's Experience Status	90
4.6	Distribution curve for Independent Variable 1 (Brand Awareness)	103

4.7	Distribution curve for Independent Variable 2 (Word-of-Mouth)	104
4.8	Distribution curve for Independent Variable 3 (Engagement)	104
4.9	Distribution curve for Independent Variable 4 (Conversion)	105
4.10	Distribution curve for Dependent Variable (Effectiveness of DCM)	105

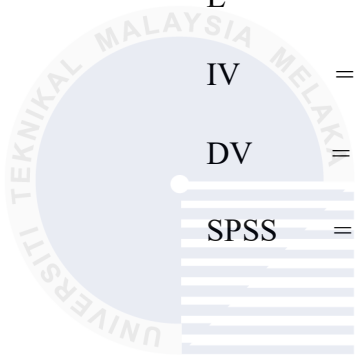


اونيورسيتي تيكنيكل مليسيا ملاك

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CM	= CONTENT MARKETING
SME	= SMALL, MEDIUM AND ENTERPRISE
DCM	= DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING
F&B	= FOOD AND BEVERAGE
BA	= BRAND AWARENESS
WOM	= WORD-OF-MOUTH
E	= ENGAGEMENT
IV	= INDEPENDENT VARIABLE
DV	= DEPENDENT VARIABLE
SPSS	= STATISTICAL PROGRAMME FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES



اونيورسيتي تيكنيكل مليسيا ملاك

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

LIST OF APPENDIX

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGES
A	Population and Sample Size	153
B	Gantt Chart Final Year Project I	154
C	Survey Questionnaire	156
D	Turnitin Result	170



اونيورسيتي تېكنيكل مليسيا ملاك

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The goal of Chapter One is to provide readers with a basic overview of the research. This chapter would provide readers with broad information about the study as well as help them grasp the entire research environment. Readers will also benefit from the issue description, research purpose, research questions, and importance of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the present day, a successful marketing plan must effectively communicate the desired destination of a corporation. Over time, marketing strategy is often referred to as an ongoing process. Marketing strategy refers to a corporation's strategic approach to achieving its commercial objectives. The objectives inside a commercial organisation (Francis Mbah Takwi, 2020). Derived from the conventional Methods for digital marketing. Occasionally, relying only on conventional methods may not provide favourable outcomes in enticing and convincing consumers within the desired market. Business is affected as a result of it. The organisation has begun to use a hybrid approach, which involves implementing both conventional methods(Emily Pribanic, 2020).

Social media marketing is widely used and growing globally in today's digital environment. In 2020, about 3.6 billion people worldwide utilized social media, expected to increase to 4.41 billion by 2025 (Statista Research Department, 2021).

Figure 1.1 depicts the numerical data. F&B companies often use social media sites, including TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. In less than a decade, subscriptions have significantly increased, leading to a large user base (Timilsina, 2017). Despite the pandemic's issues, Malaysian SMEs generated 38% of the local GDP in 2020, adding over RM500 million to the economy. Over 50 million businesses have Facebook profiles, and 88% use Twitter to promote their branding (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Instagram is a famous social networking software that enables users to quickly record, customise, and share photos with their followers (Middeltesch, 2017). Social media's superior technology enables unfettered communication among people and companies to connect and engage with customers. The F&B business relies heavily on social media for branding and marketing. Thus, it is essential to assess its impact on customer perception (Appel et al, 2019).

Figure 1.1 Worldwide social media users (2017-2025)



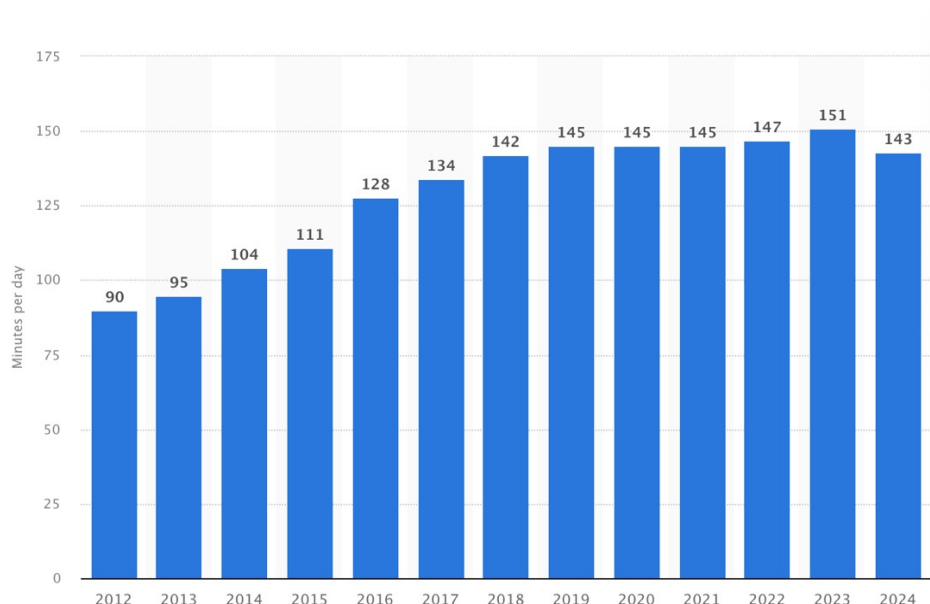
Source: Statista Research Department (2021). Number of social media users 2025.

Social media has become an essential part of regular Internet usage. According to Figure 1.2, internet users spend an average of 144 minutes daily on social media. Communication applications have increased by more than a half hour since 2015. The impact of social media user-generated data on consumer decision-making is evident, as shown by several market research studies. As a consequence,

researchers have observed how the influence of social media has enabled many F&B businesses to use several media contact points to create their brands (Perumal et al., 2017). Since consumers are more likely to share their experiences on social media, companies may understand what customers expect from the services they give using social media marketing. Research has revealed that F&B firms increasingly utilize social media to get customer feedback to improve their operations while also functioning as an information platform for Malaysian consumers (Perumal et al., 2017).

Furthermore, prospective customers lately relied on information gathered from social media, such as uploaded photographs, "share" buttons, "like" buttons, and comments, when choosing a restaurant (Li et al., 2019). Consumers may use the Global Positioning System (GPS) or "check-in" functionalities to identify restaurants, read reviews, and gather nutritional information since they often use social media (Li et al., 2019). These capabilities on social media platforms help to bridge the gap between the real world and online social networks by linking F&B businesses with consumers.

Figure 1.2 Daily time spent on social networking by internet users worldwide from 2012 to 2024 (in minutes)



Source: Statista Research Department. (2024). Daily-Social-Media-Usage Worldwide. Statist

The selection of Sushi Empire as a study subject in this thesis is driven by its significant position as a benchmark in the global food and beverage (F&B) industry, specifically within the niche of Japanese cuisine. Established as a leading brand, Empire Sushi exemplifies success through a combination of cultural authenticity, innovative strategies, and effective adaptation to diverse markets.

Empire Sushi operates in a competitive environment characterized by rapid globalization and shifting consumer preferences. The brand's ability to balance traditional Japanese culinary techniques with localized menu adaptations has contributed to its widespread appeal. This adaptability is a key factor in studying its operational model and marketing strategies. Moreover, Empire Sushi's sustainable sourcing practices, customer-focused innovation, and strategic location choices offer valuable insights into modern business operations within the F&B sector.

This study aims to analyse Empire Sushi's growth trajectory, exploring the dynamics of its strategic planning, cultural influence, and market adaptability. As a case study, it provides an ideal framework to evaluate how businesses can thrive in culturally diverse and competitive environments. The findings are anticipated to serve as a reference for other businesses seeking to replicate such success while maintaining cultural integrity and sustainability.

The choice of Empire Sushi is also motivated by its relevance to current discussions on globalization, cultural preservation, and consumer behaviour. Its global presence and adherence to high standards in both food quality and customer service make it a compelling subject for academic exploration and industry application. By understanding the factors that contribute to Empire Sushi's success, this study hopes to uncover actionable strategies applicable across various industries.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The rapid digitalization of consumer behaviour has significantly increased the relevance of digital content marketing, particularly in Malaysia's food and beverage (F&B) industry. However, many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including those in the F&B sector, struggle to fully leverage the potential of digital marketing platforms, such as social media, email, and mobile applications, to increase consumer engagement and brand visibility. This issue is compounded by a lack of consumer awareness about SMEs, which stems from ineffective or underutilized digital marketing strategies. Previous research highlights the transformative power of digital marketing in shaping consumer behaviour, with social media marketing emerging as a critical factor in influencing purchasing decisions (Lamichhane, 2022).

Regarding the promotional mix, Empire Sushi advertises mainly on social media such as Facebook and Instagram. The company probably chooses these types of media as it allows them to reach a wider public audience. From the way the company promotes itself, we can say that it has chosen the differentiated strategy channel, whereby Empire Sushi aims to achieve brand association through the unique sushi-on-the-go brand image ("Sushi Empress", 2020).

The Malaysian market, marked by growing internet penetration and widespread social media adoption, provides an ideal setting for SMEs to employ digital content marketing as a cost-effective and impactful approach. Studies, such as those by Haryani Haron et al. (2020), emphasize that digital marketing enables SMEs to enhance brand loyalty, improve customer retention, and expand their market reach through compelling storytelling, visually engaging content, and interactive consumer engagement on platforms like Facebook and Instagram. However, the effectiveness of these strategies heavily relies on SMEs' ability to consistently create high-quality content and analyze consumer data to refine their approaches.

Despite the increasing adoption of digital marketing by SMEs, there remains a knowledge gap regarding its true impact on consumer behaviour and business success. This gap is critical as SMEs, constrained by limited resources, require

tangible evidence of return on investment to justify marketing expenditures. Additionally, the dynamic nature of consumer behaviour in the digital era shaped by social media trends, online reviews, and digital advertising demands a deeper understanding of how these factors interact to drive brand awareness, engagement, and conversions.

To address this gap, this study focuses on Empire Sushi, a prominent Malaysian SME in the F&B industry, as a case study to assess the effectiveness of digital content marketing strategies. Empire Sushi represents a unique blend of traditional Japanese cuisine and innovative digital marketing approaches, making it an exemplary subject for understanding how SMEs can thrive in competitive and digitally driven marketplaces.

This study aims to explore the relationship between brand awareness, consumer engagement, word-of-mouth, and conversion rates as key indicators of digital marketing effectiveness. By examining the digital marketing practices of Empire Sushi, this research seeks to identify optimal strategies that can enhance marketing outcomes, foster long-term customer relationships, and improve business sustainability. Moreover, the findings will not only provide actionable insights for Empire Sushi but also serve as a practical guide for other Malaysian SMEs in the F&B sector, empowering them to navigate the complexities of digital marketing and achieve sustained growth.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What is the impact of digital content marketing on increasing brand awareness among consumer in Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector?
2. What is the impact of digital content marketing on word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing behaviour among consumers in Empire Sushi?
3. What are the primary factors that affect the level of consumer engagement with digital content marketing campaigns carried out by Empire Sushi?
4. What is the correlation between digital content marketing efforts and conversion rates or sales performance for Empire Sushi?



1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

1. To examine the relationship between digital content marketing and brand awareness among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.
2. To analyse the impact of digital content marketing on word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing among Empire Sushi's customers.
3. To assess how digital content marketing tactics influence consumer engagement for Empire Sushi.
4. To evaluate the role of digital content marketing in driving conversion rates and sales for Empire Sushi.



1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of digital content marketing (DCM) among consumers of Malaysian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) sector. Specifically, the study focuses on Empire Sushi, a Malaysian SME known for its innovative approaches to digital marketing and its ability to bridge traditional Japanese cuisine with contemporary marketing strategies. By narrowing the focus to Empire Sushi, this study provides a more practical and detailed analysis of DCM's role in shaping consumer behaviour.

The primary respondents for this research are customers who engage with Empire Sushi through digital platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. This focus allows for a more targeted examination of how consumer participation, brand awareness, and engagement are influenced by DCM strategies. The selection of social media platforms aligns with current trends in consumer behaviour, where visual content and interactive engagement play a critical role in decision-making processes.

This study is confined to the Malaysian market, emphasizing the unique challenges and opportunities faced by SMEs in the local F&B industry. The research identifies four (4) key factors influencing the effectiveness of DCM strategies: brand awareness, consumer engagement, word-of-mouth, and conversion rates. These factors are analysed within the context of social media and e-commerce platforms, which are increasingly essential for advertising and customer interaction.

By focusing on the specific case of Empire Sushi, this research seeks to contribute actionable insights for policymakers, future researchers, and SME consumer in the F&B sector. The findings aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the objectives and potential of digital content marketing initiatives, particularly in leveraging social media trends to enhance business performance. This focused approach ensures that the study remains aligned with its objectives and delivers practical outcomes for the industry.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Digital content marketing has become a cornerstone of modern marketing strategies, offering businesses an effective way to engage with consumers in the digital age. For Empire Sushi, a brand striving to maintain a competitive edge in Malaysia's food and beverage market, understanding the factors contributing to the effectiveness of digital content marketing is crucial. This study explores these factors, aiming to uncover how specific strategies, tools, and content types resonate with consumers, drive engagement, and influence purchasing decisions.

As consumers increasingly rely on digital platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to discover and interact with brands, businesses must optimize their digital marketing efforts to meet these evolving preferences. Visual and interactive content, such as photos, videos, and user-generated posts, has proven effective in capturing attention and fostering emotional connections with audiences. By focusing on Empire Sushi's unique brand identity and consumer demographics, this study seeks to identify actionable insights that can enhance its digital marketing campaigns and build stronger relationships with its customers.

The findings of this research are expected to benefit not only Empire Sushi but also other small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia's food and beverage sector. By highlighting the importance of tailored content strategies, the study can guide businesses in creating compelling campaigns that align with their brand values and consumer expectations. Furthermore, it emphasizes the role of innovative platforms like TikTok in reaching new audiences, fostering engagement, and driving growth.

For policymakers and industry stakeholders, the study underscores the importance of fostering a supportive digital ecosystem. Encouraging the adoption of cost-effective digital marketing tools and providing access to essential resources such as mobile data, devices, and training can empower SMEs to thrive in a digital-first economy. Additionally, the study highlights the need for businesses to stay agile and adaptive to emerging trends in digital content marketing, ensuring they remain competitive in a rapidly changing market.

Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on digital marketing, providing a framework for businesses like Empire Sushi to optimize their marketing efforts. By understanding the factors that influence consumer behavior and engagement with digital content, businesses can craft strategies that not only enhance brand visibility but also foster lasting connections with their target audience.

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

This study revolves around the effectiveness of digital content marketing within the Malaysian food and beverage (F&B) industry, with a particular focus on **Empire Sushi**, a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) renowned for its innovative use of social media and digital marketing strategies. Below are the key terms used in this research, contextualized to align with Empire Sushi's operations and marketing practices:

1. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

According to SME Corp. Malaysia (2013), SMEs in the manufacturing sector are defined as businesses with a sales turnover not exceeding RM50 million or less than 200 full-time employees. For the services sector, which includes Empire Sushi, SMEs are characterized by a sales turnover below RM20 million and a workforce of fewer than 75 employees. Empire Sushi fits this category as a growing local business with a specialized focus on Japanese cuisine in the F&B industry.

2. Food and Beverage (F&B) Industry

As outlined by SME Corp. Malaysia, the F&B industry is categorized under manufacturing and services, encompassing businesses of varying sizes micro, small, and medium. Empire Sushi operates within this subsector, offering high-quality sushi products that cater to Malaysian tastes while maintaining Japanese authenticity.

3. Effectiveness

Effectiveness in this study refers to the degree to which Empire Sushi's digital content marketing efforts achieve their intended outcomes, such as increased brand visibility, consumer engagement, and improved sales. This is aligned with the definition by Oxford Dictionaries, where effectiveness signifies the success of achieving anticipated result.

4. Social Media

Social media, as defined by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), includes platforms built on Web 2.0 technology that enable users to create and share content. For Empire Sushi, platforms like Instagram and TikTok are critical in engaging customers through visually appealing content and interactive marketing campaigns, fostering brand loyalty and consumer engagement.

5. Digital Content Marketing (DCM)

Digital content marketing, as per kunocreative.com, involves creating, publishing, and distributing relevant content to attract and engage a specific audience. Empire Sushi leverages this approach to strengthen its brand identity by sharing high-quality visuals, storytelling, and promotional campaigns, primarily through social media channels.

6. Word-of-Mouth (WOM/eWOM)

Word-of-mouth communication refers to the sharing of personal experiences and opinions about a product or service. For Empire Sushi, e-WOM through customer reviews, social media shares, and online recommendations plays a significant role in enhancing its reputation and attracting new customers.

7. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness relates to the extent to which Empire Sushi captures consumer attention and establishes a recognizable identity. By consistently

delivering creative and culturally relevant content, Empire Sushi aims to strengthen its connection with customers and stand out in the competitive F&B market.

8. Engagement

Engagement in this context refers to Empire Sushi's ability to interact meaningfully with its audience on digital platforms, encouraging participation and fostering a sense of community. This is achieved through campaigns, live interactions, and personalized content that resonate with consumers.

9. Creativity

Creativity is essential for Empire Sushi's marketing success. It encompasses innovative ideas in content creation, such as unique visual designs, culturally inspired campaigns, and compelling storytelling that appeals to diverse consumer segments.

10. Conversions

In the digital marketing context, conversions represent the desired actions taken by Empire Sushi's target audience, such as making purchases, subscribing to updates, or engaging with content. This is a critical metric for evaluating the effectiveness of its digital marketing efforts.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter's goal is to provide readers with an in-depth analysis and explanation of the concepts and gaps in the selected topic. The readers will understand the goal that the research is trying to accomplish. Additionally, there are phrases and keywords that readers may find helpful. In a nutshell, readers learn how digital content marketing, particularly marketing initiatives, may help Malaysian SMEs thrive in the future.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The second chapter will focus on prior studies linked to this study. This chapter will discuss relevant definitions, ideas, and theories for this investigation. The discussion of this research will begin with a review of previous studies, ranging from broad to specialized. The vast breadth starts with the history of the internet and social media as platforms for digital content marketing. The following section discusses SMEs in Malaysia's food and beverage sector.

Previous research on digital content marketing on social media will be discussed, along with variables that impact its effectiveness among consumer in Malaysia SME F&B. These variables include brand awareness, engagement, word-of-mouth (WOM) and conversion. By centering the discussion on **Empire Sushi**, this chapter aims to bridge gaps in understanding the role of DCM in driving business success. The chapter begins with an overview of fundamental concepts such as DCM, brand awareness, and engagement, followed by a review of relevant studies. The chapter concludes by identifying research gaps specific to SMEs in Malaysia.

2.2 CONCEPT

2.2.1 CONTENT MARKETING'S HISTORY

The printing machine, invented by Johannes Gutenberg in 1440, led to the creation of promotional brochures and pamphlets, which is how the history of content marketing began in the 1900s. The book "Poor Richard's Almanack,"

written by Benjamin Franklin in 1732, served as an advertisement for his Flourishing printing business (Franklin, 2004). The corporate journal "The Locomotive," which is being published today under the same name, had its debut in 1867 at the Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Corporate. This tactic was most successfully used in 1895 when agricultural equipment maker John Deere started publishing "The Furrow." The journal was started with the intention of helping farmers improve their companies by offering advice (coppypress.com, 2022). However the depth of the magazine's substance wasn't the only factor in its appeal. People were also captivated by the intriguing tales in it. Millions of readers had perused The Furrow by the year 2000. Over 550,000 copies of The Furrow are still in print as of 2015 (Loredana Patrutiu Baltes).

John Deere set the example immediately, and other businesses swiftly followed, notably the French tire manufacturer Michelin. In 1900, they published The Michelin Guide, a prominent journal with travel and auto repair tips (today primarily renowned as a restaurant guide). Even though there weren't many cars at the time, Michelin took a gamble when they predicted that articles like theirs would encourage more people to buy cars, drive, and wear out their tires. In the 1900s, specialized consumer publications like Popular Mechanics, Advertising World, and Architecture Magazine grew in popularity. According to Guide Michelin (2009), these periodicals targeted particular demographics, giving businesses their first chance to place customized adverts. A well-known illustration of this is the Jell-O advertisements in "Ladies Home Journal." Newspaper ads for Jell-O primarily targeted homemakers with recipes for delicious sweets made with the product. Because they could appeal to their target audience with information that would be useful to them, Jello-O's sales rose as a consequence of this campaign (Keyser, 2013).

A whole new age of content marketing began with radio's ascent to prominence as a communication tool. An early example of this was Sears-Roebuck and Company, which bought airtime to provide the agricultural community with helpful information. The marketing was so successful for Sears that in 1924, the company started its radio station, WLS (World's Largest Store). The station provided considerably more than just agricultural tips. In addition, there was comedy, music,

community service, and other entertainment. In 1933, Proctor & Gamble sponsored "Oxydol's Own Ma Perkins," a radio serial drama about their new soap product. The target audience for the daytime radio program was women. Proctor & Gamble used the term "soap opera" to describe this kind of program. The most well-known instance of radio content marketing occurred on Halloween night in 1938 when actor Orson Welles announced to listeners throughout the nation that an alien invasion was occurring in New Jersey. A sizable number of viewers of the show thought the narrative was real. However, the show's real goal was to generate a large audience and advertise the radio station (CBS), not to cause mass panic. It also functioned! The show was the subject of more than 12,000 articles, which contributed to CBS Radio becoming a household name (Content Marketing Institute, 2016).

The 1940s and 1950s are seen as a declining age for content marketing. This was mainly caused by the growth of advertising, which monopolized all primary media forms and left little room for more appropriate content marketing strategies (not to mention World War II propaganda). One exception is the rise of kid-friendly cereals. Marketers believed that the best way to reach youngsters was to create adorable animal mascots and eye-catching packaging. Tony the Tiger and Trix the Rabbit were, therefore, born. By helping kids form an emotional connection with their cereal, this technique helped parents remember it better. The fact that cartoon characters are still promoting sugary cereal by the bowlful is proof that this tactic was a huge success (Content Marketing Institute, 2016).

Most Americans had a television by the 1960s (The American Century, 2022). This contributed to the creation of the multi-channel marketing campaign that is still used in modern content marketing. Multi-channel marketing allows brands to reach a broader audience on several channels with the same message. Among the most successful instances of this was the oil and gas company Exxon. The slogan "Put a tiger in your tank" was used to launch a marketing campaign in the early 1960s, suggesting that Exxon petrol would give your car the strength of a tiger.

Put a tiger in your tank became associated with Exxon thanks to the company's marketing campaign on radio, television, and print media (Matthew Speiser, 2020). Exxon's popularity surged as a result, and they started selling car accessories with

tigers as the motif. Exxon set the example for other companies, who discovered that launching a multichannel campaign was more economical than launching solitary initiatives on several channels. Even in this day and age, multi-channel content marketing is still widely used, but with far more sophisticated strategies (more on that later) (Content Marketing Institute, 2016).

In the 1980s, comic book heroes were introduced as a powerful kind of content marketing. Comics from Marvel and DC were adapted from action toys like G.I. Joe and Spiderman. For a generation of children, the content helped to bring the toys to life, creating a deep bond that has persisted to this day (as seen by the deluge of superhero movies). Another toy company that has joined the content war is LEGO. Naturally, "The Lego Movie" was LEGO's greatest content marketing accomplishment. In 1987, they launched its Brick Kicks magazine, which included product pricing, cartoons, games, competitions, modelling instructions, and more. All of these elements contributed to the brand's increased consumer accessibility. The most notable change to the content marketing landscape happened in the 1990s with the introduction of personal computers and internet use. As a result, websites and email were created, providing marketers with exciting new possibilities. Many companies switched from allocating funds for television and radio advertising to websites and email newsletters—a practice that is now known as digital marketing. "Content marketing" was coined in 1996 at a journalism conference by John F. Oppedahl. This led to the development of what we now refer to as "modern" content marketing and gave a name to an approach that had been used for hundreds of years (Loredana et al., 2015).

Social media, search engine optimization (SEO), and multi-channel marketing have all converged in the area of content marketing during the past two decades. The main channels via which businesses connect with their clients are now Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and a number of other sites (JM. Guedes, 2021). Consequently, very advanced methods for creating and sharing material have emerged. Companies discovered how to adapt their content for different mediums. Companies were more creative and nimble in their approaches to content marketing at the same time in an effort to set themselves apart from rivals (Content Marketing Institute, 2016).

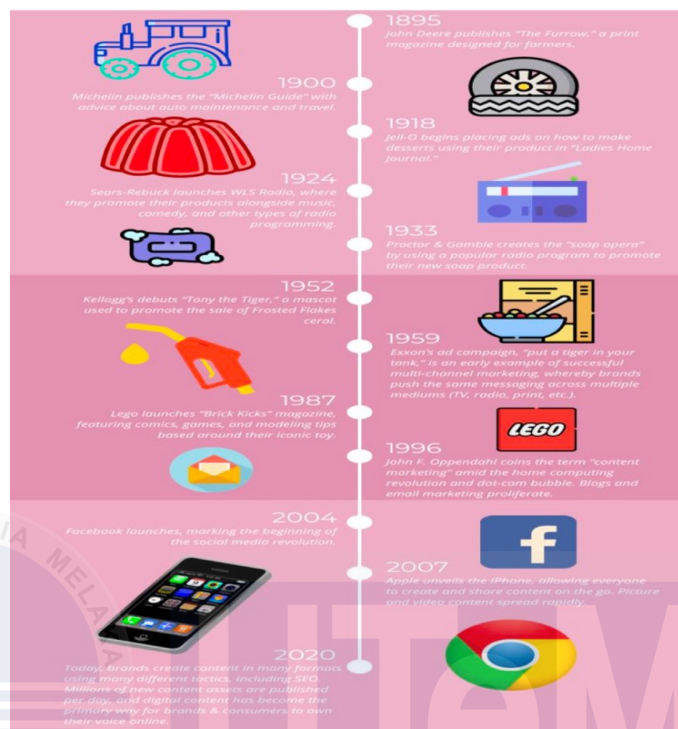


Figure 2.1: The history of content marketing.

Source: *Content Marketing and Content strategy: A Sprint to the Past*. (n.d.).

Www.linkedin.com. Retrieved April 19, 2024, from

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/contentmarketing-startegy-sprint-past-araoluwa-ogundairo?trk=pulse-article_more-articles_relatedcontent-card.

2.2.2 DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING (DCM)

DCM is defined as the strategic creation and distribution of content to attract and retain a targeted audience (Kunocreative.com). For SMEs like Empire Sushi, DCM involves leveraging platforms such as Instagram and TikTok to engage customers and enhance brand recognition. Empire Sushi's success in this area illustrates how tailored digital strategies can align with consumer behaviour in the digital age.

Even though the content marketing strategies used by LEGO, JELL-O, and EXXON have been successful in providing consumers with knowledge about their products, they have undergone constant modification. The same holds for customers. The world has changed significantly over the last century, bringing

about changes in consumer behaviour, decision making, and the channels people use to purchase certain products and services. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google, Instagram, websites/blogs, multimedia advertising, emails, and LinkedIn are among the digital media channels and platforms that, according to the poll, directly influence customer behaviour and purchase choices (Unenabasi Godwin Ekeruke, 2020). Additionally, a significant proportion of B2C marketers express confidence in their usage of content marketing (CM), with over 75% stating that their companies employ CM incredibly, very, or reasonably well (Content Marketing Institute, 2020).

Nevertheless, the landscape of digital marketing is constantly shifting. Phelps et al. (2020) emphasise the importance of omnichannel marketing, which combines digital and offline channels to deliver a seamless customer experience. Research by Phelps et al. (2020) highlights the importance of omnichannel marketing, combining digital and offline channels to create a seamless customer experience.

This approach aligns with Empire Sushi's strategy of integrating online promotions with in-store experiences, allowing customers to connect with the brand across multiple touchpoints. McCaffrey (2019) emphasises the importance of authenticity and transparency in digital marketing operations. Customers increasingly prefer authentic information and relationships over intrusive advertising.

2.2.3 CONTENT MARKETING AS FUNDAMENTAL OF DIGITAL MARKETING

According to a recent post by Danny Sheperd (2021), content marketing and digital marketing are exceptionally compatible and effective when used together as a marketing strategy in the present day. These two methods are mutually complementary, like the relationship between a bed and breakfast. Replicate the content by duplicating and transferring it. Pam and Jim. They are an exemplary couple.

Undoubtedly remarkable. The rapid growth of communication technology has ushered the entire world into the digital era. As a result, many profit-making companies have expressed a desire to remain competitive (Patruti Baltes L. 2015). As stated by Halligan and Shah (2010), content marketing involves producing valuable material that addresses the demands of potential consumers actively seeking information about a particular product or service. Material marketing can be categorized based on the material's delivery method to the intended audience. The content marketing critical dimension model consists of three primary dimensions.

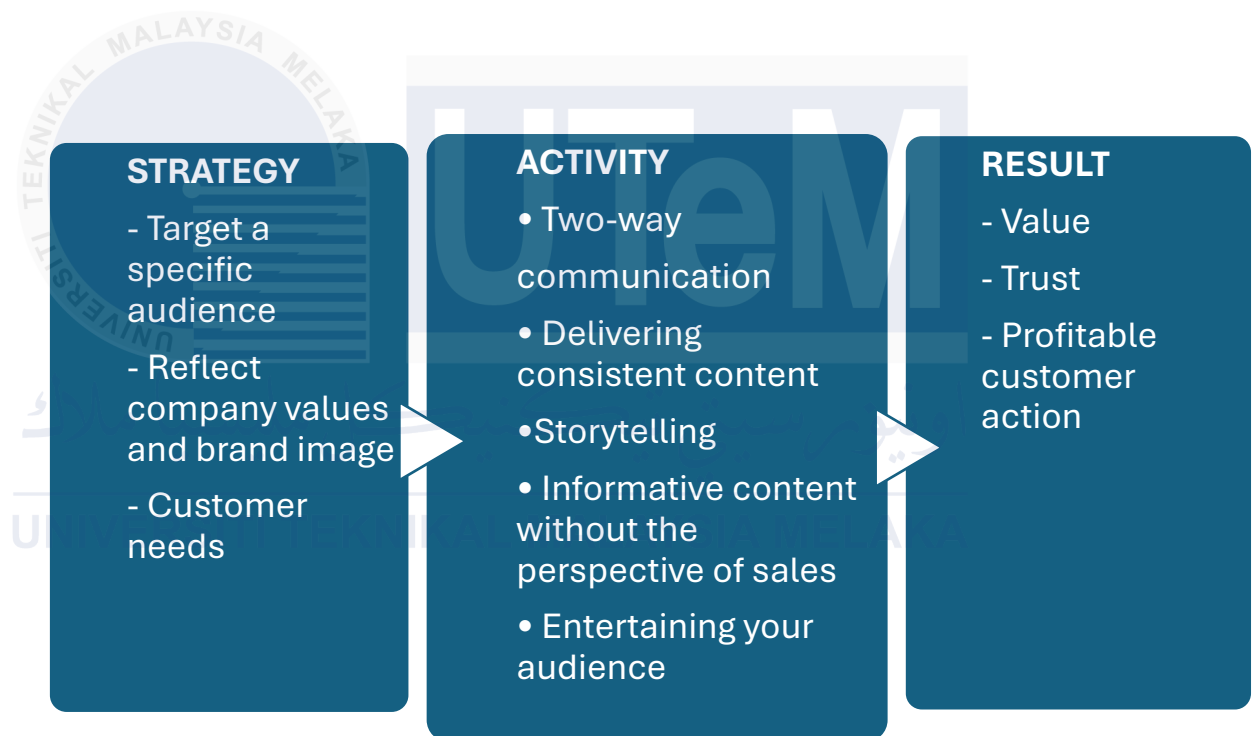


Figure 2.2 : Key dimensions of content marketing

2.2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONTENT MARKETING

Social media marketing has introduced new vocabulary and revived old concepts and practices. Content marketing has regained popularity as a trendy term in marketing circles. However, it now carries a different connotation. There is a consensus that consumers are gaining more power and influence. They now have higher expectations for professionalism and integrity in advertising. They prefer to

be presented with verifiable facts instead of being treated condescendingly. (Legorburu, J., & McColl, D. , 2014).

Perumal, K. (2017) asserts that every F&B firm requires an information platform to interact with existing and prospective clientele effectively. Social media platforms facilitate information sharing among individuals, making it imperative for F&B companies to update their social media sites with the latest information consistently. Numerous organizations employ social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

Ilangovan Perumal (2017) proposes that F&B firms can effectively generate brand visibility within a brief timeframe and at a minimal expense by utilizing social media, namely through word-of-mouth. The strong association between brand awareness and the utilization of social media as a marketing channel in the F&B industry indicates that F&B companies should consider the importance of brand recognition.

Small business owners often need to pay more attention to low-cost marketing choices, such as social media marketing (Castronovo, C. & Huang, L. 2012). Low-cost marketing strategies are crucial for small enterprises to stay competitive in a broader market (Perry, 2014). According Atwong, C. T. (2015), social media advertising is often used by business owners to engage with customers. Small businesses can attract customers by offering engaging content on their websites. According to Jara, Parra, and Skarmeta (2014), company owners must strike a balance between satisfying customer demands and enhancing their enterprises in order to stay competitive in the market. Social media is described as a bidirectional marketing process that involves active customer connection, engagement, participation, and interaction. *Social media* is defined as a bidirectional marketing process that involves active consumer connection, engagement, involvement, and interaction. According to Wang (2021, p. 1), interactive marketing is evolving to enhance client engagement and interaction. Nathan (2012) posits that viral content functions as an exceptionally efficacious mechanism to expand an individual's subjective perspective on previous experiences. The individual puts forth a hypothesis positing that the reason individuals share viral content is because it

"embodies or reveals an experience of pleasure that we could never have imagined." While brand researchers generally concur that fostering a sense of community on social media platforms increases brand loyalty and trust, opinions remain divided regarding the most effective strategies to accomplish this (Laroche et al., 2013).

Content marketing serves the purpose of "establishing connections with users and cultivating customer relationships," as opposed to merely disseminating information regarding new products and promotions (Hillebrand, 2014, p. 9). Social media applications, including Facebook, are classified as social networking sites due to the significant degree of social presence, self-presentation, and self-disclosure exhibited by users. Conversely, social media content communities include Flickr and YouTube, where users share images, videos, and other forms of media but are classified as such due to their lower levels of visibility and disclosure. Conversely, a social media content community is more concerned with information than with peers on a social networking site. Users sharing media content is the principal objective of social media content communities, which provide content producers with increased flexibility in producing and disseminating content across various networks (Thompson, 2011, p. 463).

2.2.5 SMALL MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (SME)

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are essential assets and a significant driving force for the country's economy. SMEs in Malaysia constitute the most important share of enterprises, accounting for 98.5%. They also provide a substantial contribution to the country's GDP, amounting to 37.1%, and are responsible for employing 66% of the workforce (SME Corporation Malaysia, 2018). Hence, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) must achieve both favourable commercial expansion and sustained long-term viability. However, despite the positive impact on the economy and individuals, the growth of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia is perceived as limited and sluggish. This is seen in the annual increase of SME employment as a percentage of total jobs, with an average increment of 0.73% every year. This growth can be attributed to the rising number of SMEs in Malaysia (HRDF, 2019).

Shepherd and Wiklund (2009) conducted a review of studies on firms' growth and found that the owner's well-being is a crucial factor. The variation in costs can differ among firms, contingent upon the industry and the nature of the enterprises. However, they share specific characteristics, such as the goal of generating profit and the aspiration to have a significant effect in their particular market by offering their products. This demonstrates that the wellbeing of business owners directly stimulates growth in the operation of the company. While there has been some progress in the study of the relationship between well-being and company growth, it remains a topic that needs to be addressed in the literature. Consequently, there needs to be more knowledge on the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and the obstacles to their development continue to persist. This study acknowledges that in addition to the essential requirement of increasing SME enterprises, it is crucial to examine the well-being of business owners in order to enhance the potential for their business growth.

SME Corp. Malaysia provides the prevailing definition for SMEs in Malaysia, which is based on the number of employees and total sales income in a year (SME Corp. Malaysia, 2016) (Table 2.1). Furthermore, Malaysia's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are categorised as micro, small, or medium-sized, depending on the number of employees or the annual sales or revenue generated by the business (Hashim, M. K., & Abdullah, M. S. (2000)

Table 2.1 : SME definitions (SMIDEC, 2004)

	Manufacturing, manufacturing related services & agro based		Services, primary agriculture & information and communication	
	Employees	Sales turnover (RM)	Employees	Sales turnover (RM)
Micro enterprises	< 5	< 250,000	< 5	< 200,000
Small enterprises	5-50	250,000-10mil	5-19	200,000-1mil
Medium enterprises	51-150	10ml-25mil	20-50	1mil-5mil

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are essential assets and a significant driving force for the country's economy. SMEs in Malaysia constitute the most important share of enterprises, accounting for 98.5%. They also provide a substantial contribution to the country's GDP, amounting to 37.1%, and are responsible for employing 66% of the workforce (SME Corporation Malaysia, 2018). Within the F&B sector, SMEs like Empire Sushi face unique challenges, including limited resources and the need for innovation to compete in a saturated market. Empire Sushi stands out by blending traditional Japanese cuisine with local flavours, supported by effective digital marketing strategies. Hence, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) must achieve both favourable commercial expansion and sustained long-term viability. However, despite the positive impact on the economy and individuals, the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia is perceived as limited and sluggish. This is seen in the annual increase of SME employment as a percentage of total jobs, with an average increment of 0.73% every year. This growth can be attributed to the rising number of SMEs in Malaysia (HRDF, 2019). The F&B sector accounts for 15.1% of SMEs in Malaysia's manufacturing industry (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2011). However, despite their economic significance, many SMEs struggle to fully leverage digital tools to enhance their market presence. This research investigates how Empire Sushi addresses these challenges through targeted DCM practices.

Shepherd and Wiklund (2009) conducted a review of studies on firms' growth and found that the owner's well-being is a crucial factor. The variation in costs can differ among firms, contingent upon the industry and the nature of the enterprises. However, they share specific characteristics, such as the goal of generating profit and the aspiration to have a significant effect in their particular market by offering their products. This demonstrates that the wellbeing of business owners directly stimulates growth in the operation of the company. While there has been some progress in the study of the relationship between well-being and company growth, it remains a topic that needs to be addressed in the literature. Consequently, there needs to be more knowledge on the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and the obstacles to their development continue to persist. This study acknowledges that in addition to the essential requirement of increasing SME enterprises, it is crucial to examine the well-being of business owners in order to enhance the potential for their business growth.

SME Corp. Malaysia provides the prevailing definition for SMEs in Malaysia, which is based on the number of employees and total sales income in a year (SME Corp. Malaysia, 2016) (Table 2.1). Furthermore, Malaysia's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are categorised as micro, small, or medium-sized, depending on the number of employees or the annual sales or revenue generated by the business (Hashim & Abdullah, 2000).

According to the Economic Census 2016, the Food and Beverages (F&B) subsector has the second most considerable percentage within the services sector, accounting for (20.4%). In the manufacturing industry, the subsector of Food and Beverage (F&B) has the second most considerable percentage, accounting for 17.4% of the total. This article examines explicitly the F&B subsector, which is highly significant in both the services and manufacturing sectors. This subsector is in urgent need of advancement and expansion.

Defining SMEs is challenging due to the lack of a universally applicable definition that can encompass all countries. Each country has its own criteria for categorising SMEs, as noted by Ghobadian, A., & Galleary, D. N. (1996) and Curran and Blackburn (2001), as mentioned in Hashim and Noor (2014). The National

SME Development Council (NSDC) initially established a common definition for SME on 9 June 2005. However, due to various economic developments such as price inflation, structural changes, and shifts in business trends, the definition has undergone periodic reviews. In 2013, a new definition of SME was approved during the NSDC meeting in July. This revised definition came into effect on 1st January 2014, as stated by SME Corp. Malaysia (2013).

SMEs have a crucial role in the Malaysian economy, as noted by Khalique et al. (2011) and acknowledged in the works of Azmi, Basir, Mukhazir, & Mohamed (2014) and Hashim (2014). Based on the SME yearly Report for 2012/2013, the annual growth rate of SMEs was 6.3 per cent, surpassing the broader economy's growth rate of 4.7 per cent from 2006 to 2012. Various reasons, including robust domestic economic activity, favourable conditions in the labour market, and ongoing availability of financing options, influenced the sustained annual expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Recent reports indicate that while SMEs in Malaysia have shown positive performance in recent years, their contribution to the country's economy is significantly lower compared to SMEs in advanced and other high middle-income countries. In these countries, SMEs contribute more than 40 per cent to the economy, whereas in Malaysia, the contribution is lower. This suggests that Malaysian SMEs have a significant gap to bridge in order to catch up with their counterparts in other countries. However, the SME Masterplan (2012 - 2020) provides an opportunity to unlock the untapped potential of SMEs and improve their overall productivity and competitiveness, as stated in the SME Annual Report (2012/2013).

According to the 2011 SME Census report, there were 645,136 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in Malaysia, accounting for 97.3 per cent of all business establishments in the country. The services sector had the highest number of SMEs, with a total of 580,985 establishments, making up 90 per cent of all SMEs in the country. The manufacturing sector had 37,861 SMEs, accounting for 5.9 per cent of the total. The construction sector had 19,283 SMEs, representing 3.0 per cent. The agriculture sector had 6,708 SMEs, making up 1.0 per cent. The mining and quarrying sector had the smallest number of SMEs, with only 299, accounting for 0.1 per cent. Out of the entire population of SMEs, 77.0

per cent were classified as micro-sized, while the remaining 23.0 per cent were categorised as small and medium enterprises. Among the small and medium establishments, 20.0 per cent were small establishments, while the remainder were medium establishments.

2.2.6 FOOD & BEVERAGES SMALL MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

In Malaysia, the Government defines small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the manufacturing sector as companies that employ no more than 200 employees and have a sales turnover of less than RM 25 million. Throughout the year, there has been a notable enhancement in the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the country, particularly in terms of their production.

Table 2.2 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) of Manufacturing Sector in Malaysia

Micro	Small	Medium
Sales turnover of not greater than RM300,000 or not greater than 5 fulltime employees	Sales turnover of not greater than RM300,000 or in between 5 to 75 fulltime employees	Sales turnover of greater than RM 15 million and not greater than RM50 million or in between 75 to 200 fulltime employees

Sources: SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp. Malaysia), 2016

SMEs in the manufacturing sector account for 6% of the total 37,861 business establishments. In 2010, 77% of Malaysia's total SMEs were microenterprises. Approximately 20% of SMEs are small-sized, with the remaining 3% being medium-sized. Malaysia's food and beverage manufacturing industry accounts for 15.1% of all SMEs and ranks second in terms of contribution to the Malaysian economy.

Table 2.3 SMEs share in the Manufacturing Sector by Sub-sector

SMEs in the Manufacturing	SMEs Percentage (%)	SMEs Total
Wearing apparel	24	9,096
Food product	15.1	5,723
Fabricated metal product	10.5	3,979
Printing	7.7	2,918
Furniture	4.9	1,857
Rubber and Plastic Products	4.6	1,743
Wood product	3.8	1,440
Non-metallic mineral products	3.6	1,364
Machinery & Equipment	3.2	1,213
Metal Based	2.9	1,099
Chemical Product	2.5	947
Textiles	2.5	947
Others	14.6	5,533
Overall total	100	37,861

Sources: (Department of Statistics Malaysia 2011)

Table 2.3 demonstrates the significance of food and beverage manufacturing for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia. In 2015, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) accounted for 65.5% of the overall employment and contributed 17.6% to the total exports. However, despite the improving performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in recent years, Malaysian SMEs still make a comparatively minor contribution to the broader economy compared to their counterparts in advanced and other middle-income nations. The Government launched the SME Masterplan in 2012 with the goal of guiding the growth of SMEs in accordance with Malaysia's ambition to achieve high-income status by 2020.

2.2.7 CONSUMER

A consumer refers to an individual, group, or organisation that engages in transactions or exchanges with a business entity, typically by buying goods or

services. Consumer plays a crucial role in the functioning of markets as their demand directly influences production and stimulates innovation. They have a significant impact on business performance through their influence on product development, pricing strategies, and overall market dynamics. Consumers currently have unparalleled access to information, which empowers them to make well-informed decisions and engage with companies through many channels, including Internet platforms and social media. According to the research conducted by Sunil Gupta and Donald R. Lehmann in October 2001, customers are considered valuable assets for a company as they are expected to generate consistent revenue and exhibit complete loyalty towards the company's products. Consumer loyalty is influenced by multiple aspects, including product quality, brand reputation, price competitiveness, customer service, and developing market trends. My perspective supports this. In the current highly competitive environment, consumers are presented with a wide range of choices, and their loyalty can frequently be unpredictable.

Consumers are individuals who have a preference for and utilise the services offered by the business; the highest quality service will result in a favourable reaction from consumers. In 2020, Larissa Becker and Elina Jaakkola conducted a research titled "Customer Experience: Fundamental Premises and Implications for Research." In recent years, there has been a significant focus on customer experience in both marketing research and practice. According to McCall (2015), business leaders, Homburg et al. (2015) and Lemon and Verhoef (2016), marketing professionals, the customer experience plays a crucial role in determining a company's success. A favourable customer experience not only cultivates allegiance but also amplifies brand standing, stimulates recurring transactions, and promotes affirmative word-of mouth recommendations. This exhibition is crucial for customers in order to achieve profitability in any organisation worldwide.

2.2.8 EMPIRE SUSHI

Empire Sushi is a well-known brand within the Malaysian food and beverage industry, specializing in affordable, fresh, and ready-to-eat sushi for consumers seeking quick and healthy meals. Established with the vision of making sushi

accessible to a wider audience, the company focuses on quality ingredients and consistent customer experience. Empire Sushi operates primarily in shopping malls and high-footfall areas, leveraging its strategic locations to attract a diverse customer base. The brand's core philosophy revolves around blending traditional Japanese culinary techniques with local flavors, catering to the unique preferences of Malaysian consumers.

Operating in a highly competitive fast-casual dining and takeaway sushi segment, Empire Sushi faces the challenge of standing out in a saturated market. As the global demand for sushi continues to grow, Empire Sushi has positioned itself as a leader in delivering a balance of quality, affordability, and convenience. To maintain its competitive edge, the company integrates innovative marketing strategies, including digital content marketing (DCM) and social media engagement, to effectively reach and retain its target audience.

Digital marketing has become a cornerstone of modern business strategies, enabling companies like Empire Sushi to engage consumers and measure success effectively. Empire Sushi integrates DCM strategies such as engaging social media content, digital coupon campaigns, and online reservation systems. These efforts align with Murdough's (2010) framework of social media marketing effectiveness, which emphasizes systematic measurement processes in areas such as deployment and optimization. Furthermore, the inclusion of clear calls to action (CTAs), as highlighted by Camiade (2012), ensures Empire Sushi effectively converts passive online visitors into engaged customers by analyzing metrics like website traffic, coupon redemptions, and reservations, demonstrating a data-driven approach to decision-making.

Social media marketing is a key driver of consumer engagement and brand loyalty. Empire Sushi employs platforms like Instagram and Facebook to share visually appealing content, including promotional posts, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and customer testimonials. These strategies enhance engagement while positioning the brand as approachable and customer focused. However, challenges remain in quantifying the ROI of social media marketing. As Tapia (2010) noted, the lack of definitive frameworks for evaluating efficiency requires companies like

Empire Sushi to incorporate real-time performance analytics and continuously refine their strategies.

Conversion is a critical metric for evaluating marketing success. As Charlesworth (2005) stated, conversion extends beyond sales, encompassing actions like email subscriptions, content downloads, and social media engagement. Empire Sushi tracks conversion metrics such as digital coupon redemptions and online reservations, aligning with industry best practices. Additionally, customer retention strategies are integral to sustaining long-term growth. Skole (2014) emphasized the importance of leveraging digital content to foster brand loyalty and repeat business. Empire Sushi achieves this by offering personalized promotions, loyalty programs, and tailored content that resonates with its customer base.

As an SME, Empire Sushi faces unique challenges in resource allocation and market positioning. Gulati (2021) observed that small businesses often struggle with adopting innovative marketing techniques due to limited budgets and expertise. However, Empire Sushi overcomes these barriers through targeted digital marketing, efficient resource use, and a focus on community engagement. By leveraging localized campaigns and understanding the specific preferences of its market, the company builds a loyal customer base. Furthermore, Empire Sushi demonstrates its commitment to ethical practices by sourcing sustainable seafood and minimizing waste, aligning with consumer expectations for environmentally responsible business operations.

While Empire Sushi has achieved considerable success, challenges remain in scaling its operations and expanding its digital reach. The rapidly changing digital landscape necessitates continuous adaptation and innovation. The company could explore emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR) to enhance customer experience and streamline operations. To further strengthen its position, Empire Sushi could adopt omnichannel marketing strategies, integrating online and offline customer experiences. Additionally, investing in staff training and technology upgrades will enable the company to remain competitive in a dynamic market.

In conclusion, Empire Sushi exemplifies the successful application of digital marketing and operational strategies in the food and beverage industry. By integrating consumer-centric approaches, leveraging data-driven insights, and maintaining a commitment to sustainability, the company positions itself as a leader in its segment. Continuous innovation and a focus on market trends will be critical in ensuring sustained growth and success for Empire Sushi.

2.3 CONCEPT INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

2.3.1 BRAND AWARENESS

Philip Kotler and Gary Amstrong describe a brand as a "name, term, sign symbol (or combination of these) that identifies the product's maker or seller."

The online Cambridge dictionary defines *awareness* as "knowledge that something exists, or understanding of a situation or subject at present based on information or experience." Thus, from a marketing standpoint, brand awareness can be described as the phrase that indicates customers' familiarity (awareness) with a brand or its products. Simply put, brand awareness assesses how memorable and recognised a brand is to its target audience (Bynder, 2022). According to Kotler and Keller (2015), consumers will have a more favourable perception of a product associated with a positive brand in the community. When customers are concerned about making the wrong selection, they are more likely to select a well-known brand (Kotler & Keller, 2015). For Empire Sushi, increasing brand awareness is achieved through visually appealing content and consistent engagement on platforms like Instagram. Keller (2003) emphasizes that strong brand awareness, combined with positive associations, enhances customer loyalty and purchase intent. Brand awareness is generated and improved by growing brand familiarity via frequent exposure, resulting in customers having "experienced" the brand (Keller, 2003). Brand awareness, mixed with solid connections, creates a distinct brand image. Brand associations are made up of several episodes, concepts, facts, and examples that build a network of brand knowledge. These connections are crucial for marketers and directors when it comes to brand positioning and distinction, as well as establishing good brand perceptions. Empire Sushi utilizes

creative storytelling and culturally relevant marketing campaigns to connect with its audience. For instance, its campaigns during festive seasons incorporate elements of Malaysian culture, resonating with local consumers and fostering brand loyalty.

Furthermore, brand associations are more powerful when they are based on a diversity of experiences or communication exposures (Aaker, D.A. 1996). In the context of this study, brand awareness supplied by DCM is critical to encouraging the development of SMEs, particularly their sales performance. According to Wang et al. (2019), product knowledge may influence the entire buying decision-making process for customers when purchasing a product.

Product knowledge is considered a direct predictor of purchase intent (Wang et al., 2019).

- **Promote your brand directly to your customers** (Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2015). *Marketing Management*. Pearson Education)

Instead of relying on people to discover the brand, the most effective approach is to promote the brand in locations where potential buyers congregate actively. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube are examples of online platforms where millions of users congregate. Empire Sushi employs active customer engagement through social media platforms to listens customer feedback, and builds a community around its offerings. This strategy aligns with Keller's (2003) recommendation to incorporate brands into customer dialogues to foster familiarity and goodwill. The technique entails establishing the brand's presence in these locations through active community engagement rather than simply promoting it through broadcasting. This involves actively participating in and attentively listening to the community.

In order to seamlessly incorporate a brand into customer conversations, the brand needs to join the community and consistently communicate with customers actively. Eventually, the brand will receive the necessary visibility and recognition.

- **Establish connections between customers and contacts.** (Keller, K. L. (2003). *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*. Pearson Education.)

Customers may indirectly promote a brand by engaging with each other on social media sites, such as the comments area on blogs or Facebook, where they can engage in dynamic conversations about the items. Empire Sushi also promotes interactivity among customers by encouraging them to share their experiences and feedback on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. This not only enhances engagement but also creates an organic promotional network as satisfied customers share their experiences with others.

- **Interact regularly on TikTok.** (Wang, H., Li, X., & Tang, H. (2019). *Social Media Marketing and Brand Equity: Perspectives of Digital Marketing*. Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness.)

TikTok is a viral social media platform for creating brand recognition. Users often post about a wide range of topics, providing an opportunity to engage as a listener, ask questions in the comment area, give answers to their issues, and integrate the firm into the discussion. While TikTok may first seem perplexing, the TikTok community is eager to assist. Hence, the influence of a single individual we choose to follow might result in a significant increase in the visibility of our brand. Empire Sushi has adapted to this platform by engaging with the younger demographic, answering questions, and integrating itself into trending conversations. As a result, the brand achieves greater visibility and engagement, while ensuring it aligns with community standards to avoid negative associations. Nevertheless, it is advisable to have a thorough understanding of the correct TikTok procedures to prevent being categorised as spammers and those who are not part of the community.

- **Create high-quality content** (Bynder. (2022). *The Power of High-Quality Content in Brand Building*. Retrieved from Cambridge Marketing Sources.)

In order to create a favourable image and ensure brand recall, it is essential to provide high-quality content. High-quality content not only imparts information and educates consumers but also fosters trust and establishes the organisation as a

knowledgeable and authoritative entity in the sector. High-quality material may quickly go viral when shared by those who see its value and potential benefits for others. High-quality material will entice individuals to revisit the website, and by maintaining a regular posting schedule, your business will quickly accumulate a following. Empire Sushi excels in creating visually appealing and culturally relevant campaigns, especially during festive seasons. These campaigns resonate with local consumers by incorporating Malaysian cultural elements, fostering both connection and loyalty.

Empire Sushi's targeted approach to brand awareness has had a profound impact on its market positioning and customer base. By combining strategic social media marketing with high-quality, culturally resonant campaigns, the brand has built a strong identity in Malaysia's competitive food and beverage sector. The integration of positive brand associations, frequent exposure, and authentic customer engagement ensures sustained growth and customer loyalty. Hence, brand awareness is a cornerstone of marketing strategy and a driver of long-term success for businesses like Empire Sushi. By employing a mix of innovative digital marketing strategies and culturally relevant content, Empire Sushi has positioned itself as a recognizable and trusted brand. As demonstrated, effective brand awareness not only enhances customer perceptions but also fosters loyalty, ultimately leading to improved business performance.

2.3.2 WORD OF MOUTH (WOM)

According to online Cambridge dictionary WOM can be defined as:

“given or done by people talking about something or telling people about something.” While according to Merriam-Webster dictionary defined WOM as:

“generated from or reliant on oral publicity; word-of-mouth customers; a word-of-mouth business.”

Word-of-mouth marketing (WOM) significantly influences consumer behavior. Empire Sushi benefits from both traditional WOM and electronic WOM (eWOM), where satisfied customers share their experiences online. Studies by Trusov et al. (2009) reveal that WOM has a lasting impact on brand credibility and customer acquisition. Empire Sushi actively encourages customers to post reviews and share photos on social media, amplifying its reach and creating a ripple effect of positive brand perception.

eWOM, or electronic word-of-mouth, refers to any good or negative comment about a product or company made by future, existing, or past consumers. These statements are shared with a large number of individuals and institutions over the Internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39). eWOM, or electronic word-of-mouth, refers to the flow of information among customers on the internet. It can take several forms, such as user-generated content, online product evaluations, personal emails, and social media postings (Shu-Chuan Chu, 2021). Word-of-mouth marketing is a promotional strategy where customers of a company act as its advocates and spread positive information about it. It significantly reduces the company's expenses on promotional initiatives. It has the potential to be applicable to a product, service, or experience as an illustration. The advocate's endorsement bears additional significance as they have no personal advantage from advertising the product yet are willing to risk their reputation by recommending it. This is because the brand's association is sufficiently strong to transfer. Research by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) highlights that eWOM encompasses user generated content, online reviews, and social media interactions. For Empire Sushi, leveraging both traditional WOM and eWOM ensures they can tap into diverse consumer networks and amplify their marketing efforts.

The source of this information is the MBA Skool Team from the year 2012. Word of mouth may be quantified by employing many indicators, including the frequency of mentions of the blog in various media outlets, both online and offline. The metrics used to measure social media engagement include the count of retweets, the frequency of appearing in friends' timelines, the number of reposts or shares, and the number of answers to friend referral invites, among others (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). According to Durukan and Bozaci (2012), individuals tend to express both favourable and unfavourable viewpoints to their peers on social media during their encounters with certain companies (Durukan & Bozaci, 2012). It is crucial to generate discussion among consumers, particularly in Malaysia, concerning SME products. The utilisation of WOM (Word-of-Mouth) and e-WOM (Electronic Word-of-Mouth) can be advantageous for food and beverage company in Malaysia as it helps in fostering consumer loyalty. Ramzan and Syed (2018) assert that content-based social media marketing is crucial for fostering client loyalty and incentivizing customers to engage in electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM) by sharing content.

Word-of-mouth (WOM) has been widely recognised as a significant and influential marketing activity. It can impact and shape customers' attitudes and behaviours when it comes to purchasing. Research on word-of-mouth (WOM) began in the 1960s, focusing on the factors that motivate and result from WOM. Seraj (n.d) and Arndt (1967), as revised by Cheung & Thadani (2010), defined WOM as "interpersonal non-commercial communication between acquaintances." Since that time, the study on word-of-mouth (WOM) and its impact on consumers' decision-making has become deeply rooted (Steffes & Burgee, 2009).

According to a study conducted by Trusov, M., Bucklin, R. E., & Pauwels, K. (2009), they discovered that acquiring new customers through word-of-mouth recommendations is highly effective. Their study also reveals that the long-term impact of word-of-mouth on signups is significantly more significant than the impact of traditional advertising (Trusov et al., 2009). The credibility of word-of-mouth (WOM) has a significant influence on a company's sales growth. A survey conducted on fifteen different products and services across various categories revealed that over 50 per cent of consumers stated a high likelihood of purchasing

as a result of conversations with others about the product or service (Keller & Fay, 2012).

The Internet has enhanced the capacity for individuals and potential customers to connect, facilitating the rapid dissemination of product information and more cost-effective adoption of products in the market. Traditional word of mouth (WOM) has transformed into electronic word of mouth (eWOM) with the rise of the Internet, providing a favourable environment for the advancement of eWOM (Cheung & Thadani, 2010). Utilising electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) via social media allows organisations to enhance and strengthen the brand value of their products or services, resulting in capturing the interest of consumers (Sveri, Ling and Nasermoadeli, 2014). eWOM allows consumers to share their thoughts not just with people they know but also with the entire world. This makes eWOM a time-saving method since information can be transmitted more quickly and easily (Allsop, Basset, and Hoskins, 2007 & Gildin, 2003). While electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) does not always guarantee success, a meticulously designed campaign can generate a significant and long-lasting "firestorm of buzz" effect (Ferguson, 2008).

As online shopping services continue to advance and enhance, electronic word-of mouth (eWOM) is becoming more crucial. Consumers can now shape their opinions and make purchasing decisions for items or services based on suggestions and recommendations from friends on social media (Erkan and Evans, n.d.). According to Erkan and Evans (n.d.), their research suggests that eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) could provide marketers with significant opportunities because of the remarkable growth, impact, and popularity of social networks. With the progress of the internet, companies started to realise that it could be their primary means of communication. As a result, they began to utilise various marketing methods that are both cost-effective and more effective in actively engaging with customers compared to traditional channels (Costronova & Huang, 2012).

Word-of-mouth marketing (WOMM) is highly influential as it depends on contented customers willingly sharing favourable words about your brand. Here are some tactics to enhance your Word-of-Mouth Marketing (WOMM):

i. Provide exceptional customer experience

Empire Sushi ensures high-quality service and consistent food quality, creating a memorable dining experience that customers are eager to share. Research by Durukan and Bozaci (2012) emphasizes that consumers are likely to express both favorable and unfavorable opinions to their peers, highlighting the importance of consistently exceeding customer expectations.

ii. Promote User-Generated Content (UGC)

Empire Sushi leverages UGC campaigns, encouraging customers to post photos and reviews with branded hashtags. As Ramzan and Syed (2018) assert, UGC not only fosters loyalty but also incentivizes customers to engage in eWOM, creating authentic and organic endorsements.

iii. Encourage Referrals.

Referral initiatives provide existing customers with incentives to recommend Empire Sushi to friends and family. According to Keller and Fay (2012), over 50% of consumers are likely to purchase a product based on recommendations, making referrals a critical component of Empire Sushi's WOM strategy.

iv. Interact with Your Audience

By motivating customers to share their positive dining experiences on platforms like Instagram and Facebook, Empire Sushi amplifies its reach. This aligns with findings by Trusov et al. (2009), who discovered that WOM has a long-term impact on customer acquisition and brand credibility. eWOM also fosters engagement, with consumers sharing photos and reviews that influence their social circles.

Research shows that WOM has a substantial impact on consumer decision-making processes. Studies by Cheung and Thadani (2010) reveal that interpersonal communication through WOM influences purchase intent more than traditional advertising. Empire Sushi benefits from this phenomenon as satisfied customers frequently recommend their products to others.

Additionally, eWOM allows Empire Sushi to reach a broader audience, as information shared online spreads faster and more widely. Erkan and Evans (n.d.) highlight the importance of social networks in driving eWOM, providing marketers with valuable opportunities to engage with potential customers. While WOM and eWOM are powerful, they are not without challenges. Negative reviews or customer dissatisfaction can spread quickly online, potentially harming brand reputation. Empire Sushi mitigates this risk by promptly addressing customer concerns and maintaining transparency in their interactions. The opportunities, however, outweigh the risks. With the growing popularity of social media, Empire Sushi can continue to expand its reach and influence by implementing innovative WOM strategies.

In conclusion, word-of-mouth marketing, both traditional and electronic, plays a pivotal role in Empire Sushi's success. By fostering authentic customer advocacy, leveraging social media platforms, and delivering exceptional dining experiences, Empire Sushi effectively utilizes WOM to enhance brand credibility and customer acquisition. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, Empire Sushi's commitment to engaging consumers through WOM and eWOM ensures sustained growth and market relevance.

2.3.3 ENGAGEMENT

Although the idea of 'engagement' in business interactions is not a recent one, there has been a notable increase in interest among practitioners in the past decade (e.g., Haven, 2007; Harvey, 2005). The majority of prior scholars associate the term 'engagement' with 'consumer.' Researchers commonly blend terms in their studies. Customer engagement refers to the exchanges that occur between a brand and a buyer through various communication channels, including social media, email, community forums, and webinars (Bishop, C, 2020). Engagement is quantified by simultaneously analysing many indicators to get insight into user interaction with an app. These metrics include retention, use statistics, session durations, and session frequencies. Within the realm of Digital Marketing, the word pertains to the direct engagement of customers with businesses through behaviours like clicks, likes, comments, and shares (RockContent, 2020). Empire Sushi excels in fostering engagement through interactive campaigns, such as contests and live cooking

demonstrations on TikTok. This approach aligns with Palmatier and Ghasemi's (2019) findings that consumer participation strengthens brand relationships. Empire Sushi's engagement strategy also includes user-generated content, where customers share their dining experiences. This not only enhances visibility but also builds a sense of community around the brand.

Engagement in mobile marketing has been successful due to the fact that individuals in this digital era are doubtless unlikely to continue utilizing digital platforms like social media. Abdul-Ghani et al. (2011) identified three aspects of engagement.

1. **Utilitarian :** Refers to practical and goal-oriented interactions. Empire Sushi achieves this through its user-friendly online ordering system and prompt responses to customer inquiries, ensuring convenience for its customers.
2. **Hedonic (refers to the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain) :** Involves creating pleasurable and enjoyable experiences. Empire Sushi's vibrant social media campaigns, live cooking demonstrations, and interactive contests foster an emotional connection with customers, encouraging them to engage with the brand.
3. **Social :** Focuses on community-building and interaction among customers. Empire Sushi fosters social engagement through user-generated content campaigns, where customers share their dining experiences, creating a sense of belonging and advocacy.

Social engagement is a measure of whether individuals have reacted to the company's messages or postings. Valuable content plays a crucial role in motivating people to take action, which is essential for effectively connecting with individuals on social media platforms (Tatik et al., 2017). In the current marketing method known as DCM, the strategy has significantly changed as consumers now seek narrative and entertaining material in addition to engaging with it. It is essential to acknowledge that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) should recognise that customers have shifted to the Internet to find ways to entertain, learn, and connect. This is due to the digital revolution, which has led to a need for

increasingly diverse and interactive material that is tailored to individual preferences (Granata & Scozzese, 2019).

Palmet and Ghasemi (2019) define *customer engagement behavior* as the act of expressing affection for a company's Instagram post, actively participating in sharing suggestions to help the business improve its products and services, and displaying a stronger motivation to establish positive connections with the brand.

Empire Sushi employs a variety of engagement strategies to connect with its customers, foster loyalty, and drive growth:

1. Interactive content and contest

Empire Sushi organizes interactive campaigns such as “Best Sushi Photo” contests on Instagram, where customers participate by sharing their creative sushi photos. This not only increases brand visibility but also strengthens customer relationships by involving them in the brand’s journey.

2. Live cooking demonstration on TikTok

Recognizing the popularity of TikTok among younger audiences, Empire Sushi conducts live cooking demonstrations, showcasing the preparation of their signature dishes. This approach not only entertains but also educates customers about the brand’s quality and authenticity, enhancing trust and emotional connections.

3. User-Generated Content (UGC)

Encouraging customers to share their experiences on social media with branded hashtags has proven effective for Empire Sushi. According to Palmet and Ghasemi (2019), UGC enhances brand credibility as it reflects authentic consumer experiences.

4. Valuable and contextual content

Following the 5Cs framework (Content, Context, Connectivity, Continuity, Collaboration) proposed by Armano (2008), Empire Sushi focuses on

delivering highquality and contextually relevant content. For instance, during festive seasons, Empire Sushi integrates elements of Malaysian culture into its marketing campaigns, resonating with the local audience.

- i. Content - Provide high-quality material to foster community building. This demonstrates the firm's commitment and motivation. The material should be supplied via suitable channels. Achieving this goal will result in relevant participation from the appropriate individuals. When material is relevant and of good quality, it is more likely to be shared and advocated for by the intended audience. Content should target specific groups of individuals.
- ii. Context - Providing the appropriate experience at the right moment and meeting people where they are. They are understanding the community's engagement preferences.
- iii. Connectivity - Creating experiences that encourage micro interactions among community members.
- iv. Continuity - Maintaining a long-lasting and sustainable community while providing a valuable and consistent user experience.
- v. Collaboration - Community involvement is most effective when people work together to accomplish shared goals and objectives.

Driving online engagement has caused augmentation in the company's investment in social media. It is well known to experts that it is not an easy task to define and measure engagement (Epps, Mulligan and Wilkos, 2009). However, Forrester Consulting (2008), and adapted by Epps, Mulligan and Wilkos, 2009 and Haven and Vittal (2008), has come with four components that makes up the engagement framework and name it as the four I's which are

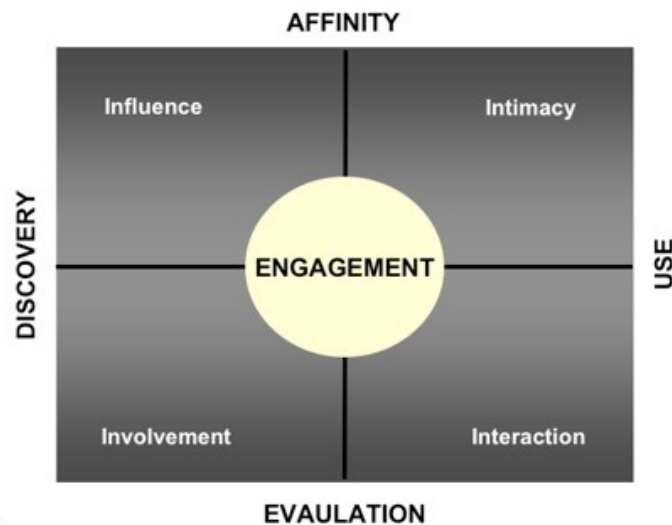


Figure 2.3 : 4I's Customer Engagement Components

Sources : Understand Customer Engagement

- i. Involvement refers to the active presence of an individual at different points of contact with a brand. Empire Sushi tracks website traffic, time spent on pages, and the frequency of social media interactions to gauge consumer interest. Metrics encompass several data points, such as the number of visitors to a website, the amount of time spent on each page, the frequency of physical store visits, and the impact of mass media advertising. The data sources consist of Web Analytics and shop traffic reports to refine strategies.
- ii. Interaction refers to the specific acts that individuals engage in while they are present at specific touchpoints. Metrics encompass many indicators, such as click-through rates, online transactions, in-store sales, uploaded images or videos, and more. Data sources encompass a variety of platforms, such as e-commerce platforms, POS systems, and social media platforms.
- iii. Intimacy refers to the emotional connection or dislike that an individual has towards a brand. Metrics encompass the evaluation of sentiment in various forms of online communication, such as blog posts, blog comments, discussion forums, and customer service call interactions. Data sources encompass many channels, such as brand monitoring services, survey answers, customer care call centres, and more.

- v. Influence refers to the probability that an individual will advocate for the brand. Metrics encompass several factors, such as brand awareness, customer loyalty, affinity, repurchases, Net Promoter Score, satisfaction ratings, and forwarded material. Some examples of data sources are market research services, brand monitoring, customer service call centres, and surveys.

The Impact of Engagement on Empire Sushi

Engagement significantly impacts Empire Sushi's performance in several ways:

1. Increased Customer Loyalty

By creating meaningful interactions and emotional connections, Empire Sushi fosters loyalty among its customers. Loyal customers are more likely to return and recommend the brand to others.

2. Enhanced Brand Visibility

Interactive campaigns and UGC amplify Empire Sushi's reach, making it more visible to potential customers. This aligns with McCracken, Oullier, and Ramsøy's (n.d.) findings that engagement drives brand awareness.

3. Stronger Emotional Connections

Emotional connections, built through hedonic and social engagement strategies, increase customer satisfaction and advocacy. Empire Sushi's culturally resonant campaigns strengthen its bond with the Malaysian audience.

While engagement offers numerous benefits, it also presents challenges. Maintaining consistent engagement requires significant resources and effort. Negative feedback or lack of participation can also hinder progress. However, these challenges can be addressed through proactive strategies, such as promptly addressing customer concerns and continuously refining engagement efforts.

Consumer engagement is a critical driver of success for Empire Sushi. By employing diverse strategies that cater to utilitarian, hedonic, and social dimensions, the brand effectively connects with its audience, fosters loyalty, and enhances its market position. As the digital landscape evolves, Empire Sushi's commitment to meaningful engagement ensures its continued growth and relevance in the competitive food and beverage industry.

2.3.4 CONVERSION

The concept of consumer conversion is a cornerstone in contemporary marketing strategies, particularly within a technology-driven and highly competitive landscape. According to Gulati (2021), the transition from potential clients to actual customers is increasingly complex, requiring a nuanced understanding of consumer behaviour and an innovative approach to marketing tactics. Empire Sushi exemplifies this challenge by employing multiple strategies, including digital content marketing (DCM), to measure and enhance conversion rates effectively.

In the context of digital marketing, conversion is evaluated through various quantifiable metrics, such as online reservations, digital coupon redemptions, content download registrations, and other measurable actions (DeStefano, 2013). Empire Sushi tracks its conversion through these metrics, which aligns with Camiade's (2012) argument that clear calls to action (CTAs) are vital for driving measurable outcomes. This reflects the broader consensus that conversion rates are not only key performance indicators (KPIs) but also critical for demonstrating the return on investment (ROI) of marketing efforts.

Charlesworth (2005) broadens the understanding of conversion by emphasizing that it extends beyond mere sales transactions. Conversion is a multi-faceted concept encompassing various consumer actions, such as engaging with digital content, sharing, subscribing, or even downloading informational materials like eBooks or white papers (Skole, 2014). These actions indicate consumer interest and can generate indirect or long-term profitability. For SMEs like Empire Sushi,

this highlights the importance of designing and analyzing content strategies that resonate with their target audience.

Additionally, the effectiveness of conversion strategies relies heavily on the alignment of organizational objectives and the use of integrated digital marketing campaigns. As noted by Avinash Kaushik (2013), conversion goals are dynamic and vary across organizations, necessitating a tailored approach to measure outcomes effectively. Empire Sushi leverages CTAs such as webinar registrations and video views to create a data-driven marketing ecosystem, enabling the evaluation of both immediate and comparative performance metrics (Marketing Maven, 2013).

Moreover, the use of social media platforms as a pivotal tool for driving conversions has gained prominence. According to DeMers (2014), social media marketing is indispensable for cultivating engagement and tracking conversions, as actions such as likes, shares, and subscriptions serve as proxies for consumer interest and brand loyalty. The emphasis on social media by Empire Sushi underscores its commitment to fostering a deeper connection with its audience while collecting actionable insights.

In conclusion, Empire Sushi's efforts to enhance consumer conversion demonstrate the integration of effective digital marketing techniques with a focus on measurable outcomes. By adopting clear CTAs, analyzing performance metrics, and tailoring strategies to consumer behaviour, Empire Sushi not only strengthens its market position but also sets a benchmark for other SMEs aiming to achieve higher conversion rates. This approach illustrates the critical role of consumer conversion in the broader marketing framework and underscores its significance as a tool for achieving sustainable business growth.

2.4 CONCEPT DEPENDENT VARIABLE

2.4.1 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING

Effectiveness is defined by oxforddictionaries.com as “*The degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result; success*”.

Despite its widespread use over the past decade, there still needs to be a systematic approach to measure the impact of social marketing effectively. Social marketing texts have provided numerous approaches for researching and supporting social marketing. However, they still need to provide a definitive perspective on how to accurately analyse the performance of social marketing (Varcoe J. ,2004).

Digital content marketing (DCM) has emerged as a pivotal strategy for businesses seeking to engage with consumers in a highly competitive and digitally dominated marketplace. For Empire Sushi, DCM plays a critical role in not only attracting consumers but also driving measurable outcomes, such as increased brand engagement, improved customer retention, and higher conversion rates. By leveraging key elements of DCM, Empire Sushi exemplifies the potential of this approach to foster meaningful consumer interactions and enhance business performance.

The effectiveness of DCM is grounded in its ability to align marketing objectives with the preferences and behaviours of the target audience. According to Tapia (2010), achieving effectiveness in digital marketing requires a structured framework, as the absence of clear definitions or conceptual frameworks often hampers the ability to measure success. Empire Sushi mitigates this challenge by employing measurable performance indicators, such as online reservations, social media interactions, and digital coupon redemptions. These metrics align with the overarching objectives of DCM, providing actionable insights into consumer engagement.

Murdough (2010) proposed a systematic measurement framework for evaluating social media and DCM effectiveness, comprising five key phases: concept, definition, design, deployment, and optimization shown in the Figure 2.7

below. Empire Sushi can integrate this framework to refine its DCM strategy. For instance, in the concept phase, objectives such as improving online visibility or enhancing brand loyalty can be established. By aligning these objectives with quantifiable KPIs, such as the number of website visits or the rate of coupon redemptions, Empire Sushi can create a robust foundation for assessing marketing success.

In the definition phase, Empire Sushi can identify the most effective digital platforms and strategies to achieve its goals. This involves analyzing consumer behaviour to determine which platforms yield the highest engagement rates. For instance, if Instagram drives higher interactions compared to other platforms, resources can be optimized to maximize its impact. Additionally, incorporating performance assessment techniques, such as A/B testing, enables Empire Sushi to refine its content strategies and enhance overall campaign efficiency.

The design phase involves specifying the tactics and venues most suited to Empire Sushi's active digital presence. This includes developing engaging content, such as high-quality images, promotional videos, and informative blog posts, tailored to the interests of the target audience. By configuring performance reporting tools and integrating technological tracking mechanisms, Empire Sushi ensures accurate data collection and insight generation.

In the deployment phase, ensuring the reliability of data collection processes and the accuracy of performance reports is critical. Empire Sushi can implement quality assurance (QA) procedures to validate the effectiveness of its campaigns. For instance, tracking metrics like click-through rates (CTR) and engagement rates provides a real-time overview of campaign performance, enabling timely adjustments to optimize results.

Finally, the optimization phase consolidates all previous efforts by integrating reporting and insights to identify areas for improvement. Empire Sushi can utilize this phase to refine its marketing strategies continuously, incorporating consumer feedback and market trends to maintain relevance and effectiveness.

The success of DCM at Empire Sushi can be further contextualized through the integration of social media marketing, as highlighted by Pradiptarini (2010). Social media platforms serve as vital channels for disseminating digital content, driving consumer engagement, and fostering brand loyalty. Empire Sushi's use of clear calls to action (CTAs) in its digital campaigns ensures that consumers are guided towards desired actions, such as making online reservations or sharing content. This aligns with Camiade's (2012) assertion that effective DCM necessitates the inclusion of CTAs to achieve tangible outcomes.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of digital content marketing at Empire Sushi lies in its ability to merge strategic planning with consumer-centric approaches. By leveraging data-driven insights and employing a systematic measurement framework, Empire Sushi enhances its ability to engage consumers, improve brand perception, and achieve business objectives. This approach not only underscores the importance of DCM in the modern business landscape but also positions Empire Sushi as a model for other SMEs seeking to optimize their digital marketing strategies.

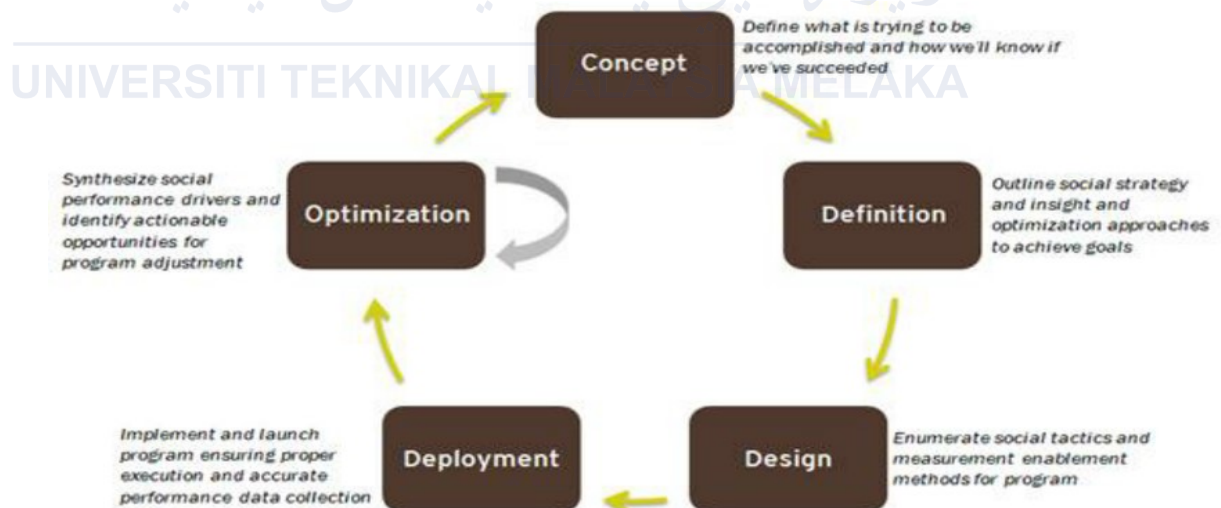


Figure 2.4 : Social media measurement process

Source: Murdough (2010)

Table 2.4 Phases in Social Media Measurement Process

Phase	Measurement Process	Measurement Activities
Concept	Define the objectives that the brand aimed to accomplish by advancing their relationship with their intended audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align measurement objectives with project or company goals. • Identify precise key performance indicators (KPIs) that are in line with the objectives. • Establish quantifiable performance benchmarks or targets to accurately measure and assess the level of success achieved.
Definition	Outline how social platform could be influenced to optimized approaches in order to achieve desired goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify important insight questions for understanding programme success, including

		<p>whether social media levers may impact KPIs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the most effective analytical technique for optimising activities. • Determine performance assessment frequency and timeframe for programme upgrades.
Design	<p>Specify tactics and venues most appropriate for a brand's active social media presence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish performance data sources and procedures. • Identify technological tracking hooks and manual actions required for accurate and comprehensive data collecting • Configure and customise performance

		reporting tools for easy access to required insights.
Deployment	Ensuring correct execution and reliable performance data is the main goal of the implementation and launch programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct quality assurance (QA) for data gathering procedures. • Ensure performance reports are comprehensive and meet expectations. • Create data infrastructure by collecting different sources to create social media performance dashboards.
Optimization	Combine all of the work completed in earlier stages into reporting and insights, and find opportunities for programme improvement and modification that may	

	be implemented immediately.	
--	-----------------------------	--

Source: Murdough (2010)

2.5 MODEL AND THEORY

This study used the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to examine customer reactions to digital marketing strategies. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) asserts that perceived utility and ease of use affect technology uptake. This model assesses how Empire Sushi's digital tactics foster customer involvement and loyalty.

The paradigm was established on the extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Chuttur, 2009), while the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is based on the theory of logical action proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is widely acknowledged as a significant extension of academic study concerning the application and utilization of developing technologies (Aydin et al., 2016). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a theoretical framework that elucidates user acceptance and utilization of technology (Kowang, T. et al., 2020). TAM is a recognized extension of scientific study by Aydin and Burnaz (2016), as referenced in Wasiul et al. (2020), aimed at exploring novel technology applications. Additionally, Jarina et al. (2019) investigated the factors affecting the use of self-service technology kiosks at McDonald's by gathering responses from participants using surveys. They conducted a study and analysis of consumers' acceptance comprehension. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) examines people's attitudes and experiences that affect their choices to use a certain technology and their actual usage of it.

Additionally, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was used by a cohort of researchers to evaluate the extent of familiarity with developing technologies

from two specific perspectives: perceived efficacy and convenience. The attitude towards the technology may be assessed using these two fundamental components, which reveal customer experiences and behavioural use of the technology. Davis (2019) defines effectiveness as the extent to which an individual believes that utilizing a specific technology can enhance job efficiency, a crucial factor influencing users' acceptance and implementation of that technology through experience and attitude. In contrast, convenience refers to the belief that employing a particular technology is straightforward. Consequently, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is mostly acknowledged as the most extensively validated scientific research framework, owing to its validations, implementations, and replications (Legris et al., 2003). Chuttur (2009), in an overview examination of TAM, found that the model might be optimally enhanced by addressing the gaps in rigidity and importance (Chuttur, 2009). Moreover, other studies have since altered the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) from its original framework to include additional elements deemed more significant in assessing the influence of technology on user experience. Bobbitt and Dabholkar (2001) modify the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by including past self-service experience and an individual's attitude toward technology use. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been widely used in studies concerning technology usage experiences and has been augmented by including additional factors that influence the propensity to adopt technology across many business contexts (Jeong, 2013). This study will use a slightly modified TAM model to address a relevance gap in identifying perceived characteristics associated with SST experiences and adoption.

2.6 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The study depicts the structure in Figure 2.6 below. Five variables were created to measure the depth of the study. The dependent variable is the factor of effectiveness digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysian SMEs F&B. The independent variables are brand awareness, Word-of-Mouth (WOM), engagement, and conversion.

Using the designated framework, this study will examine the association between brand awareness, word-of-mouth (WOM), engagement, and conversion about practical digital content marketing efforts.

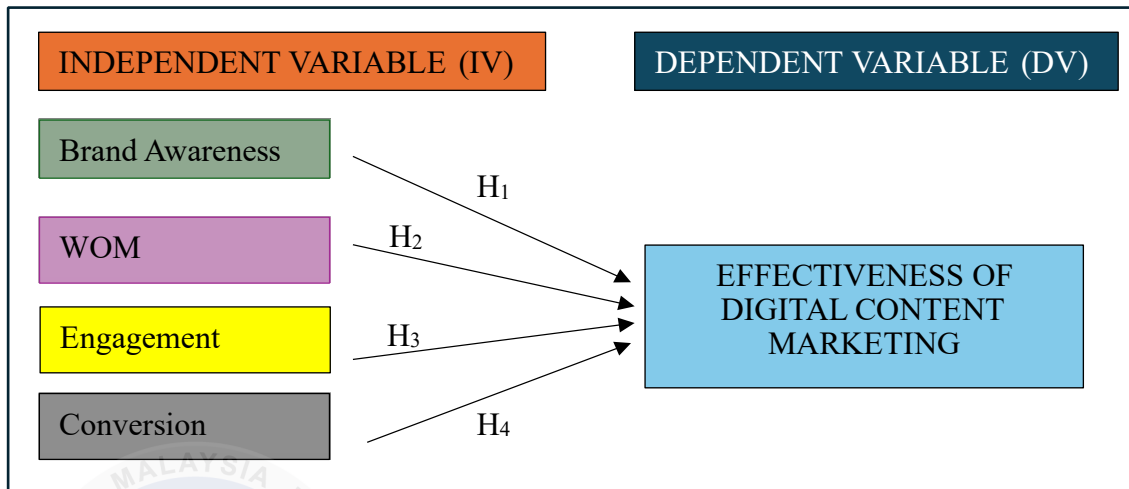


Figure 2.5 :: Research Framework

Brand awareness represents the extent to which consumers recognize and recall a brand, an essential component of marketing success (Keller, 1993). Word-of-mouth (WOM) emphasizes the impact of consumer recommendations in spreading brand information, a powerful tool in shaping brand perception (Berger & Iyengar, 2013). Engagement reflects the level of interaction and participation consumers have with digital content, showcasing how effectively digital platforms foster consumer involvement (Keller, K. L., 1993). Finally, conversion focuses on the ability of digital marketing efforts to transform potential customers into paying customers or subscribers, a critical metric of marketing performance (Berger, J., & Iyengar, R. 2013). This research framework systematically analyzes the associations between these variables, offering a multidimensional approach to understanding consumer behavior and the complex nature of digital marketing strategies. By linking the variables to measurable outcomes, the framework ensures practical relevance for SMEs in the competitive F&B industry.

Furthermore, it aligns with prior academic literature, incorporating established concepts while addressing the unique challenges faced by SMEs in Malaysia. The framework enables hypothesis testing, guiding empirical analysis and validation of proposed relationships between variables. It provides a clear structure for data collection, analysis, and interpretation, facilitating actionable insights to enhance marketing strategies. In essence, this research framework serves as a vital tool

bridging theoretical concepts with practical application. It addresses a critical gap in understanding the dynamics of digital content marketing in Malaysian SMEs, particularly in the F&B sector. By exploring the relationships between brand awareness, WOM, engagement, and conversion, the framework highlights the factors driving the effectiveness of digital marketing efforts. This structured approach not only enriches the study's academic contribution but also offers valuable insights for SMEs seeking to optimize their digital marketing strategies in a competitive landscape (Berger, J., & Iyengar, R. 2013).

2.7 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses listed below were developed to determine the link between the variables and subsequently answer the study's research question. The hypotheses are:

H₁: Brand awareness positively impacts digital content marketing among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.

H₂: WOM positively impacts digital content marketing among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.

H₃ : Engagement positively impacts digital content marketing tactics influence consumer engagement for Empire Sushi.

H₄: Conversion positively impacts the role of digital content marketing in driving conversion rates and sales for Empire Sushi.

2.8 SUMMARY

This chapter has examined important ideas and research that are pertinent to DCM, SMEs, and the food and beverage industry, with an emphasis on Empire Sushi. Customised digital tactics are crucial for increasing brand visibility, engagement, and conversion rates, according to the research. By filling up the highlighted research gaps, this study hopes to provide insightful information that would enable Malaysian SMEs to prosper in the digital economy.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explain thoroughly the research design, research methods, data collection, research location, research strategy, sampling, time horizon, questionnaire design, validity and reliability of research instruments, and data analysis used to test the hypotheses.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The objective of research design is to establish a comprehensive framework that assists the researcher in conducting a study aimed at generating answers to various difficulties. After identifying the variables in the issue statement and developing a theoretical framework, the next step is to construct the research using a strategy that enables the gathering of necessary data and analysis to reach an explanation (Sekaran, 2003) . Research design is created to establish an overall strategy to assist the researcher in the conduct of the research that will present answer to the problems. The subsequent step after identifying the variables in the problem statement and the theoretical framework has been developed is to design the research using a method where necessary data can be collected, and analysis can be done to achieve an explanation (Sekaran, 2003). According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010, research design is “*A master plan that specifies the*

methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the needed information” (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010).

In order to fulfil the objective of this study, a quantitative methodology has been employed, since it allows for the collection and analysis of data in numerical format. Additionally, one may identify trends and calculate averages, make forecasts, examine causal linkages, and extrapolate findings to large populations (Pritha Bhandari, 2020). A study design that aims to explain a phenomenon looks at the causal relationship that exists between a dependent and an independent variable. Utilizing this descriptive study enables the researcher to have a more comprehensive understanding of the problem. The researcher can adapt to newly discovered facts and ideas that arise during the inquiry. In addition, the researcher employed a web questionnaire as a study technique to highlight the research hypothesis. The researcher is utilizing an online questionnaire to facilitate respondents' ability to answer electronically. Additionally, it aims to examine the factor of effectiveness digital content marketing towards consumers at Empire Sushi in Melaka. Distributing the questionnaire through internet links aids the researcher in efficiently collecting data for the study. Given that this is an explanatory study, we will thoroughly analyse all secondary data obtained from current and historical research. Subsequently, we will do primary data analysis to ascertain the link between the variables under investigation. The data obtained through this method will be used to examine the relationship between various independent variables, such as brand awareness, word of mouth, engagement, and conversion, and the dependent variable, which is the effectiveness of digital content marketing carried out by consumer in Malaysian SMEs F&B. The researcher adapted questions from previous studies and used them as question to obtain information from respondent.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.3.1 Quantitative Research

When it comes to data collection and analysis, quantitative research focuses on numerical data and statistics, while qualitative research focuses on verbal data

and interpretations. Both are essential for obtaining diverse forms of information. Raimo Steefkerk (2019) asserts that statistics and graphs are employed to communicate quantitative research. It is employed to verify or examine hypotheses and assumptions. This research methodology can be employed to generate universally applicable information on a certain issue. Experiments, observations quantified as numerical data, and surveys with closed-ended questions are typical instances of quantitative methodologies.

Raimo Steefkerk (2019) also proposes that words are employed to communicate qualitative research. It is employed to comprehend concepts, ideas, or experiences. This mode of study enables you to acquire comprehensive expertise on matters that are typically unfamiliar. Qualitative research commonly employs interviews with open-ended inquiries, verbal reports of observations, and literature studies to study ideas and theories.

The study employed a quantitative technique due to its reliance on objective facts, numerical data, and statistics. The resulting outcomes will possess greater validity, reliability, and consistency. The primary source of data for this study will be survey questionnaires. The researcher will distribute, gather, analyse, and interpret the survey among consumer in Malaysia small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) food and beverage (F&B). The collected data will be utilized to examine the effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing among consumers in Malaysia SMEs F&B. This study uses a quantitative design because it allows the measurement of relationships between variables statistically (Creswell, 2014).

The steps involved in quantitative research include formulating a research topic, developing hypotheses, collecting data, analysing it, and drawing conclusions (Ghanad, 2023). In addition, Bouquet (2005) offers a comprehensive approach for quantitative research, with an emphasis on operationalizing variables, collecting data, and selecting samples. This strategy is used for gathering numerical data from online surveys and analysing it using various statistical tools. Aiming to comprehend the influence of intellectual property trademarks on users with a large number of customers, we have examined the self-service technology component and are now ready to make decisions that benefit the whole population.

Consequently, the data is more suitable for analysis in this study's assessment of the link between the factor of effectiveness digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia SMEs F&B.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

3.4.1 Primary Data and Secondary Data Sources

Primary data, as defined by Surbhi S. (2020), refers to material that is collected directly by the researcher with the specific intention of addressing the research issue and is additionally referred to as primary data or unprocessed data. The process of collecting primary data incurs significant expenses as it is conducted internally by the organization or agency, necessitating the allocation of financial and human resources. The investigator exercises direct control and supervision over the process of data collection. Data can be collected by several methods, such as surveys, observations, physical tests, postal questionnaires, questionnaires administered by enumerators, personal interviews, telephone interviews, focus groups, case studies, and other approaches. The survey method was chosen as the primary data source for this study because of its reliability in providing accurate information from the respondents. As this study is conducting in quantitative method, then a questionnaire that blasted in management section of Goggle Form will be utilized in this research. The provided questionnaire will be distributed to potential respondents in the format of URL or links through WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, Facebook, and others social media platform. The questionnaires need to be confidential to protect and respect the humanity of the respondents. Furthermore, the majority of the study's respondents have had previous experience eating at Empire Sushi, AEON Bandaraya, Melaka.

Surbhi S. (2020) defines secondary data as information that has been previously obtained and documented by a different individual for a purpose unrelated to the current research problem. It is a highly accessible kind of data obtained from various sources, including censuses, government publications, internal organizational records, reports, books, journal articles, websites, and more. Secondary data has various benefits since it is freely accessible and saves the

researcher time and money. However, since the data is obtained for objectives other than the issue at hand, the utility of the data may be reduced in a variety of ways, including relevance and accuracy. According to Sekaran (2003), the researcher can attain the necessary information and knowledge from past research that had been conducted and done by other researchers. Therefore, the documents that are important yet useful for this study of research will select and gather from the database of ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and Emerald Insight Since the researcher has limited time to conduct the research, both data is used in this study to save time. Researchers may now acquire information that was previously unattainable via direct interaction with the public and questionnaire. This has shown to be highly valuable.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.5.1 Population

The population, as defined by Pritha Bhandari (2020), encompasses the complete group from which you intend to derive conclusions. According to Pritha Bhandari (2020), a sample refers to the specific group of individuals from whom data will be collected. The sample size is invariably smaller than the total population size.

Objectives have served as the fundamental basis for all forms of academic inquiry. Objectives serve to elucidate the underlying topics of study, either directly or indirectly. The objectives of the study are to determine the specific group to which the research results can be applied or for which the findings can be generalised. Within the realm of study, a collective of individuals is commonly denoted as the population (Shukia S., 2020). A sample is a portion of a population that accurately represents it in its entirety. It signifies that the selected sample units must accurately reflect all the characteristics of the different types of units in the population. In most research, data is gathered from a sample of units rather than the entire population, for various reasons. The findings are then extrapolated to apply to the whole population. To ensure accuracy, it is necessary to carefully select a sample while considering the characteristics of an ideal sample (Shukia S., 2020).

The scope of this study encompasses small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are owned by Malaysian individuals and operate within the manufacturing sector, with a specific focus on the food and beverage (F&B) subsector. The effectiveness of digital content marketing operations is assessed mainly by focusing on Empire Sushi's consumers. The researcher selected Empire Sushi's consumers as the primary focus because they are actively involved with the content and may offer significant insights regarding its entertainment value, information conciseness, and marketing efficacy. The researcher employs the random sample method for sampling. As stated by Thomas L. (2020), a simple random sample refers to a randomly selected subset of a population. Every individual in the population has an equal and precise probability of being selected with this sampling method.

This method is the most straightforward among all probability sampling methods, as it involves only one random selection and requires minimal prior knowledge of the population. Due to the implementation of randomization, any study conducted on this population is expected to possess exceptional internal and external validity.

Based on the 2020 SME Census report, a total of 1,151,399 SMEs was recorded operating their business in Malaysia and Empire Sushi has several outlets around Malaysia. In 2024, there are around 20 Empire Sushi establishments situated in different locations, like as Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Johor Bahru, Kedah, Pahang, Perak, Kelantan, and Penang. Notable sites in Kuala Lumpur include Sunway Putra Mall, Nu Sentral, and Berjaya Times Square. In Subang Jaya, the Empire Shopping Gallery is also worth mentioning. The extensive availability of this sushi establishment allows sushi aficionados from all across Malaysia to easily access it. It offers sushi flavours that have been specifically adapted to cater to the taste preferences of Malaysians at Pavillion Bukit Jalil.

Melaka, a Malaysian state, is expected to have a population of over 1,027,500 by 2024. This forecast represents a slight increase above the 998,428 registered in the 2020 census. Melaka's population is divided into three central districts: Melaka Tengah, Alor Gajah, and Jasin, with Melaka Tengah having the

highest population. The state continues to display a consistent population increase, reflecting its continued urban expansion and economic activity.

The respondents for this study were selected from the customer base of Empire Sushi at AEON Bandaraya Melaka. To identify and choose the respondents, a probability sampling method, specifically a **simple random sampling technique**, was employed. This method ensures that every customer has an equal chance of being selected, reducing the likelihood of bias and enhancing the generalizability of the findings. The study targeted individuals aged 15 and above who had prior experience with Empire Sushi's food, beverages, or services. The sample size was determined to be **386 respondents**, guided by Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, which aligns with the population size and the objectives of the study.

3.5.2 Sampling method

In order to assess the effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing among consumers in Malaysian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) food and beverage (F&B), it would be optimal to employ a stratified random sample technique. Sampling is a method employed to choose a smaller group of individuals from a larger population in order to accomplish specific study goals (Sharma, 2017). There are two main types of sampling techniques which is probability or representative sampling and non-probability sampling.

Probability sampling methods, such as primary random, systematic random, stratified random, cluster, and multi-stage procedures, guarantee that every individual in the population has an equal probability of being chosen. This approach enables researchers to extrapolate their findings and draw inferences about the entire population. In contrast, non-probability sampling approaches, such as quota, volunteer, purposive, and haphazard sampling, rely on the researcher's subjective judgment rather than random selection.

This approach guarantees that the varied demographics of the consumer base are sufficiently portrayed. The sampling procedure commences by delineating discrete strata within the population, including age cohorts, gender, geographical region, and purchasing patterns. After the establishment of these layers, a sample is

selected randomly from each group in a manner that is proportional to their representation in the entire population. This methodology reduces the influence of biased sampling and improves the capacity to apply the findings to a wider population. By encompassing a wide range of consumer viewpoints and actions, the research may more precisely evaluate the influence of digital marketing methods. This survey focuses on Empire Sushi in Melaka customers aged 15 and up who have had at least one experience with their food, drinks, or services.

The research project has opted to utilize probability sampling. The questionnaires were created using Google Forms, allowing the researcher to gather and compile data from the participants efficiently. The questionnaires will be focused on establishing a link, such as a URL, that provides convenient access to the desired responders through email, social media, or internet-based platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, and others. Subsequently, the gathered data may be examined to identify patterns, inclinations, and opportunities for enhancement, so offering significant perspectives for F&B SMEs to enhance their digital content marketing endeavours and effectively serve their intended audience.

To gather responses, a Google Form questionnaire was created and distributed through multiple digital platforms, such as email, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, and other social media channels. This approach facilitated easy access for the respondents and enabled the efficient collection of data. Initially, I faced challenges in reaching the required number of respondents, as some potential participants were hesitant to engage due to time constraints or privacy concerns. However, by clarifying the purpose of the research and assuring respondents of confidentiality, I managed to build trust and encourage participation.

One of the most memorable moments was engaging with participants who were passionate about Empire Sushi's unique offerings. Some even provided detailed feedback beyond the questionnaire, sharing their personal experiences and suggesting improvements. The diversity of responses added richness to the study, allowing me to analyze varied perspectives on the effectiveness of digital content marketing.

In the end, despite the hurdles, the experience taught me the importance of persistence, clear communication, and adaptability in conducting research. This journey not only enhanced my understanding of Empire Sushi's customer base but also strengthened my skills in data collection and analysis.

3.5.3 Sample size

The determination of sample size is based on the number of population being researched. The population of Melaka is estimated to be about 1,027,500 by 2024.. The primary customer demographics for the food and beverage industry usually consist of persons between the ages of 15 and 64, which accounts for around 70% of the total population. Research suggests that a substantial percentage of Malaysians often eat meals outside of their homes. Approximately 70% of Melaka's dine out at least once every week, as stated in Nielsen research. To determine the required sample size, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) have provided a table as a guideline for sample size decisions. According to Roscoe (1975), it is generally recommended that sample sizes between 30 and 384 are suitable for most researchers, as noted in Sekaran (2003). Given that the population in this study exceeds 1000,000, it is recommended to have a sample size of at least 386 samples. However, due to constraints faced by the researcher in obtaining the necessary samples, it has been determined that a sample size of 386 will be used for the research. This number still aligns with the sample size suggested by Roscoe (1975).

3.6 LOCATION RESEARCH

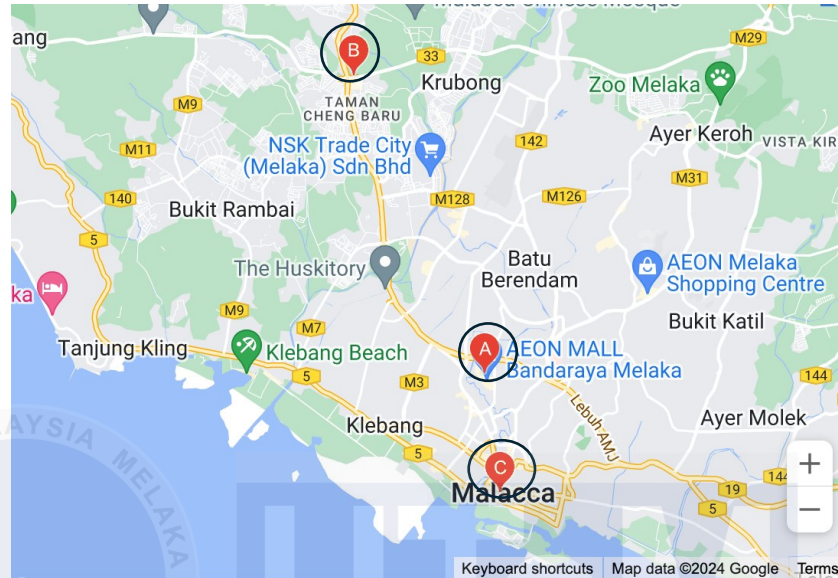


Figure 3.1 : Location of Empire Sushi in Melaka

This research was carried out at Melaka, Malaysia (Figure 3.1). Malaysia, located in Southeast Asia, consists of thirteen states and three federal territories. Melaka is a state on Malaysia's south Malay Peninsula. Its strategic location on the southwest coast, bounded by Negeri Sembilan to the north and Johor to the south, has dramatically influenced its historical and cultural diversity. This research is primarily conducted in Empire Sushi in Melaka, a township in AEON Bandaraya ,Lotus Cheng and Mahkota Parade Melaka, Malaysia. The researchers chose Melaka because Melaka are most popular and has a lot of attractions for the tourist and the travellers. Empire Sushi in Melaka mall, is located in the food sector on the ground floor. The mall's location and proximity to a tourist spot attract a considerable number of visitors. This allows researchers to assess and evaluate the efficiency of digital content marketing among Empire Sushi customers based on demographics. Additionally, Melaka's high-speed internet access facilitated the researcher's investigation. This research study comprised just 384 respondents who had previously utilised Empire Sushi's services in Melaka.

3.7 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The research plan dictates the overarching trajectory of the investigation. Research methodology includes the process of performing research and is a

fundamental component of it. The selection of a suitable research approach depends on several factors, including the objectives and inquiries of the study, the available resources and time, the researcher's philosophical principles, and the existing knowledge of the subject being investigated (Wedawatta G., Ingirige B., Amaratunga D. 2011, p. 3-4). The reason for selecting a survey as the research technique is that it may be constructed as a comprehensive collection of data. A questionnaire is a compilation of inquiries or elements designed to gather data regarding the attitudes, experiences, or perspectives of respondents. Questionnaires are a versatile tool for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires are extensively utilised in market research, as well as in the fields of social and health sciences. For instance, a company may request feedback on a recent customer service encounter, whereas psychology researchers may employ surveys to investigate perceptions of health risks (Pritha Bhandari, 2021).

This study complies with the research ethics set by the university. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and data confidentiality was guaranteed

3.8 SURVEY INSTRUMENTS-QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

According to Aryal S. (2022), a questionnaire is a document that contains questions and other sorts of items meant to elicit information suitable for analysis. The questionnaire may be considered a type of paper interview. The creation of a questionnaire follows a similar pattern to that of an interview schedule. However, because the questionnaire is impersonal, it is critical to pay special attention to its design. Because there is no interviewer to clarify ambiguities or clarify misconceptions, the questionnaire must be exact in its operation. A greater diversity of alternative replies to each topic must be anticipated than in an interview. Aryal S. (2020) also suggests that questionnaire design is a critical component of research since an incorrect questionnaire misleads researchers, academics, and policymakers. As a result, a questionnaire must have a collection of acceptable and relevant questions sequentially. The structure of the questionnaire is determined mainly by the type of questionnaire utilised.

The primary information in this study was collected quantitatively using a survey form. To do quantitative analysis, a questionnaire survey will be sent to a

broad group of respondents with similar questions. Saunders et al. (2016) suggest that distributing a questionnaire to several responders facilitates data collecting and comparability. The questionnaire is developed using Google Forms and may be sent to respondents by QR codes, URLs, or links. The researcher may disseminate the survey form via social media, email, and other online platforms. Respondents may access the questionnaire by computer, mobile phone, tablet, or other network-connected devices. Additionally, it saves time on data collecting by allowing for easy data entry into an Excel spreadsheet.

This survey's questionnaire has multiple questions and is separated into sections, including Section A, section B and Section C. Because this questionnaire is multilingual, respondents have the option of answering in English for questions that need written responses. In section A, the questions are primarily on the respondents' demographic characteristics and corporate backgrounds. Section B contains questions on the Factor Influenced Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs F&B. Questions related to brand awareness, WOM, engagement and conversion. Section C includes questions about the evaluation of digital marketing effectiveness.. All question in this research about independent variables and dependent variables was adapted from previous research. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure responses

3.8.1 Section A: Demographic Profile/Organizational Profile

Section A of the demographic or organizational profile is focused on gathering detailed information about respondents, divided into personal and professional characteristics. The personal characteristics include variables such as age, gender, race, and the respondent's experience with Empire Sushi, which provides insight into their individual background and potential preferences or behaviors. Age helps to categorize respondents into generational groups, gender can highlight any differences in experiences or preferences, and race allows for a deeper understanding of cultural or ethnic influences. The inclusion of experience with Empire Sushi is particularly relevant, as it helps gauge familiarity with the brand and its offerings, which could impact perceptions and feedback. On the professional side, the respondents' highest level of education is also captured, offering a glimpse

into their academic qualifications and potential expertise. This information collectively provides a holistic understanding of the respondents, enabling more targeted analysis and the identification of patterns or trends related to personal and professional factors.

3.8.2 Section B: Factor Influenced Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SME F&B

This section consists of the question about the elements that driven the Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among F&B Consumer in Malaysia SMEs. This section consists of 4 variables which is Brand Awareness, WOM, Engagement and Conversion.

3.8.3 Section C: The Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SME F&B

This section includes the questions aimed to elicit information on the respondent's degree of engagement and familiarity with social media marketing platforms. Aside from that, respondents preferred social media for marketing are also asked to determine which social media are chosen by Malaysian SMEs and the elements that usually used in their Digital Content Marketing.

3.8.4 Dependent Variable and Independent Variables

Section C additionally includes questions designed to analyse the efficiency of Digital Content Marketing among consumers in Malaysian SMEs F&B. The questions can be assessed using the Likert Scale. Jamieson Susan (2022) defines the Likert Scale as a method employed in surveys to evaluate individuals' attitudes, perspectives, or impressions. Participants select from a predetermined range of possible responses to a specific topic or statement; typical options include "strongly agree," "agree," "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." When answer categories are assigned number codes, it is necessary to specify the corresponding numerical values for each research, for example, 1 = highly agree, 2 = agree, and so forth. The Likert scale is named after Rensis Likert, an American social scientist who devised the technique in 1932. Jamieson Susan (2022) also proposed that the dimensions of a Likert scale may differ. Historically, researchers employed a five-point scale consisting of categories such as "strongly agree," "agree," "neutral,"

"disagree," and "strongly disagree." Expanding the range of alternatives in a rating scale, such as using seven categories instead of fewer, could offer respondents more choices. However, others say that people tend to avoid selecting the extreme categories on larger scales, possibly because they wish to avoid appearing overly extreme in their opinions. The 5-point Likert Scale is displayed in Table 3.1 below:

No of Scale	Scale
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Table 3.1: 5-Point Likert Scale

In Section B and C numerous items from secondary sources were selected and altered to assess all of the factors in this section. The item listed as in the Table 3.2 below:

Variables
Brand Awareness
Word of Mouth
Engagement
Conversion
Effectiveness of digital content marketing activities among Malaysia SMEs in the F&B industry.

Table 3.2: Variables Measured

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

Once all the data from the respondents have been gathered, it is necessary to analyse this data in order to obtain results for the research and each of the hypotheses. Currently, there exists a technological system known as SPSS

(Statistical Package for Social Sciences). This computer software can assist in the analysis and interpretation of the results using the data obtained in this report. Therefore, SPSS is employed in this report due to the quantitative nature of the research. SPSS is highly efficient in handling and organizing extensive amounts of data, and it may significantly expedite the analysis and summarization of collected data.

Pallant (2010) states that SPSS utilizes conventional multiple regression to assess the reliability, correctness, and validity of the collected data. During the administration of the questionnaire, SPSS might be used to test the provided hypotheses. In addition, doing a standard multiple regression analysis will assist in assessing the gathered data and identifying areas for enhancing and reinforcing the reliability of the variables. SPSS facilitates hypothesis testing by including all variables in the analysis. Four data analysis procedures need to be performed for this research, which are descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, validity analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. (Hoque et al., 2018).

Data were analysed using SPSS Version 26.0. Descriptive analysis was used to identify the characteristics of the respondents, while Pearson's correlation analysis and multiple regression were used to test the relationship between variables.

3.9.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics is an important part as it will assist the researcher in understanding the data dissemination and examines the relationship between the variables. It is a technique that use to explain the basic characteristics of a research where it will give a summary of a particular data. According to Vetter (2017), descriptive analysis can assist the researcher in summarizing data collected effectively and logically. This method will used to measure the frequency distribution, tables, histograms, charts, and central tendency such as mean, median, and mode. The Demographic Respondents segment containing the personal details of the respondents, such as age, gender, educational level, and buyers of Empire Sushi products and services, will be presented using the descriptive study. Moreover, the frequency distributions will be used in this study and the findings

can be explained in percentage terms where to describe the impact of digital marketing on customer interest in purchases. The results are explained based on the mean and standard deviation values. The level of mean score can be classified into low, medium, and high, based on the mean range below of Table 3.3:

Range of Mean	Level
0.00 – 1.67	Low
1.68 – 3.33	Medium
3.34 – 5.00	High

Table 3.3: Mean Score

3.10 PILOT TEST

Before beginning the process of distributing questionnaires to a large group, a pilot test with a small group of respondents is undertaken to validate the research topic. The purpose of the pilot test is to demonstrate the questionnaire's reliability (Saunders et. al., 2016). It is crucial to guarantee that the respondents understand and are not perplexed by the questions asked in the survey. The researcher prepared 30 of questionnaires for the pilot test to obtain feedback from the respondents. The researcher utilised SPSS to examine the data's reliability, and the Cronbach's Alpha technique was used to assess the data's reliability. Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.7 and above, according to Saunder et al. (2016), are considered acceptable. While it is preferable if the Cronbach's Alpha is more than 0.8, those with 0.9 and higher are deemed excellent.

In this pilot test, a small sample of respondents were evaluated in the first step to see if the questionnaire could collect the data required by the researcher. To improve the questionnaire's validity and reliability, at least 30 participants who had previously utilized Empire sushi's services were chosen for the pilot test (Jarina et al., 2019). As a result, a pilot test was conducted to ensure the questionnaire's validity and reliability. Following data collection, the researcher revised the questionnaire to ensure that respondents understood the questions and provided more accurate data.

3.11 RELIABILITY

This study uses Cronbach's Alpha to compute the mean correlation of each item or measurement across all variables. It is commonly employed to assess the coherence of data. The alpha coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. According to Hoque & Awang (2016), a value of 0.5 or above for the alpha coefficient indicates that the measure is reliable for all variables. Table 3.4 displays the range of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient and its measure of internal consistency. A Cronbach's Alpha value of more than 0.7 is deemed acceptable, a value greater than 0.8 is considered good, and a value of 0.9 or higher is designated as exceptional. This study will use both the dependent variable and independent variables to assess their reliability and validity. A pilot test was conducted involving 30 respondents to ensure the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7 indicates good reliability (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016).

Table 3.4 : Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Range

Source: (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016)

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Internal Consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Questionable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Table 3.5 : Reliability Statistics for Independent Variable 1 (Brand Awareness)*Sources: (SPSS Output)*

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.752	5

The reliability statistics for Independent Variable 1 is brand awareness shown in Table 3.4. . The questionnaire consists of 5 questions in brand awareness part. The Cronbach's Alpha value is **0.752**, which is higher than 0.7. As a result, it is considered acceptable.

Table 3.6 : Reliability Statistics for Independent Variable 2 (Word of mouth)*Sources: (SPSS Output)*

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.788	5

The reliability statistics for Independent Variable 2 is word of mouth (WOM) shown in Table 3.5. The questionnaire consists of 5 questions in word of mouth (WOM) part. The Cronbach's Alpha value is **0.788**, which is higher than 0.7. As a result, it is considered acceptable.

Table 3.7 : Reliability Statistics for Independent Variable 3 (Engagement)

Sources: (SPSS Output)

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.752	5

The reliability statistics for Independent Variable 3 is engagement shown in Table 3.6. The questionnaire consists of 5 questions in is engagement part. The Cronbach's Alpha value is **0.752**, which is higher than 0.7. As a result, it is considered acceptable.

Table 3.8 : Reliability Statistics for Independent Variable 4 (Conversion)*Sources: (SPSS Output)*

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.700	5

The reliability statistics for Independent Variable 4 is conversion shown in Table 3.7. The questionnaire consists of 5 questions in is conversion part. The Cronbach's Alpha value is **0.700**, which is higher than 0.7. As a result, it is considered acceptable.

UNIVERSITI TEKNIKAL MALAYSIA MELAKA

**Table 3.9 : Reliability Statistics for Dependent Variable
(the effectiveness of digital content marketing)**

Sources: (SPSS Output)

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.770	5

The reliability statistics for Dependent Variable is the effectiveness of digital content marketing shown in Table 3.8. The questionnaire consists of 5 questions in is the effectiveness of digital content marketing part. The Cronbach's Alpha value is **0.770**, which is higher than 0.7. As a result, it is considered acceptable.

Table 3.10: Reliability Statistics for All Items (Overall)

Sources: (SPSS Output)

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.926	.928	25

The reliability statistics for all items are shown in Table 3.9. The questionnaire consists of 25 questions. The Cronbach's Alpha value is **0.926**, which is higher than 0.7. As a result, it suggests that it has high reliability, and that the questionnaire was trustworthy.

3.12 VALIDITY

The concept of validity is complicated and diverse, with different meanings and purposes depending on the context in which it is applied. Shepard (2013) emphasizes the necessity of assessing the aim of assessment when determining validity, especially in the context of educational reform. A high validity value indicates that the study provides a high level of confidence. Internal validity is established when research demonstrates a causal relationship between two variables. Internal validity will be established for survey questionnaires by demonstrating that a group of questions is statistically connected with factors or analytical outcomes. This study used a questionnaire to investigate the factor of effectiveness digital content marketing in Malaysia SME F&B. To circumvent validity risks, researchers conduct pilot experiments on small groups. The researcher will proceed to the actual focus group if the questionnaire shows strong validity.

3.13 PEARSON'S CORRELATION COEFFICIENT

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient R indicates how strong a relationship exists between two variables. In this study, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the strength of the relationship between the independent variable, brand awareness, engagement, WOM and conversion. The dependent variable, the effectiveness of digital content marketing.

Significant or not.

Pearson's correlation, which measures the degree and direction of a linear relationship between two variables, has been studied from a variety of angles. Liu (2019) provides a probabilistic explanation, focusing on the computation of concordant pairs. Positive linear correlation suggests that increasing one variable will lead to a rise in other variables. For a negative linear correlation, increasing one variable causes the other variable's correlation to drop. If the correlation coefficient is 0, it indicates that there is no linear link between the variables. In this study, one independent variable and three dependent variables are researched simultaneously to investigate the link between each variable.

Perfect negative	Strong negative	Weak negative	Perfect Independent	Weak Positive	Strong Positive	Perfect Positive
-1	-0.7	-0.3	0	0.3	0.7	1

Table 3.11: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

3.14 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Multiple regression analysis is a fundamental statistical method in data science that focuses on variable selection and statistical causal inference (Iwasaki, 2020). This method estimates the association between a dependent variable and many independent factors, particularly for educational data (Uyanik, 2013). MRA assists researchers in determining which independent variables, such as brand awareness, engagement, WOM and conversion have the greatest impact on the dependent variables, which are the effectiveness of digital content marketing. Additionally, the equation for the multiple regression analysis is presented below:

A	Constant/ Other influences
B	Influence of X_1 (Brand awareness)
C	Influence of X_2 (Engagement)
D	Influence of X_3 (WOM)
E	Influence of X_4 (Conversion)
Y	Dependent Variable (User experience)
X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4	Independent Variable

Table 3.12 : Equation of Multiple Regression Analysis

3.15 STATISTICAL PACKAGE FOR SOCIAL SCIENTISTS (SPSS)

In the present research, the statistical programme for social sciences (SPSS) was utilized to properly analyse and interpret the data. SPSS is the most popular and easy-to-use software tool for analysing, managing, and presenting statistical data. Then, to analyse all of the data from 386 respondents, SPSS software is required to reduce the researcher's effort and ensure appropriate analysis.

3.16 SUMMARY

This chapter detailed the application of the research methodology in the study. The use of an appropriate methodology was essential for obtaining accurate data. A descriptive study design was selected for the investigation, incorporating quantitative methods that involved administering questionnaires. Secondary data was also relied upon to provide theoretical insights and to better understand the impact of digital content marketing on consumers within Malaysian SMEs in the F&B sector.

Primary data was collected by distributing questionnaires to respondents across Malaysia. Before reaching the general public, a preliminary test involving 10 randomly selected participants was conducted to gather feedback and implement improvements to the questionnaire. The data obtained from the survey was analyzed using SPSS version 25. Additionally, various methodologies were implemented to mitigate potential risks, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the study. These measures established the research paper as a credible and trustworthy source.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter has provided the data and discussion on this study. It has demonstrated the successful completion of this research goal. This chapter presented and discussed the results of the data analysis that was obtained from the respondents to the title, which is the factor of effectiveness digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia SME food and beverage. The pilot test was the first step, followed by descriptive, correlation, and regression analysis. In this study, 386 questionnaires were collected using researcher-based surveys and distributed to the respondents at Melaka randomly through an online Google Survey Form. The researcher analysed all the data acquired using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and provide it in tabular form.

4.2 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

A reliability study was used to determine the variable's internal validity. Above 0.7, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient is acceptable (De Vellis, 2003). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, (2016) backed up this claim, stating that the lowest acceptable reliability value is 0.7. The Cronbach Alpha's thumb guidelines are as follows:

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Internal Consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Questionable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Table 4.1: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Range

Source: (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016)

Table 4.2: Reliability Analysis of Each Variable

Source: (Output from SPSS)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Reliability</i>
Brand awareness (IV1)	.843	Good
Word of Mouth (IV2)	.825	Good
Engagement (IV3)	.824	Good
Conversion (IV4)	.837	Good
Effectiveness of DCM (DV)	.733	Acceptable

Within this research, the overall Cronbach Alpha for the independent variables (Brand awareness, Word of mouth, Engagement and Conversion) is 0.947, while

the overall alpha for dependent variable (the effectiveness of digital content marketing) is 0.770. Both alpha readings for are excellent and acceptable respectively, based on the table above 4.2.

Table 4.3: Reliability Statistics for All Items (Overall)

Sources: (SPSS Output)

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of item
.947	.949	5

4.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

This chapter discusses the demographic profile of the study's 386 respondents (N=386) and links these findings to the research objectives. Descriptive statistical methods, specifically frequency analysis, were utilized to analyze and summarize the respondents' demographic data, including gender, age, race, education level, and occupation.

Table 4.4 provides a detailed summary of the respondents' demographic characteristics. These findings are essential in understanding the background of the respondents, offering insights into the composition of the sample and its relevance to the study's objectives. The analysis also serves to contextualize the research findings, ensuring that the demographic variables are appropriately aligned with the research goals and contribute meaningfully to answering the research questions.

Table 4.4: Total Respondents*Source: (Output from SPSS)*

STATISTICS					
		Gender	Age	Race	Highest educational level
N	Valid Missing	386	386	386	386
		0	0	0	0

Part 1 Respondent's Demographic**4.3.1 Gender****Table 4.5 : Frequency and Percentage of Gender***Source: (Output from SPSS)*

GENDER					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female / Perempuan	205	53.1	53.1	53.1
	Male / Lelaki	181	46.9	46.9	100.0
	Total	386	100.0	100.0	

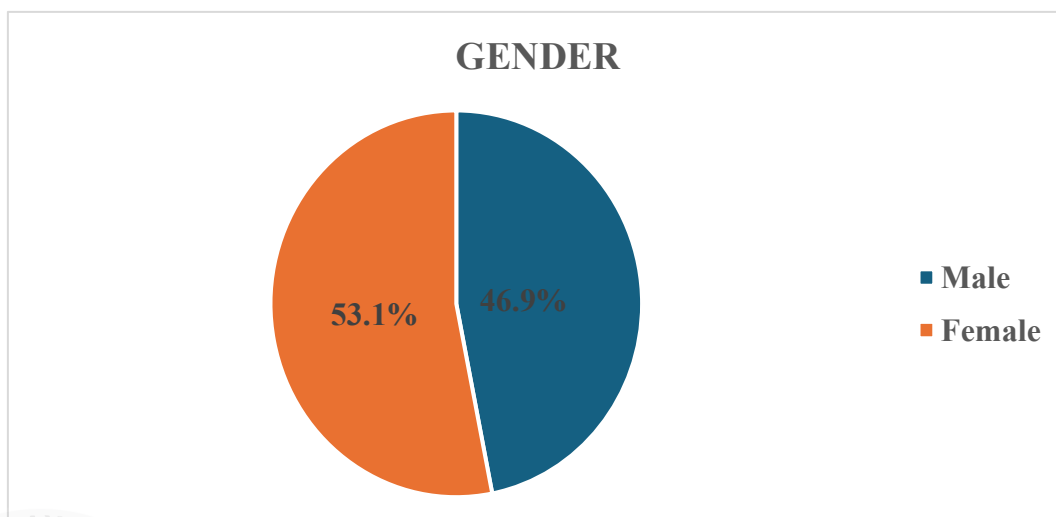


Figure 4.1: The Pie Chart of Respondent's Gender

According to Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1, shows that the gender of all 386 respondents who were answering the questionnaires. There are total of 386 respondents where **53.1% were made up of female** which represent **205 respondents**, and **46.9% or 181 respondents were male**. Female respondents were somewhat higher than male respondents.

4.3.2 Age

Table 4.6: Frequency and Percentage of Age

Source: (Output from SPSS)

AGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	19 below / bawah	66	17.1	17.1	17.1
	20 - 39 years old / tahun	156	40.4	40.4	57.5
	40 - 49 years old / tahun	105	27.2	27.2	84.7
	50 years old and above / tahun keatas	59	15.3	15.3	100.0
	Total	386	100.0	100.0	

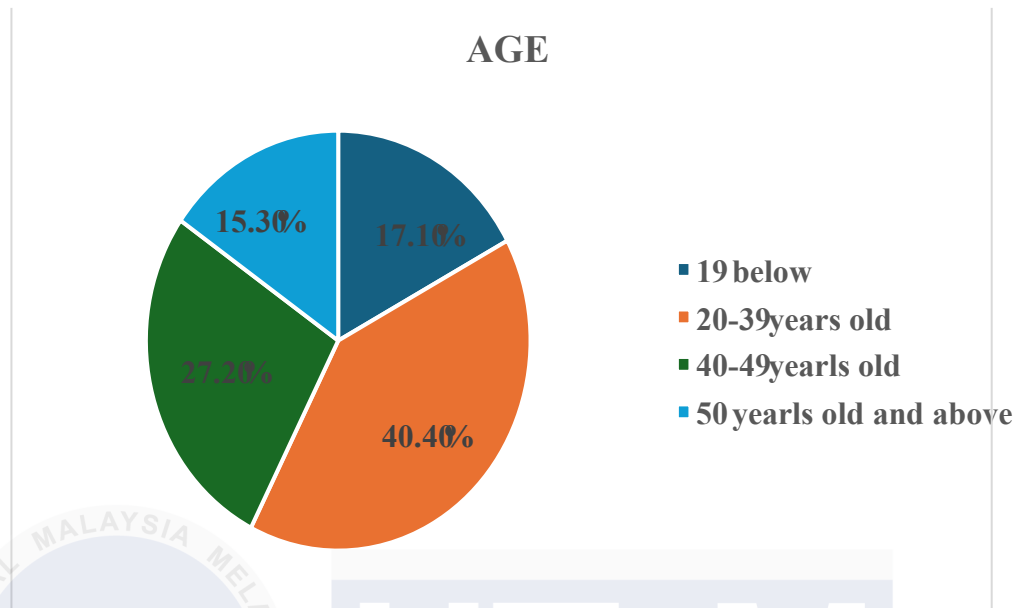


Figure 4.2 : The Pie Chart of Respondent's Age

Based on Table 4.6 and Figure 4.2, there are total 4 categories of age group. Respectively, provide the results of a frequency analysis performed on the replies of respondents on their ages. There has been a total of 386 respondents. Overall, the respondents are mostly from age group of **20-39 years old** which are **156 respondents made up of 40.4%** of the total respondents. This is then followed by **105 respondents (27.2%)** which fall under age group of **40-49 years old** and **66 respondents (17.1%)** which represents age group **19 years old and below**. The result is similar with the research done by Jarina et al.(2019) where most of the respondent are from the age group of 20-39 years old.

4.2.3 Race

Table 4.7: Frequency and Percentage of Race

Source: (Output from SPSS)

RACE					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Chinese / Cina	150	38.9	38.9	38.9
	Iban	2	.5	.5	39.4
	Indian / India	93	24.1	24.1	63.5
	Malay / Melayu	141	36.5	36.5	100.0
	Total	386	100.0	100.0	

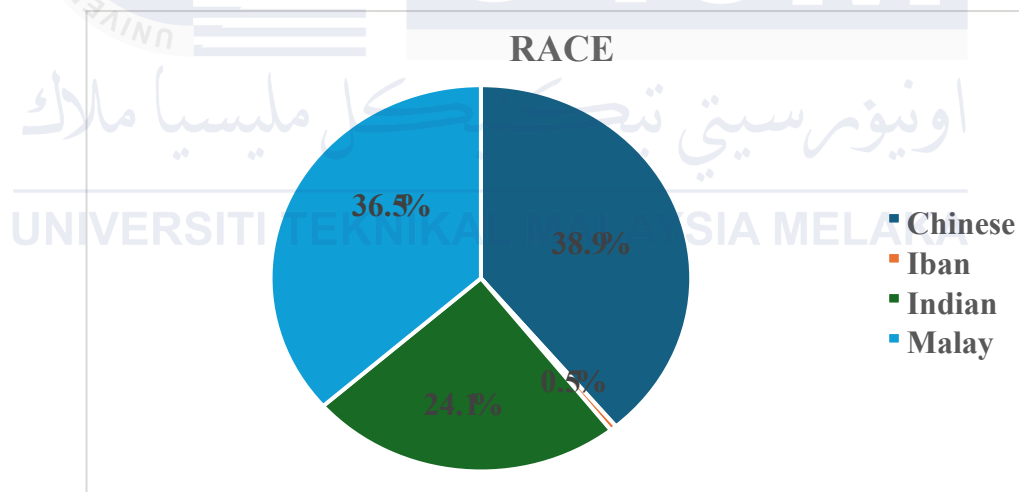


Figure 4.3: The Chart of respondent's Race

Table 4.7 and Figure 4.3 shows the statistics of the number of races. The higher proportion of race involved in this research is Chinese which is **150 respondents or 39%** and the lower respondents in this statistic of the race is **Iban** category which is **2 respondents or 0.5%** of the percentage. Other than that, there were **141 respondents or 36.5%** is **Malay** and lastly follow by **93 respondents or 24.1%** is from **Indian** race.

4.3.4 Highest educational level

Table 4.8 : Frequency and Percentage of Highest educational level

Source: (Output from SPSS)

HIGHEST EDUCATION LEVEL					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor's Degree / Ijazah	100	25.9	25.9	25.9
	Diploma / STPM	99	25.6	25.6	51.6
	Master / Sarjana Muda	84	21.8	21.8	73.3
	Ph.D	49	12.7	12.7	86.0
	SPM	54	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	386	100.0	100.0	

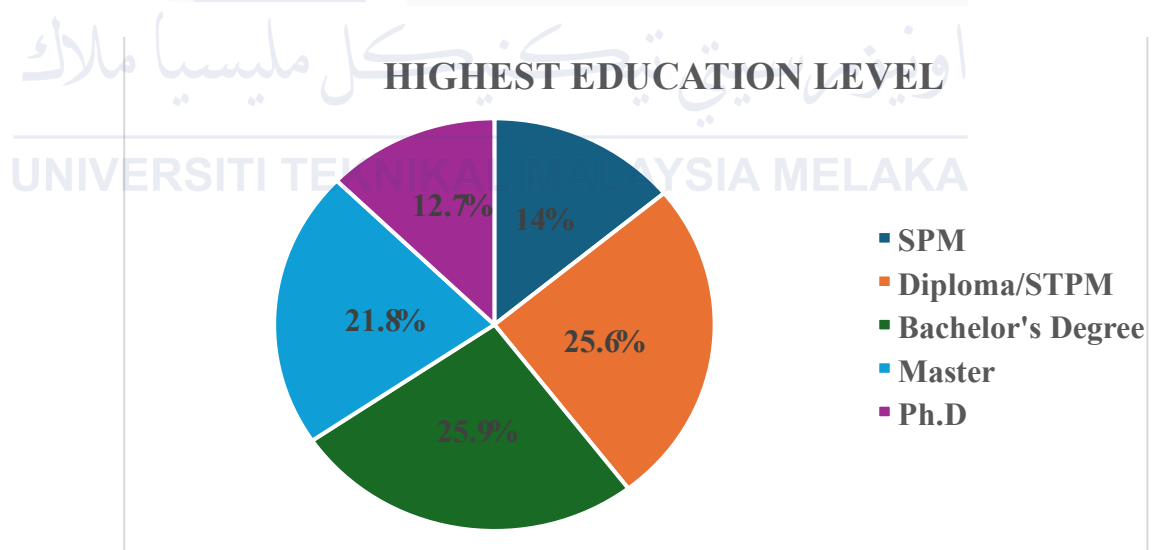


Figure 4.4 :The Chart of Respondent's Education Level

From Table 4.8 and Figure 4.4, it showed that highest education level of respondents. Most of the respondents are from education level of **bachelor's degree** which represents **100 respondents with 25.9%**. The respondents from **Diploma/STPM** level were in second position which made up of **99 respondents with 25.6%**. This is then followed by **84 respondents or 21.8% with Master**

level. Next, followed by respondents with **SPM** qualification with a total number of **54 respondents with 14%** and **49 respondents or 12.7% with Ph.D.** who have provided a response.

Part 2 Organizational Profile

4.3.5 User Experiences

Table 4.9: Frequency and Percentage of respondent's experiences

(Source: SPSS Output)

USER EXPERIENCES					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes / Ya	386	100.0	100.0	100.0

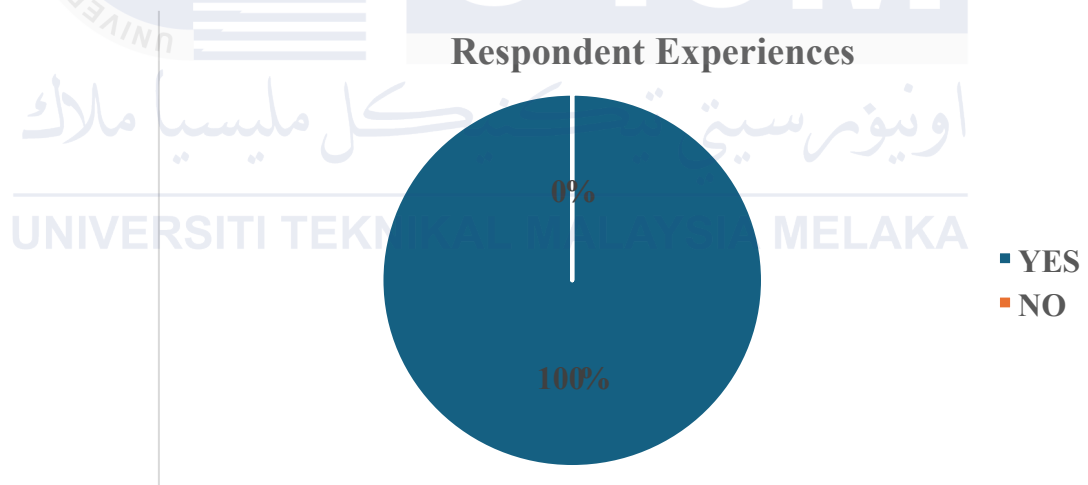


Figure 4.5: The Chart of Respondent's Experiences Status

According to Table 4.9 and Figure 4.5, there were a total of a **386 (100%)** people who responded to the survey. This particular survey question survey has been responded by a total of 386 respondents who have experienced of Empire Sushi.

4.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON INDEPENDENT VARIABLES AND DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The researcher used five-point Likert Scale to identify the impact of innovative self-service technology on user experience at Empire Sushi. The Likert Scale will be four points rating scale in which 1 represent strongly disagree, 2 represented disagree, 3 represented agree and 4 represented strongly agree.

Table 4.10: Descriptive Analysis Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

Source: (Output from SPSS)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
BRAND AWARENESS	386	1	4	3.1176	.78990
WORD OF MOUTH	386	1	4	3.0943	.76686
ENGAGEMENT	386	1	4	3.0725	.77609
CONVERSION	386	1	4	3.0653	.79524
DV	386	1	4	3.2280	.64502
Valid N (listwise)	386				

Table 4.10 has displayed the result from descriptive statistics of independent variables and dependent variables by using SPSS. The independent variables were the factor of effectiveness digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia SMEs food and beverage, which is Brand Awareness, Word of Mouth, Engagement and Conversion while dependent variable was the effectiveness digital content marketing. The table displays the results of descriptive statistics for both independent and dependent variables using SPSS. The independent factors examined are Brand Awareness (BA), Word of Mouth (WOM), and Convenience (C), while the dependent variable is the effectiveness of digital content marketing (DV). The **dependent**

variable (DV) had the **highest mean** value of (**M=3.2280**), indicating that most respondents agreed on the importance of user experience within the study's setting. Among the independent variables, Brand Awareness attained the highest mean values (**M=3.1176**), closely followed by Word of Mouth (WOM) (**M=3.0943**) and other factors which is Engagement (E) (**M=3.0725**) and Conversion (C) (**M=3.0653**). The findings indicate that user experience is highly esteemed, with brand recognition, word of mouth, and convenience substantially impacting respondents' evaluations.

4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variable 1 (IV1)

Table 4.11: Descriptive Statistics of Brand Awareness (BA)

Sources: (SPSS Output)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
BA1- social media is useful for brand, product or service recognition.	386	1	4	3.09	1.023
BA2- Empire sushi's product or service are becoming more popular on social media.	386	1	4	3.15	1.003
BA3- Empire sushi's Digital Content Marketing strategy as an entertainment can contribute to existence of current product and new product in the market.	386	1	4	3.15	1.001
BA4- Empire sushi's social media been able to market our brand, products or service.	386	1	4	3.08	1.040
BA5- Empire sushi social media has increased in follower and like especially our brand, product or service.	386	1	4	3.12	.970
Valid N (listwise)	386				

From the table, the findings reveal that the **highest mean** value among the Brand Awareness factors is for **BA2 and BA3**, both with a mean value of (**M=3.15**), indicating that respondents highly agree on the importance of these items in measuring brand awareness. **BA5** follows with a mean value of (**M=3.12**), while **BA1 and BA4** recorded **slightly lower** mean values of (**M=3.09**) and (**M=3.08**), respectively. The **standard deviation** values across the items range between 0.970 and 1.040, demonstrating a moderate variability in the responses.

The minimum rating scale for each item was 1, and the maximum was 4, indicating that respondents were consistent in their understanding of the brand awareness concept related to Empire Sushi. This implies that all items contribute meaningfully to evaluating brand awareness within the context of the study. These findings suggest that all five items contribute significantly to measuring brand awareness. The results emphasize that **BA2 and BA3** are the most impactful in shaping respondents' perception of brand awareness, highlighting their importance in evaluating Empire Sushi's brand recognition and recall.

4.4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variable 2 (IV2)

Table 4.12: Descriptive Statistics of Word of Mouth (WOM)

Sources: (SPSS Output)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
WOM1- Empire sushi's customers and prospects talk about their experiences and opinions regarding our products/services with their family and friends.	386	1	4	3.10	1.029
WOM2- Viral marketing (messages designed to be passed along, often electronically or by email) influences consumer purchase decision.	386	1	4	3.07	1.017
WOM3- Positive reviews and comments about Empire sushi 's digital content influence customer purchase decisions.	386	1	4	3.11	.995
WOM4- Conversation Creation (things such as emails, promotions, entertainment or anything that is designed to create WOM) influences consumer purchase decisions.	386	1	4	3.10	.958
WOM5- Empire sushi's sales are affected by customers' positive/negative review/experience.	386	1	4	3.10	1.002
Valid N (listwise)	386				

From table 4.12, the data indicates that the **highest mean** value among the "Word of Mouth" (WOM) components is **WOM3**, with a mean of (**M=3.11**), signifying the most consensus among respondents about its importance in assessing word of mouth for Empire Sushi. **WOM1, WOM4, and WOM5** exhibited a mean value of (**M=3.10**), however **WOM2** had the **lowest mean** value of (**M=3.07**), indicating somewhat less consensus. The **standard deviation** values span from 0.958 to 1.029, indicating significant variability in answers, with **WOM1** exhibiting the most variability (**standard deviation of 1.029**) and **WOM4** the least (**standard deviation of 0.958**). This indicates that the respondents' assessments of **WOM1** exhibited somewhat more variability than those of **WOM4**.

The rating scale for all items ranged from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 4, indicating that respondents uniformly evaluated word-of-mouth elements according to their comprehension of the idea. The data indicate that respondents recognize the significance of word of mouth in influencing their opinions of Empire Sushi, with **WOM3 being the most relevant component**. Overall, these findings emphasize that respondents recognize the importance of WOM in fostering user engagement with Empire Sushi. **WOM3** emerged as the most relevant component, highlighting its critical role in influencing user perceptions and opinions of the brand.

4.4.3 Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variable 3 (IV3)

Table 4.13: Descriptive Statistics of Engagement (E)

Sources: (SPSS Output)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
E1- I actively like, comment, and share Empire sushi's digital content on social media.	386	1	4	3.11	1.023
E2- Built good relationship with customers thus increase the trust on our brand/products.	386	1	4	3.11	.989
E3- Social media content can lead participants to follow brands.	386	1	4	3.06	1.016
E4- People tend to share the infographics that they like on social media platforms.	386	1	4	3.07	1.046
E5- Infographics are more informative compared to long texts.	386	1	4	3.01	.990
Valid N (listwise)	386				

From Table 4.13, the findings reveal that the **highest mean** value among the "Effectiveness" (E) factors is shared by **E1 and E2**, with a mean of (**M=3.11**). This indicates that respondents highly agreed that these items contribute to the perceived effectiveness of the study's subject. **E4** follows with a mean value of (**M=3.07**), **E3 with a mean of (M=3.06)**, and **E5 records the lowest mean value of (M=3.01)**, showing slightly less agreement among respondents. The **standard deviation** values range from 0.989 to 1.046, indicating moderate variability in responses. **E4** has the **highest standard deviation (1.046)**, suggesting more diverse opinions for this item,

while **E2** has the **lowest standard deviation (0.989)**, showing relatively consistent responses.

The minimum rating scale for all items was 1, and the maximum was 4, reflecting that respondents consistently evaluated the effectiveness factors based on their understanding of the topic. These results suggest that the respondents recognize the importance of effectiveness in the given context, with E1 and E2 being the most significant factors influencing perceptions.

Overall, these findings suggest that respondents acknowledge the importance of effectiveness in shaping user engagement. Among the factors, **E1** and **E2** emerged as the most significant contributors, emphasizing their critical role in influencing perceptions of engagement in the study's context. This underscores the relevance of these factors in driving positive user interactions and involvement.

4.4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variable (IV4) Table

4.14: Descriptive Statistics of Conversion (C)

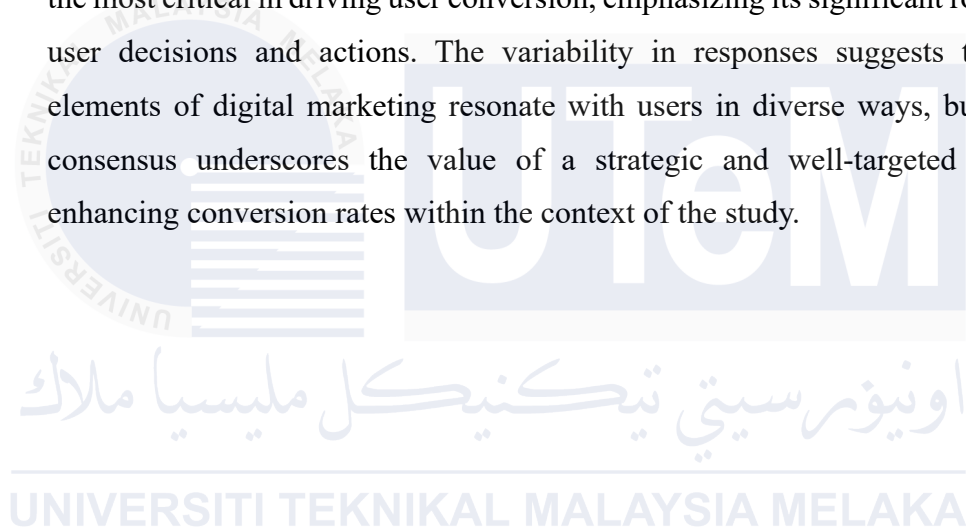
Sources: (SPSS Output)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
C1- Empire sushi social media helped to increase customer base and online sales.	386	1	4	3.04	1.042
C2- With data from social media marketing campaigns, I receive more relevant and personalized offers, allowing me to stay connected with empire sushi, often at lower costs for me as a customer.	386	1	4	3.11	1.022
C3- Social media marketing able to convert prospects into customer.	386	1	4	3.06	.998
C4- The strategy of persuading visitors to take action, such as making a purchase or filling out forms, becomes easier with social media marketing.	386	1	4	3.05	1.004
C5- Customer use the links provided in Empire sushi's digital content to discover more about their products or services.	386	1	4	3.06	1.043
Valid N (listwise)	386				

From Table 4.14, The data indicates that under the "Conversion" (C) categories, C2 has the **greatest mean** value of (**M=3.11**), indicating that respondents most strongly agree on the significance of this aspect in evaluating conversion. **C3 and C5** are tightly aligned, each having a mean value of (**M=3.06**), whilst **C4** has a mean value of (**M=3.05**). **C1** has the **lowest mean** score of (**M=3.04**) indicating somewhat less consensus among respondents relative to other items. The **standard**

deviation values span from 0.998 to 1.043, indicating substantial heterogeneity in the answers. **C5** has the **largest standard deviation (1.043)**, indicating a broader dispersion of ideas, while **C3** shows the **lowest standard deviation (0.998)**, reflecting better uniformity in replies.

The rating scale for all items ranged from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 4, indicating that respondents offered their assessments within a uniform framework. These findings reveal that respondents acknowledge the importance of digital marketing efforts in influencing conversion rates. Among the factors, **C2** emerged as the most critical in driving user conversion, emphasizing its significant role in shaping user decisions and actions. The variability in responses suggests that different elements of digital marketing resonate with users in diverse ways, but the overall consensus underscores the value of a strategic and well-targeted approach to enhancing conversion rates within the context of the study.



4.4.5 Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variable (DV)

Table 4.15: Descriptive Statistics of the effectiveness of digital content marketing

Sources: (SPSS Output)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
DV1- Digital Content Marketing is an effective marketing tools for SMEs.	386	1	4	3.15	1.003
DV2- Empire sushi performance and productivity are much better after using Digital Content Marketing as marketing tool compared to before they use Digital Content Marketing.	386	1	4	3.08	1.040
DV3- Empire sushi company Digital Content Marketing strategy is integrated with company's short term and long-term goal.	386	1	4	3.11	.989
DV4- Empire sushi Digital Content Marketing is gaining trust gradually among social media platform users.	386	1	4	3.21	.975
DV5- Empire sushi content strategy has been revised, and we eliminated anything that did not work before posting it on social media.	386	1	4	3.59	.538
Valid N (listwise)	386				

The data indicates that among the "Dependent Variables" (DV), **DV5** has the **highest mean value of (M=3.59)**, indicating that respondents significantly agree on its significance in assessing the dependent variable. **DV4** has a mean value of **3.21**, indicating its considerable significance among responders. **DV1 and DV3** have mean values of **3.15 and 3.11**, respectively, although **DV2** has the **lowest mean value at (M=3.08)**, indicating somewhat reduced consensus among responders. The **standard deviation** values span from 0.538 to

1.040, indicating differing degrees of response consistency. **DV5** has the **lowest standard deviation (0.538)**, indicating relatively consistent replies, while **DV2** shows the **largest standard deviation (1.040)**, signifying more variety in responses.

The rating scale for all items ranged from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 4, therefore guaranteeing answers were confined to a uniform range. The results indicate that DV5 is seen as the paramount dependent variable, with respondents consistently recognizing its importance within the study's framework. Additional dependent variables also significantly contribute but demonstrate somewhat lower levels of concordance and response consistency.

4.5 NORMALITY TEST

The normality test determines whether our data has a normal distribution. According to Perry's book, a normal distribution is a symmetrical, bell-shaped distribution of data with attributes that is used as a benchmark for evaluating data distribution shapes. A test is considered normal if the results show that only a small percentage of participants are on the right and left tails, with most participants in the middle. It depicts the symmetry and one data cluster in the middle. For the larger samples the value of Skewness should be between -2 and + 2 while for Kurtosis the value should be between -7 and + 7. The researcher used the Skewness and Kurtosis to test using SPSS to explore normality testing.

Table 4.16 : Results of Normality Test*Source: (Output from SPSS)*

Descriptive Statistics							
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
IV1MEAN	386	3.1176	.78990	-.214	.124	-1.281	.248
IV2MEAN	386	3.0943	.76686	-.155	.124	-1.169	.248
IV3MEAN	386	3.0725	.77609	-.287	.124	-1.070	.248
IV4MEAN	386	3.0653	.79524	-.206	.124	-1.079	.248
DVMEAN	386	3.2280	.64502	-.401	.124	-.938	.248
Valid N (listwise)	386						

The normality of the variables was tested using Skewness and Kurtosis values. The acceptable range for Skewness is between -2 and +2, and for Kurtosis, between -7 and +7. Referring to Table 4.20, the Skewness and Kurtosis statistics for all variables (IV1MEAN, IV2MEAN, IV3MEAN, IV4MEAN, and DVMEAN) fall within these ranges, confirming that the data for all variables are normally distributed.

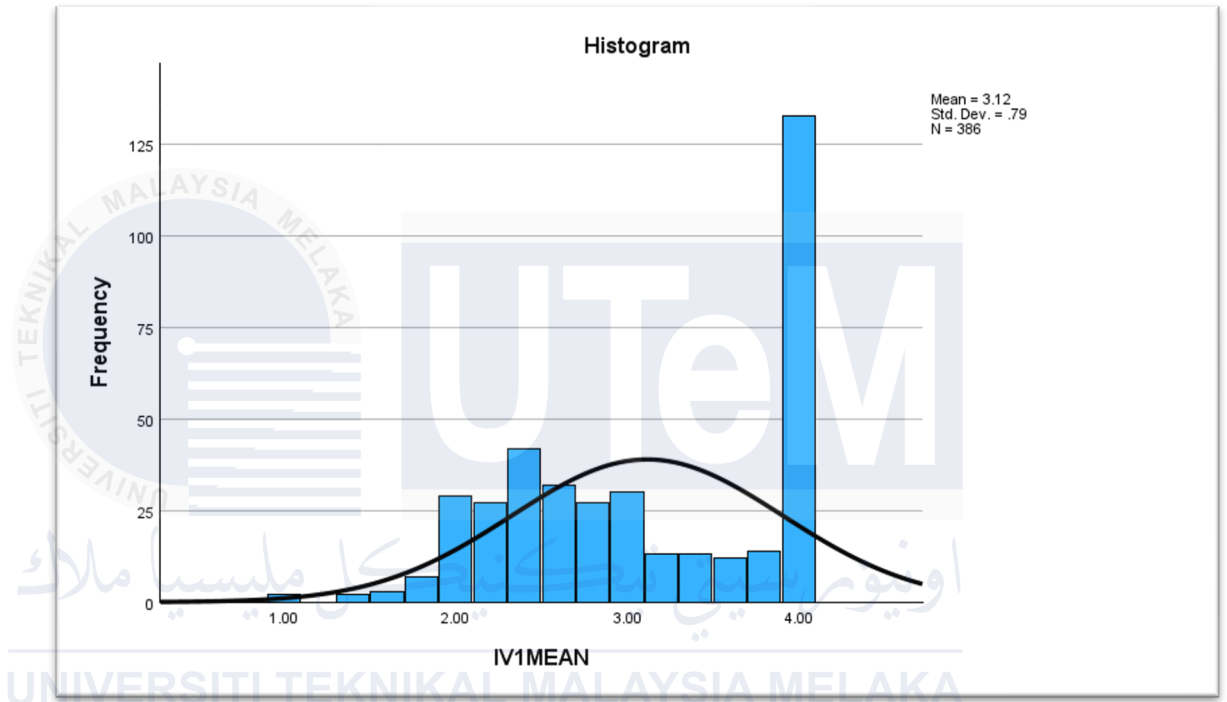


Figure 4.6: Distribution curve for Independent Variable 1 (Brand Awareness)

Source: (Output from SPSS)

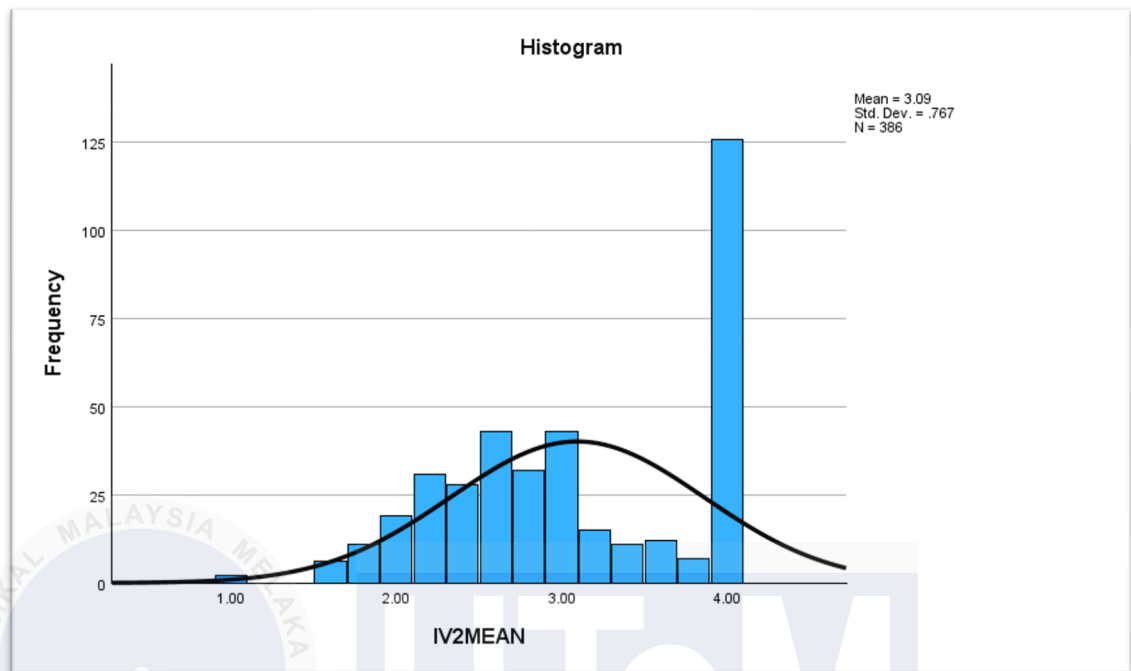


Figure 4.7: Distribution curve for Independent Variable 2 (Word-of-Mouth)

Source: (Output from SPSS)

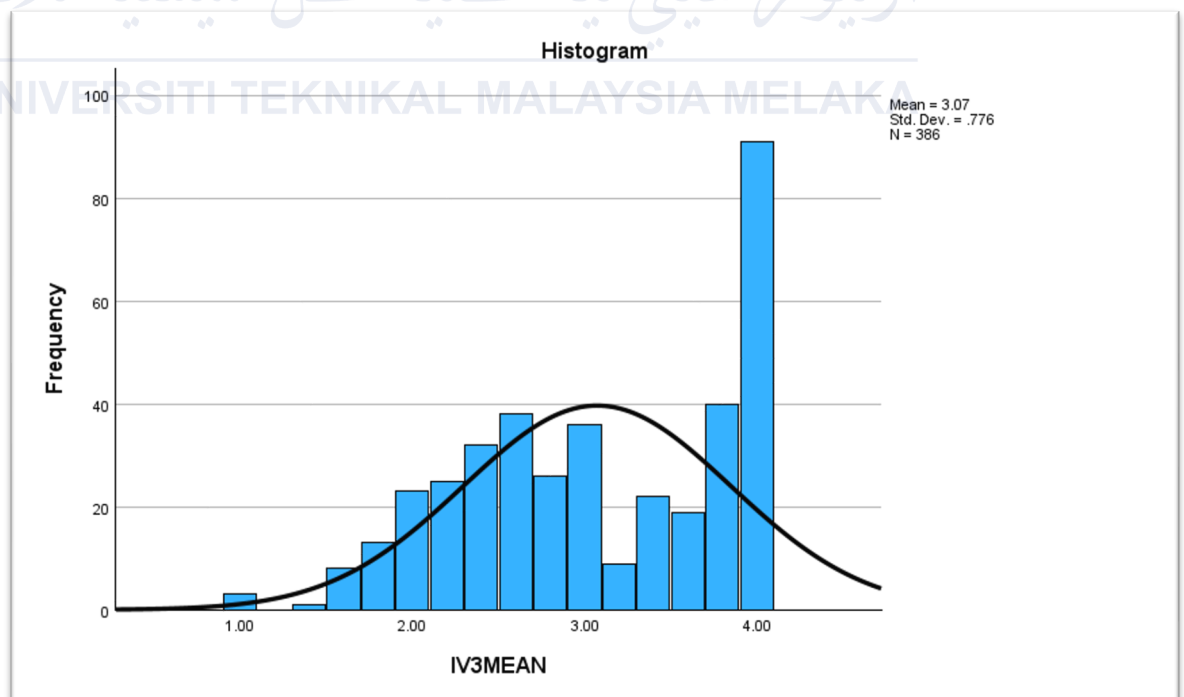


Figure 4.8: Distribution curve for Independent Variable 3 (Engagement)

Source: (Output from SPSS)

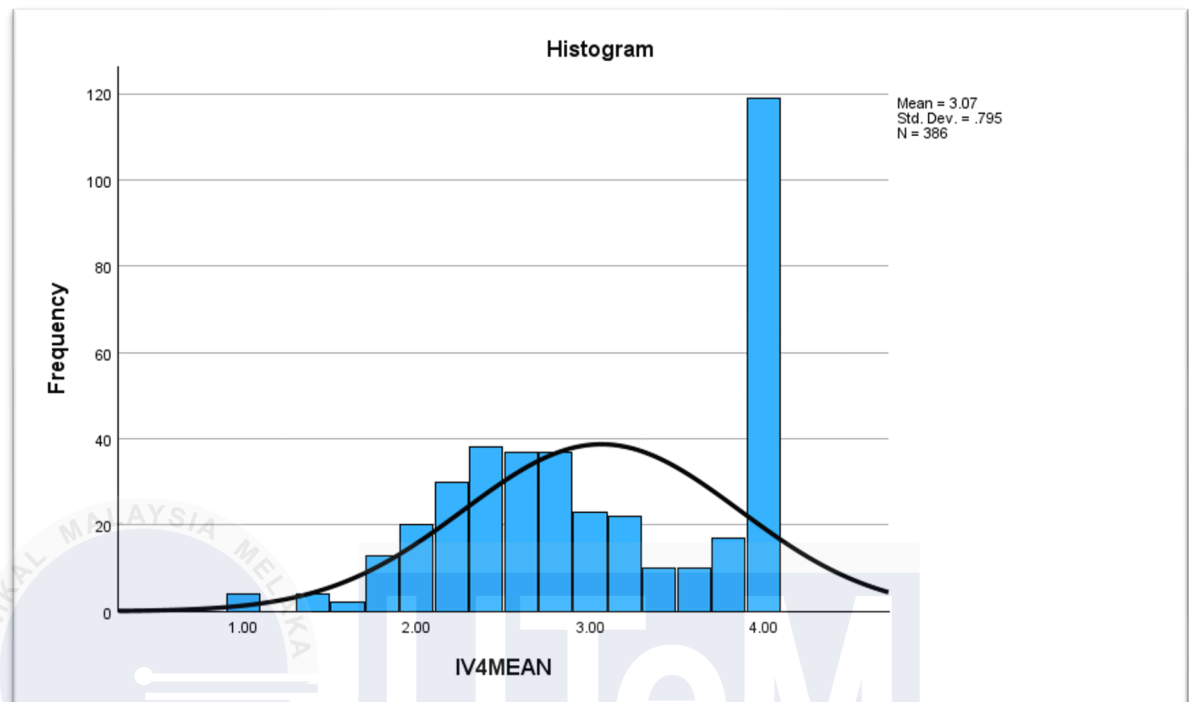


Figure 4.9: Distribution curve for Independent Variable 4 (Conversion)

Source: (Output from SPSS)

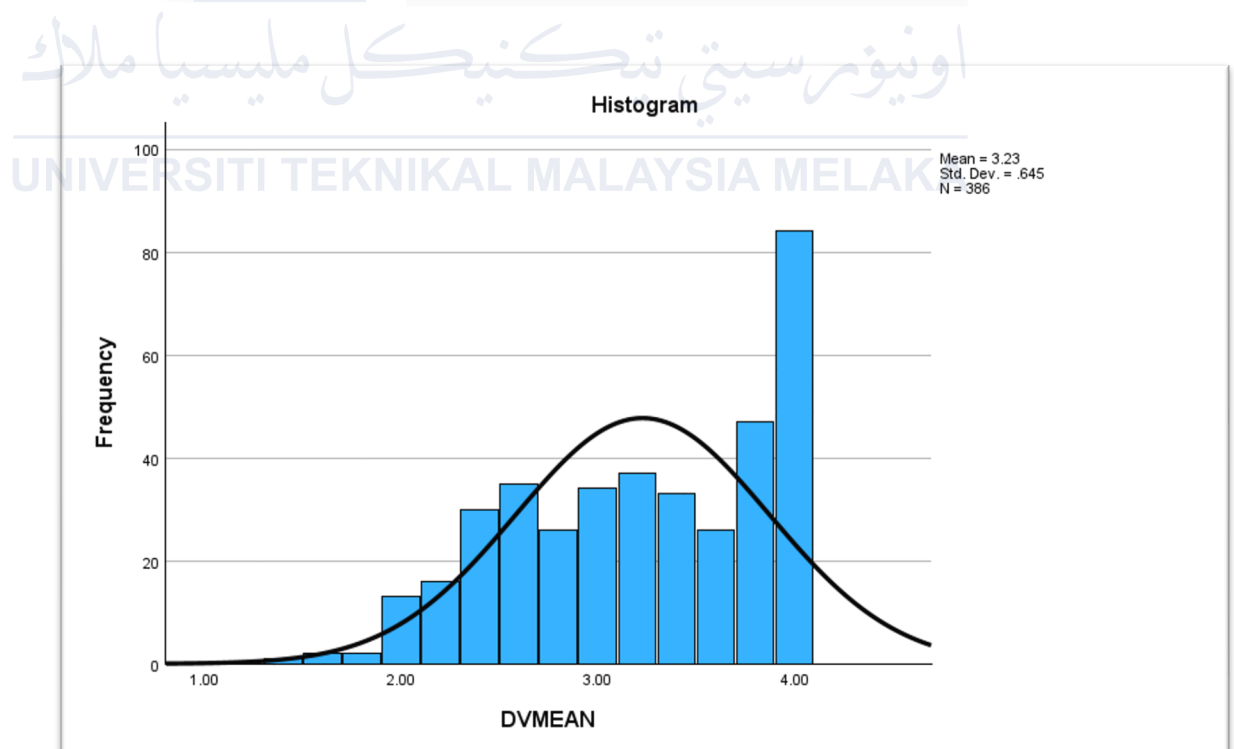


Figure 4.10: Distribution curve for Dependent Variable (Effectiveness of DCM)

Source: (Output from SPSS)

4.6 VALIDITY TEST

Pearson Correlation was used to conduct the validity test, which is used to explain the connection between independent and dependent variables. According to Saunders et al. (2016), the correlation coefficient would be used to determine the strength of the link between independent and dependent variables. The Pearson's Correlation Coefficients for evaluating the correlation range of the R-Values are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Range of Pearson's Correlation Coefficients and the Interpretation

Source: (Saunders et. al., 2016)

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (R-values)	Interpretation
± 0.70 to ± 1.0	Very strong relationship
± 0.40 to ± 0.69	Strong relationship
± 0.30 to ± 0.39	Moderate relationship
± 0.20 to ± 0.29	Weak relationship
± 0.01 to ± 0.19	No relationship

Table 4.18: Correlations between variables

Source: (Output from SPSS)

CORRELATIONS						
		IV1MEAN	IV2MEAN	IV3MEAN	IV4MEAN	DVMEAN
BRAND AWARENESS (IV1)	Pearson Correlation	1	.800**	.780**	.728**	.842**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	386	386	386	386	386
WORD OF MOUTH (WOM)	Pearson Correlation	.800**	1	.784**	.786**	.794**

(IV2)	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	386	386	386	386	386
ENGAGEMENT (IV3)	Pearson Correlation	.780**	.784**	1	.812**	.810**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	386	386	386	386	386
CONVERSION (IV4)	Pearson Correlation	.728**	.786**	.812**	1	.741**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	386	386	386	386	386
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DCM (DV)	Pearson Correlation	.842**	.794**	.810**	.741**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	386	386	386	386	386
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Table 4.18 has showed the results of correlation between independent variables which is impact the effectiveness digital content marketing (Brand awareness, Word of Mouth, Engagement and Conversion) and dependent variable (The Effectiveness of digital content marketing). The relationship between **brand awareness** and the effectiveness of digital content marketing was a strong relationship with r value of **0.842, n=386, p<0.01**. Besides, there was a very strong relationship between **word of mouth and the effectiveness of digital content marketing** as the r value represents **0.794 with n=386 and p<0.01**. The coefficient of **engagement, r=0.810, n=400, p<0.01** also showed a very strong relationship towards effectiveness of digital content marketing. In addition, the relationship between **conversion** and the effectiveness of digital content marketing were also a very strong relationship with r value of **0.741, n=400, p<0.01**. In general, all the **independent variables** had showed **positive relationship towards the dependent variable**. From the result of correlation analysis, it showed that brand awareness very much impactful when forming with effectiveness of digital content marketing. This is because brand awareness has

showed the highest coefficient value of 0.842. This result has been proved by Aymar Raduzzi et al. (2010) where there is significant and positive association between brand awareness and the effectiveness of digital content marketing.

Customers are more ready to suggest the brand to others and are more likely to become loyal to the brand when they are satisfied with the product. (Albarracin and Wyer, 2000, Cronin and Taylor, 2018, Lee et al., 2015) This finding is further supported by previous studies that emphasize the critical role of loyalty in shaping customer satisfaction and behaviour. In general, the table highlights the positive impact of the independent variables on user experience, demonstrating their importance in the context of the study. The significance of the relationships ($p < 0.01$) suggests that changes in the independent variables directly and strongly influence the dependent variable.

4.7 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS (MODEL SUMMARY)

A set of mathematical approaches for estimating and justifying the size of a dependent variable based on the value of one or more independent variables is known as regression analysis. A number that expresses the feasible estimate of a dependent variable from a range of independent variables is the result of regression. To determine the strength and significance of the association between variables (independent and dependent variables) , multiple regression analysis was used.

Table 4.19: Model Summary of Multiple Regression

Source: (Output from SPSS)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.883 ^a	.780	.778	.30407
a. Predictors: (Constant), IV4MEAN, IV1MEAN, IV2MEAN, IV3MEAN				

According to table 4.19, the R value was positive as an outcome of the model summary of multiple regression analysis. **R = 0.833** for multiple coefficients of regression, indicating a strong and positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables. R was referring to the framework's strong connections. As a result, the value of R is greater than ± 0.70 , indicating that it has a positive and good association. Besides, the value of **R square is 0.780**. This suggests that the effectiveness of digital content marketing (dependent variable) is influenced by an independent variable of 77.8% (brand awareness, word of mouth, engagement and conversion), while the rest ($100\% - 77.8\% = 30.4\%$) is influenced by other factors or causes was not mentioned in this research. Moreover, the adjusted R Square values of 0.778 which means that around 70% variance in the effectiveness of digital content marketing (dependent variable) could be clarified by the regression predictor variables. Furthermore, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to test the differences between two or more means.

4.7.1 ANOVA

Table 4.20

Source: (Output from SPSS)

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	124.951	4	31.238	337.861	<.001 ^b
	Residual	35.226	381	.092		
	Total	160.178	385			
a. Dependent Variable: DVMEAN						
b. Predictors: (Constant), IV4MEAN, IV1MEAN, IV2MEAN, IV3MEAN						

The F-test is used to determine if the model matches the data correctly. Significant research is used to check the relationship between variables and the impacts of the important value will indicate whether there is a statistically significant association between variables. Based on the Table 4.20 above, the result of **F-test value** was **337.861** with a **significant level $p=0.000$ ($p<0.05$)**. The **F-test value** was **337.861** which showed that a higher value, it indicated that the overall regression is a good fit for the data and can conclude that there was a significant relationship between

independent variables and dependent variable. It was obvious that all the independent variables were statistically important for their effect on the dependent variable. Therefore, the factor of independent variables of Brand awareness, Word of mouth, Engagement, Conversion and the Effectiveness of digital content marketing.

4.8 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis testing is required in this research to evaluate if the developed hypothesis is accepted or rejected. Regression analysis was chosen to evaluate the outcome of independent variables to test the hypothesis. Hypothesis testing is also used to determine whether the results of a survey or experiment provide relevant results. That is being accepted or rejected. In the regression analysis, brand awareness, word of mouth, engagement and conversion were independent variables of this research and dependent variable was the effectiveness of digital content marketing. The result of hypothesis testing was presented in Table 4.22. If the value of significance, $p < 0.05$, there was a positive relationship between the two variables. However, if the value of significance, $p > 0.05$, there was no positive relationship of independent variable toward the dependent variable. Hence, the value of t must be exceeding 1.96 to achieve a significance level of 0.05 for a two-sided test, (Puri & Treasaden, 2010).

Source: (Output from SPSS)

Coefficients^a

a. Dependent Variable: DVMEAN

Table 4.21 above indicates that the result of the Coefficient for multiple regression analysis. The beta value of brand awareness was 0.439 with the significant value of 0.001, while the beta value of word of mouth (WOM) was 0.180 with significant value of 0.001, the beta value of engagement was 0.289 with significant value of 0.001 and lastly the beta value conversion was 0.045 with the significant value of 0.318. The brand loyalty has the highest beta value compare with other three variables, so it shows that brand awareness has the greatest effective of digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia SMEs F&B.

Based on table 4.23, the linear equation was developed as below:

$$Y = 0.791 + 0.358X_1 + 0.152X_2 + 0.240X_3 + 0.037X_4$$

Where:

Y = The effectiveness of digital content marketing

X₁ = Brand awareness

X₂ = Word of Mouth (WOM)

X₃ = Engagement

X₄ = Conversion

Based on the linear equation above, there was a strong relation between brand awareness, WOM, engagement and conversion for the effectiveness of digital content marketing. Researcher has made four hypotheses to analyse the which factors was the most effective on user experience as shown in below:

Hypothesis 1:

Brand awareness positively impacts digital content marketing among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.

The results of regression for Brand Awareness as independent variables and Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs Food and Beverage as dependent variable was shown in Table 4.23. The **t-value is 9.961**, with a significant value of $p=0.001$. The fact that the p value is less than 0.05 implies that there is a substantial association between Effectiveness of Digital Content

Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs F&B . The findings confirm that Brand Awareness significantly and positively influences the effectiveness of DCM.

Based on this statistical evidence, **the hypothesis (H1) is accepted**, demonstrating the critical role that Brand Awareness plays in shaping consumer perceptions and driving the success of digital marketing strategies. These results emphasize the importance of cultivating strong Brand Awareness to enhance the impact of DCM efforts within the Malaysian SMEs F&B sector. Brand Awareness emerges as a key determinant in optimizing marketing outcomes and achieving greater consumer engagement. Perumal et al. (2017) found that brand awareness significantly influences the usage of social media as a marketing medium in the F&B industry. They concluded that higher brand awareness leads to more effective social media marketing efforts, thereby enhancing consumer engagement and marketing outcomes.

Hypothesis 2:

WOM positively impacts digital content marketing among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.

The results of regression for WOM as independent variables and Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs Food and Beverage as dependent variable were shown in Table 4.23. The **t-value is 3.834**, with a significant value of $p=0.001$. The fact that the p value is less than 0.05 implies that there is a substantial association between Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs Food and Beverage. Therefore, the H2 was accepted, the word-of-mouth factor positively affects the effectiveness of DCM. The WOM factor showed significant impacts towards effectiveness of DCM with the β value =0.152.

Based on these findings, **the hypothesis (H2) is accepted**, affirming that WOM positively impacts the effectiveness of DCM. These results underscore the critical role of WOM as a strategic factor in driving the success of digital content marketing initiatives within the Malaysian SMEs Food and Beverage industry, highlighting its potential to amplify consumer engagement and marketing outcomes. According to Nielsen Report (2015) on trust in advertising, 86% of Malaysian

consumers place a high level of trust in recommendations from people they know. The report emphasizes that mastering online WOM marketing techniques can lead to quicker and more viral reach, thereby amplifying the effectiveness of digital marketing efforts.

Hypothesis 3:

Engagement positively impacts digital content marketing tactics influence consumer engagement for Empire Sushi.

The results of regression for Engagement as independent variables and Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs Food and Beverage as dependent variable were shown in Table 4.23. The **t-value is 6.067**, with a significant value of $p=0.001$. The fact that the p value is less than 0.05 implies that there is substantial association Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs Food and Beverage. Therefore, the H3 was accepted, the engagement factor positively affects the effectiveness of DCM. The engagement factor showed significant impacts towards effectiveness of DCM with the **β value =0.289**.

In essence, our hypothesis (H3) is validated: Engagement significantly boosts the effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing (DCM). This compelling evidence shows that user engagement is far more than a passive result, it actively drives digital marketing success. It emphasizes the importance of creating interactive and meaningful engagements to enhance marketing performance, especially within Malaysian SMEs in the F&B sector. By harnessing Engagement as a strategic element, digital marketers can elevate consumer interaction, build stronger connections with their target audience, and ultimately magnify the impact of their marketing campaigns. Sharabati et al. (2024) highlights that engaging with customers on digital channels to understand their behavior and preferences helps organizations create better experiences and products, leading to stronger economic results and an enlarged market presence. This emphasizes the critical role of customer engagement in driving the success of digital marketing initiatives within SMEs.

Hypothesis 4:

Conversion positively impacts the role of digital content marketing in driving conversion rates and sales for Empire Sushi.

The results of regression for Conversion as independent variables and Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs Food and Beverage as dependent variable were shown in Table 4.23. The **t-value is 0.999**, with a significant value of $p=0.318$. The fact that the p value is more than 0.05 implies that there is no substantial association Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Among Consumer in Malaysia SMEs Food and Beverage. As a result, the researcher rejected the alternative hypothesis in favour of the null hypothesis.

As the p-value fails to demonstrate significance, the **alternative hypothesis is rejected** in favour of the **null hypothesis**, suggesting that Conversion does not substantially impact the effectiveness of DCM within the context of this study. These results highlight that while Conversion may still be an important concept in broader marketing strategies, it does not play a significant role in explaining or influencing the effectiveness of digital content marketing in the Malaysian SMEs' F&B sector, as evaluated in this research. This finding aligns with research by Alias et al. (2022), who investigated factors influencing the effectiveness of social media as a marketing tool among SMEs in Selangor, Malaysia. Their study revealed that while conversion rates did not show a significant impact. This suggests that certain commonly emphasized marketing factors may not universally enhance DCM effectiveness in all contexts.

Table 4.22: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Brand awareness positively impacts digital content marketing among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.	H1₁ is accepted.
H2: WOM positively impacts digital content marketing among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.	H2₂ is accepted.
H3: Engagement positively impacts digital content marketing tactics influence consumer engagement for Empire Sushi.	H3₃ is accepted.
H4: Conversion positively impacts the role of digital content marketing in driving conversion rates and sales for Empire Sushi.	H4₄ is not significant.

4.9 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the analysis of data collected through questionnaires, utilizing various statistical tests including reliability analysis, descriptive analysis, normality testing, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. All analyses were conducted using SPSS software, and the reliability of the questionnaire was found to be high, ensuring the robustness of the collected data.

The findings revealed that **brand awareness** emerged as the most significant factor influencing the effectiveness of digital content marketing, demonstrating its critical role in enhancing user experience. Furthermore, the study confirmed that all factors investigated such as word-of mouth, engagement, and conversion had significant impacts on the effectiveness of digital content marketing, as all hypotheses tested were accepted.

These results align with the research objectives by identifying key drivers of digital content marketing success and their influence on consumer behaviour in the Malaysian SMEs Food and Beverage sector. The findings provide valuable insights into how digital content marketing strategies can be optimized to achieve greater consumer engagement and business outcomes. The discussions, conclusions, and recommendations based on findings will be elaborated in the subsequent chapter

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis from Chapter 4 were discussed. The data and results of the research study that had been analysed were described by the researcher. This chapter will include the demographics, study objectives, implications of the study, limitations of the study, and future study recommendations.

5.2 SUMMARY OF STUDY

The purpose of this researcher was to examine the factor of the effectiveness of digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia SMEs food and beverage. In this research, there were four independent variables which are brand awareness, word of mouth, engagement and conversion which effects toward the effectiveness of digital content marketing.

5.3 DISCUSSION ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

The study had 386 respondents, all of whom completed the questionnaire. 205 respondents, or 53.1% of the total, were female, and 181 respondents, or 46.9%, were male. Female responses marginally exceeded male responses.

The responses were categorized into four age groups. The predominant age group was 20–39 years, including 156 responses or 40.4% of the total. Subsequently, there were 105 respondents (27.2%) in the 40–49 age bracket, 66 respondents (17.1%) aged 19 and below, and 59 respondents (15.3%) aged 50 and above. These results correspond with Jarina et al. (2019), in which the predominant age group of participants was similarly 20–39 years. The largest demographic of responders was Chinese, including 150 persons (38.9%). Malays comprised 141 respondents (36.5%), Indians constituted 93 respondents (24.1%), while the Iban group had the least participation with 2 respondents (0.5%).

Upon analysing educational attainment, most respondents had a Bachelor's degree (100 respondents or 25.9%), closely followed by those with Diploma/STPM degrees (99 respondents or 25.6%). Furthermore, 84 respondents (21.8%) had a Master's degree, 54 respondents (14%) held SPM degrees, and 49 respondents (12.7%) attained a Ph.D.

5.4 DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives were stated as below:

- 1) To examine the relationship between digital content marketing and brand awareness among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.
- 2) To analyze the impact of digital content marketing on word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing among Empire Sushi's customers.
- 3) To assess how digital content marketing tactics influence consumer engagement for Empire Sushi.
- 4) To evaluate the role of digital content marketing in driving conversion rates and sales for Empire Sushi.

5.4.1 Objective 1 : To examine the relationship between digital content marketing and brand awareness among consumers of Empire Sushi in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.

This investigation aimed to determine the correlation between digital content marketing (DCM) and brand recognition among consumers in Malaysia's SME food and beverage industry. The research used Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and Regression Analysis to show a strong beneficial effect of DCM on brand awareness.

The data indicate that brand awareness is the most significant component in the efficacy of DCM. Descriptive statistics showed that respondents acknowledged the significance of digital content marketing in enhancing brand awareness, with the highest mean values for items BA2 and BA3 ($M = 3.15$). This evaluation examined the popularity of goods or services on social media and the influence of DCM techniques in launching new products. This indicates that smart and compelling digital content enhances brand exposure and customer awareness.

The examination of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient substantiated the importance of the link, yielding a correlation value of $r=0.842$ ($p<0.01$) between brand awareness and the efficacy of DCM. This robust link highlights the importance of

ongoing digital interaction in enhancing customer familiarity with SME F&B brands. This conclusion was supported by multiple regression analysis, which showed that brand awareness had the highest standardized coefficient ($\beta=0.439$, $p<0.001$) compared to other variables like engagement ($\beta=0.289$), conversion ($\beta=0.045$), and word-of-mouth ($\beta=0.180$). The findings indicate that brand awareness is the paramount element influencing the efficacy of DCM in this scenario.

A deeper analysis reveals that this strong relationship stems from the psychological impact of repeated exposure to digital content. Theories such as *mere exposure effect* (Zajonc, 1968) explain how familiarity, derived from frequent digital interactions, enhances customer preferences and recall. Furthermore, Albarracín and Wyer (2000) emphasized that satisfied customers are not only more likely to advocate for a brand but also develop stronger loyalty a phenomenon observed in the current study where higher brand awareness correlated with enhanced customer trust and commitment.

Moreover, research by Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) and Chiu et al. (2009) supports the idea that interactive and emotionally appealing digital content strengthens the consumer-brand relationship. This aligns with the finding that entertaining and informative DCM initiatives, especially on social media, create a memorable and positive brand experience. For Empire Sushi, this likely translates to customers feeling compelled to share their experiences online, contributing to high word-of-mouth engagement.

The implications of these findings are substantial for SMEs in the F&B sector, particularly in a competitive market like Malaysia. By leveraging well-designed DCM strategies that balance informational value with entertainment, brands can not only enhance visibility but also cultivate deeper emotional connections with their audience. Future studies should explore the specific formats and platform dynamics that optimize brand awareness to refine these strategies further.

5.4.2 Objective 2 : To analyze the impact of digital content marketing on word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing among Empire Sushi's customers.

The second objective of this research is to evaluate the influence of digital content marketing (DCM) tactics on customer engagement within Malaysia's SME food and beverage industry. Engagement is a vital indicator for assessing the efficacy of digital content in promoting engagement between businesses and their viewers.

The descriptive statistics results show that DCM initiatives significantly impact customer involvement. The analysis indicated that engagement metrics, specifically E1 ("I actively like, comment, and share Empire Sushi's digital content on social media") and E2 ("I have established a good relationship with customers, thereby enhancing trust in our brand/products"), exhibited the highest mean values of $M=3.11$, signifying those respondents concurred with these assertions. These findings underscore the significance of social media initiatives that actively engage consumers, prompting them to connect with the company.

A strong correlation value of $r=0.810$ ($p<0.01$) from Pearson's Correlation Coefficient analysis supports the positive link between involvement and the effectiveness of DCM. This discovery highlights the significance of customer engagement in enhancing the effectiveness of digital marketing initiatives. Engagement cultivates profound relationships, enabling businesses to have a continual presence in their consumers' digital environments.

Multiple regression analysis underscored the importance of involvement as a determinant of DCM efficacy. Engagement, with a standardized coefficient of $\beta=0.289$ and a significant t value of 6.067 ($p<0.001$), was identified as the second most impactful variable, after brand awareness. The findings indicate that consumer activities, including sharing, commenting, and interacting with information, significantly enhance the overall efficacy of DCM tactics.

The findings align with existing literature, including studies by Hsu and Chiu (2004), which highlight the pivotal role of WOM in establishing brand credibility and

cultivating consumer loyalty. Positive testimonials, personal recommendations, and authentic reviews shared on digital platforms often hold greater value for consumers than traditional marketing messages. Additionally, Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) emphasized the importance of interactive and engaging content in generating WOM opportunities, which further strengthen trust and advocacy.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings can be linked to the *Social Influence Theory* (Kelman, 1958), which posits that individuals are more likely to act on recommendations and reviews shared within their social circles due to trust and perceived credibility. Additionally, the *Diffusion of Innovations Theory* (Rogers, 1962) suggests that WOM serves as a mechanism for spreading awareness and encouraging the adoption of products or services, particularly among early adopters and opinion leaders.

In the context of Malaysia's SME F&B sector, Empire Sushi exemplifies how shareable and engaging content fosters consumer trust and advocacy, ultimately enhancing WOM marketing. The ability to create culturally relevant, visually appealing, and emotionally resonant content has positioned the brand to leverage its digital presence effectively.

Future research should explore the specific types of content (e.g., videos, infographics, user generated content) or social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, Facebook) that optimize WOM marketing. By identifying these elements, SMEs can refine their DCM strategies to further enhance consumer advocacy, trust, and long-term success.

5.4.3 Objective 3 : To assess how digital content marketing tactics influence consumer engagement for Empire Sushi.

The second objective of this research is to evaluate the influence of digital content marketing (DCM) tactics on customer engagement within Malaysia's SME food and beverage industry. Engagement is a vital indicator for assessing the efficacy of digital content in promoting engagement between businesses and their viewers.

The descriptive statistics results show that DCM initiatives significantly impact customer involvement. The analysis indicated that engagement metrics, specifically E1 ("I actively like, comment, and share Empire Sushi's digital content on social media") and E2 ("I have established a good relationship with customers, thereby enhancing trust in our brand/products"), exhibited the highest mean values of $M=3.11$, signifying those respondents concurred with these assertions. These findings underscore the significance of social media initiatives that actively engage consumers, prompting them to connect with the company.

A strong correlation value of $r=0.810$ ($p<0.01$) from Pearson's Correlation Coefficient analysis supports the positive link between involvement and the effectiveness of DCM. This discovery highlights the significance of customer engagement in enhancing the effectiveness of digital marketing initiatives. Engagement cultivates profound relationships, enabling businesses to have a continual presence in their consumers' digital environments.

Multiple regression analysis underscored the importance of involvement as a determinant of DCM efficacy. Engagement, with a standardized coefficient of $\beta=0.289$ and a significant t value of 6.067 ($p<0.001$), was identified as the second most impactful variable, after brand awareness. The findings indicate that consumer activities, including sharing, commenting, and interacting with information, significantly enhance the overall efficacy of DCM tactics. Engagement is directly influenced by the brand's ability to create content that captures attention and elicits immediate responses. *Flow Theory* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) explains this phenomenon: when digital content is immersive and well-matched to user preferences, consumers experience a state of "flow," leading to sustained and meaningful interactions with the brand.

Empire Sushi's ability to sustain high engagement levels is also linked to the strategic use of visually appealing, culturally relevant, and emotionally engaging content. This aligns with *Affective Commitment Theory* (Allen & Meyer, 1990), which suggests that emotional attachment to a brand encourages frequent and intentional interaction. For instance, Empire Sushi's celebration of Malaysian culture in its campaigns likely strengthens emotional ties with its audience, driving recurring engagement.

Moreover, the findings differ from WOM as engagement metrics measure real-time interaction rather than the subsequent spread of information. Social media platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok, act as dynamic spaces for fostering these engagements through tools like live streams, reels, and user-driven challenges. Empire Sushi's strategic use of such platforms creates micro-moments of interaction that deepen the consumer-brand relationship.

In Malaysia's SME F&B sector, the findings highlight the importance of creating highly interactive, visually stimulating, and culturally resonant content. This focus not only sustains customer interest but also builds trust and loyalty, ensuring the brand remains top-of-mind. To enhance these outcomes, SMEs should experiment with content formats like gamified interactions or augmented reality experiences that foster deeper consumer engagement.

5.4.4 Objective 4 : To evaluate the role of digital content marketing in driving conversion rates and sales for Empire Sushi.

The efficacy of digital content marketing (DCM) in raising conversion rates and boosting revenue for SMEs in Malaysia's F&B industry is the last goal of this research. Conversions, defined as consumer activities that achieve corporate objectives (e.g., completing transactions, and submitting forms), are a critical statistic of marketing efficacy.

An examination of the conversion variables (C1–C5) indicated considerable consensus among respondents about the influence of DCM on improving conversions. C2 ("With data from social media marketing campaigns, I receive more pertinent and personalized offers, enabling me to maintain a connection with Empire Sushi, frequently at reduced costs for me as a customer") had the highest mean value, with $M=3.11$. Other conversion-related factors, such as C3 ("Social media marketing's ability to convert prospects into customers"), had somewhat lower mean values of $M=3.06$, suggesting that respondents mostly acknowledged the influence of DCM on conversion results.

The examination of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient revealed a robust positive correlation between DCM and conversion rates, with $r=0.741$ ($p<0.01$). This

correlation can be explained using *Customer Journey Theory*, which emphasizes that personalized and targeted marketing nurtures consumers along the decision-making process, fostering trust and reducing purchase friction. By providing relevant content and offers, Empire Sushi simplifies the decision-making process, encouraging customers to complete transactions.

Regression analysis indicated that conversion had the lowest standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.045$) among all independent variables, accompanied by a non-significant t-value of 0.999 ($p > 0.05$). This result indicates that, while DCM contributes to boosting conversions, its direct effect on conversion rates and sales may be less significant than its influence on other measures, such as brand awareness or engagement. This suggests that while DCM supports conversion optimization, external factors such as product pricing, convenience, and customer experience also play critical roles in determining purchase decisions. *Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory* (Oliver, 1980) provides insights here conversion is influenced not only by marketing but also by whether the overall experience meets or exceeds customer expectations, including product value and service quality.

These findings are consistent with research by Maditinios et al. (2013), which highlights the multifaceted nature of conversion optimization. While DCM engages potential customers and moves them through the sales funnel, factors such as competitive pricing, ease of purchase, and post-purchase support significantly impact final purchase decisions. Kokkinou and Cranage (2015) further emphasized the role of convenience in driving conversions, indicating that features like expedited checkout processes or user-friendly interfaces amplify the likelihood of conversion.

Empire Sushi's approach demonstrates how personalized DCM strategies create opportunities to engage and convert customers. By leveraging data-driven insights, such as customer preferences and purchase history, the brand tailors offers and content to meet individual needs. This approach aligns with *Personalization Theory*, which posits that tailored interactions foster deeper emotional connections and higher conversion rates.

To enhance conversion outcomes, SMEs in the F&B sector should integrate complementary strategies beyond DCM. For instance, optimizing user experience

through seamless checkout processes, implementing loyalty programs, and offering time sensitive promotions can address the external factors that impact conversions. Additionally, businesses should focus on removing barriers to purchase, such as unclear pricing or complicated navigation, to further streamline the customer journey.



5.5 DISCUSSION ON THE HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Table 5.1: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Brand awareness positively impacts digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia SME F&B.	Accepted p-value =0.001 ($p<0.05$)
H2: WOM positively impacts digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysian SME F&B.	Accepted p-value =0.001 ($p<0.05$)
H3: Engagement positively impacts digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia SME F&B.	Accepted p-value =0.001 ($p<0.05$)
H4: Conversion positively impacts digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia's SME F&B.	No significant p-value =0.318 ($p>0.05$)

Table 5.1 summarizes the hypothesis testing results. The findings reveal that three hypotheses were accepted as their p-values were below the threshold of 0.05, indicating significant positive relationships. However, one hypothesis was rejected, as it did not meet the significance criteria. The accepted hypotheses highlight the critical roles of brand awareness, word-of-mouth, and engagement in influencing digital content marketing among consumers in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.

The significant value of brand awareness, $p=0.001$ which is less than 0.05 indicates that it has a positive relationship on the effectiveness of digital content marketing. The premise that brand recognition has a favourable effect on digital content marketing was confirmed. This finding underscores the significance of brand identification in influencing customer behaviour and marketing results. Prior research, including that of Akturan and Tezcan (2012), corroborates the assertion that robust brand awareness favourably affects engagement and consumer loyalty on digital platforms.

Other than that, the significant value of service quality, $p=0.001$ which is lower than 0.05 indicates that word of mouth has a positive relationship on the effectiveness of digital content marketing. WOM showed a substantial favourable effect on digital content marketing, so validating the second hypothesis. This corresponds with the results of Hsu and Chiu (2004), who highlighted the significant impact of customer recommendations on enhancing trust and involvement in digital marketing initiatives.

Furthermore, significant value of convenience, $p=0.001$ which is lower than 0.05 indicates that engagement has a positive relationship on the effectiveness of digital content marketing. The hypothesis about engagement was validated, indicating a substantial positive correlation with digital content marketing. Engagement is crucial for cultivating significant relationships between brands and customers, as shown by research by Hirschman and Holbrook (1982), which correlates strong engagement with enhanced brand loyalty and consumer pleasure.

Lastly, in this study, the significant value of conversion, $p=0.381$ which is more than 0.05 indicates that conversion has a no substantial relationship on the effectiveness of digital content marketing. The concept that conversion favourably influences digital content marketing was dismissed. Although conversion is a crucial element of marketing success, its direct impact on digital content marketing may rely on other underlying elements, necessitating more examination to elucidate its significance in this context.

In conclusion, the findings underscore brand recognition, word-of-mouth, and engagement as essential factors in effective digital content marketing strategies. Conversion necessitates a more profound investigation to reveal its possible indirect impacts on marketing success. The hypothesis-testing findings emphasize the significance of brand recognition, word-of-mouth, and engagement in facilitating effective digital content marketing. Collectively, these elements provide a strong foundation for improving customer relationships and fulfilling company goals in the SME food and beverage industry.

5.6 IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

This paper can serve a theoretical implication in the context of digitization of content marketing and its effectiveness of its activities among consumers towards SMEs in the F&B industry. The marketing strategy discussed in this study is Digital Content Marketing activities that adopted parallel with the movement of digitization and digitalization, where the key activity and effectiveness of DCM had been illustrated with supportive figures and facts in the literature. The factors including Brand Awareness (BA), Word-of-Mouth (WOM), Engagement and Conversion were also studied and structured, which may act as theoretical information source for future research. The data analysed may serve as a basic reference and supportive outcomes for other researchers in academic fields.

The study contributes to theoretical advancements by validating frameworks like the *Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)* and *Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)* in the context of DCM. For instance, the findings show how consumer intent, influenced by engaging and personalized content, translates into higher engagement and conversion rates, aligning with TPB's emphasis on intention-behaviour relationships. Moreover, the study supports the *Self-Determination Theory (SDT)* by demonstrating how intrinsic motivations, such as the desire for meaningful interactions, drive consumer engagement with digital content. These contributions enrich the theoretical landscape and offer a basis for future research to explore emerging technologies and platforms like TikTok and AI-driven marketing.

For SME practitioners, the study highlights actionable strategies for leveraging DCM to enhance business performance. SMEs in the F&B sector can capitalize on visually compelling and culturally resonant content to foster deeper emotional connections with their audience. The study's findings, such as the high correlation between brand awareness and DCM efficacy ($r = 0.842$), underscore the value of consistent, high-quality content in building trust and loyalty. SMEs are encouraged to invest in tools that monitor consumer feedback, refine strategies, and personalize customer experiences. Practical initiatives such as loyalty programs, real-time interaction on social media, and influencer collaborations can further amplify engagement and conversion outcomes.

The insights from this research provide guidance for policymakers aiming to support SME growth through digitalization. Government-led initiatives, such as training programs on digital literacy and marketing, can empower SMEs to adopt DCM strategies more effectively.

Subsidizing access to digital tools and ensuring affordable, high-speed internet are critical enablers for widespread adoption of DCM practices. Additionally, offering incentives for innovation in digital technologies, like AI and analytics tools, can drive SME competitiveness. Policymakers may also focus on creating collaborative networks where SMEs can share best practices and access mentorship on DCM implementation.

Technology providers can leverage the findings to design tools that address the specific needs of SMEs. For instance, developing affordable, user-friendly platforms with integrated analytics dashboards can help businesses track and optimize their marketing efforts. Features such as AI-driven insights and content automation can further enhance SMEs' ability to engage consumers effectively. These innovations can democratize access to advanced marketing technologies, enabling even small businesses to compete in the digital marketplace.

In summary, this study underscores the transformative role of DCM in driving growth for Malaysia's SMEs in the F&B sector. Its implications span multiple stakeholders, from academics and practitioners to policymakers and technology providers, fostering a more robust digital ecosystem. Future research should explore sector-specific challenges, cultural differences, and emerging technologies to refine DCM strategies further. By addressing these areas, the study paves the way for more targeted and impactful marketing approaches that align with evolving consumer behaviours and technological advancements.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

As with any study, there are certain limitations that should be recognized and addressed in the future. Although a great effort was made to obtain a larger sample size of Malaysia SMEs in the F&B industry, the final one used in this study is somewhat limited. Hence, any application of its findings should be cautious. Researcher had distributed 386 questionnaires to the respondent of Empire Sushi's consumer and all of them were replied with feedback. This study also used quantitative method which executed by questionnaires contains only close ended questions. Close ended question only allows respondents to select the provided answer option. In addition, the study only focusses on consumer in Malaysia SMEs food and beverage. The researcher also remarked that this study only focusses on Melaka.

First, this study did not examine the elements and process of producing valuable and quality content that is related to SMEs in the F&B industry. For an example, the types of music, picture and video did not elaborate in depth. The usage of all these elements should be adapted by the current trend on social media platform that contributed as DCM dispersion action. As the recorded findings by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), businesses may utilize a variety of social networking services, including TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter, each with different or unique features and qualities. Second, the metrics used to assess social media use, such as understanding consumer's perspectives and preferences, as well as competitiveness in other marketplaces.

This research also not entailed specific type of contents that suitable for F&B product. However, the researcher does mention that key activities that needed in order to produce quality content. Following current trend is crucial in order to establish a relationship between consumers and brands through valuable and quality content. In addition, this study did not address enough comparison between Digital Content Marketing and Traditional Content Marketing in this era. Even though, the whole world seems to be attached with mobile phone which contains social media that contributed to dispersion of DCM, the existence of Traditional Content Marketing still recognized by a certain society and business entities in Malaysia.

Lastly, the current study used a cross-sectional survey method to acquire the essential data, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings in a different context and time which was two months of period to collect the data from the respondents so that the researcher could not find more responses from the respondents.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could explore the effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing (DCM) in industries beyond the SME food and beverage sector, such as retail, healthcare, education, or tourism, to assess whether similar strategies yield comparable results. Investigating other industries can help identify sector-specific factors that influence DCM success, such as the type of product or service, target audience preferences, or the most effective digital platforms for engagement. For instance, industries like tourism or retail may provide insights into how DCM impacts high-involvement purchases or experiences compared to the relatively lower involvement purchases in the food and beverage industry. This broader focus would help determine whether DCM strategies need to be tailored differently for industries requiring higher consumer research and decision-making, offering valuable insights into how to adapt

Besides, future research should adopt a mixed-methods approach to address the limitations of relying solely on close-ended questionnaires, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing (DCM). By combining quantitative methods, such as surveys and statistical analysis, with qualitative methods, such as interviews, focus groups, or content analysis, researchers can gain both broad trends and deeper insights into consumer motivations and perceptions. For instance, in-depth interviews or focus groups could explore emotional connections to digital content, while qualitative analysis of social media posts and comments could reveal real-time consumer reactions. This integrated approach would enable future studies to uncover not just what works in DCM but also why it works, offering actionable strategies for SMEs to create more impactful and consumer-centric digital marketing campaigns and optimize DCM across diverse fields.

Additionally, future research should include a wider range of respondents rather than focusing on a specific group, such as consumers from a particular location or demographic. Expanding the sample to encompass individuals from diverse age groups, income levels, educational backgrounds, and geographic regions would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different consumer segments interact with Digital Content Marketing (DCM). For example, younger consumers may engage differently with social media content compared to older audiences, or urban and rural consumers may have varying perceptions of digital marketing efforts. By incorporating respondents with diverse characteristics, future studies can uncover broader trends and patterns, enabling SMEs to tailor their DCM strategies more effectively to reach and resonate with a wider audience.

In conclusion, future research on Digital Content Marketing (DCM) should expand its scope to explore its effectiveness in industries beyond the SME food and beverage sector, such as retail, healthcare, education, and tourism, to uncover industry-specific factors and optimize strategies accordingly. A mixed-methods approach is recommended to provide a comprehensive understanding of DCM by combining quantitative data with qualitative insights to explore not only what works but also why it works. Additionally, future studies should include a broader and more diverse range of respondents to identify trends across different demographics, regions, and consumer segments. By addressing these aspects, future research can provide valuable, actionable insights to enhance the impact of DCM across various fields and audiences.

5.9 SUMMARY

Digital content marketing (DCM) plays a pivotal role in enhancing brand awareness, as highlighted by the findings of the study. Empire Sushi's strategic use of platforms like Instagram and TikTok effectively increased consumer familiarity and brand visibility. Statistical analysis revealed a strong correlation between DCM and brand awareness ($r=0.842$), making it the most influential factor in DCM effectiveness. Consumers recognized the significance of Empire Sushi's creative storytelling and culturally resonant content in shaping their perception of the brand. Such efforts not only positioned Empire Sushi as a recognizable name in the market but also reinforced consumer trust and loyalty toward the brand.

The impact of DCM on word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing was also significant. Empire Sushi successfully leveraged user-generated content (UGC) campaigns and encouraged customer reviews on platforms like Facebook and Instagram. These initiatives amplified customer advocacy, fostering both traditional and electronic WOM. The study found a positive correlation between WOM and DCM effectiveness ($r=0.794$), indicating that satisfied customers frequently share their experiences, which enhances brand credibility. Viral marketing techniques and customer testimonials further highlighted the effectiveness of WOM in strengthening Empire Sushi's brand image and encouraging new customers to explore its offerings.

Consumer engagement emerged as another critical determinant of DCM effectiveness. Empire Sushi's initiatives, including interactive campaigns, live cooking demonstrations, and visually appealing social media content, successfully fostered deeper connections with their audience. Engagement metrics revealed a strong positive correlation with DCM effectiveness ($r=0.810$), signifying that consumers actively interacted with the brand's content through likes, comments, and shares. By creating culturally relevant campaigns and providing entertaining content, Empire Sushi strengthened emotional bonds with its customers, enhancing brand loyalty and fostering repeat engagement.

The role of DCM in driving conversion rates and sales was also assessed, though its direct impact was found to be less significant compared to other factors. While DCM facilitated conversions by offering personalized promotions and

clickable links, external factors such as product pricing and convenience played a larger role in influencing final purchase decisions. Regression analysis showed a lower standardized coefficient for conversion ($\beta=0.045$, $p>0.05$), suggesting that while DCM supported the customer journey, it was not the primary determinant of conversion outcomes. Nonetheless, Empire Sushi's efforts in tailoring digital campaigns to consumer preferences helped streamline the decision-making process and contributed indirectly to sales growth.

In summary, the study underscores the importance of DCM in enhancing brand awareness, fostering WOM, and driving consumer engagement for Empire Sushi. However, while DCM plays a supporting role in optimizing conversions, other external factors significantly influence sales outcomes. These findings provide valuable insights into how DCM strategies can be tailored to maximize effectiveness in Malaysia's SME F&B sector.

REFERENCE

Aaker, D. A. (1996). Measuring brand equity across products and markets. *California management review*, 38(3).

Abdul-Ghani, E., Hyde, K. F., & Marshall, R. (2019). Conceptualising engagement in a consumer-to-consumer context. *Australasian marketing journal*, 27(1), 2-13.

Abdulameer, S. S., Yaacob, N. A., & Ibrahim, Y. M. (2020). Measuring league supply chain, information sharing, and supply chain performance: pre-test and pilot test. *International Journal of Technology*.

Ahmad, F., Kee, C. P., Mustaffa, N., Ibrahim, F., & Mahmud, W. A. W. (2012). Information propagation and the forces of social media in Malaysia. *Asian Social Science*, 8(5), 71-76.

Akturan, U., & Tezcan, N. (2012). Mobile banking adoption of the youth market: Perceptions and intentions. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol 30, pp 444-459.

Albarracín D, Wyer RS (2000). The cognitive impact of past behaviour: influences on beliefs, attitudes, and future behavioural decisions *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79(1):5-22.

Andreassen, T. W. & Streukens, S. (2009). Service innovation and electronic word-of-mouth: is it worth listening to? *Managing Service Quality*, 19(3), 249-265.

Appel, G., Grewal, L., Hadi, R., & Stephen, A. T. (2019). The future of social media in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(1), 79-95.

Atwong, C. T. (2015). A social media practicum: An action-learning approach to social media marketing and analytics. *Marketing Education Review*, 25(1), 27-31.

Azmi, I. A. G., Basir, A., Muwazir, M. R., Hashim, R. C., & Mohamed, H. A. (2014, June). Motivation of Muslim women entrepreneurs in Malaysian SMEs. In *4th International Conference on Management* (pp. 1-11).

Baltes, L. P. (2015). Content marketing-the fundamental tool of digital marketing. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov. Series V: Economic Sciences*, 111-118.

Becker, L., & Jaakkola, E. (2020). Customer experience: fundamental premises and implications for research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48, 630-648.

Bhandari, P. (2020). An introduction to quantitative research. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/quantitative-research/>

Bhatnagar, A., & Ghose, S. (2004). A latent class segmentation analysis of eshoppers. *Journal of business research*, 57(7), 758-767.

Bishop, C. (2020). Customer engagement guide: Definition, strategies, and tips. Zendesk. <https://www.zendesk.com/blog/customer-engagement-actually-means/>

Bouquet, C. (2005). Methodology for the Quantitative Research. In *Building Global Mindsets: An Attention-Based Perspective* (pp. 63-74). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Brodie, R. J., Ilic, A., Juric, B., & Hollebeek, L. (2013). Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of business research*, 66(1), 105-114.

Brown, J., Broderick, A. J., & Lee, N. (2007). Word of mouth communication within online communities: Conceptualizing the online social network. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 21(3), 2-20.

Calder, B. J., Malthouse, E. C., & Schaedel, U. (2009). An experimental study of the relationship between online engagement and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 23(4), 321-331.

Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). *Word-of-mouth*. In Cambridge dictionary. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/word-of-mouth>

Castells, M. (2010). Globalisation, networking, urbanisation: Reflections on the spatial dynamics of the information age. *Urban studies*, 47(13), 2737-2745.

Castronovo, C., & Huang, L. (2012). Social media in an alternative marketing communication model. *Journal of marketing development and competitiveness*, 6(1), 117-134.

Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019). Digital Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice. Pearson.

Chapman, T. (2008). social network marketing, engagement marketing and brands. Retrieved from <http://www.socialnetworkmarketinguk.com/SNMreport2008.pdf>

Cheung, C. M., & Thadani, D. R. (2010). The effectiveness of electronic word-of-mouth communication: A literature analysis. *Proceedings of the 23rd Bled eConference eTrust: implications for the individual, enterprises and society*, 329-345.

Cheung, C. M., & Thadani, D. R. (2012). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth communication: A literature analysis and integrative model. *Decision support systems*, 54(1), 461-470.

CopyPress (2022). The History of Content Marketing. <https://www.copypress.com/blog/history-content-marketing/>

Curran, J., & Blackburn, R. A. (2001). Older people and the enterprise society: Age and self-employment propensities. *Work, employment and society*, 15(4), 889-902.

Dani, V. (2014). Measuring customer satisfaction for F&B chains in Pune using ACSI model. *Procedia-social and behavioural sciences*, 133, 465-472.

Dehghani, M., & Tumer, M. (2015). A research on effectiveness of Facebook advertising on enhancing purchase intention of consumers. *Computers in human behavior*, 49, 597-600.

DeMers ,J. (2014). 6 Steps to improve the conversion rates of your blog posts. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2017/03/10/6-steps-to-improve-theconversion-rates-of-your-blog-posts/#5cd592a65a06>

Dessart, L., Veloutsou, C., & Morgan-Thomas, A. (2015). Consumer engagement in online brand communities: a social media perspective. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 24(1), 28-42.

DeStefano, B. (2013). How to Measure Social Media Marketing Success. Retrieved from <http://www.svmsolutions.com/resources/articles/how-measure-socialmedia-marketing-success>

DeVellis, R.F., Scale development: Theory and applications, 2nd Edition, Thousand Oaks, Sage, 2003. Duggirala, M., Rajendran, C., and Anantharaman, R.N., Patient-perceived dimensions of total quality service in healthcare, Benchmarking: An International Journal, vol. 15, no. 5, pp.560–583, 2008.

Drell, L. (2013). Marketing 101: The Importance of Conversion. Retrieved from <http://mashable.com/2013/11/21/conversions-metrics/#xN.eyQHa.sql>

Duffett, R. G. (2015). Facebook advertising's influence on intention-to-purchase and purchase amongst Millennials. *Internet Research*, 25(4), 498-526.

Durukan, T., & Bozaci, I. (2012). A survey on determinants of word of mouth in social media. *International Journal of Economics*, 1(7), 36-44.

Dwivedi, Y. K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D. L., & Carlson, J. (2021). Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. *International Journal of Information Management*, 59(1), 1-37.

Efthymiou, A., Middleton, N., Charalambous, A., & Papastavrou, E. (2019). Adapting the eHealth literacy scale for carers of people with chronic diseases (eHeals-Carer) in a sample of Greek and Cypriot carers of people with dementia: Reliability and validation study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 21(11), e12504.

Emily Pribanic (2020). Benefits of Combining Digital with Traditional Marketing.

Epps, S. R., Mulligan, M. & Wilkos, D. (2009). *What Engagement Means For Media Companies Forrester's Framework Measures Four Dimensions Of Engagement*. Retrieved from <https://www.forrester.com/report/What-Engagement-Means-For-Media-Com%20panies/RES53814>

Evans, C., & Erkan, I. (2014). The impacts of electronic word of mouth in social media on consumers purchase intentions. *Digital Marketing-2014*, 9-14

Ferrington, I. (2015). Measuring the effectiveness of social media marketing. Retrieved from <http://www.agencyuk.com/2015/04/measuring-the-effectiveness-of-social-mediemarketing/> (Can't open)

Formosa, S., & Formosa Pace, J. (2022). Digitisation, digitalisation, digital transformation: the Maltese spatial encounter.

Francis Mbah Takwi. (2020). The Innovative Marketing Strategies of Mtn Cameroon.

Franklin, B. (2004). *Poor Richard's almanack*. Barnes & Noble Publishing.

Ghanad, A. (2023). An Overview of Quantitative Research Methods. *International Journal Of Multidisciplinary Research And Analysis*, 6(8).

Ghobadian, A., & Gallear, D. N. (1996). Total quality management in SMEs. *Omega*, 24(1), 83-106.

Godes, D., & Mayzlin, D. (2004). Using online conversations to study word-of-mouth communication. *Marketing science*, 23(4), 545-560.

Godwin, E. U. (2019). *An empirical analysis on effect of digital marketing on consumer buying behaviour* (Doctoral dissertation, Doctoral dissertation, Masters Dissertation, The School of Postgraduate Studies Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria).

Gopaldas, A. (2015). Creating firm, customer, and societal value: Toward a theory of positive marketing. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(12), 2464-2471.

Gupta, S., & Lehmann, D. R. (2003). Customers as assets. *Journal of Interactive marketing*, 17(1), 9-24.

Haida, A., & Rahim, H. L. (2015). Social Media Advertising Value: A Study on Consumer's Perception. *Technology*, 1(1), 1-8.

Halevi, G., & O'Hanlon, R. (2016). Creating content marketing for libraries. *Journal of Medical Library Association*, 342-345.

Halligan, B., & Shah, D. (2009). *Inbound marketing: get found using Google, social media, and blogs*. John Wiley & Sons.

Hashim, M. K., & Abdullah, M. S. (2000). A proposed framework for redefining SMEs in Malaysia: One industry, one definition. *Asian academy of management journal*, 5(1), 65-79.

Haute, E.V. (2021). Sampling Techniques. Research Methods in the Social Sciences: An A-Z of key concepts.

Haven, B., Vittal, S., Overby, C. S., & Cokeh, E. (2008). Five tools and technologies to measure engagement.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: what motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet?. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 18(1), 38-52.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: what motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet?. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 18(1), 38-52.

Hillebrand, S. (2014). Content marketing in social networks, Unpublished dissertation, MBS – Universität Kassel.

Hirschman, E. C., & Holbrook, M. B. (1982). Hedonic consumption: emerging concepts, methods and propositions. *Journal of marketing*, 46(3), 92-101.

Hoffman, D. L., & Fodor, M. (2010). Can you measure the ROI of your social media marketing? *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 52(1), 41-49.

Hollebeek, L.D., Glynn, M.S. and Brodie, R.J. (2014). Consumer Brand Engagement in Social Media: Conceptualization, Scale Development and Validation. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 28(2), pp.149–165.

Howe, S. (2023). *Social Media Statistics for Malaysia*. [online] Meltwater. Available at: <https://www.meltwater.com/en/blog/social-media-statistics-malaysia>.

Hsu, M. H., & Chiu, C. M. (2004). Internet self-efficacy and electronic service acceptance. *Decision support systems*, Vol 38(3), pp 369-381.

Iwasaki, M. (2020). Multiple Regression Analysis from a Data Science Perspective.

Jamieson, Susan (2017) "Likert scale". Encyclopedia Britannica.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Likert-Scale>. Accessed 17 June 2022.

Jara, A. J., Parra, M. C., & Skarmeta, A. F. (2014). Participative marketing: extending social media marketing through the identification and interaction capabilities from the Internet of things. *Personal and ubiquitous computing*, 18, 997-1011.

Jarina, Nur Izzatysyafiq, Puteri Nurafilah & Mizaria (2019), Customer Acceptance Towards Self-Service Technology At Mcdonald ' S, *Journal of Politeknik Malaysia*, issues December, pp 13.

JM. Guedes (2021). Machine-Driven Content Marketing.
<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/978-1-83909-694520211006/full/html>

Kalamkar, R.J. (1932). A Study in Sampling Technique with Wheat. *The Journal of Agricultural Science*, 22, 783 - 796.

Keller, E., & Fay, B. (2012). Word-of-Mouth Advocacy. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 52(4), 459-464.

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of marketing*, 57(1), 1-22.

Keller, K. L. (2003). Strategic branding management: building measuring, and managing brand equity.

Keller, K.L. (2006). Brands and Branding: Research Findings and Future Priorities.

Marketing Science [online] 25(6), pp.740–759. Available at:
<https://pubsonline.informs.org/doi/abs/10.1287/mksc.1050.0153>.

Keyser, W. (2013). *Telling StartUp Stories: Keep the End in Mind*. Booktango.

Khalique, M., Nassir Shaari, J. A., Isa, A. H. B. M., & Ageel, A. (2011). Role of intellectual capital on the organizational performance of electrical and electronic SMEs in Pakistan. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(9).

Kokkinou, A., & Cranage, D. A. (2015). Why wait? Impact of waiting lines on selfservice technology use. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 27(6), 1181-1197.

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, (2012). The social media (r)evolution? – Asian perspectives on new media. Retrieved from: http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_31322-1522-230.pdf?120615060647

Lamichhane, B. (2022). Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Behavior in Pokhara. *KIC International Journal of Social Science and Management*.

Laroche, M., Habibi, M. R., & Richard, M. O. (2013). To be or not to be in social media: How brand loyalty is affected by social media?. *International journal of information management*, 33(1), 76-82.

Legorburu, G., & McColl, D. (2014). *Storyscaping: Stop creating ads, start creating worlds*. John Wiley & Sons.

Legorburu, J., & McColl, D. (2014). *Social media marketing and consumer empowerment*. *Journal of Marketing*, 78(5), 123-145.

Li, J., Kim, W. G., & Choi, H. M. (2019). Effectiveness of social media marketing on enhancing performance: Evidence from a casual-dining restaurant setting. *Journal of Tourism Economics*, 27(1), 3-22.

Liu, X.S. (2019). A probabilistic explanation of Pearson's correlation. *Teaching Statistics*, 41, 115 - 117.

Lockett, A. (2018). *Online Marketing Strategies for Increasing Sales Revenues of Small Retail Businesses - ProQuest*. [online] www.proquest.com. Available at:

<https://www.proquest.com/openview/1245bcf57721e618e6dffc78e8727fb8/1?pqorigsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>.

Macdonald, E. K., & Sharp, B. M. (2000). Brand awareness effects on consumer decision making for a common, repeat purchase product: A replication. *Journal of business research*, 48(1), 5-15.

Maditinos, D., Chatzoudes, D., & Sarigiannidis, L. (2013). An examination of the critical factors affecting consumer acceptance of online banking: A focus on the dimensions of risk. *Journal of Systems and information Technology*, 15(1), 97-116.

Mahafzah, A. G., Aljawarneh, N. M., Alomari, K. A. K., Altahat, S., & Alomari, Z. S. (2020). Impact of customer relationship management on food and beverage service quality: The mediating role of employees satisfaction. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 8(2), 222-230.

Malthouse, E. C., Calder, B. J., Kim, S. J., & Vandebosch, M. (2016). Evidence that user-generated content that produces engagement increases purchase behaviours. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 32(5-6), 427-444.

Maybank Islamic & COOKHOUSE To Offer Halal Business Cloud Kitchen.
<https://risemalaysia.com.my/3669/maybank-cookhouse-offer-cloud-kitchen/>

MBA Skool Team. (2012). Word of Mouth Meaning & Definition. MBA Skool; MBA Skool. <https://www.mbaskool.com/business-concepts/marketing-and-strategy-terms/2082word-of-mouth.html>

McCombes, S. (2021). How to create a research design. Scribbr.
<https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/research-design/>

McCracken, G., Oullier, O., & Zoëga, T. (2014). The Science of Engagement An exploration into the true nature of engagement-what it means and what causes it. *Grounded in science, not fiction*.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). *Word-of-mouth*. In Merriam-Webster dictionary.
Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/word-of-mouth>

Middlelesch, T. (2017). Instagram, advertising on a level playing field? The effect of brand familiarity and advertisement vividness. Retrieved 30 October, 2021, from <http://purl.utwente.nl/essays/71798>

Moe, W. W., & Fader, P. S. (2004). Capturing evolving visit behavior in clickstream data. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1), 5-19.

Murdough, C. (2009). Social media measurement: It's not impossible. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 10(1), 94-99.

Nathan, W. (2012). What Makes Content Viral – A BuzzFeed Developer Opines. URL:<http://wmliesn.com/2012/10/alexandria/what-makes-content-viral-abuzzfeeddeveloper-opines/>. Accessed 12 Mar 2013.

Netemeyer, R.G., Krishnan, B., Pullig, C., Wang, G., Yagci, M., Dean, D., Ricks, J. and Wirth, F. (2004). Developing and validating measures of facets of customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(2), pp.209–224.

Novianti, I. D., & Ariani, K. R. THE EFFECT OF FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING ON FINANCIAL SKILLS WITH POCKET MONEY AS A MODERATING VARIABLE IN GENERATION Z (CASE STUDY ON STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF MUHAMMADIYAH SURAKARTA).

Palmet, M. and Ghasemi, S. Z. (2019) Driving online brand engagement, trust, and purchase intention on instagram. MBA Master's Thesis in Business Administration. School of Business, Society and Engineering, Malardalen University.

Perry, J. T. (2014). *Low-cost marketing strategies for small businesses*. Small Business Journal, 7(1), 22-29.

Perumal, I. (2017). *Social media marketing strategies for F&B firms*. F&B Management Journal, 5(2), 35-48.

Perumal, I. (2017). *The impact of social media on brand visibility in the F&B industry*. Journal of Marketing Research, 15(2), 101-118.

Perumal, I., Krisnan, U. D., & Abdul Halim, N. B. (2017). Social Media in Food and Beverages Industry: Case of Klang Valley, Malaysia. International Journal of Business and Management, 12(6), 1-7.

Perumal, K. (2017). *The role of social media platforms in the F&B industry*. Journal of Business and Social Media, 12(3), 45-60.

Pradiptarini, C. (2011). Social Media marketing: measuring its effectiveness and identifying the target market. *Journal of Undergraduate Research*, 14, 1-11.

Raimo Streefkerk. (2019). Qualitative vs. quantitative research. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/qualitative-quantitative-research/>

Ramzan, U., & Syed, A. R. (2018). Role of content-based social media marketing in building customer loyalty and motivating consumers to forward content. 1-20. *Journal of Internet Banking and Commerce*, 23(3).

Rock Content Writer (2020). What is Engagement Marketing and How to Use It. Rock Content.

Romanchuk, O., Koval, R., Paska, M., Holod, A., & Nykyha, O. (2022). The history of the Michelin Red Guide. *The Journal of VN Karazin Kharkiv National University. Series: International Relations. Economics. Country Studies. Tourism*, (16), 75-86.

Rutkauskaite, I. (2012). *Successful brand strategy execution on social media* (Doctoral dissertation, Master thesis. København: Copenhagen Business School).

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A., Research methods for business students. 7th Edition, Edinburgh Gate, Pearson Education, 2016.

Scozzese, G., & Granata, G. (2019). The action of e-Branding and Content marketing to improve consumer relationships. *European Scientific Journal*, 15(1 (January 2019)), 58-72.

Sekaran, U. (2003). Research methods for business (4th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Seraj, M. (2012). Electronic Word-of-Mouth in Social Media: It Helps or Confuses?

Retrieved from <https://www.scribd.com/document/212201273/Mina-Seraj-ewom-pdf>

Severi, E., Ling, K. C., & Nasermodeli, A. (2014). The impacts of electronic word of mouth on brand equity in the context of social media. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 9(8), 84-96.

Shu-Chuan Chu. (2021). Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on social media platforms: A literature review and future research directions. *International Journal of Advertising*, 40(1), 1-35.

Siedlecki, S. L. (2020). Understanding Descriptive Research Designs and Methods.

ResearchGate; Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338300876_Understanding_Descriptive_Research_Designs_and_Methods

Skole, J. (2014). 5 Social media marketing metrics you should be measuring. Retrieved from <https://www.getambassador.com/blog/social-media-marketing-metrics>

SME Annual Report 2012/2013, SME Developments and Outlook, SME Corp Malaysia, Accessed at: <http://www.smecorp.gov.my/index.php/en/resources/2015-12-21-1107-06/sme-annual-report/book/5-annual-report-2012/2-annual-report>

SME Corp. Malaysia (2013) *Guideline for new SME definition*. Retrieved from: http://www ofs.org.my/file/files/Guidelines%20on%20New%20Definition%20of%20SME%202013__SME%20Corporation.pdf

Statista Research Department. (10 September, 2021). Daily-Social-MediaUsageWorldwide: Retrieved 28 October, 2021, from Statista: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/433871/daily-social-mediausageworldwide/#statisticContainer>

Statista Research Department. (10 September, 2021). Number of social media users 2025. Retrieved 28 October, 2021, from Statista: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-socialnetwork-users/>

Steffes, E. M., & Burgee, L. E. (2009). Social ties and online word of mouth. *Internet research*, 19(1), 42-59.

Surbhi S. (2016). Difference Between Primary and Secondary Data (With Comparison Chart) - Key Differences. Key Differences. <https://keydifferences.com/difference-betweenprimary-and-secondary-data.html>

Tapia, W. (2010). *An exploratory case study on the effectiveness of social network sites the case of Facebook and Twitter in an educational organisation*. (MBA Thesis). Griffith College Dublin, Ireland.

The American Century (2022). Number of TV Households in America 1950-1978. <https://americancentury.omeka.wlu.edu/items/show/136>.

Thomas, J. R., Martin, P., Etnier, J. L., & Silverman, S. J. (2022). *Research methods in physical activity*. Human kinetics.

Thompson, P., 2011. Social networking sites and content communities: Similarities, differences, and recommendations for learning,' in Proceedings, Volume 2: Selected Papers on the *Practice of Educational Communication and Technology*, Jacksonville, FL, November 8- 12, pp. 462-466.

Timilsina, M. (1 January, 2017). Impacts of social media in restaurant businesses: A case study of restaurants based on Oulu region. Retrieved 1 March, 2022, from http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/10024/128861/1/Timilsina_Manoj.pdf

Trusov, M., Bucklin, R. E., & Pauwels, K. (2009). Effects of word-of-mouth versus traditional marketing: findings from an internet social networking site. *Journal of marketing*, 73(5), 90-102.

Trusov, M., Bucklin, R.E. and Pauwels, K. (2009). Effects of Word-of-Mouth versus Traditional Marketing: Findings from an Internet Social Networking Site. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(5), pp.90–102.

Turner, D.P. (2020). Sampling Methods in Research Design. Headache: The Journal of Head and Face Pain, 60.

Uyanık, G., & Güler, N. (2013). A Study on Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 106, 234–240.

Varcoe, J. (2004, May). Assessing the effectiveness of social marketing. In *ESOMAR Public Sector Research Conference* Wachal, R. (1971). Humanities and computers: A personal view. *The North American Review*, 256(1), 30-33.

Wang, H., Ma, B., & Bai, R. (2019). How does green product knowledge effectively promote green purchase intention?. *Sustainability*, 11(4), 1193.

Wang, X. (2022). RESEARCH ON THE INFLUENCE OF COLLEGE COUNSELOR TEAM CONSTRUCTION ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY. *Psychiatria Danubina*, 34(suppl 4), 482-482.

Wiklund, J., Patzelt, H., & Shepherd, D. A. (2009). Building an integrative model of small business growth. *Small business economics*, 32, 351-374.

Wu, Y. L., Agrawal, D., & El Abbadi, A. (2001). Applying the golden rule of sampling for query estimation. *ACM SIGMOD Record*, 30(2), 449-460



APPENDIX A

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.— N is population size. S is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

GANTT CHART FINAL YEAR PROJECT II

TASK	WEEK														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Meeting for FYP2															
Create Interview Questions															
Correction Interview Questions															
Data Collection through Interview															
Completion of Data Collection and Arrange into Transcript															
Information Processing (Chapter 4)															
Conduct Chapter 4															
Submit Chapter 4 and Correction Chapter 4															
Information Processing (Chapter 5)															
Conduct Chapter 5															
Submit Chapter 4 (latest) and Chapter 5															
Correction Chapter 5															
Combine Chapter 1-5															
Prepare Presentation															
Presentation															

APPENDIX C



SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

THE FACTOR OF EFFECTIVENESS DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING AMONG CONSUMER IN MALAYSIA SMEs FOOD AND BEVERAGE.

Dear Sir/Madam/Mr/Mrs,

I am Nur Qhairunnisha binti Zamree, a final year student who is currently pursuing Degree in Bachelor of Technology Management and Technopreneurship at Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, UTEM. I am conducting research on a topic " The factor of effectiveness digital content marketing among consumer in Malaysia SMEs food and beverage". In this research will serve to guide the researcher into the effectiveness of digital content marketing.

The questionnaire is consisting of THREE (3) sections which are, Section A,B and C. Section A is about the details of the respondents, while Section B is about independent variable and followed by effectiveness of digital content marketing which is dependent variable in Section C.

Please read the questions carefully before answering them. Tick the answer in the box provided. The information that is received will be kept strictly and only for academic research purposes.

Thank you for devoting 15 minutes of your time and energy into this survey.

Tuan/ Puan/Mr/Puan,

Saya Nur Qhairunnisha binti Zamree , pelajar tahun akhir Ijazah Sarjana Muda Pengurusan Teknologi dan Teknousahawanan di Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, UTEM. Saya sedang menjalankan penyelidikan mengenai topik " Faktor keberkesanan pemasaran kandungan digital dalam kalangan pengguna di Malaysia PKS makanan dan minuman.". Dalam penyelidikan ini akan menjadi panduan kepada pengkaji tentang keberkesanan pemasaran kandungan digital. Borang soal selidik terdiri daripada TIGA (3) bahagian iaitu Seksyen A,B dan C. Seksyen A adalah mengenai butiran responden, manakala Seksyen B mengenai pembolehubah bebas dan diikuti oleh keberkesanan pemasaran kandungan digital di Bahagian C. Sila baca soalan dengan teliti sebelum menjawabnya. Tandakan jawapan dalam kotak yang disediakan. Maklumat yang diterima akan disimpan dengan tegas dan hanya untuk tujuan penyelidikan akademik sahaja.

Terima kasih kerana menumpukan 15 minit masa dan tenaga anda ke dalam tinjauan ini.

Name / Nama : Nur Qhairunnisha binti Zamree

Email / Emel :

Contact number / Nombor telefon:

Supervisor/ Penyelia,

Mr. Mukhiffun Bin Mukapit

Email / Emel :

Fakulty / Fakulti : Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia, Melaka.

SECTION A: ORGANIZATION PROFILE

This section of survey is for collecting the organizational information from the respondent. Please answer (/) in the appropriate space provided.

Part 1 Respondent's Demographic

A. What is your age?

- ☐ 19 below
- ☐ 20 – 39 years old
- ☐ 40 – 49 years old
- ☐ 50 years old and above

B. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

C. What is your race?

- ☐ Malay
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Others, please state:...

D. What is your current education level?

- ☐ SPM
- ☐ Diploma/STPM
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master
- ☐ Ph.D

E. Do you have been experienced Empire sushi product and service?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**SECTION B: FACTOR INFLUENCED EFFECTIVENESS OF DIGITAL
CONTENT MARKETING AMONG CONSUMER IN MALAYSIA SMEs F&B**

The following statements below depicting to measure of brand awareness, word of mouth, engagement, and conversion. All the questions should be rated on scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). To what extent you agree with the following statements, please circle your choice to the scale as follows / *Penyataan berikut di bawah menggambarkan untuk mengukur kesedaran jenama, dari mulut ke mulut, penglibatan, dan penukaran. Semua soalan hendaklah dinilai pada skala dari 1 (Sangat Tidak Setuju) hingga 5 (Sangat Setuju). Sejauh mana anda bersetuju dengan pernyataan berikut, sila bulatkan pilihan anda skala seperti berikut.*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

Brand Awareness (defined as the term that describes consumers' familiarity (awareness) with a brand or its products. Simply put, brand awareness measures how memorable and recognisable a brand is to its intended audience)					
No	Item	1	2	3	4
1	Social media is useful for brand, product or service recognition.				
2	Empire sushi's product or service are becoming more popular on social media.				
3	Empire sushi's Digital Content Marketing strategy as an entertainment can contribute to existence of current product and new product in the market.				
4	Empire sushi's social media been able to market our brand, products or service.				
5	Empire sushi social media has increased in follower and like especially our brand, product or service.				

Word of Mouth (WOM) (defined as “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet”)					
No	Item	1	2	3	4
1	Empire sushi’s customers and prospects talk about their experiences and opinions regarding our products/services with their family and friends.				
2	Viral marketing (messages designed to be passed along, often electronically or by email) influences consumer purchase decision.				
3	Positive reviews and comments about Empire sushi 's digital content influence customer purchase decisions.				
4	Conversation Creation (things such as emails, promotions, entertainment or anything that is designed to create WOM) influences consumer purchase decisions.				
5	Empire sushi’s sales are affected by customers’ positive/negative review/experience				

Engagement (In the context of Digital Marketing, the term refers to how customers interact directly with brands through various actions such as clicks, likes, comments, and shares)					
No	Item	1	2	3	4
1	I actively like, comment, and share Empire sushi's digital content on social media				
2	Built good relationship with customers thus increase the trust on our brand/products				
3	Social media content can lead participants to follow brands				
4	People tend to share the infographics that they like on social media platforms.				
5	Infographics are more informative compared to long texts				

Conversion ("The moment at which a marketing message receiver takes the required action." Conversion is just getting someone to react to your call to action such as aware, searching and buying the products.)					
No	Item	1	2	3	4
1	Empire sushi social media helped to increase customer base and online sales				
2	Database from social media marketing campaign allows us to re-target existing customers at a much lower marketing cost.				
3	Social media marketing able to convert prospects into customer				
4	Strategy of persuading visitors to take action, such as making a purchase or filling out forms, becomes easier with social media marketing.				
5	Customer use the links provided in Empire sushi's digital content to discover more about their products or services				

**SECTION C: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING
AMONG CONSUMER IN MALAYSIA SMEs F&B**

This section provides statements that reflect the effectiveness of digital content marketing. All the questions should be rated on scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). To what extent you agree with the following statements, please circle your choice to the scale as follows / Bahagian ini menyediakan kenyataan yang mencerminkan keberkesanan pemasaran kandungan digital. Semua soalan hendaklah dinilai pada skala dari 1 (Sangat Tidak Setuju) hingga 5 (Sangat Setuju). Sejauh manakah anda bersetuju dengan pernyataan berikut, sila bulatkan pilihan anda kepada skala seperti berikut.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

The Effectiveness of Digital Content Marketing Activities					
No	Item	1	2	3	4
1	Digital Content Marketing is an effective marketing tools for SMEs.				
2	Empire sushi performance and productivity are much better after using Digital Content Marketing as marketing tool compared to before they use Digital Content Marketing.				
3	Empire sushi company Digital Content Marketing strategy is integrated with company's short term and long term goal.				
4	Empire sushi Digital Content Marketing is gaining trust gradually among social media platform users.				
5	Empire sushi content strategy has been revised, and we eliminated anything that did not work before posting it on social media.				

Thank you for your participation.

The data collected are for academic purpose only.



Bachelor of Technopreneurship with Honors (BTEC)

Faculty of Technology Management and Technopreneurship (FPTT)

Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM)

Research Project Survey Questionnaire:

THE FACTOR OF EFFECTIVENESS DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING AMONG CONSUMER IN MALAYSIA SMEs FOOD AND BEVERAGE.

Brand Awareness			
No	Items	Author	Reference
1	Social media is useful for brand/product/service recognition	Ved Prakash et al.	Perspective Benefits and Future of Social Media Marketing, Journal of Positive School Psychology 2022, Vol. 6, No. 6, 6296 – 6301
2	Empire sushi's product or service are becoming more popular on social media.	G. Panigyrakis et al.	All we have is words: applying rhetoric to examine how social media marketing activities strengthen the connection between the brand and the self, International Journal of Advertising (2019)

3	Empire sushi's Digital Content Marketing strategy as an entertainment can contribute to existence of current product and new product in the market.	<i>M.L. Cheung et al.</i>	Developing a conceptual model for examining social media marketing effects on brand awareness and brand image, <i>International Journal of Economics and Business Research</i> (2019)
4	Empire sushi's social media been able to market our brand, products or service.	G. Panigyrakis et al.)	All we have is words: applying rhetoric to examine how social media marketing activities strengthen the connection between the brand and the self, <i>International Journal of Advertising</i> (2019)
5	Empire sushi social media has increased in follower and like especially our brand, product or service.	Susana C. Silva et al.	How companies evaluate the ROI of social media marketing programmes: insights from B2B and B2C, <i>Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing</i> Volume 35 · Number 12 · 2020 · 2097–2110

Word of Mouth (WOM)			
No	Item	Author	Reference
1	Empire sushi's customers and prospects talk about their experiences and opinions regarding our products/services with their family and friends	Brown, J., Broderick, A.J. and Lee, N. (2007).	Brown, J., Broderick, A. J., & Lee, N. (2007). Word of mouth communication within online communities: Conceptualizing the online social network. <i>Journal of interactive marketing</i> , 21(3), 2-20.
2	Viral marketing (messages designed to be passed along, often electronically or by email) influences consumer purchase decision.	(Kumar et al., 2020)	Kumar, J., Konar, R., & Balasubramanian, K. (2020). The Impact of Social Media on Consumers' Purchasing Behaviour in Malaysian Restaurants. <i>Journal of Spatial and Organisational Dynamic</i> , 8(3), 197-216.
3	Positive reviews and comments about Empire sushi 's digital content influence customer purchase decisions.	Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K.P., Walsh, G. and Gremler, D.D. (2004)	Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: what motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet?. <i>Journal of interactive marketing</i> , 18(1), 38-52.

4	Conversation Creation (things such as emails, promotions, entertainment or anything that is designed to create WOM) influences consumer purchase decisions.	(Kumar et al., 2020)	Kumar, J., Konar, R., & Balasubramanian, K. (2020). The Impact of Social Media on Consumers' Purchasing Behaviour in Malaysian Restaurants. <i>Journal of Spatial and Organisational Dynamic</i> , 8(3), 197-216.
5	Empire sushi's sales are affected by customers's positive/negative review/experience	Dilip Lalwani	Young ConsumersOnline and Offline Channel Purchase Behaviour (2016)

Engagement			
No	Items	Author	Reference
1	I actively like, comment, and share Empire sushi's digital content on social media	Hollebeek, L.D., Glynn, M.S. and Brodie, R.J. (2014).	Consumer brand engagement in social media: Conceptualization, scale development and validation. <i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i> , 28(2), 149-165.
2	Built good relationship with customers thus increase the trust on our brand/products	Kabu Khadka & Soniya Maharjan	Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty (2017).
3	Social media content can lead participants to follow brands	Gümüş, N. (2017).	Gümüş, N. (2017). THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT MARKETING ACTIVITIES OF FIRMS ON CONSUMERS' BRAND FOLLOWING BEHAVIOR. <i>Academic Research International</i> , 8(1), 4-5.

4	People tend to share the infographics that they like on social media platforms.	Yildirim, Celik, Yildirim, & Kaban, 2016)	Yildirim, s., Celik, E., Yildirim, G., & Kaban, A. (2016). A study on the development the infographics reader questionnaire and reader opinions. SHS Web of Conferences: ERPA, 31, 5.
5	Infographics are more informative compared to long texts	Yildirim, Celik, Yildirim, & Kaban, 2016)	Yildirim, s., Celik, E., Yildirim, G., & Kaban, A. (2016). A study on the development the infographics reader questionnaire and reader opinions. SHS Web of Conferences: ERPA, 31, 5.

Conversion			
No	Items	Author	Reference
1	Empire sushi social media helped to increase customer base and online sales	Asia R. Lockett	Online Marketing Strategies for Increasing Sales Revenues of Small Retail Businesses (2018)
2	Database from social media marketing campaign allows us to re-target existing	Joe Nwachukwu Umunna	Social Media Marketing Strategies for
	customers at a much lower marketing cost		Increasing Customer Engagement (2021)
3	Social media marketing able to convert prospects into customer	Jere Eriksen	Building the Sales Process (2013)

4	Strategy of persuading visitors to take action, such as making a purchase or filling out forms, becomes easier with social media marketing.	Loretta N. Ezaife	Social Media Strategies for Increasing Sales (2017)
5	Customer use the links provided in Empire sushi's digital content to discover more about their products or services.	Moe, W.W. and Fader, P.S. (2004).	Moe, W. W., & Fader, P. S. (2004). Capturing evolving visit behaviour in clickstream data. <i>Journal of Interactive Marketing</i> , 18(1), 5-19.

THE FACTOR OF EFFECTIVENESS DIGITAL CONTENT MARKETING AMONG CONSUMER IN MALAYSIA SMEs FOOD AND BEVERAGE.			
No	Items	Author	Reference
1	Digital Content Marketing is an effective marketing tools for SMEs.	Abdulrazak Taiye Arobo	The Effect of Digital Marketing on SMEs A case study of Swedish And Nigerian companies (2022).
2	Empire sushi performance and productivity are much better after using Digital Content Marketing as marketing tool compared to before we use Digital Content Marketing.	Urska Binter	Influence of Online Marketing Strategies on the Sales Success of B2B Companies (2019)

3	Empire sushi company Digital Content Marketing strategy is integrated with company's short term and long term goal.	Amanda Claesson & Albin Jonsson	The Confusion of Content Marketing A study to clarify the key dimensions of content Marketing (2017)
4	Empire sushi believe that Digital Content Marketing is gaining trust gradually among social media platform users.	Linda D. Hollebeck	Digital Content Marketing's Role in Fostering Consumer Engagement, Trust, and Value: Framework, Fundamental Propositions, and Implications, Journal of Interactive Marketing (2019)
5	Empire sushi have revise back our content strategy and eliminate anything did not work before post it in social media.	Amanda Claesson & Albin Jonsson	The Confusion of Content Marketing A study to clarify the key dimensions of Content Marketing (2017)