

Digital Marketing and Sales Positioning in Businesses in Southern Lima

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ABSTRACT

Digital marketing is a key strategy that uses online platforms to promote products and services, allowing companies to connect globally with their audience in an effective and personalized way. Positioning is the strategy to stand out in the consumer's mind, differentiating the brand with unique attributes, clear benefits, competitive comparisons, creating a memorable and relevant connection. This study had a quantitative research approach, employing basic research with a non-experimental descriptive cross-sectional design. The variables are complex as they will study more than two dimensions. In addition, the sample consisted of 197 non-probabilistic traders. As results, Spearman's correlation was used, with a value of $\rho=0.713$, showing that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, demonstrating a considerable positive correlation between variables and highlighting the importance of digital marketing as an essential tool for high market positioning. The study's discussions confirm the presence of a significant relationship between digital marketing and positioning in businesses in southern Lima. Finally, it is concluded that businesses are highly susceptible to the various online platforms that exist to promote a product or service, and this is reflected in their positioning, providing an opportunity to distinguish oneself from competitors and positively impact customers.

Keywords: Accounting, Business administration, Business economics, Marketing, Personnel economics.

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing has taken on a key role in the commercial dynamics of a business because it allows customers to learn about offers, promotions, and new products without being in the store or receiving help from salespeople (Anastacio & Vega, 2022). Therefore, this variable is a tool that organizations worldwide use to promote a product or service, improve their market position, and generate profit (Meléndez, 2018). Likewise, positioning is fundamental in brand development, as it considers active communication with customers to obtain a competitive advantage over rival brands by establishing a clear relationship with the target audience (Maza et al., 2020).

The problematic reality affecting entrepreneurs in southern Lima is that in recent years there has been a lack of and misuse of digital platforms to promote innovative products or services. It is known that digital marketing has helped various businesses to position themselves in the market, therefore they have decided to use social media so that entrepreneurs can have a direct relationship with their customers and thus position themselves ahead to their competitors. However, they have faced challenges related to information overload and consumer mistrust, as there have been many cases of data breaches and misuse of personal information. As a result, people are constantly

alarmed and concerned about how their information is being used, which hinders the efficiency of a strong and lasting connection between customer and merchant. Brands have constantly fought for the interest of their potential buyers through advertising campaigns that are released daily, but sometimes people get tired and saturated with them, ignoring the seller's message. For that reason, the proper use of digital marketing is influenced by the positioning that a business may have in the future.

Internationally, the World Bank (2024), notes that in 2022, more than 90% of people in different countries with high socioeconomic status used the internet, while 25% of people with low socioeconomic status used this network. Therefore, Guevara & Cruz (2022) consider that each country must independently seek strategies to accelerate the adaptation of digitalization and ensure that population can benefit from all the advantages it offers, since digital transformation has had a radical impact on communication between sellers and customers, forcing companies to understand and adapt to this new space for consumer relations through digital channels and interaction platforms (United Nations, 2021). For this reason, using various digital media is a powerful differentiator compared to competitors. It also helps to effectively and functionally identify demands and thus adapt them to the offer, as well as improving user interactivity with the company. These factors are essential in the process of developing good positioning (Torres et al., 2021).

Similarly, the European Marketing Academy (2022), points out that positioning not only involves the space that a product or service has in the consumer's mind, whether positive or negative, but also that its main objective is that when a user wants to purchase an offer, they choose it from among thousands of other brands on the market, as well as recommending that brand to their acquaintances, thereby building loyalty and becoming their first choice, creating value and purchasing action. For this reason, (Sánchez et al, 2019) consider that positioning is an important part of brand creation that involves assertive communication with the market space, which is why digital marketing has evolved in such a way that it is now very powerful and serves to maintain high competitiveness in the market, considering new demands and offers, as well as helping to efficiently respond to the activities necessary to provide a product or service adapted to the urgent needs of customers and the environment.

According to a study by the American Marketing Association (2024), companies worldwide have consistently invested approximately \$600 billion in digital marketing including social media advertising, various marketing strategies, websites, etc. However, even though large sums of money are usually invested, the aim is not only to increase sales and generate profits, but also to build long-term customer relationships and provide a unique user experience (Yabar-Velarde et al., 2024).

This is based on planned strategies and ethical decisions, such as segmenting your target audience according to their needs and preferences, always considering relevant, creative, informative, and useful content, and not neglecting interaction with the audience (Oliveros & Velasquez, 2022). It is also fundamental to raise awareness of the benefits of digital marketing among companies so that they can implement these innovative strategies, not only focusing on user needs and satisfying them through attractive offers, but also as a tool that helps a company's value chain, always putting the customer first. Digital marketing is a strategic support that provides tools to overcome challenges and new market experiences (Hernández et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the California privacy law under the European Consumer Union (2020) requires that all organizations commit to managing and storing personal information with the user's authorization and under strict rules in a secure and responsible manner, as this is an important aspect of digital marketing, because (Nasrabadi et al, 2024) mention that it gives consumers the right to know what type of data companies collect about them and the purpose, as well as the right to request that their information be deleted if necessary. According to research by Cyberstream (2024), companies must be clear about their privacy policies and be completely honest with consumers. Johari et al. (2024) affirm that this will help strengthen their trust in the organization as they highly value the issue of protecting information, thereby improving their relationship with users and reducing the risks of security breaches (Bravo-Huivin et al, 2024).

Similarly, Vargas (2022), mentions that the purpose of the study carried out was to find competitiveness among digital channels and customer loyalty for the Natural Plant brand, located in the Municipality of Surco. This study was used and resulted in a cross-sectional correlation investigation. It is important to mention that strategies can be used to improve customer acquisition, positioning, and day-to-day management to generate loyal customers in the future. In the same way, Campos et al. (2020) agree that SEO and SEM will greatly assist in the search for digital platforms for customers, increasing the number of visits, generating web traffic, and providing information about customer needs, thereby building a relationship between the company and its customers. For customers retention, the personalization factor must be implemented, as each loyal customer has different needs, and it is very effective to acquire a marketing plan (Abarca et al, 2022) via personalized email for each loyal customer of the company to reach their minds and satisfy their needs. Guamán (2024), has verified that marketing is applicable in any company, and currently, there are multiple strategies to solve digital marketing problems. Social media marketing can be applied to key areas from the very start of a company, whether for services or products, as many businesses adopt this strategy.

According to Cudriz & Corrales (2020), they suggest that digital marketing plans should be developed and implemented by the store manager or administrative coordinator to evolve appropriate strategies to achieve the company's positioning (Romero, 2021). This allows for a higher level of interaction with customers, as studies show that there is a very strong positive correlation between the variables (Buiza & Nina, 2021). The program aims to develop a digital marketing strategy that will enable Makro to increase its position in the domestic market.

As Solorzano & Parrales (2021), state, branding is seen as a tool to help manage a company's brand, with the aim of ensuring that goods or services provided by businesses attract the interest of consumers, with the goal of building brand loyalty (Acosta, 2019). In recent years, people have observed how different brands perform. They successfully use this tool to position themselves against the competition and gain relevance in the market, thus boosting sales, achieving economic growth, and increasingly placing themselves for mutual benefit (Sánchez et al., 2019).

From the perspective of Herrera (2024), if digital marketing strategy is used correctly, it will improve the business's presence in the market, which means that the most attractive customers will be drawn to the company and make it their first choice for purchases. Therefore, better management of posts on social media or other digital platforms will result in better customer attraction, as they will have greater experience when interacting with the website or other platforms used by companies, thus achieving more objectives (Hotmart, 2023).

Therefore, it is proposed the following general objective: to determine the relationship between digital marketing and positioning in businesses in southern Lima.

The purpose of this research is to show how digital marketing has established itself as a secondary resource for positioning in the increasingly competitive business environment of southern Lima. This work not only contributes to academic training in digital marketing but also has practical implications that can improve customer experience through virtual platforms, encourage entrepreneurship, and promote a more ethical and responsible business environment. Furthermore, through critical analysis of digital marketing and positioning, practical solutions will be provided that can be implemented to solve real problems, benefiting businesses and consumers alike. That is why these research variables are powerful tools for businesses in Peru. By focusing on customer understanding, creating relevant content, and leveraging social media, companies can improve their appeal and, ultimately, their success in the competitive Peruvian market, thereby building customer loyalty to progressively increase their sales.

Developing the theoretical framework, Gomez et al. (2024), state that digital marketing has been growing over time, consisting of a set planned and creative strategies focused on direct and personalized communication tailored to each user. This allows for the marketing of various services or products that can meet people's needs with the help of digital tools for mutual benefit, as the company would be fulfilling its objectives and continuing to generate sales in a competitive market (Peçanha, 2022).

As Cépeda and Gómez (2021), express, the best-known and most widely identified strategies are SEO, whose main objective is to improve visibility and attract relevant traffic to a website in a sustainable manner. On the other hand, Campos, et al. (2020), tell us that SEM, which stands for search engine marketing, is based on promoting websites to improve visibility through paid advertising.

Likewise, there are essential tools in digital marketing, as mentioned by Chunque (2022). Such as, product E-marketing, which allows a series of messages to be exchanged quickly on the internet, using all its media so that the product offered is much more highly valued (Flores & Ferreyros, 2024). E-commerce is a resource that facilitates the purchase and sale of goods with the help of existing digital platforms. E-promotion serves to publish a variety of products with the characteristics they offer, among other tools (Montalvan & Torres, 2022).

Regarding social media, Moro & Fernández (2020) state that its purpose is to communicate any type of multimedia content, such as images, videos, audio, etc. It connects people quickly and helps to market products. Furthermore, users have the power to upload visual material of their choice. There are two types of social media. Blanco (2023) considers horizontal social media to be those that do not have a specific theme and are aimed at any type of person, while vertical social media are aimed at people with common interests. The most popular applications are Instagram, Facebook and TikTok (Ramirez, 2024).

Over the years, digital marketing has benefited entrepreneurs in every way (Martinez, 2024).

It offers certain important advantages, such as measuring results, helping to evaluate how effective an advertising campaign has been, enabling strategic investment, since high costs are not necessary to have a big impact (Ashaari H, 2024). Greater reach is a key point in digital marketing, as advertising and promotion can achieve everyone at the same time. Similarly, customer loyalty is mentioned, as it is useful to attract potential customers and, in turn, retain frequent customers, which will help to continue generating sales and create relationships with consumers (Carrillo, 2021).

Regarding the development of digital marketing dimensions, the contributions of Ysla (2022) are considered. It is studied the web flow dimension, which is a critical aspect where the interaction between people and virtual platforms is evident. In addition, the author analyzes how users relate to the variety of content to improve customer

experience. As Pumarrumi. (2019) points out, this dimension has certain components that influence the successful development of digital marketing, such as navigation, which is how people use and move within the same virtual space. Furthermore, entry and exit pages are very helpful in identifying the type of content that customers like to see and the type of content that causes them to lose interest (Corrales & Brazales, 2017).

As Du et al. (2024) indicate, according to the functionality dimension, it will help people looking for information about a specific product not to leave just because they did not find the data they needed. That is why it is desirable to address the conditions that people have, to achieve perfect satisfaction with the brands (Ridge, 2023). Confirming Oyola, (2022), functionality influences the customer experience, the success and implementation of marketing campaigns; usability and ease of navigation on the business's digital platforms, and their loading speed, as this determines whether the user continues to explore the website or chooses to leave it, and finally, the accessibility of content aimed at the public (Sans-Serrano & Freire-Sánchez, 2024).

On the other hand, HubSpot Academy (2023) states that the feedback dimension is crucial for maintaining a competent relationship with customers. Furthermore, consumer behavior is much better understood through constant communication with them. Likewise, feedback on the product, service, advertising campaign, or simply something related to the brand can be positive or negative, but it will be important for the business to improve and continue to grow (Inigo, 2023). This information can be gathered through effective tools such as questionnaires and surveys, testimonials, and data analysis. This is important so that the company can adapt its offerings in the market and continue to meet customer expectations (Guillén, 2021).

Regarding the interactivity dimension, Garibay (2019) mentions that through constant and ethical interaction, it is possible to attract more customers and generate a closer bond with them, knowing what they are looking for in the company and whether they will get it. On the contrary, Mendoza-Castañeda & Ocón-Galán (2023) mention that, in terms of social media, the level of interaction with the public can be measured through likes, comments, shares, and views of the audiovisual content published on different applications (Newberry, 2024). To have greater interaction with users, meaningful content must be shared so that it impacts with the audience and they can identify with the brand, also through various promotions and offers, stronger interaction with customers can be achieved; finally, by always responding and being attentive to customer responses and perceptions, they will feel heard and understood (Mafra, 2022).

Each dimension is essential for businesses to develop effective and useful digital marketing strategies, with the aim of planning creative and efficient strategies that meet identified needs and realize consumer potential through digitalization. By understanding and implementing these four dimensions, businesses will be able to adapt to constant market changes and improve their productivity and profitability (Mulyana et al. 2024).

On the other hand, Córdova (2019) mentions that positioning refers to a brand's strategies to capture user's minds by comparing it with its main competitors that offer similar products or services. For that reason, Santiso (2023), mentions that positioning is crucial for companies today, as it facilitates the projection of new methods that allow them to achieve higher levels of profits and sales, building consumer loyalty to create a solid and trusting relationship with them and thus offer personalized and unique products for their complete satisfaction. In addition, it helps to create an innovative, attractive, different, and honest identity and image that helps to stand out in a competitive market and social environment (Ponte, 2022).

According to Mackay et al. (2021), positioning is classified into different types based on certain characteristics such as brand, target audience, competition, etc. First, there is positioning based on competition, which is when a company wants to outperform other companies that offer the same type of product or service, referred to as competitors (Santiso, 2023). Attribute-based positioning occurs when characteristics are identified that help generate a competitive advantage. Customer-based positioning refers to finding the necessary product that helps satisfy the user's needs (Lopez, 2024). Price-based positioning refers to products that are cheaper than those offered by the competition. It is a strategy widely used by companies and helps them generate sales (Flores, 2023).

On the other side, Schwab (2022) mentions that to develop a good and effective positioning strategy, aspects such as the target audience must be taken into account through good market segmentation, which will help to define the people to whom the appropriate product or service will be directed. Likewise, Figuera (2017) considers regarding what differentiates a brand from other competitors as a crucial part of a good positioning strategy, highlighting the unique and distinctive characteristics of a specific product to develop a competitive advantage that will stand out in a challenging environment. Similarly, Asana (2024) highlights the 4Ps of the marketing mix, representing products, prices, places, and promotions. These must be focused and precise in relation to organizational objectives to build a company's brand positioning (Vera & Sumba-Bustamante, 2024).

However, Verdesoto (2024) states that there are some mistakes made when developing a positioning strategy, because some organizations want to highlight more than two attributes of their products, causing confusion among customers and becoming just another brand on the market, so that users will not remember it and the company will lose credibility. One of the most common mistakes is under positioning, as pointed out by Torreblanca (2022),

which occurs when the target audience has a vague concept of the brand, that is, when the company is just one more option among others in the market, since it does not distinguish itself or share an attractive competitive advantage, much less existing appropriate communication between customer and seller (Castro-Gutiérrez et al., 2024). Another is over-positioning, Olivar (2021) explains that this occurs when the company is eager to sell and generate profits and tends to overemphasize its identity and characteristics, as well as highlighting certain advantages of its products or services that are not true. There is also confusing positioning, as emphasized by Sánchez et al. (2019), which is when a company presents more advantages of a product than it should, causing very little clarity about what it wants to sell due to the excess of information shared by a brand (Parra et al., 2024).

Regarding the development of positioning dimensions, the contributions of Zapata (2023) were considered. This author contemplates four relevant dimensions, the first is brand recall, which, according to Rodríguez (2024) is the grouping of factors that build a brand's identity, such as digital visual elements, the message to be conveyed through marketing, and customer experiences. This is what the customer perceives and feels differently from the image that other companies have. As Ortega (2024) mentions, a differentiated brand image can be developed through market research to conduct a thorough study of the competition and its environment to understand how customers recognize the competition and take advantage of opportunities to differentiate themselves from the rest. It is also very important to define the value proposition and consider what makes the brand unique and why customers should choose it over other options (Rosales, 2024).

Similarly, Fuentes-Toribio et al. (2023) mention that brand association consists of a competitive strategy often used by various companies to stand out from other similar products, highlighting attractive and honest characteristics, advantages, and benefits in order to satisfy user requirements (Roldán, 2022). These aspects can be proportion, color, quality, tone, value, attention, location, functionality, price, warranty, or brand. These are essential for capturing the interest of others and creating a distinctive identity (Yoza et al. 2022).

Also, according to Delgado (2023), the recommendation is to make known a value proposition across different digital channels, that is, to communicate something new and superior to competitors, so that the target audience is clear about why they should choose that company and not others. As Narváez et al. (2019) point out, it is important to spread as much information as possible across all channels because this will help the company to stand out from other companies and thus gain the interest, commitment, and loyalty of customers, helping to build a striking and unique brand identity. Similarly, Martínez (2024) says that it also allows companies to optimize their resources effectively and efficiently to increase the use of online dissemination and promotion and adapt their content to certain channels according to their potential customers, as well as facilitating the development of a bond of trust, integrity, and reliability with users (Díaz et al., 2023).

On the other hand, according to Pursell (2023), consumer loyalty helps companies to sell an exclusive, unique product with greater profits. This strategy is mainly characterized by intangible components, it means elements that cannot be touched or measured but that influence the value of a product, such as trust, reputation, loyalty, innovation, and positioning (Romero, 2021). Furthermore, this type of strategy not only aims to sell something different but also seeks to develop a unique and different experience that meets the user's needs in a particular and unusual way that the competition cannot match. If companies manage to stand out in a competitive market, it will help them to constantly attract more customers and, above all, to build loyalty and retain them (Gallardo-Tello et al., 2024).

The positioning dimensions outlined above are very important because they enable companies to establish effective connections with customers, strengthen loyalty, and reach success in a competitive market. This can be achieved if the company is original, authentic, and reasonable in its brand proposition, to gain a presence in the minds of consumers (Ridge, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

The research approach is quantitative because survey tools are used through a standardized scheme. In addition, with the help of information gathering and processing, an answer will be given to the study question, thus verifying the general and specific hypotheses, with the purpose of describing and interpreting the relationship between both variables in the businesses carried out by merchants in southern Lima (Ñaupas et al. 2018, p. 140).

This study is of a basic type, as it develops new knowledge about research without participating in it. Furthermore, it focuses on understanding certain fundamentals and discovering areas of knowledge that have not yet been studied in order to produce new theories and thus develop functional and competent measures based on research to improve and optimize the correct use of digital marketing and achieve good positioning (Nieto, 2018, p. 2).

Its design is non-experimental, cross-sectional, and descriptive, as there is no voluntary intervention in the variables mentioned; they simply occur. Likewise, data is collected at a single point in time to analyze variables in a specific context (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza, 2018, p. 174).

The research population is the group of people who have similar characteristics for obtaining information in the investigation. In this study, the population consists of 400 people from southern Lima who currently own a business (Naupas et al, 2018).

Likewise, the sample is a significant part of the population, in which information is collected that adequately reflects the entire population. Sampling refers to the methodology used to select it from the population (Iñiguez et al. 2017), based on the calculation, this sample consists of 197 people who will have a business in 2025. The sample is non-probabilistic.

Reliability is observed in research when the same results are obtained with the sample when applied in similar situations. Standardized instruments usually have their reliability verified by their creators, but it is advisable to verify it in a pilot sample to ensure its suitability for the new context (Narvaez, 2019).

The Cronbach's Alpha result (0.900), used to determine the level of reliability, will be measured using the levels indicated by Lavrakas (2008). Therefore, it can be said that this instrument is reliable for measuring this variable. Regarding the number of items (24).

The Cronbach's Alpha result (0.851), which has the aim to determine the level of reliability, will be measured using the levels indicated by Lavrakas (2008). Therefore, it can be said that this instrument has excellent reliability for measuring this variable. Regarding the number of items (21).

This instrument has been used randomly on different people in southern Lima who currently own any type of business. It was developed as an online questionnaire and distributed through various social networks. The results will be used to apply the corresponding methods without modifying any variables, making it possible to measure and present them using tables and graphs applied in statistics.

RESULTS

The study included 197 people who responded to the survey. The data obtained was first transferred to Excel and then to the SPSS-26 statistical program in order to analyze the data by creating tables and graphs that would provide answers to the general problems and hypotheses of the research.

Table 1. Digital marketing.

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Low level	64	32.5	32.5	32.5
	Medium level	78	39.6	39.6	72.1
	High level	55	27.9	27.9	100.0
	Total	197	100.0	100.0	

Analyzing Table 1. It is shown a varied distribution between low, medium and high levels in a sample of 197 people regarding digital marketing in businesses in southern Lima. In general terms, the medium level is the most frequent, with 78 participants, representing 39.6% of the total, indicating that the majority are at a medium level of knowledge of digital marketing. Secondly, the low level has a frequency of 64 people, equivalent to 32.5%. Finally, the high level has the lowest frequency with 55 people, representing 27.9% of the sample. This overview indicates that there are people with advanced knowledge, but the majority of the sample is at medium or low levels, representing an opportunity for development in this area with the aim to improve general knowledge of digital marketing in businesses in southern Lima.

Table 2. Positioning.

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Low level	63	32.0	32.0	32.0
	Medium level	82	41.6	41.6	73.6
	High level	52	26.4	26.4	100.0
	Total	197	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 2 and the positioning variable, it can be observed that the predominant level in businesses in southern Lima is the medium level with 82 people, equivalent to 41.6% of those surveyed, the low positioning level has a frequency of 63, representing 32% of the total, and the high level has 52 cases, corresponding to 26.4% of the sample. Therefore, it can be concluded that the cumulative distribution shows that 73.6% of respondents

have a low or medium level, suggesting that a significant portion of the population could benefit from interventions to improve their positioning levels.

Table 3. Correlations.

		Digital marketing	Positioning
Spearman's Rho	Correlation coefficient	1.000	,713**
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	197	197

Note: **. The correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (two-tailed).

In Accordance with the results obtained, Spearman's correlation coefficient was used, and its value was 0.713, reflecting a high positive relationship between the two variables. This value suggests that as digital marketing increases, the positioning of businesses in southern Lima also improves. In addition, the level of significance obtained is $p=0.000$, which is lower than the value 0.01, allowing us to affirm that the correlation is relevant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is confirmed that there is a significant relationship between the use of digital marketing and the positioning of businesses in southern Lima. This finding highlights the relevance of digital marketing as an effective tool for strengthening business visibility and competitiveness in a dynamic market.

Table 4. Cross-tabulation Digital Marketing*Positioning.

		Positioning			
		Low level	Medium level	High level	Total
Digital marketing	Low level	51	11	2	64
		81.0%	13.4%	3.8%	32.5%
	Medium level	12	50	16	78
		19.0%	61.0%	30.8%	39.6%
	High level	0	21	34	55
		0.0%	25.6%	65.4%	27.9%
Total		63	82	52	197
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Through the analysis of the variables, it shows the organization of the values of the two variables. 32.5% of the total respondents correspond to people with a low level of digital marketing. Within this group, the majority (81%) also have a low level of positioning, which indicates a relationship between low levels in both variables. At the medium level of digital marketing, which constitutes 39.6% of the total, 61% of individuals are also at a medium level of positioning, while 30.8% reach a high level in the latter variable. This suggests that the medium level of digital marketing is more distributed between medium and high levels of positioning, although it is mainly concentrated at the intermediate level. Finally, the high level of digital marketing accounts for 27.9% of the total, which the majority (65.4%) also have a high level of positioning, reinforcing the idea that high digital marketing skills are associated with high positioning. This analysis suggests a positive relationship between the level of digital marketing and the level of positioning in businesses in southern Lima.

Table 5. Correlations between variable 1 and the dimensions of variable 2

		Digital marketing	Brand recall	Brand association	Recommendation intention	Consumer loyalty
Spearman's Rho	Digital marketing	1.000	,719**	,555**	,601**	,541**
			0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197
	Brand recall	,719**	1.000	,535**	,580**	,537**
		0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197
	Brand association	,555**	,535**	1.000	,428**	,450**
		0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197
	Recommendation intention	,601**	,580**	,428**	1.000	,478**

		0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
		197	197	197	197	197
	Consumer loyalty	,541**	,537**	,450**	,478**	1.000
		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
		197	197	197	197	197

Note: **. The correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (two-tailed).

The responses show that digital marketing correlates positively with all dimensions of the positioning variable, being strongest with brand recall ($r = 0.719$), indicating that a solid digital marketing strategy contributes to consumers remembering the brand. There is also a moderate correlation with brand association ($r = 0.555$) and recommendation intention ($r = 0.601$), suggesting that digital strategies strengthen perceptions and willingness to recommend. Finally, the relationship with consumer loyalty ($r = 0.541$) indicates that digital actions influence retention. All correlations are significant ($p < 0.01$), validating the hypothesis of a significant relationship between both variables.

Table 6. Correlations between dimensions of variable 1 and variable 2.

		Feedb ack	Web flow	Functi onality	Interactiv ity	Brand recall	Brand associa tion	Recommen dation intention	Consumer loyalty
Spearman's Rho	Feedback	1.000	,666**	,565**	,483**	,670**	,523**	,569**	,492**
			0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
	Web flow	,666**	1.000	,557**	,566**	,694**	,507**	,586**	,525**
		0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
	Functionality	,565**	,557**	1.000	,420**	,581**	,418**	,437**	,417**
		0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
	Interactivity	,483**	,566**	,420**	1.000	,576**	,413**	,448**	,408**
		0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
	Brand recall	,670**	,694**	,581**	,576**	1.000	,535**	,580**	,537**
		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
	Brand association	,523**	,507**	,418**	,413**	,535**	1.000	,428**	,450**
		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
		197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
	Recommendation intention	,569**	,586**	,437**	,448**	,580**	,428**	1.000	,478**
		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
		197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
	Consumer loyalty	,492**	,525**	,417**	,408**	,537**	,450**	,478**	1.000
		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
		197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197

Note: **. The correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (two-tailed).

The findings in Table 6 show the correlation between digital marketing dimensions and positioning, using Spearman's coefficient. Statistically significant associations between the variables analyzed are revealed. It is observed that "Brand recall" dimension has a high correlation with "Web flow" ($q = 0,694$) and with "Feedback" ($q = 0,670$), suggesting that greater brand recall is associated with customer experience and expectations. In addition, the "Web Flow" variable also shows strong correlations with "Feedback" ($q = 0,666$) and "Interactivity" ($q = 0,566$), indicating that a good flow experience is related to interaction between people and greater feedback. Overall, all variables are positively correlated, highlighting significant relationships between aspects of the experience on digital platforms and loyalty and recommendation variables. This suggests that digital marketing and positioning have a significant impact on consumer perception and loyalty to the brand.

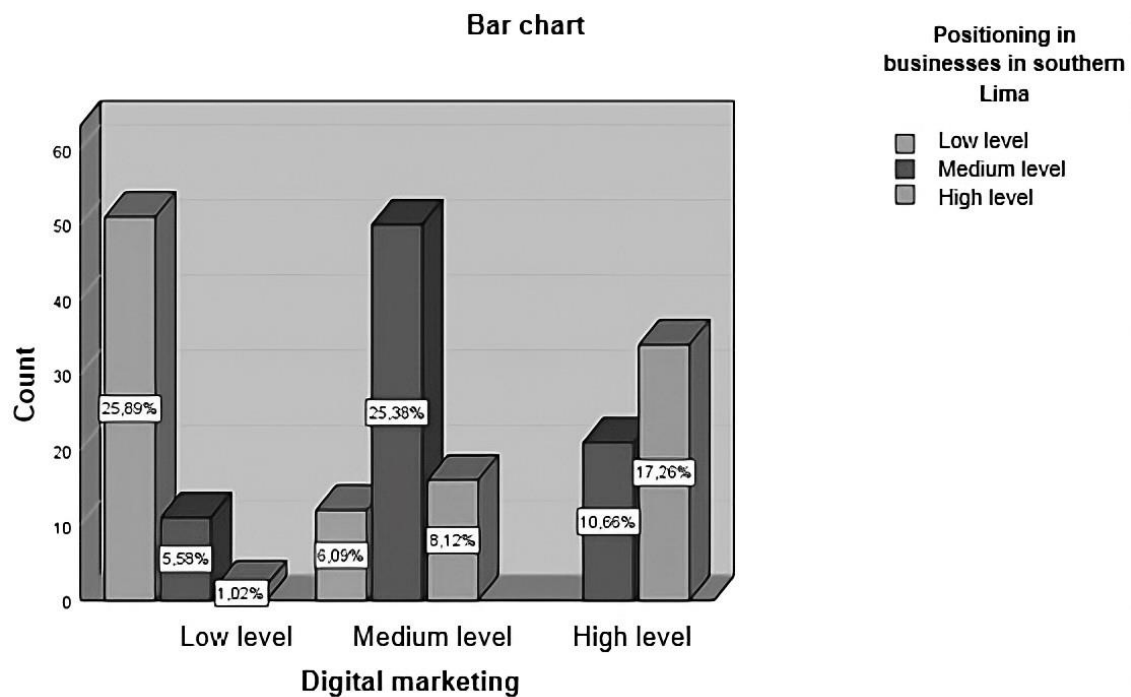


Figure 1. Frequency bar for the three levels of positioning in businesses in southern Lima.
Note: The image shows the responses for digital marketing and positioning levels.

At the low level of digital marketing, there is a high correlation with the low level of positioning (25,89%). In contrast, the medium level of digital marketing shows a significant percentage at the medium level of positioning (25,36%). At the high level of digital marketing, there is a marked inclination toward a high level of positioning, with a notable increase of 17.26%, with no records at the low level. This means that a solid focus on digital marketing not only improves brand awareness but also drives growth and competitiveness in an increasingly digital business environment.

DISCUSSIONS

The analysis addressed the social environment of digital marketing and positioning in businesses in southern Lima, focusing on the theoretical foundations and results obtained from the research.

According to previous studies, it was identified and evidenced that the more digital marketing there is, the higher the positioning. Therefore, the responses of the study confirm the presence of a significant relationship between digital marketing and positioning in businesses in southern Lima. This finding is related to previous research by Ysla (2022) and Zapata (2023), who also found a correlation between the two variables in people who have their businesses located in southern Lima.

The discussion began by answering the general hypothesis stated above, using Spearman's correlation coefficient for data analysis ($\rho = .713^{**}$), confirming a correlation between the variables of digital marketing and positioning in businesses in southern Lima. A high positive relationship was shown, indicating that the greater the digital marketing, the higher the positioning. Likewise, Ysla (2022) points out in the study carried out that Pearson's correlation was used ($r = 0.767$) verifying a considerable positive relationship in both variables. Furthermore, the significance value is less than 0.05, therefore accepting the alternative hypothesis of the research. Similarly, Zapata (2023) also used Pearson's correlation ($r = 0.903$) verifying a very strong positive relationship between both variables. In turn, the significance value is less than 0.05, then accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis.

Regarding the digital marketing variable, table 1 shows that 32.5% of the business owners surveyed report being at a low level, while 39.6% indicate that they are at a moderate level, compared to 27.9% who are at a high level. In other words, in businesses in southern Lima, there is a balanced number of people who use digital media and those who do not. In relation to the research of Ysla (2022), most respondents indicate that they are at a medium level (57,1%), followed by a low level with 19,8% and finally, a high level with 23% of the population. Based on these percentages, it can be deduced that digital marketing is low or average in businesses in southern Lima.

On the other hand, table 2 of the positioning variable was analyzed, observing that 32% of the respondents have a low level of positioning, while 41,6% are at a medium level and 26,4% mention being at a high level. In other words, in businesses in southern Lima, there are many people who confirm having a medium and low level of positioning. Similarly, Zapata (2023) mentions in the research that most businesspeople are part of the medium positioning level with 52%, followed by the upper level with 24% and finally, the lower level with 14%. Therefore, according to these results, it is said that the vast majority of businesses in southern Lima tend to have a regular and unstable positioning in the minds of their customers.

According to the first specific hypothesis, table 4 analyzed the relationship between the feedback dimension of digital marketing and positioning, showing a considerable positive relationship ($\rho, 670^{**}$). It is interpreted that the more feedback businesses receive from their customers as an opportunity for improvement, the higher their positioning. Similarly, in the study of Ysla (2022), which correlated feedback and sales management ($r=0,748$), confirming a medium positive correlation, like the more appropriate the feedback, the better the positioning.

In the second specific hypothesis, the relationship between the web flow dimension and the positioning variable was evident, where there is a positive relationship ($\rho, 694^{**}$). It is interpreted that the greater the brand recall, the stronger the positioning of the business. Likewise, the recommendation intention dimension of positioning has a high score ($\rho, 586^{**}$). Similarly, in the study of Ysla (2022), a correlation was made between web flow and sales management ($\rho, 626^{**}$), and a positive average correlation was found, suggesting that if web flow is optimal, positioning will be better. Regarding the research of Zapata (2023), it was found that the recommendation intention dimension of positioning remained at a regular level of 50%, concluding that this element is highly influenced using digital marketing.

In the third specific hypothesis, the relationship between the functionality dimension of digital marketing and positioning was perceived, showing a positive relationship ($\rho, 581^{**}$), where it is interpreted that the greater the achievement of satisfying customer needs through a digital platform, the better consumer loyalty will be, that is, greater positioning. Similarly, in the study of Ysla (2022), the correlation between functionality and sales management ($\rho, 748$) was carried out, confirming a positive average correlation, concluding that relevant functionality leads to better positioning.

Finally, regarding the fourth specific hypothesis, the relationship between the interactivity dimension of digital marketing and positioning was observed, demonstrating a positive relationship ($\rho, 576$), which means, the greater the interaction between people and virtual platforms, the higher the positioning. Similarly, in the research of Ysla (2022), the correlation between interactivity and sales management ($\rho, 586$) was established, confirming a positive average correlation, it was stated that good interactivity will lead to improved positioning.

Therefore, after this analysis, it is confirmed that businesses in southern Lima are greatly affected by the digital marketing used, impacting all positioning aspects. In other words, depending on the strategies a business may use to make customers aware of the brand on virtual platforms, it will be possible to build user loyalty through positioning tools. For this reason, it is important to understand the tools that facilitate digital marketing to have a positive impact on customers.

CONCLUSION

Finally, it is concluded that digital media is becoming increasingly important for organizations seeking to stand out and effectively attract customers. By using tools such as surveys, personalized content, and responsive interactions on social media, companies can foster a closer connection with their audience. This suggests that as businesses in South Lima adopt and optimize digital marketing strategies achieving greater recognition. This interaction not only improves brand awareness but also strengthens market positioning by creating memorable and meaningful experiences for customers. This finding underscores the importance of organizations allocating resources to digital tools to improve their reach and competitiveness, especially in an environment where consumers are increasingly connected through digital media. The research supports the idea that digital marketing is a key element for the development and consolidation of businesses in South Lima, allowing them to access a broader market and build a solid brand image. Similarly, most companies in South Lima have little or no knowledge of digital marketing representing opportunities to promote their development and strengthen their skills in this key area.

In this way, companies will have optimal comprehensive management of the functionalities offered by digital platforms for their businesses, such as Market Place on Facebook, Virtual Store on Instagram, and advertising payments to achieve greater visibility, among others, indicating that as entrepreneurs receive training and guidance, they will be able to attract more customer and user attention. By using the digital platform provided, businesses will achieve better sales management and obtain a greater number of customers, as well as achieve a solid position for their brand and in the market.

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