

EGYPTIAN TOURISM SMES IN THE DIGITAL ERA: AGILE MARKETING AND BRANDING AS CATALYSTS FOR SUSTAINABLE MARKETING PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: Digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped marketing paradigms for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), particularly within Egypt's dynamic tourism sector. This study investigates the synergistic relationships between digital marketing, agile marketing, and agile branding as catalysts for sustainable marketing performance in Egyptian tourism SMEs. The research aims to examine direct effects of digital marketing on marketing performance, agile marketing, and agile branding, while exploring the mediating roles of agile marketing and agile branding in the digital marketing-performance nexus. Employing a quantitative research design, this study utilized structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze data from 496 tourism SME representatives collected through a dual-approach survey methodology. The measurement instrument comprised five validated constructs assessed through established scales, with data collection conducted between August-December 2024 across various Egyptian tourism enterprises. Results reveal significant positive effects of digital marketing on marketing performance ($\beta = 0.497$, $p < 0.001$), agile marketing ($\beta = 0.421$, $p < 0.001$), and agile branding ($\beta = 0.398$, $p < 0.001$). Agile marketing ($\beta = 0.458$, $p < 0.001$) and agile branding ($\beta = 0.404$, $p < 0.001$) significantly enhance marketing performance. Mediation analysis confirms agile marketing ($\beta = 0.209$, $p < 0.001$) and agile branding ($\beta = 0.200$, $p < 0.001$) as significant mediators between digital marketing and performance. These findings position digital marketing as a strategic resource that, combined with organizational agility, drives sustainable competitive advantage while supporting UN Sustainable Development Goals 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13 through eco-friendly practices and community-focused initiatives.

Keywords: digital marketing, marketing performance, agile marketing, agile brand, small and medium enterprises, tourism, sustainability, SDGs, Egypt

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INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing has become an important catalyst for marketing results, especially for small and medium -sized companies (SMB) (Ahmed & Rashid, 2024). The rapid progress of digital technology has changed traditional marketing practices, when SME reaches the larger target groups, communicated more efficiently with customers and revised their real-time marketing strategies (Dwivedi et al., 2021). The relationship between digital marketing and marketing performance is composed. Dense marketing functions and equity including various mediated variables, digital marketing activities (Wu et al., 2024; Roberts, 2023) promote performance to a large extent. Digital marketing includes many activities such as marketing on social media, search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing and e-post marketing. These actions help create small and medium -sized businesses to create customer experiences, promote customer engagement and develop permanent relationships with their target groups (Dwivedi et al., 2021). When it comes to SME, agile marketing skills make companies experiment with new marketing methods, analyze the effect of them and change real-time strategy. This flexibility is especially important in the digital age, as the customer's preferences and market trends can change rapidly.

Studies have shown that small and medium -sized companies with excellent flexible marketing skills are better distributed to utilize SMB digit marketing skills and better marketing success (Kosasi et al., 2017; Ongam & Charosukamongkol, 2024). In addition to AGEL marketing, brand capital is another important component that expresses the relationship between digital marketing and marketing performance. Marking Capital refers to the value that notifies a

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product or service achieved through customer beliefs, brand loyalty and brand awareness (Roberts, 2023). Digital marketing plays an important role in creating and strengthening the brand for interacting with customers on different digital media and growing brands on different digital media (Peter & Dalla Vecchia, 2021). For SME, the big brand can separate its offers from stock competition, promote customer loyalty and promote long-term financial success (Alamro, 2024).

Research on the impact of digital marketing on marketing benefits has focused on large companies or specific industries, except for a remarkable difference in understanding its use in Tourism Sme, which works under limited resources such as limited resources and heavy dependence on local markets. In addition, Agile Marketing and Brand Mediated Works have put less weight in this regard. Turly marketing, excellent by flexibility and relapse processes, is often considered a function that increases the effect of digital marketing. Similarly, although the flexible brand is considered an important aspect of marketing success, the status of mediators in tourists in tourists' small and medium-sized businesses - where consumer chairs and loyalty can be more difficult for less resources - predetermined. The current research generally uses fragmented methods, fails to install integrated models that reflect the combined effects of digital marketing, smooth marketing and smooth brand.

Abdelghani (2018a) emphasizes digital infrastructure and agile workflows in Saudi tourism organizations, advocating strategic tech adoption and workforce upskilling to optimize service quality insights aligning with agility-driven branding in resource-constrained SMEs. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 demonstrates how digital transformation and AI-driven marketing can enhance tourism competitiveness, providing a framework for Egyptian tourism SMEs to leverage technological innovation for sustainable growth and market positioning (Abdelghani et al., 2025a). Integrating digital leadership and psychological mediators such as self-efficacy and techno-eustress is pivotal for fostering sustainable AI adoption and performance improvements in tourism SMEs, especially as organizations navigate digital transformation and dynamic market contexts (Ahmed et al., 2025a). In addition, the influence of regional and cultural diversity, which plays an important role in developing digital marketing strategies for tourists SME, usually disregards, which results in generalized conclusions with limited relevance to different situations. Finally, more complete techniques are needed to analyze marketing efficiency, as existing studies mostly focus on economic matrix, ignoring qualitative elements such as customer participation and loyalty in a long time. It is important to address these intervals important insight into how tourists SMB -are successfully using digital marketing to promote performance through unstable and better brand. Therefore, the aim of this research is to analyze the effect of digital marketing on the marketing performance of tourist SME, with special emphasis on medial marketing and the mediation roles of the flexible brand. Especially the purpose of the study is: a) analyze the direct effect of digital marketing on marketing performance, smooth marketing and agile brand, b) Check the direct effect of smooth marketing and age brand on marketing performance, and c) media and CEING in SMB in SMB -Means Arbitrarination of the interconnection of digital marketing. By addressing these goals, research is intended to provide full knowledge of digital marketing, smooth marketing and paired mobility of brand, which provides practical insight to tourist SME -s to increase the marketing strategies and performance. Integrating sustainable practices into digital marketing—such as promoting eco-friendly tourism or reducing resource-intensive campaigns—can enhance both performance and environmental stewardship, aligning with global sustainability agendas (Jones et al., 2023).

Consequently, the aim of this study is to investigate the complex interplays among digital marketing capabilities and marketing performance effects in Egyptian tourism SMEs with a specific focus on how agile marketing practices and agile branding strategies mediate such relationship. First is to explore the direct relationship between the adoption of digital marketing, and the performance of tourism SMEs facing resource constraints in terms of marketing and agile branding development. Second, to examine how agile marketing practices and agile branding strategies separately impact improved marketing performance in Egypt's competitive tourism market. To assess the mediating processes by which agile marketing and agile branding promote the impact of digital marketing investments, with implications for practitioners who seek to carry out sustainable tourism development in alignment with vision 2030 and internationally recognized sustainability agenda.

2. The Relationship with Sustainability and SDGs

This research establishes meaningful connections with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, demonstrating the strategic importance of digital marketing and agile practices in fostering sustainable tourism development. The study's emphasis on digital marketing capabilities in Egyptian tourism SMEs directly aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by promoting entrepreneurial capacity, innovation, and employment opportunities within the tourism sector (García-Morales et al., 2021; Han et al., 2023). The integration of agile marketing and branding strategies facilitates responsive business practices that support SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) through the adoption of digital technologies and innovation-driven competitiveness (UNWTO, 2022). Furthermore, the research contributes to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by enabling tourism SMEs to develop marketing approaches that promote sustainable tourism practices and community engagement (Jones et al., 2023). The study's framework supports SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by encouraging efficient resource utilization through digital platforms and data-driven decision-making processes that minimize waste in marketing activities (Schaltegger et al., 2014). Additionally, the research indirectly contributes to SDG 13 (Climate Action) by promoting digital marketing strategies that reduce the environmental footprint associated with traditional marketing approaches while supporting eco-friendly tourism initiatives and sustainable destination management (García-Morales et al., 2021; Han et al., 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Digital marketing helps small and medium-sized companies compete in regions controlled by large companies (Afful-Dadzi et al., 2023), but efficiency is promoted by dense marketing techniques and strong brand production. Research suggests that digital marketing, especially through e-commerce and social media, improves economic performance and stability for

small and medium-sized businesses, especially during crises such as Kovid-19 (Afful-Dadzi et al., 2023). This promotes SMB competition by improving exposure, customer contact and brand awareness, by providing considerable insight into consumer behavior (Yasmin et al., 2015). The study highlights social media's role in shaping tourist decisions via user-generated content (Abdelghani et al., 2023), emphasizing agile engagement on platforms like Facebook and YouTube to enhance brand trust and customer-centric innovation in tourism SMEs. Agile marketing strengthens the SMB flexibility further, which allows market changes and rapidly north of customer requirements, so marketing increases efficiency. Strong branding is equally important, promotes customer loyalty, separates SMB in crowded markets and enables globalization (Roberts, 2023). Agile marketing enables SMEs to adopt sustainable practices responsively, such as reducing waste in promotional activities, while sustainable branding (e.g., eco-certifications) strengthens consumer trust and long-term resilience (Schaltegger et al., 2014; García-Morales et al., 2021). The mark is mediation between digital marketing and marketing performance by increasing the brand and market share (Limakrisna & Yoserizal, 2016). Abdelghani (2018b) identifies digital infrastructure gaps, resistance to change, and ineffective training in Egypt's tourism sector, underscoring the urgency of strategic ICT adoption to enhance organizational agility and digital readiness. The collection of digital marketing, smooth marketing and branding provides a co-operative effect, which promotes innovation, consumers' happiness and corporate success (Giantari et al., 2022).

Environmental commitment and green motivation significantly influence purchasing intentions through environmental identity mediation, suggesting that tourism SMEs must integrate sustainability messaging into their agile marketing strategies to attract environmentally-conscious travelers (Ahmed et al., 2025b). Aligning these strategies with sustainability goals, like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensures tourism SMEs balance profitability with planetary and societal well-being (Han et al., 2023; UNWTO, 2022). An overall strategy, which combines digital strategy with brand-bed efforts, not only attracts consumer guarantee, but also keeps them through more and more labeled loyalty (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

The efficacy of digital transformation for tourism SMEs is contextualized by broader research. For instance, strong internal social capital fosters SME cohesion, though limited external networks hinder market expansion, underscoring the need for bridging strategies akin to agile branding (Hernández-Medina et al., 2025). Furthermore, for key demographics like Generation Z, the perceived usefulness and ease of use of digital platforms are critical determinants of engagement, validating the necessity of user-centric digital marketing (Tran & Khoa, 2025). However, this digital shift requires careful management, as AI-driven content creation offers efficiency but simultaneously raises significant concerns about authenticity and data security, highlighting a critical balance for SMEs pursuing agile digital strategies (Bujdosó et al., 2025).

1. The effect of digital marketing on marketing performance

Digital marketing has become the cornerstone of modern business strategies, especially for small and medium -sized businesses (SME), as it allows businesses to reach wide target groups, link more efficiently to customers and optimize the marketing efforts in real time (Nuseir & Aljumah, 2020; Sharabati et al., 2024). Digital Marketing Promoted Customer Relationship Management (CRM), which is important for ensuring long -term organizational success. By implementing digital technology, SMBs can obtain and analyze consumer data, inspect customer behavior, and customers can adjust their marketing strategies to meet expectations (Jung & Shegai, 2023). This computer -driven approach not only improves the customer's joy, but also the brand loyalty, which is an important driver for marketing success (Utomo & Susanta, 2020). This flexibility is especially important in dynamic markets, where customer preferences and competing landscapes can change rapidly.

By using digital marketing, small and medium -sized businesses can be ahead of competition and gain greater marketing benefits (Jamil et al., 2020). Nuseir & Aljumah (2020) stated that digital marketing improves the company's results between small and medium -sized companies in the United Arab Emirates, especially when supported by good environmental factors. Corresponding Sharabati et al. (2024) emphasized the transformation effect of digital marketing on SME performance when it comes to modern digital changes. These findings are confirmed by Alghizzawi et al. (2023), which emphasized the relationship between digital marketing and business results as an important object of research. Moreover, digital marketing innovation significantly enhances firm performance through strategic capability development and competitive advantage creation (Park et al., 2023), further validating its role as a catalyst for SME growth. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: Digital marketing positively affects marketing performance.

2. The effect of digital marketing on agile marketing

Agile marketing defined by flexibility, reactivity and recurrent processes has proven to be an important ability for companies trying to survive in dynamic contexts (Alamro, 2024; Kosasi et al., 2017). The combination of digital and smooth marketing is important for small and medium -sized businesses, which usually meet resources, and provides them with cost -effective equipment to compete with large companies (Kosasi et al., 2017). Digital marketing channels, including social media, allow small and medium-sized companies to communicate directly with customers, get response and adjust market changes quickly, a fundamental part of smooth marketing (Haverila et al., 2024). In addition, digital technologies promote cross -functional collaboration and communication by increasing close marketing. Project management tools, collaborative platforms and data sharing techniques coordinate activities for teams, coordinate goals and perform campaigns effectively, assures the flexibility and reactionability required for smooth marketing (Bozkurt et al., 2024).

The link between digital marketing and smooth marketing is further improved by the importance of data analysis in running decisions. Agile marketing requires companies to create date -driven alternatives based on real -time information, such as the delivery of digital marketing solutions (Haverila et al., 2024). Consumers can detect data, market trends and success for the campaign, discover companies, erection barriers and adapt their plans properly. This data -driven strategy improves the agility of the marketing teams so that they can adapt to more efficiently for market changes (Figueiredo et al.,

2024). This aligns with evidence that digital transformation enables technological maturity through strategic capability development (Alcolea-Parra et al., 2023), vital for resource-constrained SMEs. Economic studies have shown the good effect of digital marketing on constant smooth marketing. For example, Alamro (2024) found that digital marketing initiatives improve the marketing of agility by providing companies with equipment and knowledge required to respond to changing market conditions. Similarly, Kosasi et al. (2017) underlined the relevance of digital marketing strategy to promote organizational agility between small and medium -sized companies, especially in dynamic and competitive markets. These results are confirmed by Ahmed & Rashid (2024), who emphasized the relevance of digital marketing in promoting smooth marketing practices and promoting organizational performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H2: Digital marketing positively affects agile marketing.

3. The effect of agile marketing on marketing performance

The Agile marketing improves the company's capacity, which immediately responds to changed market conditions, customer preferences and competitive problems, and promotes their ability to produce value and achieve better marketing performance (Jun et al., 2024; Alamro, 2024). Through cross -structure collaboration, relapse testing and date -driven decision -making, the flexible marketing strategies process, improves customer engagement and accelerates success in the business (Nurhaeni et al., 2024). This flexibility is important in today's dynamic economy, as market mobility regular ups and downs (Haverila et al., 2024). In addition, Age Marketing has supported innovation by letting organizations test and changing ideas on the basis of response, which results in chance with new solutions for clients (Bozkurt et al., 2024).

This iterative strategy not only improves campaign quality but also boosts client happiness and loyalty, critical drivers of marketing success (Zhou et al., 2019). This method simplifies marketing processes, reduces expenses and promotes returns, then promotes general performance (Ju et al., 2020). In addition, Agile Marketing encourages high customer engagement and joy by emphasizing rapid value and personal experiences, developing long -term connections and business success (Samaka & Kazem, 2022; Jun et al., 2024). Yükselen (2024) revealed that smooth marketing improves the company's results by promoting innovative abilities and marketing mixing flexibility. Similarly, Samaka & Kazem (2022) emphasized the need for a tight marketing approach to improve customer loyalty and achieve business success in the banking sector.

These findings are confirmed by Bozkurt et al. (2024), which outlined the importance of tight marketing skills in the invention of new product and support success for industrial trade. Agile marketing mediates digital marketing's impact on performance by fostering organizational accountability, innovation, and customer engagement (Alamro, 2024; Ahmed & Rashid, 2024). For SMBs, agile methods address resource constraints and market responsiveness (Kosasi et al., 2017), leveraging digital platforms for real-time consumer interactions (Yawised & Apasrawirote, 2022). Cross-functional collaboration via project management tools enhances campaign execution (Sukhavathanakun & SuperPon, 2024), while customer-centric practices strengthen long-term relationships (Mulyana et al., 2024). Agile improves supply chain efficiency (Salam & Bajaba, 2023) and innovation, sustaining competitiveness in dynamic markets (Zhou et al., 2019). This integration drives sustainable growth (Alamro, 2024; Ahmed & Rasheed, 2024). Therefore, the following hypothesis is considered:

H3: Agile marketing positively affects marketing performance

H4: Agile marketing mediates the link between digital marketing and marketing performance.

4. The effect of digital marketing on agile brand

In the digital age, flexible branding companies have become important for rapid adjusting market conditions and the customer's requirements. Turly brands enjoy responding to the turns of the market, constantly innovating and giving rapid price (Bozkurt et al., 2024). Digital marketing plays an important role in creating brand agency by offering technology structure and data-driven insights. Social media allows organizations such as analyzes, CRM systems and automatic marketing platforms to analyze trends, follow customer behavior and change real -time plans, create culture for flexibility and continuous development. Digital marketing improves consumer engagement and brand loyalty through interactive and customized marketing techniques. Social media and e -mail marketing platforms allow organizations to communicate directly with customers, gather feedback and immediately respond to their needs, so promote conditions are improved and agility (Gligor & Bozkurt, 2021). In addition, digital technologies promote innovation by accelerating quick testing, reaction and recurrent changes, which helps organizations to remain competitive in changing markets (Jun et al., 2024). Data analysis increases the relationship between digital marketing and age branding to get more information. By examining the success of consumer data and campaign, companies can detect opportunities, predict difficulties and improve the strategy effectively. The combination of digital marketing with agel branding rates increases gradually flexibility, innovation and the company's results in competing contexts (Yunus et al., 2022). Bozkurt et al. (2024) revealed that the Agility brand increases significantly by providing equipment and knowledge required to adapt to the changed market conditions in digital marketing methods. Also Bozkurt et al. (2024) emphasized the effect of the alleged agility on social media in the establishment of branding and loyalty, which are important components of flexible organizations. So, the following hypothesis is used:

H5: Digital Marketing Positively Affects Agile Brands

5. The effect of agile brand on marketing performance

In the modern corporate context, the idea of brand -peculiarity has attracted much attention when organizations try to adapt to quickly changed market conditions and consumer preferences. Turly brands are differentiated by quickly responding to market changes, constantly innovating and their ability to give price to customers in real time (Bozkurt et al., 2024). This hypothesis suggests that flexible companies favorably affect marketing performance, a link certified by the growing research

part that emphasizes the value of the brand in strengthening customer satisfaction, loyal and competitive advantage (Jun et al., 2024). Furious branding organizations quickly help respond to changed market conditions, customer preferences and competitive problems, which increases their ability to provide price and more marketing success (Rashid et al., 2024).

By applying tight functions such as cross -functional collaboration, relapse testing and data -driven decision -making, organizations can increase the marketing strategies, promote customers' involvement and operate corporate success (Ju et al., 2020). This adaptability is especially important in today's rapidly growing business environment, as the expectations of customer and market dynamics always increase (Gangaraju et al., 2023). In addition, Agile companies promoted marketing performance by increasing operating efficiency and resource allocation. By applying data analysis and real -time insights, organizations can detect opportunities, forecasts obstacles and distribute resources more efficiently (Rashid et al., 2024).

This allows data -driven technology organizations to improve their marketing processes, reduce expenses and get a high investment return (ROI), and expand their overall marketing performance (Gangaraju et al., 2023).

Samaka & Kazem (2022) demonstrated that flexible marketing strategies improve customers' loyalty to a large extent and achieve the company's success in the banking sector. Similarly, Sukhawatthanakun & Supapon (2024) emphasized the need for tight marketing skills to drive the success of the new product development and industrial company. These findings are confirmed by Jun et al. (2024), which emphasized the importance of starting up the marketing of agility in strengthening new products such as warehousing and performance. Agile brands mediate digital marketing's influence on performance by enhancing adaptability, innovation, and real-time consumer responsiveness (Sukhawatthanakun & Supapon, 2024; Ahmed & Rashid, 2024). Strategic visual branding components effectively communicate sustainable offerings (Bressan & Pedrini, 2021), illustrating how agile brands amplify customer-centric value. The synergy of transformational entrepreneurship, organizational support, and employee resilience strengthens competitive advantage in tourism organizations, aligning digital agility and innovation with broader sustainable development objectives and sectoral adaptation (Ahmed et al., 2025c). Digital tools like CRM systems and automated platforms enable data-driven agility, allowing experimentation and iterative strategy refinement (Mulyana et al., 2024; Yawised & Apasrawirote, 2022).

For SMEs, this synergy offers cost-effective competitiveness through direct customer engagement and rapid market adjustments (Matarazzo et al., 2021). Cross-functional collaboration via project management technologies accelerates campaign execution (Tehraniyan et al., 2024), while personalized, customer-centric strategies strengthen loyalty (Mata et al., 2024). Empirical evidence links agile practices to optimized supply chains, customer satisfaction, and sustained competitive advantage (Jasim et al., 2024; Latif Al Mawahreh et al., 2024). Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:

H6: Agile brand positively affects marketing performance.

H7: Agile brand mediates the link between digital marketing and marketing performance.

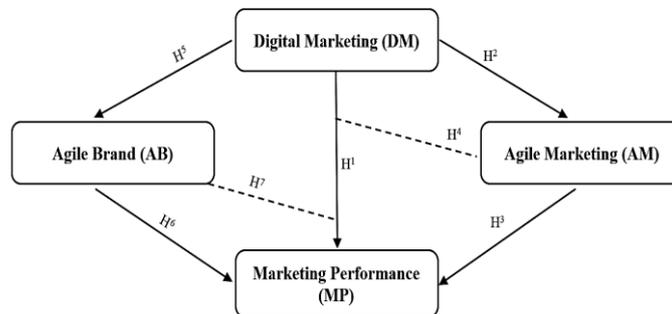


Figure 1. Theoretical framework and research hypotheses

METHODOLOGY

1. Sampling and data collection

To investigate the study's assumptions, data were gathered from workers representing different management levels within tourist SMEs in Egypt. The decision of an acceptable sample size was impacted by the criteria of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the recommended approach for data processing. Although there is continuous discussion over the appropriate sample size for SEM, a commonly accepted standard advises capturing at least 10 observations for each variable under investigation (Hair et al., 2021). With the research including 33 criteria, a minimum of 330 valid answers was judged sufficient to enable robust and useful analysis. To do this, the researchers employed a dual method for survey dissemination. The first strategy included internet channels, including social media sites, LinkedIn, and email to contact participants. The second technique comprised in-person outreach, when tourist SMEs were approached personally to discuss the survey's aims and substance. Strict safeguards were made to preserve the confidentiality of all data and information submitted by respondents. Participation was purely voluntary, with no incentives provided to prevent any unwanted influence. Prior to completing the survey, participants got a full permission form that openly outlined the goal of the research, their ability to withdraw at any time, and promises of anonymity and data confidentiality. These methods guaranteed that participants were well-informed about their engagement and willingly volunteered, conforming to the highest standards of ethical research techniques. Between August and December 2024, a total of 791 questionnaires were sent, resulting in 643 replies. After comprehensive screening, 496 replies were considered eligible for statistical analysis, reaching a response rate of 63%. The final sample size of 496 was determined

appropriate based on statistical power analysis, assuring the reliability and accuracy of estimations for the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) applied in the research. This sample size accords with accepted SEM standards, which encourage keeping an adequate ratio of cases to parameters to produce strong and generalizable conclusions.

2. Measurement

The research employed a standardised questionnaire to obtain its key data, separated into five major elements. The first portion focused on digital marketing, assessed using six items taken from Alwan & Alshurideh (2022) and Sivasankaran (2013). Sample lines were, “Social media marketing provides a wide range of feedback and information products and helps in finding the best product” and “Social media platforms offer high-quality information about the brand or firm.” The second segment analysed marketing performance, measured using six items borrowed from Al-Azab & Al-Romeedy (2020). Example items were, “The company’s marketing plan achieves its targeted results” and “The company’s management has clear strategic marketing decisions for the future.” The final component of the questionnaire focusses on agile marketing, examined by 15 questions produced by Ayomide & Patrick (2024). Sample items were, “Our company is efficient in launching new products or updates to the market” and “Our marketing strategies adapt quickly to changes in the market.” The fourth segment assessed agile brand, employing six items taken from Bozkurt et al. (2023). Example statements were, “This brand can quickly detect changes in the social media environment” and “This brand can quickly respond to changes in the social media environment.” Finally, the fifth portion gathered demographic information about the participants, encompassing characteristics such as gender, age, education level, and tenure.

3. Common method bias

Before doing additional statistical analysis, a comprehensive examination was done to discover the existence of Common Method Variance (CMV), a phenomena that may misrepresent relationships when data is gathered at a single time point, such as via simultaneous surveys employed in this work. To address this problem, two procedures were utilized: the Harman single-factor test and principal component analysis (PCA). The results of these analyses demonstrated that no one factor accounted for more than 50% of the overall variation. This shows that CMV is unlikely to represent a substantial difficulty within the scope of this inquiry, assuring the validity of the findings (Al-Romeedy & Zaki, 2024).

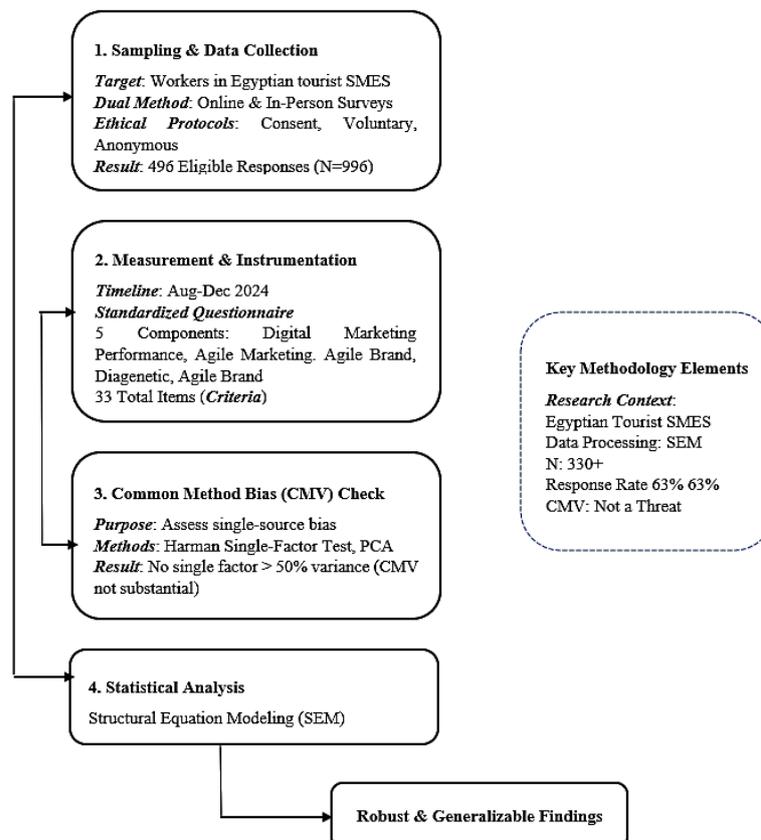


Figure 2. The Methodology Flow Chart

RESULTS

1. Participants profile

The participant profile reflects a broad sample as seen in Table 1, with 59.1% men and 40.9% females. The age distribution reveals that most participants are in their mid-career phases, with 36.7% aged 45 to less than 55 years and 31.3% aged 35 to less than 45 years, while younger individuals (15.7%) and those aged 55 years or above (16.3%) are less represented. In terms of education, 74.6% of participants possess a bachelor’s degree, followed by 19.8% with less than a bachelor’s degree and just

5.6% with postgraduate credentials. Regarding tenure, a plurality (58.7%) have 10 to less than 20 years of experience, while 23.6% have fewer than 10 years and 17.7% have 20 years or more, suggesting a highly experienced sample overall.

Table 1. Participants profile

Participants profile		Freq.	%	Participants profile		Freq.	%
Gender	Male	293	59.1%	Education	Less than bachelor	98	19.8%
	Female	203	40.9%		Bachelor	370	74.6%
Age	Less than 35 years	78	15.7%	Tenure	Postgraduate	28	5.6%
	From 35 to less than 45 years	155	31.3%		Less than 10 years	117	23.6%
	From 45 to less than 55 years	182	36.7%		From 10 to less than 20 years	291	58.7%
	55 years and above	81	16.3%		20 years and above	88	17.7%
Total						496	100%

2. Measurement model

The fit and validity of each concept in the measurement model were tested before assessing the overall measurement model with the total sample. The evaluation employed multiple goodness-of-fit indices, which demonstrated a solid match between the suggested model and the gathered data. The indices included CMIN/DF = 3.172, GFI = 0.945, CFI = 0.938, IFI = 0.944, NFI = 0.931, TLI = 0.929, and RMSEA = 0.034, all of which fell below acceptable levels for model fit (Hair et al., 2021). These findings demonstrate that the measurement model is well-specified and properly captures the data (Al-Romeedy & Alharethi, 2024). Table 2 presented the psychometric qualities of four constructs: digital marketing, marketing performance, agile marketing, and agile brand, using statistical techniques to assess their reliability and validity. These assessments are critical for ensuring that the items adequately and consistently measure their intended constructs. Factor loadings examine the link between observed items and their underlying concept, with values over 0.7 suggesting substantial relationships. Cronbach's Alpha (α) evaluates internal consistency, where values over 0.7 imply reasonable reliability, while those above 0.8 or 0.9 suggest excellent dependability. Composite Reliability (CR) analyses total build reliability, with values over 0.7 considered good. Average variation Extracted (AVE) evaluates the variation captured by the concept relative to error, where values over 0.5 suggest high convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021; Alshihha et al., 2024). The concept of digital marketing displays excellent psychometric features. Its Cronbach's Alpha is 0.876, and its CR is 0.941, showing outstanding internal consistency and overall dependability. The AVE of 0.729 demonstrates that the concept captures considerable variation from its items, indicating high convergent validity. Factor loadings vary from 0.815 to 0.911, suggesting substantial correlations between the items and the construct. In addition, marketing performance displays great dependability and validity.

The Cronbach's Alpha of 0.870 and CR of 0.940 reflect outstanding dependability. The AVE score of 0.724 demonstrates that the concept appropriately reflects variation from its elements. Factor loadings between 0.806 and 0.889 reflect considerable contributions from all elements to the build. As well, despite its higher quantity of elements, agile marketing retains strong psychometric qualities. The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.766, and the CR is extraordinarily high at 0.974, showing great overall dependability. The AVE score of 0.714 provides high convergent validity, and the factor loadings, ranging from 0.804 to 0.892, demonstrate consistent strength across all items. The agile brand model exhibits great dependability and validity. With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.888 and a CR of 0.944, it indicates good internal consistency and dependability. The AVE of 0.739 demonstrates that the concept captures a large share of variation from its elements. Factor loadings ranging from 0.809 to 0.901 suggest substantial and consistent contributions. Overall, the findings verify the reliability and validity of all constructs. High factor loadings, strong Cronbach's Alpha, high CR, and adequate AVE values guarantee the robustness of the measures. These results suggest that the constructs are well-suited for future examination and add to the legitimacy of the study's conclusions.

Table 2. Measurement model

Construct	Factor loading	α	CR	AVE	Construct	Factor loading	α	CR	AVE
Digital marketing		0.876	0.941	0.729	Agile marketing4	0.813			
Digital marketing1	0.844				Agile marketing5	0.859			
Digital marketing2	0.832				Agile marketing6	0.841			
Digital marketing3	0.865				Agile marketing7	0.888			
Digital marketing4	0.815				Agile marketing8	0.892			
Digital marketing5	0.856				Agile marketing9	0.816			
Digital marketing6	0.911				Agile marketing10	0.805			
Marketing performance		0.870	0.940	0.724	Agile marketing11	0.865			
Marketing performance1	0.889				Agile marketing12	0.833			
Marketing performance2	0.852				Agile marketing13	0.819			
Marketing performance3	0.806				Agile marketing14	0.886			
Marketing performance4	0.866				Agile marketing15	0.832			
Marketing performance5	0.873				Agile brand		0.888	0.944	0.739
Marketing performance6	0.819				Agile brand1	0.877			
Agile marketing		0.766	0.974	0.714	Agile brand2	0.809			
Agile marketing1	0.843				Agile brand3	0.874			
Agile marketing2	0.804				Agile brand4	0.812			
Agile marketing3	0.876				Agile brand5	0.901			
Agile marketing4	0.813				Agile brand6	0.883			

Table 3 illustrates the correlation matrix and diagonal values (in parenthesis) indicating the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the components digital marketing, marketing performance, agile marketing, and agile brand. The diagonal values, ranging from 0.845 to 0.860, transcend the inter-construct correlations, showing discriminant validity based on the Fornell-Larcker criteria. The correlations reveal moderate to significant associations, with the strongest being between agile marketing and marketing performance (0.706), demonstrating the substantial interaction between these dimensions. These findings confirm both the reliability and discriminant validity of the tested constructs.

Table 3. Discriminate validity

Construct	Digital marketing	Marketing performance	Agile marketing	Agile brand
Digital marketing	(0.854)			
Marketing performance	0.564	(0.851)		
Agile marketing	0.611	0.706	(0.845)	
Agile brand	0.593	0.598	0.667	(0.860)

3. Structural Model Assessment

Table (4) illustrates the examination of the impacts of digital marketing on marketing performance, agile marketing, and agile brand using path coefficient analysis (β), standard error (S.E.), critical ratio (C.R.), and p-values. The findings reveal that digital marketing has a strong and favourable influence on marketing performance ($\beta = 0.497$, p-value = 0.000) and agile marketing ($\beta = 0.421$, p-value = 0.000), verifying hypothesis H1 and H2, respectively. Additionally, agile marketing considerably and favourably influences marketing performance ($\beta = 0.458$, p-value = 0.000), supporting H3. Similarly, digital marketing reveals a strong beneficial impact on agile brand ($\beta = 0.398$, p-value = 0.000), corroborating H5. Finally, the data demonstrate that agile brand considerably and favourably influences marketing performance ($\beta = 0.404$, p-value = 0.000), supporting H9.

Table 4. Direct effect results

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P Value	Result
H1: Digital marketing \rightarrow marketing performance	0.497	0.065	7.646	0.000	Confirmed
H2: Digital marketing \rightarrow agile marketing	0.421	0.073	5.767	0.000	Confirmed
H3: agile marketing \rightarrow marketing performance	0.458	0.060	7.633	0.000	Confirmed
H5: digital marketing \rightarrow agile brand	0.398	0.058	6.862	0.000	Confirmed
H6: Agile brand \rightarrow marketing performance	0.404	0.051	7.921	0.000	Confirmed

Table 5. indirect effect results

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P Value	Result
H4: Digital marketing \rightarrow agile marketing \rightarrow marketing performance	0.209	0.056	3.732	0.000	Confirmed
H7: Digital marketing \rightarrow agile brand \rightarrow marketing performance	0.200	0.051	3.921	0.000	Confirmed

4. Mediation Analysis

Table (5) displays the mediation study undertaken to examine the roles of agile marketing and agile brand in the link between digital marketing and marketing performance. The data indicate the mediating impacts of both agile marketing and agile brand, with both hypotheses obtaining statistical significance at $p < 0.001$. Specifically, H4 reveals that agile marketing mediates the effects of digital marketing on marketing performance ($\beta = 0.209$, C.R = 3.732), underlining the crucial importance of agility in optimising the success of digital strategies. Similarly, H7 reveals that agile brand mediates the association between digital marketing and marketing performance ($\beta = 0.200$, C.R = 3.921), demonstrating the relevance of brand adaptation and responsiveness in generating higher performance. These findings verify the considerable contributions of agile components in enhancing the relationship between digital marketing and marketing success, validating both H4 and H7.

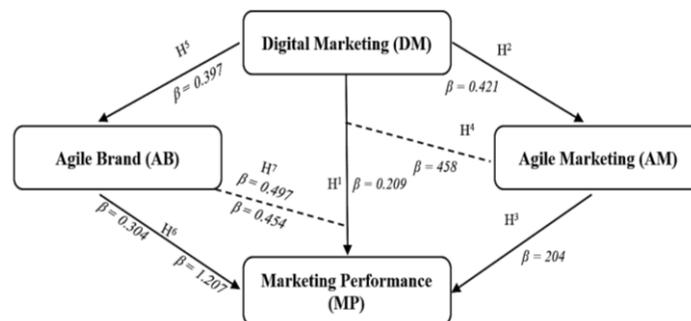


Figure 3. Study Structural Model

DISCUSSION

This research aims to evaluate the impact of digital marketing on marketing performance, agile marketing, and agile brand, while also evaluating the effects of agile marketing and agile brand on marketing performance. Additionally, it explored the mediating roles of agile marketing and agile brand in the link between digital marketing and marketing performance. A quantitative study technique was utilised, employing a standardised questionnaire issued to tourist SMEs in

Egypt to gather data. The findings of the study substantially supported the suggested research model, validating all assumptions and provided useful insights into the dynamic interaction between digital marketing, agility, branding, and performance in the tourist industry. The findings suggested that digital marketing had a favourable influence on marketing performance. Previous study revealed the substantial significance of digital marketing in increasing SME marketing success. Nuseir & Aljumah (2020) revealed that digital marketing enhances performance, especially under favorable environmental circumstances, whereas Alghizzawi et al. (2023) stressed its substantial relationship with marketing results. Sharabati et al. (2024) recognised digital marketing's revolutionary significance amid digital transformations. Its advantages include raising operational efficiency, decreasing marketing expenses, and optimising resource allocation via automation, improved communication, and data analytics (Jung & Shegai, 2023; Utomo & Susanta, 2020). These efficiencies result in marketing performance success (Kerdpitak, 2022). The findings underscore how AI-driven marketing strategies, when combined with social media engagement and personalization, provide tourism SMEs with sustainable competitive advantage by strengthening guest loyalty, decision-making, and customer-centric innovation (Zaki et al., 2025).

Moreover, the findings demonstrated the good influence of digital marketing on agile marketing. These results correlate with Alamro (2024), who revealed that digital marketing initiatives play a crucial role in boosting marketing agility by supplying firms with tools and information to handle altering market dynamics. Similarly, Kosasi et al. (2017) stressed the relevance of digital marketing tactics to enhancing agility in SMEs, especially in fast-paced and competitive contexts. Ahmed & Rasheed (2024) further verified the relationship, showing digital marketing's importance in supporting agile processes and enhancing organizational performance. Integrating digital and agile marketing supports innovation and competitiveness by providing iterative testing, feedback, and strategy refinement (Bozkurt et al., 2024; Jun et al., 2024). Similarly, CSR orientation directly enhances performance through employee participation (Boubaker et al., 2020). The moderating role of eco-conscious behavior in green purchasing decisions emphasizes the importance of authentic sustainability practices in tourism marketing, requiring SMEs to align brand positioning with genuine environmental commitments for enhanced performance (Ahmed et al., 2025b), mirroring how agile branding fosters organizational commitment. Additionally, the data indicated that agile marketing favorably improves marketing performance. This conclusion is in accordance with Yükselen (2024), who underlined that agile marketing greatly boosts corporate performance by stimulating innovation and assuring flexibility in the marketing mix. Bozkurt et al. (2024) further underlined agile marketing's function in supporting new product development and attaining success in industrial enterprises. As well, Samaka & Kazem (2022) highlighted the benefit of agile marketing strategies in boosting corporate marketing performance. Beyond direct implications, agile marketing increases organizational competences such as supply chain management by enhancing communication and cooperation with suppliers and distributors (Gangaraju et al., 2023), resulting in greater marketing performance (Asseraf et al., 2019).

Further, digital marketing favourably benefits agile brand as findings proved. These results correlate with Bozkurt et al. (2024), who noted that digital marketing approaches greatly boost brand agility by supplying enterprises with the required tools and knowledge to respond to evolving market circumstances. Similarly, Bozkurt et al. (2024) stressed the impact of perceived social media agility in creating brand trust and loyalty, critical aspects of agile firms. Further proved the value of digital marketing in creating brand agility and enhancing corporate performance. Additionally, Nuseir & Aljumah (2020) revealed that digital marketing promotes brand agility by increasing other organizational capacities. Likewise, the data indicated that agile brand has a favourable influence on marketing performance. This conclusion is corroborated by Samaka & Kazem (2022), who stressed that the relationship between agile brands and marketing success is increased by their capacity to boost consumer involvement and satisfaction. Agile businesses stress understanding customer demands and providing value fast, which is critical for creating long-term connections and generating company success. By embracing agile approaches like as customised marketing, real-time feedback, and continuous improvement, enterprises may connect with clients more effectively and create individualised experiences that fulfil their expectations (Jun et al., 2024). This customer-focused strategy is a basic attribute of agile brands (Rashid et al., 2024). Ultimately, the findings show the mediating roles of Agile Marketing and Agile Brand in the link between Digital Marketing and Marketing Performance. These results underscore the crucial connection between digital marketing, agility, and brand response in attaining marketing success.

Theoretical and practical implications

The results of this research give considerable theoretical insights by increasing the knowledge of how digital marketing promotes marketing success via the mediating roles of agility and brand responsiveness, with a special emphasis on tourist SMEs. The favourable effect of digital marketing on marketing performance, agile marketing, and agile branding highlights its value as a strategic instrument that helps SMEs to stay competitive in a fast changing environment. These findings validate the ideas of the Resource-Based View (RBV), which sees digital marketing as a valuable, intangible resource that boosts organizational capabilities when implemented successfully. Through its capacity to maximise client interaction, simplify processes, and give actionable information via technologies like as social media analytics and CRM systems, digital marketing becomes a critical asset for sustainable development. Additionally, the mediating roles of agile marketing and agile branding give empirical support for the Dynamic Capabilities Theory, which highlights the requirement for enterprises to build adaptable and flexible processes to prosper in unpredictable and competitive marketplaces. Agile marketing acts as a means for exploiting digital analytics to build adaptable, client-focused campaigns, while agile branding guarantees that enterprises stay sensitive to growing consumer wants and market trends. Together, these skills help firms to integrate digital marketing more successfully, showcasing the interaction between technology, agility, and branding in attaining greater performance. This study therefore enriches the theoretical paradigm by highlighting how agility and branding act as crucial mediators that magnify the efficacy of digital marketing in increasing performance results. Green management practices significantly influence sustainable

performance (Acquah et al., 2023), urging SMEs to embed eco-certifications and resource efficiency into agile branding. The results also add to the burgeoning debate on the use of agility in branding, a topic that remains relatively underexplored.

By identifying agile branding as a crucial element in the marketing-performance connection, the study fills a gap in the literature and offers a platform for future research into how brands may stay flexible, customer-centric, and adaptable in dynamic marketplaces. This contribution is especially significant for SMEs in the tourist industry, where quick changes in client preferences and market circumstances need ongoing innovation and adaptability. Complementing this, sustainable tourism strategies necessitate green service innovation to mediate relationships between marketing practices and performance outcomes (García-Morales et al., 2021), aligning with our SDG-focused recommendations.

The practical implications of this research are especially relevant for tourist SMEs, who typically face resource limits and operate in highly competitive and dynamic situations. The results underscore the strategic relevance of digital marketing, not just as a tool for increasing marketing performance but also as a driver of organizational agility and brand responsiveness. Managers in tourist SMEs should realise the multidimensional function of digital marketing and invest in its integration to increase overall company results. Tourism SMEs should implement digital marketing technologies such as social media analytics, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, and automated marketing platforms to obtain actionable information, track consumer behavior, and change marketing tactics in real time. These technologies may help SMEs streamline their marketing operations, increase client targeting, and cut expenses, providing higher returns on investment.

The research demonstrates the crucial importance of agile marketing in moderating the link between digital marketing and marketing performance. Managers should concentrate on building flexible marketing strategies that allow for fast reactions to consumer requirements and market changes. Practices like as iterative campaign testing, real-time feedback loops, and continuous improvement methods help organisations to remain ahead of competition and create improved consumer experiences. Notably, environmental sustainability in SMEs hinges on employee pro-environmental behaviour and green management strategies (Acquah et al., 2023), underscoring the need for workforce upskilling in agile-digital integration. Agile branding emerges as a critical aspect in tying digital marketing to performance achievement. Tourism SMEs should build a brand identity that is both customer-centric and adaptive. Managers may do this by personalizing customer encounters, ensuring consistent communication across channels, and being responsive to shifting consumer preferences. Agile branding not only creates client confidence and loyalty but also promotes SMEs as innovative and dependable in a changing market. The report underlines the need of combining digital marketing activities with agile methods. Managers should try to build a unified strategy where digital marketing supports agility, and agility increases the effectiveness of digital activities.

For example, employing digital technologies to enable agile decision-making means that marketing initiatives are both data-driven and responsive, enhancing their efficacy. In view of the mediating roles of agile marketing and agile branding, SMEs should concentrate on establishing dynamic skills that allow them to adjust to market changes and preserve long-term competitiveness. This includes not just investing in digital technologies but also educating personnel to utilise them effectively and building a culture of creativity and adaptability inside the firm. This integrated perspective reveals that success hinges on a multi-faceted approach. Externally, strategies must be peer-validated, as social referents are a dominant predictor of modern travel intentions (Ahmed et al., 2025d), and should integrate sustainability, where green technology marketing fosters a unique competitive advantage (Kurniawati & Kohar, 2025). Internally, organizational sustainability is fortified by clear policies that buffer against negative dynamics like resource inequity (Abdelghani & Ahmed, 2025) and by fostering emotional regulation to maintain brand integrity in turbulent environments (Abdelghani et al., 2025b).

The integration of digital marketing, agility, and branding in tourism SMEs offers significant opportunities to advance sustainability and align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By adopting digital tools to promote eco-friendly tourism practices (e.g., reducing paper-based promotions, optimizing energy-efficient campaigns), SMEs can directly contribute to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action) (Jones et al., 2023; UNWTO, 2022). Agile marketing enables SMEs to adapt swiftly to sustainability trends, such as curating campaigns that highlight local cultural preservation or low-impact tourism, fostering SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) through inclusive, community-driven initiatives (García-Morales et al., 2021; Han et al., 2023). Furthermore, agile branding that emphasizes sustainability—such as certifications for ethical tourism or storytelling around eco-conscious values—strengthens customer trust and loyalty, advancing SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) by embedding sustainability in to core business identities (Schaltegger et al., 2014; Roberts, 2023). These strategies not only enhance marketing performance but also position tourism SMEs as catalysts for systemic change, balancing economic viability with environmental stewardship and social equity. By aligning digital agility with SDG-focused branding, SMEs can amplify their role in achieving global sustainability targets while securing long-term resilience in competitive markets.

Limitations and future research

Like previous studies, this study has significant limitations that suggest new options for future research and contribute to expanding knowledge in this subject. This research focuses primarily on Egyptian tourist SMEs, which may restrict the generalizability of its results to other locations or sectors. The particular economic, cultural, and legal climate in Egypt may impact the success of digital marketing and the roles of agile marketing and brand. Future study might broaden the scope by exploring comparable correlations in other nations or sectors to compare and confirm the results in diverse circumstances, offering a wider view on the interaction between digital marketing, agility, and branding. As Furthermore, the research adopts a cross-sectional approach, gathering data at a specific moment in time. As sustainability strategies differ between small/large hotels (Lozano-Oyola et al., 2021), future work should examine how size moderates digital-agility

outcomes. This technique reduces the capacity to detect changes or causal linkages across time. Future study might adopt a longitudinal approach to examine how the effects of digital marketing and the mediating roles of agile marketing and brand develop over time, particularly as SMEs adjust to digital transitions and market shifts. Future studies should explore culturally tailored frameworks, like Saudi tourism SME strategies (Escalona-Orcao et al., 2023), to address regional variability in digital-agility adoption. This research focusses mostly on quantitative data, which may neglect deeper insights into the experiences and opinions of SMEs about digital marketing and agility. Future study might use qualitative methodologies, such as interviews or case studies, to give greater, context-specific insights into how digital marketing strategies and agile practices are applied and perceived inside SMEs. Likewise, the research does not account for external environmental variables, such as technical improvements, market rivalry, or economic volatility, which might alter the link between digital marketing and marketing success. Future study might add these characteristics into the model to better understand their moderating effects and give a more thorough view of the difficulties and possibilities confronting tourist SMEs.

In addition, while the research addresses agile marketing AND brand as two mediating elements, it does not go further into particular practices or aspects of agile marketing and brand. Neuromarketing-data analytics integration (Gaafar & Al-Romeedy, 2022) could advance adaptive digital frameworks for tourism DMOs. Future study should explore agile marketing and brand in more depth, investigating its components, implementation tactics, and direct implications on marketing performance. This might assist find concrete ways for SMEs to boost their marketing and brand agility successfully. Further, the research focused entirely on SMEs without comparing their performance to bigger firms. This constraint precludes a fuller knowledge of how company size effects the success of digital marketing and agile methods. Future study should include comparison studies between SMEs and bigger enterprises to investigate if size-related variables influence the connections observed. The study's focus on Egyptian tourism SMEs overlooks regional disparities in sustainability challenges and SDG prioritization, such as water scarcity in North Africa (SDG 6) or renewable energy adoption (SDG 7) (UNWTO, 2022). Future research could explore how cultural and economic contexts influence SMEs' capacity to align digital agility with sustainability goals, such as reducing carbon footprints (SDG 13) through localized campaigns (Jones et al., 2023). Additionally, longitudinal studies could assess whether digital marketing adaptations, like promoting eco-certified accommodations, yield long-term environmental or social benefits (García-Morales et al., 2021). Qualitative investigations might uncover barriers to SDG integration, such as resource gaps in adopting green technologies, while cross-sector comparisons could reveal how SMEs leverage agility for sustainability differently than larger firms (Schaltegger et al., 2014; Han et al., 2023).

Addressing these gaps would empower tourism SMEs to align innovation with global sustainability frameworks.

CONCLUSION

This study began with a deceptively simple premise: that digital marketing matters for tourism SMEs. What emerged, however, is something far more consequential. We set out not merely to confirm relationships but to understand how and why digital marketing translates into sustainable performance—and the answer, it turns out, resides in agility. Not agility as a buzzword, but as a lived organizational capability; not branding as static identity, but as responsive, iterative dialogue between enterprise and market. Our findings offer three substantive contributions. First, digital marketing is not a peripheral function but a strategic architecture upon which Egyptian tourism SMEs can build durable competitive advantage. The direct effects are robust—yet they tell only part of the story. The real insight lies in mediation. Agile marketing and agile branding are not mere complements to digital strategy; they are the very mechanisms through which digital investments bear fruit. Without them, digital marketing risks becoming what too often haunts resource-constrained SMEs: expenditure without amplification.

Second, we extend dynamic capabilities theory into terrain it has seldom occupied—the branding function itself. If agility has traditionally been framed in terms of supply chains or product development, we demonstrate that brand responsiveness is equally consequential. An agile brand detects, interprets, and acts upon market signals with a speed that renders traditional, calcified brand identities nearly obsolete. For tourism SMEs navigating Egypt's competitive and culturally layered landscape, this is not optional. It is existential. Third, we ground these dynamics within the sustainability imperative. The alignment we observe between digital agility and the UN Sustainable Development Goals is not decorative; it reflects a structural convergence. Resource-constrained enterprises cannot afford waste. Agile practices, by their iterative nature, minimize it. Digital platforms, by their measurability, enable it. The SMEs that embed sustainability into their brand logic—through eco-certifications, community storytelling, or low-carbon campaign design—are not simply virtue-signaling. They are future-proofing. This is, to our knowledge, one of the first studies to simultaneously model agile marketing and agile branding as parallel mediators in the digital marketing–performance nexus within Egyptian tourism SMEs. In doing so, we offer both theoretical precision and practical urgency. The message for practitioners is unambiguous: invest in digital tools, yes—but more importantly, cultivate the organizational muscle to pivot, adapt, and respond. Agility is not a tactic. It is a discipline. The journey does not end here. If anything, these findings open terrain we have only begun to map. How do agile branding capabilities develop over time? What cultural contingencies amplify or mute their effects? And can sustainability be not merely an outcome but a driver of agility itself? These questions await. For now, we offer this much: in the digital era, the agile tourism SME is not merely the one that survives. It is the one that leads.

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