Digital content marketing influence on buying decision via mediation of technology innovation

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Abstract

This study examines the relationships between digital content marketing, technology innovation, and consumer buying decisions in the context of online shopping in Saudi Arabia. The study aims to determine how digital content marketing influences technology innovation and buying decisions, as well as the mediating role of technology innovation. A cross-sectional research design was employed, collecting data from 341 individuals with online shopping experience through convenience sampling. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to analyze the direct and indirect effects among the study constructs. The results indicate that digital content marketing significantly influences technology innovation and directly impacts consumer buying decisions. Additionally, technology innovation serves as a mediator, strengthening the effect of digital content marketing on buying decisions. The study underscores the importance of integrating digital content marketing with technology-driven innovations to enhance consumer engagement and drive purchasing behavior. The findings provide actionable insights for marketers seeking to optimize digital marketing strategies and leverage technological innovations to align with consumer preferences, ultimately improving online shopping experiences in Saudi Arabia.

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1. Introduction

The rapid evolution of digital technologies and the growing importance of online shopping have transformed how consumers engage with brands and make purchasing decisions [1]. In this dynamic environment, businesses are increasingly leveraging digital content marketing and technological innovations to capture consumer attention, build brand

loyalty, and drive sales [2]. Digital content marketing, which focuses on creating engaging, relevant, and valuable content, has become a key strategy for attracting consumers and enhancing their shopping experience [3]. At the same time, technological advancements, from personalized recommendations to interactive platforms, are reshaping the online shopping journey, making it more seamless and tailored to individual preferences [4]. As these two strategies converge, understanding their impact on consumer behavior is essential for businesses aiming to create a competitive edge in the digital marketplace [5, 6].

The digital landscape in Saudi Arabia has undergone remarkable growth, influenced by increasing internet penetration, a digitally engaged youth population, and significant government investment aimed at advancing technological adoption as part of Vision 2030 [7]. As a result, online shopping has become an integral aspect of consumer behavior in the country, with businesses leveraging digital marketing and technological advancements to cater to a tech-savvy market [8]. To remain competitive, companies are increasingly adopting digital content marketing and technology innovation as strategic approaches to attract and retain consumers. Understanding the impact of these factors on consumer buying decisions has thus become crucial, particularly as businesses seek to align their strategies with local consumer preferences and technological trends.

Digital content marketing, which focuses on creating and sharing valuable content to attract and engage consumers, plays a critical role in shaping brand perception and influencing purchasing behavior [7]. Through relevant, engaging, and consistent digital content, companies can build trust and brand loyalty, which are essential for driving online shopping behavior [9]. In the Saudi context, where consumers are highly engaged on social media and responsive to digital content, businesses can enhance their reach and impact by tailoring their content to reflect local cultural and consumer values. However, while digital content can effectively draw consumers in, the availability and application of advanced technology are equally important in ensuring a seamless and satisfactory shopping experience.

Technology innovation in online shopping involves implementing tools and techniques such as artificial intelligence, personalized recommendations, and user-friendly interfaces to create a more interactive and efficient shopping journey [10]. By leveraging technology, companies can offer tailored shopping experiences, address consumer needs proactively, and ultimately influence buying decisions. In Saudi Arabia, where digital transformation is rapidly advancing, businesses are in a favorable position to adopt innovative solutions that respond to evolving consumer expectations [11]. Thus, the interplay between digital content marketing and technology innovation is likely to be a significant driver of consumer behavior in this dynamic market.

This study seeks to examine these relationships by examining the impact of digital content marketing and technology innovation on buying decisions in Saudi Arabia's online shopping environment. Specifically, it investigates how digital content marketing directly influences technology innovation and how both factors, individually and in combination, impact consumer purchasing behavior. Additionally, it examines the mediating role of technology innovation, hypothesizing that it strengthens the effect of digital content marketing on buying decisions.

2. Literature Review
2.1. Digital Content Marketing
Digital content marketing is an essential approach in today's online landscape, designed to attract, engage, and retain customers by creating and sharing valuable content that resonates with target audiences [3, 12]. Unlike traditional advertising, digital content marketing does not rely on direct promotion but instead seeks to provide relevant and helpful information that builds trust and loyalty over time [13]. This approach can involve various formats, including blogs, social media posts, videos, infographics, and email newsletters, each tailored to engage audiences on platforms they frequent [14, 15]. As a result, digital content marketing has become a key tool for businesses seeking to differentiate themselves and remain competitive in the crowded digital marketplace. The main objective of digital content marketing is to support and guide consumers through each stage of their buying journey, from awareness to consideration to decision [6, 16]. At the awareness stage, content aims to educate or entertain, capturing the audience's interest by addressing common questions or challenges they may face. During the consideration phase, content is more solution-oriented, providing insights into the brand's offerings and how they address the consumer's specific needs [17]. At the decision-making stage, content can offer persuasive information, such as testimonials, case studies, or detailed product descriptions, to encourage conversions.

A successful digital content marketing strategy requires consistency, creativity, and alignment with brand values. High-quality content that aligns with audience interests increases engagement and can foster a deeper connection with the brand [7]. Moreover, as audiences increasingly turn to digital sources for information and entertainment, brands that consistently deliver relevant content are better positioned to earn customer trust and foster long-term relationships [18]. For instance, social media channels have become powerful tools for real-time interaction with audiences, allowing brands to respond to queries, share updates, and promote user-generated content, all of which help build an engaged and loyal community [19].

The effectiveness of digital content marketing is further amplified by data analytics, which helps marketers assess content performance and refine strategies based on audience responses and engagement levels [20]. Through tracking metrics like page views, shares, and conversion rates, companies can gain valuable insights into what content resonates most with their target market, enabling a more tailored approach that better meets consumer expectations. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H_1: Digital content marketing influence on technology innovation
H_2: Digital content marketing influence on buying decision

2.2. Technology Innovation

Technology innovation refers to the development and implementation of new or improved technological solutions that create value, enhance efficiency, and address evolving consumer and business needs [21]. In today's digital economy, technology innovation spans a wide range of advancements, from artificial intelligence and machine learning to cloud computing, big data, and augmented reality [22]. By incorporating these innovations, businesses can streamline operations, offer personalized experiences, and respond proactively to market demands [23]. In the context of online shopping and digital interactions, technology innovation plays a crucial role in transforming the consumer experience [24]. For example, AI-powered algorithms can provide personalized product recommendations, predictive analytics can forecast buying trends, and automated chatbots can assist customers with queries in real time. Additionally, advancements in mobile technology and user-friendly interfaces enhance accessibility, making it easier for consumers to explore, compare, and purchase products with minimal friction [25]. These innovations not only improve customer satisfaction but also foster brand loyalty by creating a seamless and enjoyable shopping journey. The impact of technology innovation extends to how businesses collect and analyze data, enabling data-driven decision-making that can significantly improve marketing, customer service, and product development [26]. Companies can use big data and advanced analytics to better understand consumer preferences, predict trends, and optimize their strategies for greater efficiency and responsiveness [27]. Moreover, technology innovation allows for scalable solutions, enabling companies to grow sustainably while adapting quickly to shifts in consumer behavior and market conditions [28].

In highly competitive markets, technology innovation becomes a crucial differentiator, providing businesses with a way to stay relevant and competitive [29]. Companies that proactively invest in technological advancements can better anticipate consumer needs, enhance operational efficiency, and adapt more rapidly to industry changes [30]. Furthermore, technology innovation is essential in sectors with rapidly shifting demands and high consumer expectations, as it allows businesses to remain agile and capable of meeting new challenges with tailored solutions. Technology innovation is a key driver of progress and competitiveness in today's business landscape [31]. It enables companies to meet consumer demands, optimize operations, and create meaningful, efficient, and enjoyable experiences that ultimately strengthen brand loyalty and drive business growth [32]. As consumers increasingly expect personalized, seamless, and accessible digital interactions, businesses that embrace and lead in technology innovation are better positioned to capture and retain market share in an evolving digital economy. Hence the following hypotheses are proposed.

H3: Technology innovation influence on buying decision

H4: Technology innovation mediates between digital content marketing and buying decision
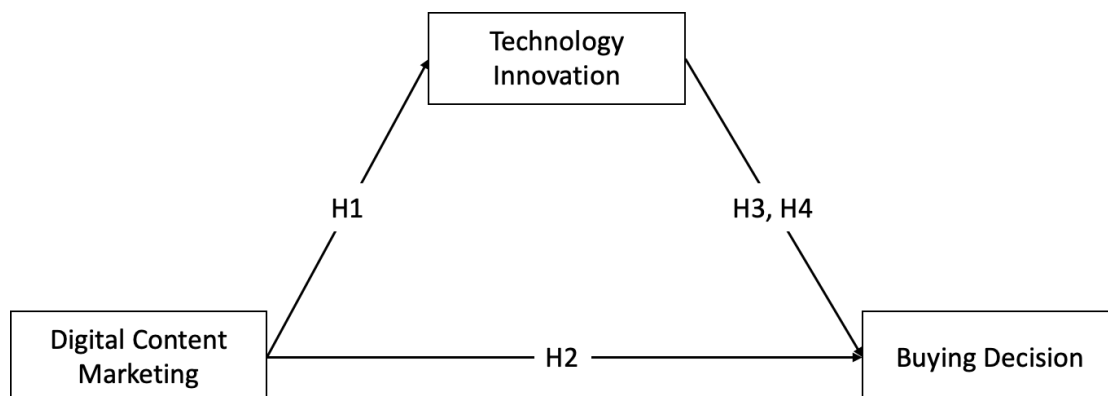
Figure 1 presents research model.

Figure 1.
Research Model.

3. Methodology

In this study, a cross-sectional research design was employed to capture data at a single point in time, allowing for an efficient examination of the relationships among digital content marketing, technology innovation, and buying decisions. The sample size was set at 341 participants, selected through a convenience sampling technique to ensure ease of data collection in Saudi Arabia. The target participants were individuals with experience in online shopping, providing relevant insights into their perceptions and behaviors in a digital purchasing context. Measurement items were adapted from established sources to ensure reliability and validity. Digital content marketing was measured using five items from Xiao, et al. [33] technology innovation with five items adapted from Voicu, et al. [34] and buying decisions with three items from Alkharabsheh and Zhen [35]. These items were used to assess participants' perspectives on each construct. For data analysis, "structural equation modeling" (SEM) was applied, allowing for the examination of complex relationships between variables and providing a robust framework to validate the measurement and structural models. SEM was chosen for its ability to handle latent variables and assess both direct and indirect effects among constructs, offering a comprehensive understanding of the proposed relationships.

4. Results

The demographic profile of the sample (n=341) reveals a fairly balanced gender distribution (Table 1), with 55% males and 45% females. The majority of participants are young adults, with nearly half (49%) aged 25-34, followed by 29% in the 18-24 age range. Smaller proportions of the sample are in the 35-44 (16%) and 45-54 (6%) age brackets, indicating a younger demographic overall. Regarding educational attainment, the sample is well-educated: 57% hold a Bachelor's degree, 37% have a Master's degree, and only 6% have a high school education or equivalent.

The measurement model results indicate in Table 2 that the constructs of digital content marketing, technology innovation, and buying decision demonstrate acceptable levels of reliability and validity, with item loadings for all constructs exceeding the 0.7 threshold. Digital content marketing has an α of 0.796, CR of 0.859, and AVE of 0.551, reflecting good internal consistency and sufficient convergent validity. Technology innovation similarly shows strong reliability, with an α of 0.797, CR of 0.862, and AVE of 0.558, meeting recommended thresholds for validity. Buying decision, with an α of 0.727, CR of 0.757, and AVE of 0.593, has moderate reliability but sufficient convergent validity.

The discriminant validity of the constructs, assessed using the "Fornell-Larcker criterion", indicates that each construct in Table 3 shares more variance with its own indicators than with those of other constructs, confirming adequate discriminant validity.

The path coefficient results presented in Table 4 indicate strong relationships among the constructs, supporting the proposed hypotheses. The path from digital content marketing to technology innovation shows a significant positive effect with a beta value of 0.721 and a T statistic of 15.041, with a p-value of 0.00, thus supporting H1. Similarly, the relationship between digital content marketing and buying decision demonstrates a positive effect ($\beta = 0.352$) and a T statistic of 12.511, with a p-value of 0.00, which supports H2. The path from technology innovation to buying decision also reveals a strong positive effect ($\beta = 0.397$) with a T statistic of 16.871 and a p-value of 0.00, thereby supporting H3. Finally, the indirect effect of digital content marketing on buying decision through technology innovation shows a beta value of 0.321 and a T statistic of 13.812, with a p-value of 0.00, confirming H4.

The R-squared values presented in Figure 2 indicate the proportion of variance explained by the model for the constructs of technology innovation and buying decision. The R-squared value for technology innovation is 0.519, suggesting that approximately 51.9% of the variance in technology innovation is explained by the model, indicating a strong explanatory power. Similarly, the R-squared value for buying decision is 0.467, which means that around 46.7% of the variance in buying decision is accounted for by the model.

Table 1.
Demographic Profile (n=341)

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	187	55%
Female	154	45%
Age		
18-24	98	29%
25-34	166	49%
35-44	56	16%
45-54	21	6%
Education		
High School or equivalent	21	6%
Bachelor's Degree	193	57%
Master's Degree	127	37%

Table 2.
Measurement Model

	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Digital Content Marketing		0.796	0.859	0.551
DCM1: "Content marketing make me feel more familiar with imported goods"	0.791			
DCM2: "Content marketing is useful to me"	0.743			
DCM3: "I will pay special attention to content marketing"	0.795			
DCM4: "Content marketing can impress me"	0.716			
DCM5: "I will trust content marketing"	0.771			
Technology Innovation	0.793	0.797	0.862	0.558
TI1: "I like to use new technologies"	0.844			
TI2: "I like learning about new technologies"	0.756			
TI3: "When I am informed about a new	0.728			

	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
technological product, I try to find the opportunity to experiment with it"				
TI4: "Compared to my friends and family, I am usually among the first to try new technologies"	0.787			
TI5: "I believe that technology innovation is very good for e-commerce"	0.798			
Buying Decision	0.801	0.727	0.757	0.593
BD1: "I enjoy my buying decision process through online shopping"	0.841			
BD2: "I have strong desire of buying decision for internet marketing over traditional marketing"	0.831			
BD3: "Digital marketing affects me on my buying decision process"	0.798			

Table 3.
Discriminant Validity (Fornell-larcker criterion)

	Buying Decision	Digital Content Marketing	Technology Innovation
Buying Decision	0.702		
Digital Content Marketing	0.471	0.742	
Technology Innovation	0.487	0.62	0.747

Table 4.
Path Coefficients.

| Paths	Beta	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values	Results
Digital Content Marketing -> Technology Innovation	0.721	0.048	15.041	0.00	H1 supported
Digital Content Marketing -> Buying Decision	0.352	0.165	12.511	0.00	H2 supported
Technology Innovation -> Buying Decision	0.397	0.164	16.871	0.00	H3 supported
Digital Content Marketing -> Technology Innovation -> Buying Decision	0.321	0.123	13.812	0.00	H4 supported
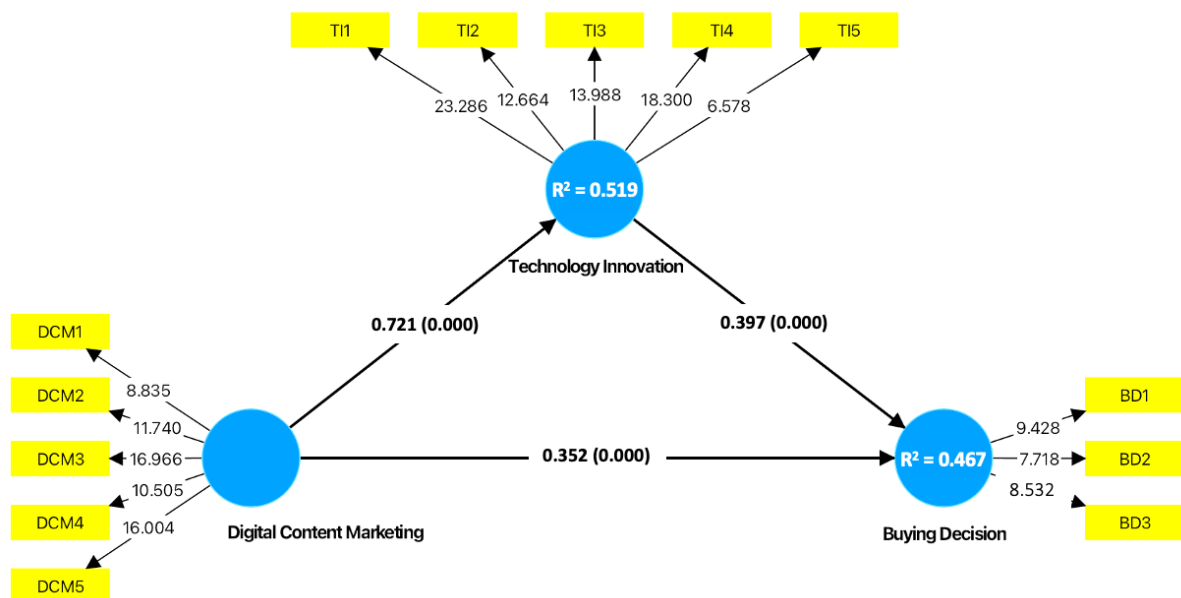
Figure 2.
Structural Model.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the intricate relationships among digital content marketing, technology innovation, and buying decisions, highlighting their implications for both theory and practical application. The analysis reveals that digital content marketing serves as a powerful driver of technology innovation, which, in turn, significantly influences consumers' buying decisions. These connections are critical as organizations increasingly leverage digital strategies to enhance their market positioning and consumer engagement. The strong path coefficients presented in

the results validate all four hypotheses. Hypothesis 1, which posits that digital content marketing positively impacts technology innovation, is robustly supported, with a path coefficient of 0.721. This indicates that effective digital marketing strategies can significantly enhance an organization's technological capabilities [27]. As businesses adapt to the fast-paced digital environment, fostering innovation through marketing initiatives becomes essential for sustaining competitive advantage [36]. Hypothesis 2 also finds support, demonstrating that digital content marketing directly influences buying decisions ($\beta = 0.352$). This relationship highlights the importance of engaging content that resonates with consumers and drives them toward purchasing actions [23]. Marketers can harness this insight by creating compelling digital narratives that not only inform but also persuade potential buyers, thereby enhancing conversion rates [37]. The analysis further confirms Hypothesis 3, which asserts that technology innovation positively affects buying decisions ($\beta = 0.397$). This finding emphasizes the role of innovative technologies in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences. As companies introduce new technologies, the ability to communicate these innovations effectively through digital content can lead to increased consumer trust and higher likelihoods of purchase. Moreover, Hypothesis 4 is supported, indicating a significant indirect effect of digital content marketing on buying decisions through technology innovation ($\beta = 0.321$). This underscores the intricate nature of these relationships, suggesting that while digital content marketing can drive innovation, it is this innovation that ultimately enhances buying decisions [24]. This pathway highlights the need for organizations to integrate their marketing and innovation strategies to create a seamless experience for consumers. These findings resonate with existing literature, emphasizing the vital connection between marketing practices and technological advancement [25]. As organizations continue to engage consumers through digital platforms, recognizing the dual role of marketing as both a facilitator of innovation and a driver of consumer behavior becomes crucial [26]. This study suggests that companies should not only focus on the technological aspects of innovation but also prioritize effective marketing strategies that communicate these innovations to consumers.

The implications of this study are multifaceted, providing valuable insights for both academics and practitioners in the fields of marketing and technology innovation. The findings contribute to the growing body of literature connecting digital marketing strategies with technology innovation, bridging a gap in existing research and encouraging further exploration of these constructs. By validating the relationships among digital content marketing, technology innovation, and buying decisions, this study offers a framework for understanding how digital content influences consumer behavior through innovation, serving as a reference point for future studies in different contexts or industries. From a practical standpoint, organizations should integrate digital content marketing strategies with their innovation initiatives. Marketers can create targeted campaigns that highlight technological advancements, positioning their products as cutting-edge solutions that address consumer needs [38]. The findings emphasize the importance of engaging content in influencing buying decisions, suggesting that businesses develop content that educates consumers about new technologies' benefits and applications, fostering trust and increasing purchasing behavior. Moreover, companies can leverage their technological innovations as key selling points in their marketing strategies, attracting consumers seeking the latest advancements and differentiating their brand in a competitive marketplace [39]. Implementing feedback mechanisms can further enhance consumer engagement by gathering insights on digital marketing and technological innovations, informing future strategies and improving offerings to meet consumer preferences.

The study also indicates the need for cross-functional collaboration between marketing and technology departments within organizations. By aligning their goals and strategies, these teams can ensure that marketing efforts effectively communicate and promote technological innovations. Future research could explore how these relationships manifest across different industries or cultural contexts, providing a more comprehensive view of consumer behavior. Longitudinal studies might investigate how dynamics between digital content marketing, technology innovation, and buying decisions evolve over time, revealing trends and shifts in consumer preferences. Additionally, incorporating variables such as consumer demographics and external environmental factors could enhance the predictive power of models related to consumer buying behavior. Employing experimental designs may help establish causality between digital content marketing and buying decisions mediated by technology innovation, offering deeper insights into specific marketing strategies that yield high consumer engagement. Finally, investigating the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality, on digital content marketing and consumer decision-making processes could provide fresh perspectives on how innovations shape consumer behavior.

6. Conclusion

This study provides strong evidence of the significant relationships between digital content marketing, technology innovation, and consumer buying decisions. It demonstrates that effective digital content not only drives technological innovation but also profoundly influences consumer purchasing behavior. Engaging content serves as a crucial tool in navigating consumer decision-making, enhancing brand engagement and loyalty in a competitive market. It encourages further exploration of these constructs across various industries and cultural contexts, paving the way for optimized digital marketing strategies that foster consumer engagement. Practically, organizations should integrate their marketing and innovation efforts, promoting collaboration between departments to effectively communicate the value of technological advancements. Implementing consumer feedback mechanisms will also enable businesses to adapt their offerings to evolving preferences. Overall, this research underscores the need for a holistic approach that leverages the synergy between digital content marketing and technology innovation. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, these insights will be vital for organizations seeking to navigate the complexities of consumer behavior and maintain a competitive edge, ultimately driving engagement and long-term success.

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