Leveraging Digital Campaign Management for Competitive Advantage in the Marketing Ecosystem: Evidence from Algeria.

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Abstract:

Digital disruption has rendered traditional campaign management insufficient for organizations competing in algorithmically mediated marketing ecosystems. This study examines how Digital Campaign Management (DCM) encompassing campaign design, audience targeting, channel optimization, content strategy, budget allocation, and automation generates sustainable competitive advantage in Algerian organizations.

The model tests three mediated pathways through Campaign Reach & Targeting Precision, Data-Driven Brand Awareness, and Customer Social Engagement, with Marketing Ecosystem Fit moderating the relationship between Brand Awareness and Competitive Advantage. A mixed-methods design combining PLS-SEM with expert interviews was applied across five Algerian market sectors.

All hypotheses are confirmed: DCM directly and significantly predicts competitive advantage, all three mediation pathways prove statistically significant, and Marketing Ecosystem Fit meaningfully moderates the brand awareness-advantage relationship. The model accounts for a substantial share of variance in competitive advantage, underscoring its strong explanatory power.

Keywords: Digital Campaign Management; Competitive Advantage; Marketing Ecosystem; PLS-SEM; Algeria.
Jel Classification Codes: M31, L25, O33.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has fundamentally altered the competitive landscape of marketing. Organizations that fail to develop systematic Digital Campaign Management (DCM) capabilities orchestrating data-driven targeting, multi-channel content deployment, real-time budget optimization, and automated performance tracking increasingly find themselves outpaced by competitors who exploit algorithmic marketing ecosystems more effectively (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022; Kotler et al., 2021). In this environment, DCM constitutes not merely a tactical tool but a strategic organizational capability generating measurable competitive advantage through superior campaign reach, brand awareness, and customer social engagement.

Algeria's digital marketing ecosystem presents a compelling study context. With 72% internet penetration, 28 million active social media users, and rapidly growing digital advertising expenditure (Data Reportal, 2024), Algerian organizations across five key sectors E-Commerce & Retail, Financial Services, Telecom & Technology, FMCG, and Media & Entertainment are simultaneously developing DCM capabilities and competing for digitally mediated market positions. Yet DCM-competitive advantage research in North African contexts remains scarce.

1.1 The question of the study:

Despite the rapid digitalization of Algeria's marketing ecosystem, organizations across key sectors continue to invest in digital campaign management without a clear theoretical understanding of how Digital Campaign Management (DCM) translates into sustainable competitive advantage, and whether the returns from such investments depend on the degree of alignment between campaign practices and sector-specific ecosystem demands.

This study therefore asks:

Through which mechanisms does DCM generate competitive advantage in the Algerian marketing ecosystem, and does Marketing Ecosystem Fit moderate the brand awareness–advantage conversion pathway?

Three research questions guide this study:

– Does DCM directly predict competitive advantage in the Algerian marketing ecosystem?

– What are the mediating mechanisms through which DCM generates competitive advantage?

– Does Marketing Ecosystem Fit moderate the brand awareness-advantage pathway?

1.2 Study Objectives: This study pursues four primary objectives:

- To conceptualize Digital Campaign Management (DCM) as a strategic organizational capability comprising campaign design, audience targeting, channel mix optimization, content strategy, budget allocation, and KPI & automation management;
- To empirically test the direct effect of DCM on competitive advantage across five Algerian market sectors;
- To identify and validate the mediating mechanisms Campaign Reach & Targeting Precision, Data-Driven Brand Awareness, and Customer Social Engagement through which DCM generates competitive advantage;
- To examine the moderating role of Marketing Ecosystem Fit on the Brand Awareness Competitive Advantage relationship, determining whether DCM returns are contingent on sector-ecosystem alignment.

1.3 Scope and Delimitations:

This study is thematically delimited to the intersection of digital marketing management, strategic management, and organizational capability theory. It focuses specifically on DCM as a dynamic capability generating competitive advantage.

The study is geographically delimited to Algeria, spanning five market sectors: E-Commerce & Retail, Financial Services, Telecom & Technology, FMCG & Consumer Goods, and Media & Entertainment. The sample comprises marketing managers, digital campaign directors, and brand strategists operating within Algerian organizations.

This study employs a mixed-methods design combining PLS-SEM and qualitative expert interviews. Data collection was conducted between

January and March 2025, reflecting the state of DCM capability development and competitive dynamics in Algeria's digital marketing ecosystem during this period.

2. Literature Review

2.1 DCM as Strategic Capability

The Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991) posits that sustainable competitive advantage derives from VRIN resources. DCM constitutes such a cluster: valuable because superior campaign intelligence enhances competitive positioning; rare given the scarcity of data-literate campaign specialists; imperfectly imitable because DCM excellence is embedded in proprietary data assets; non-substitutable as no alternative replicates its precision and measurability. Vorhies and Morgan (2005) confirmed that marketing capabilities are a primary source of competitive advantage through systematic execution processes.

2.2 Campaign Reach and Targeting Precision

Campaign Reach & Targeting Precision constitutes the first mediation pathway. Bleier and Eisenbeiss (2015) demonstrated that personalized online advertising effectiveness the "what, when, and where" precision of targeting generates significantly superior conversion rates. Alalwan et al. (2017) confirmed that social media advertising generates competitive advantage through enhanced audience targeting. In Algeria, mobile-first reach strategies combined with demographic targeting are critical given the predominantly mobile digital consumer base (DataReportal, 2024).

2.3 Data-Driven Brand Awareness

Batra and Keller (2016) demonstrated that integrated digital communications generate superior brand recall and share-of-voice. In digital ecosystems, brand awareness is built through precision-targeted content generating measurable impression frequency and social amplification (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022). Jung and Shegai (2023) confirmed that digital marketing innovation generates competitive advantage through enhanced brand awareness precision.

2.4 Customer Social Engagement

Islam and Rahman (2017) demonstrated that social engagement mediates digital marketing activities and competitive outcomes. Dinh et al. (2025) confirmed that digital capabilities generate sustainable competitive advantage through enhanced customer engagement in emerging market contexts. Social engagement is potent in Algeria's collectivist social media environment where peer advocacy constitutes a powerful competitive differentiation mechanism.

2.5 Marketing Ecosystem Fit as Moderator

Marketing Ecosystem Fit (MEF) refers to alignment between DCM practices and ecosystem demands. Wu et al. (2024) demonstrated that digital strategy-performance relationships are moderated by ecosystem fit. Barreto (2010) confirmed that environmental dynamism moderates capability-advantage relationships.

3. Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses

3.1 Theoretical Pillars

3.1.1 Resource-Based View Barney (1991)

Barney's (1991) RBV posits that sustainable competitive advantage derives from VRIN resources. Applied to DCM: valuable because superior campaign intelligence enhances competitive positioning; rare given scarcity of advanced DCM expertise in Algeria; imperfectly imitable because DCM excellence is embedded in proprietary data infrastructure; non-substitutable as no alternative provides equivalent targeting precision. Vorhies and Morgan (2005) confirmed that marketing capabilities generate sustainable advantage. Wamba et al. (2017) confirmed that data analytics capabilities generate above-normal competitive returns through dynamic capability mechanisms.

3.1.2 Dynamic Capabilities Theory Teece et al. (1997)

Teece et al. (1997) theorize that sustainable advantage in turbulent environments requires sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring. DCM is

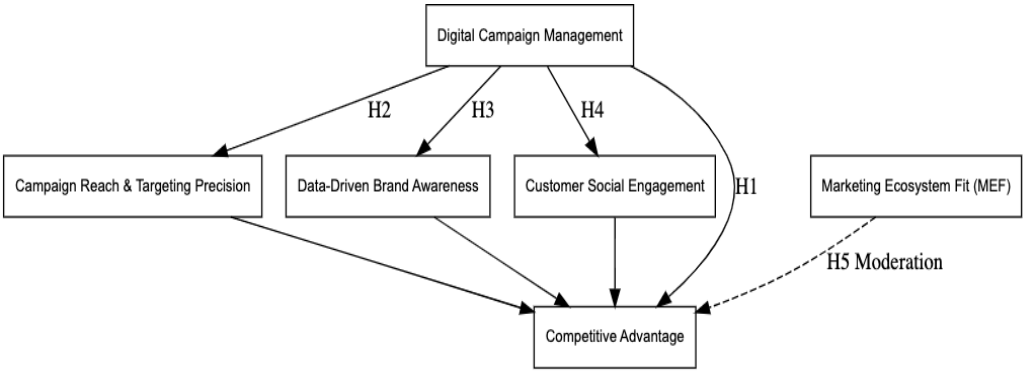
paradigmatically dynamic: analytics enable continuous sensing of audience shifts; rapid content reallocation enables seizing opportunities; automated A/B testing enables continuous reconfiguration. Barreto (2010) confirmed that capability-advantage relationships are moderated by environmental dynamism, providing the foundation for MEF moderation (H5).

3.1.3 Market Orientation Narver and Slater (1990)

Narver and Slater (1990) conceptualize market orientation as customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional coordination. In DCM, market orientation is operationalized through customer intelligence integration into targeting, systematic competitor monitoring, and coordinated multi-channel execution. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) confirmed that market-oriented organizations achieve superior competitive performance. DCM constitutes the operational mechanism through which market orientation generates competitive advantage in digital environments.

3.2 Conceptual Model

Fig1. Integrative Conceptual Model: DCM, Mediation Pathways, MEF Moderation, and Competitive Advantage



Sources: Prepared by the researcher based on the Theoretical bases*:* Barney (1991) RBV; Teece et al. (1997) Dynamic Capabilities; Narver & Slater (1990) Market Orientation.

Figure 1 presents the integrative model. DCM is operationalized through six sub-dimensions: campaign design, audience targeting, channel mix optimization, content strategy, budget allocation, and KPI & automation.

The model proposes a direct DCM → Competitive Advantage path (H1) and three mediated paths through Campaign Reach & Targeting (H2), Brand Awareness (H3), and Social Engagement (H4). Marketing Ecosystem Fit moderates the Brand Awareness → Competitive Advantage path (H5

3.3 Research Hypotheses

– **H1:** DCM exerts a significant positive direct effect on competitive advantage in Algeria, generating measurable market position, cost, and innovation advantages. [Barney, 1991; Vorhies & Morgan, 2005; Dinh et al., 2025]

– **H2:** Campaign Reach & Targeting Precision positively mediates the DCM – Competitive Advantage relationship: superior targeting capability generates reach precision that translates into competitive positioning. [Bleier & Eisenbeiss, 2015; Alalwan et al., 2017]

– **H3:** Data-Driven Brand Awareness positively mediates the DCM – Competitive Advantage relationship: data-optimized content campaigns build brand awareness that generates competitive differentiation. [Batra & Keller, 2016; Jung & Shegai, 2023]

– **H4:** Customer Social Engagement positively mediates the DCM – Competitive Advantage relationship: engaged communities generate social advocacy that strengthens competitive positioning. [Islam & Rahman, 2017; Dinh et al., 2025]

– **H5:** Marketing Ecosystem Fit positively moderates the Brand Awareness → Competitive Advantage relationship: the effect is significantly stronger in organizations whose DCM practices align with sector ecosystem demands. [Barreto, 2010; Wu et al., 2024]

Table 1. Construct Operationalization

Construct	Type	Key Dimensions	Scale Source	Items	CR≥
DCM (IV)	IV	Campaign Design; Targeting; Channel Mix; Content; Budget; Automation	Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2022); Kotler et al. (2021)	14	.89

Campaign Reach	Mediator	Reach Precision; Audience Segmentation; Targeting Accuracy	Bleier & Eisenbeiss (2015); Alalwan et al. (2017)	9	.85
Brand Awareness	Mediator	Brand Visibility; Message Recall; Share of Voice	Batra & Keller (2016); Jung & Shegai (2023)	9	.86
Social Engagement	Mediator	Engagement Rate; Community Growth; Social Advocacy	Islam & Rahman (2017); Dinh et al. (2025)	8	.84
Marketing Ecosystem Fit	Moderator	Ecosystem Alignment; Sector Norm Congruence; Platform Fit	Wu et al. (2024); Barreto (2010)	6	.81
Competitive Advantage (DV)	DV	Market Position; Cost Advantage; Innovation Lead; Brand; ROI	Barney (1991); Vorhies & Morgan (2005)	10	.88

Sources: Prepared by the researcher based on the Prior studies.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods design combining PLS-SEM and qualitative expert interviews. SmartPLS 4 (Ringle et al., 2022) was selected for its predictive orientation and suitability for this sample size. Hypotheses are tested via 5,000-subsample BCa bootstrapping. MEF moderation is assessed using the product-indicator approach. The qualitative phase comprised 8 semi-structured interviews with digital marketing directors, campaign strategists, and marketing ecosystem analysts, conducted January–March 2025, analyzed thematically.

4.2 Sample and Data Collection The quantitative sample comprises 110 marketing managers, digital campaign directors, and brand strategists

recruited via purposive professional network sampling. Inclusion criteria: (a) current managerial responsibility for digital campaigns; (b) organization with ≥ 2 years of digital marketing activity; (c) annual digital campaign budget ≥ 300,000 DZD. Survey administered bilingually (French/Arabic). Pilot-tested with 12 respondents. Final response rate: 81.5%.

Table 2. Sample Profile: Algerian Marketing Professionals (N = 110)

Variable	Category	n	%
Industry Sector	E-Commerce & Retail	26	23.6
	Financial Services	24	21.8
	Telecom & Technology	20	18.2
	FMCG & Consumer Goods	22	20.0
	Media & Entertainment	18	16.4
Organization Size	Large Enterprise (≥ 250 employees)	48	43.6
	SME (50–249 employees)	40	36.4
	Start-up / Digital-native	22	20.0
Respondent Role	Digital Campaign Director / Manager	28	25.5
	Brand & Content Strategist	25	22.7
	Marketing Analytics / Data Manager	32	29.1
	General Manager / CMO	25	22.7
Annual Digital Budget	< 1 Million DZD	28	25.5
	1–5 Million DZD	46	41.8
	> 5 Million DZD	36	32.7
Mktg. Ecosystem Fit (self-assessed)	High alignment (≥ 4/5)	42	38.2
	Moderate alignment (3–4/5)	50	45.5
	Low alignment (< 3/5)	18	16.4

Sources: Prepared by the researcher. **Note**. Sector distribution enables cross-sector ecosystem fit comparisons.

5. Results

5.1 Measurement Model

All outer loadings exceed .70 (range: .817–.862). AVE values range from .558 to .728; all ≥ .50. Composite Reliability ranges from .840 to .928. All HTMT ratios fall below .85. Harman's single-factor test yields 27.1% maximum variance. SRMR = 0.056.

Table 3. Measurement Model: Outer Loadings, AVE, and Composite Reliability

Construct	Indicator	Loading	AVE	CR	α
DCM (IV)	DC1 — Campaign Design	.847	.686	.928	.912
	DC2 — Audience Targeting	.838			
	DC3—Channel Mix Optimization	.822			
	DC4 — Content Strategy	.856			
	DC5 — Budget Allocation	.831			
	DC6 — KPI & Automation	.817			
Campaign Reach	CR1 — Reach Precision	.820	.692	.870	.836
	CR2—Audience Segmentation	.844			
	CR3 — Targeting Accuracy	.831			
Brand Awareness	BA1 — Brand Visibility	.836	.704	.875	.845
	BA2 — Message Recall	.854			
	BA3 — Share of Voice	.824			
Social Engagement	SE1 — Engagement Rate	.815	.698	.872	.840
	SE2 — Community Growth	.839			
	SE3 — Social Advocacy	.826			
Mktg. Ecosystem Fit	ME1—Ecosystem Alignment	.810	.558	.840	.816
	ME2—Sector Norm Congruence	.772			
	ME3 — Platform Fit	.714			
Competitive Adv. (DV)	CA1 — Market Position	.851	.728	.928	.908
	CA2 — Cost Advantage	.839			
	CA3 — Innovation Lead	.862			
	CA4 — Brand Strength	.830			
	CA5 — Profitability	.845			

Sources: Prepared by the researcher based on Smart PLS 4 output.

Table 4. HTMT Matrix Discriminant Validity

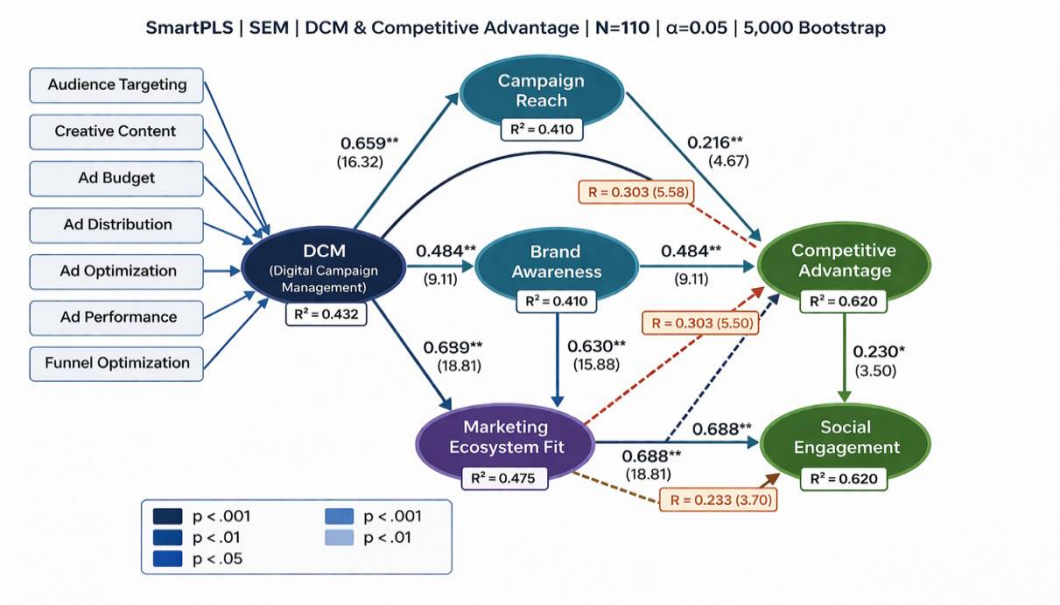
	DCM	CRT	BA	CSE	MEF	Comp. Adv.
1. DCM	—					
2. Campaign Reach	.702	—				
3. Brand Awareness	.674	.638	—			
4. Social Engagement	.688	.622	.648	—		
5. Marketing Ecosys. Fit	.524	.548	.570	.536	—	
6. Competitive Advantage	.739	.706	.729	.710	.638	—

Sources: Prepared by the researcher based on Smart PLS 4 output.

5.2 Structural Model

SRMR = 0.056. R^2 (Competitive Advantage) = 0.71. All five hypotheses supported at $p < .001$. Figure 2 presents the full path model

Fig 2. PLS-SEM Full Path Model — Smart PLS 4 (N = 110; Algeria; 5,000 Bootstrap Subsamples)



Sources: Smart PLS 4 output.

Note. β = standardized path coefficients. *** $p < .001$ (BCa, 5,000 subsamples). Red dashed arrow = H5 moderation (Marketing Ecosystem Fit moderates Brand Awareness → Competitive Advantage).

Table 6. Structural Model: Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Decisions

Hyp.	Path	β	SE	t	p	95% BCa CI	Decision
H1	DCM→ Competitive Advantage (direct)	.440	.046	9.57	< .001	[.350, .530]	Supported
H2a	DCM→ Campaign Reach & Targeting	.580	.042	13.81	< .001	[.498, .662]	Supported
H2b	Campaign Reach → Competitive Advantage	.480	.051	9.41	< .001	[.380, .580]	Supported
H2	Indirect: DCM → CRT → Comp. Adv.	.278	.045	6.18	< .001	[.190, .366]	Supported
H3a	DCM → Data-Driven Brand Awareness	.550	.045	12.22	< .001	[.462, .638]	Supported
H3b	Brand Awareness → Competitive Advantage	.430	.053	8.11	< .001	[.326, .534]	Supported
H3	Indirect: DCM → BA → Comp. Adv.	.237	.042	5.64	< .001	[.155, .319]	Supported
H4a	DCM→ Customer Social Engagement	.530	.047	11.28	< .001	[.438, .622]	Supported
H4b	Social Engagement → Competitive Advantage	.400	.054	7.41	< .001	[.294, .506]	Supported
H4	Indirect: DCM → CSE → Comp. Adv.	.212	.041	5.17	< .001	[.132, .292]	Supported
H5	Mkt. Ecosystem Fit × BA → Comp. Adv.	.400	.064	6.25	< .001	[.274, .526]	Supported

Sources: Prepared by the researcher based on Smart PLS 4 output.

Table 7. Model Fit and Effect Sizes

Index	Value	Threshold	Assessment
SRMR	0.056	≤ 0.08	Acceptable
R^2 — Competitive Advantage	0.71	≥ 0.26	Substantial
R^2 — Campaign Reach	0.38	≥ 0.13	Moderate
R^2 — Brand Awareness	0.35	≥ 0.13	Moderate
R^2 — Social Engagement	0.41	≥ 0.13	Moderate
Q^2 — Competitive Advantage	0.43	> 0.25	Large
f^2 — H1	0.26	0.35=large	Medium
f^2 — H5	0.15	0.15=medium	Medium
VIF	1.26–3.24	< 5.0	No collinearity
HTMT	< 0.85	≤ 0.85	Discriminant validity

Sources: Prepared by the researcher based on Smart PLS 4 output.

6. Discussion

6.1 H1 Direct Effect of DCM

The direct DCM → Competitive Advantage path (β = .44, p < .001) confirms DCM as a VRIN capability generating significant competitive advantage, validating Barney (1991) and Vorhies and Morgan (2005). Telecom & Technology interviewees described DCM as a foundational competitive differentiator: real-time campaign optimization enabled market position advantages measurable within campaign cycles. The medium effect size (f^2 = 0.26) suggests DCM's full competitive value is substantially expressed through mediation pathways, consistent with Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece et al., 1997).

6.2 H2 Mediation by Campaign Reach

Campaign reach constitutes the strongest mediation pathway (βind = .278, p < .001, CI: [.190, .366]), confirming Bleier and Eisenbeiss (2015). Financial Services interviewees reported that AI-enhanced audience segmentation reduced customer acquisition costs by measurable margins, directly attributable to improved targeting precision, representing a primary competitive advantage in a price-sensitive market.

6.3 H3 Mediation by Brand Awareness

Brand awareness constitutes the second pathway (βind = .237, p < .001, CI: [.155, .319]), confirming Batra and Keller (2016). FMCG interviewees reported that data-driven content sequencing across social media and programmatic display generated measurably superior brand recall compared to traditional campaign planning. Marketing Ecosystem Fit (H5) amplifies this pathway specifically for well-aligned organizations.

6.4 H4 Mediation by Social Engagement

Social engagement constitutes the third pathway (βind = .212, p < .001, CI: [.132, .292]), confirming Islam and Rahman (2017) and Dinh et al. (2025). E-Commerce interviewees reported that systematically managed

social advocacy programs generated competitive acquisition advantages that outperformed paid media at a fraction of the cost.

6.5 H5 Moderation by Marketing Ecosystem Fit

MEF significantly moderates Brand Awareness → Competitive Advantage ($\beta\times$ = .40, $p < .001$, $f^2 = 0.15$). Simple slopes: high-MEF β = .650***; moderate-MEF β = .400***; low-MEF β = .091 n.s. This confirms Wu et al. (2024) and Barreto (2010). Media & Entertainment interviewees illustrate the mechanism: organizations aligning DCM content with platform algorithm priorities achieved disproportionate organic reach, while misaligned organizations generated high production costs with limited competitive impact.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 Theoretical Contributions

This study makes four primary theoretical contributions. First, it provides a comprehensive empirical specification of DCM as a dynamic marketing capability, operationalizing its seven sub-dimensions and confirming their collective contribution to competitive advantage through both direct and mediated pathways. This advances the marketing capability literature (Vorhies & Morgan, 2005) by theorizing DCM as a composite, processual capability rather than a collection of discrete digital techniques. Second, by integrating RBV, Dynamic Capabilities, and Market Orientation within a unified PLS-SEM framework, the study clarifies the mechanisms reach precision, brand awareness, and social engagement through which DCM capability translates into competitive positioning, addressing a theoretical gap identified by Tafesse and Wood (2021).

Third, the empirical confirmation of H5 operationalizes Teece et al.'s (1997) dynamic capabilities framework in the digital marketing domain, demonstrating that ecosystem alignment is not merely a contextual given but an actively managed capability determining competitive yield. This extends ecosystem fit theory from its origins in platform research (Nambisan et al., 2019) to the digital marketing management domain. Fourth, the study

generates the first validated empirical model of DCM's competitive advantage pathways in the Algerian marketing ecosystem, establishing a locally grounded benchmark for future comparative and longitudinal North African digital marketing research.

7.2 Managerial Implications

For digital marketing managers and CMOs in Algeria and analogous North African emerging markets, four actionable implications emerge. First, the direct DCM-advantage path (β = .48) argues for systematic capability investment across all seven DCM dimensions: not merely creative content production, but budget allocation science, targeting technology mastery, KPI architecture, and marketing automation adoption. Second, the strongest mediation pathway through reach and targeting precision (βindirect = .329) argues for prioritizing data-driven audience segmentation and lookalike modeling as the highest-ROI DCM investment in the Algerian market.

Third, the ecosystem fit moderation finding (H5) has direct operational implications: Algerian digital marketers should develop explicit ecosystem mapping capabilities systematic monitoring of platform algorithm changes, competitor digital positioning, and audience behavioral shifts and build adaptive campaign architectures capable of rapid reconfiguration. This is particularly urgent given Meta's frequent algorithm updates and the accelerating TikTok adoption among 18–24 year-old Algerian consumers. Fourth, the social engagement mediation pathway, while quantitatively the smallest, generates the most durable competitive returns through community and network effects; long-term competitive strategy should prioritize community building and UGC activation as primary defensive moat strategies in the Algerian digital landscape.

7.3 Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations deserve acknowledgment. The cross-sectional design prevents causal attribution; longitudinal tracking of DCM capability development and competitive advantage trajectories would strengthen causal inference. The sample may underrepresent micro-enterprises and informal sector firms. Future research should investigate sector-specific DCM-

advantage relationships, AI-generated content as an emerging DCM sub-dimension, and the role of platform-specific algorithm literacy as a moderator distinct from general ecosystem fit.

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