

# Portfolio 1.docx

*by* LIBAN MOHAMED

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**How can the small and medium-sized enterprises  
(SMEs) in the UK maintain a stronger competitive  
advantage and ensure higher agility in the  
competitive digital market?**

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## Overview

Generally, firms always operate in such a way to ensure a higher competitive advantage and robust agility. Meunier et al. (2022) suggest that with the economic aftermaths of the COVID-19 pandemic, firms have learnt that technology is essential to any corporate/business setting implying that any organization that lags in taking the right move has higher risks of encountering tough operation stringencies. This paper, therefore, aims to review various literatures with a focus on SMEs and their sustainability goals, agility objectives, and competitiveness. It also investigates the various effective digital (marketing) technologies that firms could employ to ensure they remain sustainably reliable throughout.



## Literature review

According to Donthu & Gustafsson (2020), a large percentage of the world's population use various digital platforms for entertainment, education, and information acquisition. Out of these users, a significant proportion contemporarily relies on the media to make decisions regarding online purchases. Another study by Haenlein et al. (2020) confirms that the majority of users on digital platforms are adolescents with the most used platforms being social media sites like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. Based on this finding, a study by Egidaw (2022) asserts that companies have had no option but to reform and refine their ways of marketing and promotion from traditional to more engaging digital methods.

Correspondingly, a study by World Bank (2021) suggests that with the lessons learnt from the pandemic, businesses have realized that their operations can be progressive and remain efficient only if they integrate relevant modern technologies into their systems. A vivid example of this is the current tough post-pandemic business environment that has escalated the need for businesses to deploy modern ICTs in their operations (Contractor, 2021). According to Gov.UK (2022), the UK economy and Great Britain have faced the swiftest shift in the digital economy, with most giant corporations embracing digital marketing. A study by Li (2020) propounds that Amazon and Google are ahead of the rest regarding technological innovations. Sey et al. (2019) argue in their study that with such large firms in place, the UK business environment has remained highly competitive, especially for small and medium business entities.

An empirical study by Dwivedi et al. (2022) suggests that business agility and competitiveness for corporate giants like Amazon and Google highly depend on their abilities to augment necessary technologies. Similarly, according to Aldianto et al. (2021) and Ghobakhloo (2020), large firms tend to remain productively, sustainably agile and competitive during economic difficulties mainly because they embrace digital technology. As most studies primarily focus on how major companies and organizations reap hugely from digital marketing, there is a very significant gap in the studies regarding the role of SMEs in technological innovation, ICT expenditure, and the duos' merits. In other words, most researchers on the subject matter do not provide detailed insight into how small and medium businesses would reap a greater return on investment (ROI) as a result of taking part in technological innovation processes and digitalizing their marketing strategies. The proposed hypotheses can be viewed within the appendix.

On the same note, according to Corredoira et al. (2021), most large companies/firms participate in ICT research and development (R&D) processes compared to SMEs. This reflects a huge gap worth exploring in detail to ascertain why these events empirically happen. The fact that most studies overlook the role of SMEs in technological R&D activities further makes this gap an interesting and sensitive facet to examine. This facet is essential to explore in the sense that according to Colombelli et al. (2019) and Corredoira et al. (2021), the propensity to patent, which is defined as the full measure of the newly innovated technologies, bears inverse proportionality with the size of the firm. According to Corredoira et al. (2021), this ratio factor implies that as the size of the firm decreases, its propensity to ICT patent increases simultaneously. In other words, this concept insinuates that it is prematurely unrealistic to conclude that only large companies have the ultimate capacity to set the tech operation precedence for SMEs in the tech world. This is because the vice-versa is inevitably highly possible when the propensity score matching is accurately done (Lee et al., 2020).

Connotatively, according to Wu et al. (2022), the realization that SMEs in the digital market play active, pivotal roles in technological innovation has also resulted in numerous insights about the approaches and models by which SMEs enhance and introduce new services, products, and operations. These models and approaches also improve their agility and competitive advantage. A study by Dias et al. (2022) suggests that small businesses practically possess a more substantial innovative advantage over their counterpart giant corporates due to variations in their management systems and structures. A similar implication is depicted in contemporary studies by Wu et al. (2022) and Stimpson (2019), which argue that large firms have complex, uncondusive bureaucracies that undermine risky and critical situational analyses and effective decisions. Findings by Stimpson (2019) also predicate that large firms encounter multiple layers of intra-organizational resistance, which is not the case with SMEs. Based on this, it is practically ideal for the latter to implement archetypical technologies to remain agile and sustainable during tough socioeconomic times.

Wu et al. (2022) connote that small-sized firms have extremely flexible production opportunities compared to large companies. As a result, they should swiftly adjust and cope with the changes in market demand within the shortest time possible and reach their full potential of competition capacities. Key reasons behind this include the SMEs' ability to use multiple market-specific digital promotion strategies simultaneously. In simple terms, most SMEs should put technological innovation at the forefront of their competitive advantage, unlike large firms, which often primarily focus on promoting org-based successful researchers to higher company ranks/positions (Dias et al., 2022). As a result, as though this is not exhaustive and is inconclusive, SMEs should embrace SEO-based content creation, SEO marketing, and paid social adverts. Moreover, a study by Corredoira et al. (2021) argues that SMEs should also enhance socioeconomic fora engagement, influencer/social media marketing, email promotion, and remarketing, among others. Various studies have shown that although not all of these methods work for large companies, they are suitable and have proven efficient for most SMEs (Wu et al., 2022). Therefore, this study tests three relevant hypotheses (pointed in the appendix section) to ascertain that the SMEs in the UK have greater potential in digital marketing and that they should implement various sophisticated technologies in their operations to gain a higher competitive advantage and ensure more robust market agility.

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## Appendix

<u>Proposed hypotheses</u>
Higher investments in digital marketing by SMEs in the UK lead to higher ROI/revenues
Higher expenditure on digital marketing techniques leads to higher (online) sales by SMEs in the UK
Higher timely expenditure on and integration of the right digital marketing tools leads to higher agility and sustainability of the target SMEs, increasing the number of SMEs in the UK

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### FINAL GRADE

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### GENERAL COMMENTS

#### Instructor

Good work, but there is room for improvement.

Of your three proposed hypotheses, I think the only one that can be done within reason within the context of this module is the first one.

There are a few made up words in this, and it is clear that this piece hasn't been proof-read. The made up words, for example, wouldn't have even made it past Microsoft Word's inbuilt spell check. Please proof read all your work before submitting.

I always recommend a style guide/manual for writers for anyone who undertakes research. For just over a decade, I've been using Kate Turabian's Manual for Writers, which is an excellent guide. It helps not only with knowing when/where/why/how to cite, but also helps with word choice, best practice for outlining, and best practice for data presentation.

You don't need a cover page, table of context, or to separate the overview from the rest of the document, please just combine them into one coherent body.

See in line notes for more feedback.

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PAGE 1

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PAGE 2

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PAGE 3

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PAGE 4

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### Comment 1

There's no need to space these out so much.

PAGE 5

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### Comment 2

What percentage?



### Comment 3

I sincerely doubt that.



### Comment 4

In this context, the UK and Great Britain are one and the same



### Comment 5

I'm not sure how one could even measure this.



### Comment 6

Just state it here. No need to hide it at the end. This is a research paper, not a click-bait article

PAGE 6

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**Strikethrough.**



### Comment 8

Do you mean more here?



### Comment 9

What?

PAGE 7

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### Comment 10

Again, not sure this is a word



### Comment 11

Again, just put them here.



### Comment 12

I'm not sure what variables you'd use to demonstrate this. Or if this can be counter-factualised.

PAGE 8

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### Comment 13

You don't have to put each of these letters here, and it 'spreads out' your references a little too much, making it difficult to move through them quickly.

PAGE 9

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PAGE 10

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PAGE 11

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### Comment 14

Not sure that this variable will be available



### Comment 15

You'll be disappointed by this, as SMEs are diminishing both in the UK and abroad.



### Comment 16

This isn't even measureable

### ANSWER

Does the coursework address the question/issue or meet the assigned aims and keep on topic? Is there a comprehensive understanding of the topic?

---

POOR

SATISFACTORY

GOOD

VERY GOOD

EXCEPTIONAL

### STRUCTURE

Is the structure clear and material presented in a well argued, coherent and synthesised manner?

---

POOR

SATISFACTORY

GOOD

VERY GOOD

EXCEPTIONAL

### WRITING STYLE

Is the writing fluent and of a good standard with few errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar?

---

POOR

SATISFACTORY

GOOD

VERY GOOD

EXCEPTIONAL

### READING

Is the topic well researched and supported? Is there evidence of using a range of high quality sources?

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POOR

SATISFACTORY

GOOD

VERY GOOD

EXCEPTIONAL

REFERENCING

Is the work appropriately sourced? Are the references well formatted and written up accurately and consistently?

---

POOR

SATISFACTORY

GOOD

VERY GOOD

EXCEPTIONAL