

Social Media Marketing and Business Performance of Freelance Photographers

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Abstract: This study is primarily focused on determining the effectiveness of social media marketing to the business performance of freelance photographers. It aims to assess the effectiveness of social media marketing in terms of identity functionality, conversation functionality, relationships functionality, and visibility functionality. A descriptive correlational design was employed to the study. The instrument used an adopted modified research questionnaire, and the data were collected based on the respondents' answers through online assessment using google forms. Three statistical tools were applied in the study namely Weighted Mean, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient or Pearson R and Regression Analysis. The results from the conducted study presented that none of the individual social media marketing functionalities (identity, conversation, relationships, or visibility) have a significant independent impact on the business performance of freelance photographers. Instead, it is the combined and integrated use of these functionalities that contributes meaningfully to improving business performance. Therefore, freelance photographers should adopt a holistic social media marketing strategy that balances all these aspects to achieve better business outcomes. Freelance photographers should also practice applying different indicators together, creating a greater chance on improving business performance.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing¹, Identity Functionality², Conversation Functionality³, Relationships Functionality⁴, Visibility Functionality⁵, Business Performance⁶.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The freelance photography industry has experienced significant transformation due to the widespread and increase in number of social media platforms. Photographers now rely heavily on these platforms to market their services and showcase their portfolios. However, this shift has introduced challenges such as increased competition and the necessity for continuous engagement with audiences (Dale, 2023). The pressure to maintain an active online presence can create conflict from the creative process and lead to burnout among photographers. As a result, understanding how to effectively utilize social media marketing to enhance business performance is critical for freelancers navigating this evolving landscape.

Various studies provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of social media marketing across different countries. For instance, research in the United States indicates that while social media can enhance visibility for photographers, many report diminishing returns due to algorithm changes and oversaturation of content (Hiljemark, 2021). In contrast, Australian photographers have found

success by diversifying their marketing strategies beyond social media, suggesting that reliance on a single platform may not yield optimal results (Nader, 2024). These findings highlight the need for a broader understanding of social media's impact on business performance in varying cultural and economic contexts.

The relevance of conducting this research lies in its potential to bridge existing gaps between theory and application regarding social media marketing among freelance photographers. By exploring the effectiveness of various strategies employed by photographers in different contexts, this study aims to provide actionable insights that can enhance business performance. Ultimately, this research seeks to contribute to the broader understanding on digital marketing in creative industries while empowering freelance photographers to navigate social media effectively.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used descriptive correlational for the research design. Specifically, this design allowed the researchers to observe and measure how the effectiveness of social media

marketing relates to the business performance of freelance photographers. According to Lang et al. (2023), descriptive correlational research design is particularly useful in quantitative research when the goal is to explore and describe the relationships between two or more variables without manipulating them. The study utilized quantitative research for the data gathering. Quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data, utilizing statistical methods to describe and draw conclusions about a population based on the data gathered from the respondents (Flinton & Malamateniou, 2020). The study will provide statistical data and illustrations to present the results of the study.

The researcher utilized an adapted modified questionnaire from Kumar, V., & Gupta, A. (2019), and Hassan, A., & Shamsudin, M. N. (2013). The adapted questionnaire was revised to better suit the specific population or research focus and in accordance to the indicators that is stated in the conceptual framework of the study. The survey assessed how social media marketing affects business performance of freelance photographers.

III. RESULTS

The overall results showed that the lowest mean among the four functionalities is Relationship Functionality at 3.43, which is rated as “Always Observed”. It indicates that while relationship-building is strong, it is slightly less effective compared to other social media marketing dimensions which suggests that brands might benefit from focusing more on deepening emotional connections and loyalty with their audience. The highest mean is Identity Functionality at 3.74, which is rated as “Always Observed”, reinforcing that clear and consistent brand identity presentation remains the strongest aspect of social media marketing effectiveness.

The Pearson's r value is 0.367, suggesting that as social media marketing efforts increase, business performance tends to improve as well. The p-value is 0.002, which is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05. This means the correlation is statistically significant, providing evidence that there is a meaningful association between social media marketing and business performance among the respondents. However, the individual regression coefficients for each of the four components of social media marketing reveals that the four predictors, Identity Functionality ($p = 0.346$), Conversation Functionality ($p = 0.258$), Relationship Functionality ($p = 0.811$), and Visibility Functionality ($p = 0.847$), were statistically not significant, as all p-values exceeded 0.05. The lack of statistical significance suggests that these features may offer limited or inconsistent contributions to business performance.

IV. DISCUSSION

There is a moderate and statistically significant positive relationship between social media marketing and the business performance of freelance photographers. This means that greater engagement in social media marketing is linked to improved business outcomes. Therefore, active and effective

use of social media marketing can play an important role in enhancing the success of freelance photography businesses.

None of the individual social media marketing functionalities (identity, conversation, relationships, or visibility) have a significant independent impact on the business performance of freelance photographers. This suggests that no single element alone drives success. Instead, it is the combined and integrated use of these functionalities that contributes meaningfully to improving business performance. Therefore, freelance photographers should adopt a holistic social media marketing strategy that balances all these aspects to achieve better business outcomes.

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TABLES

Table 1 Overall Results for Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing

Indicators	Mean	Description
Identity Functionality	3.74	Always Observed
Conversation Functionality	3.68	Always Observed
Relationship Functionality	3.43	Always Observed
Visibility Functionality	3.73	Always Observed
Grand mean	3.65	Always Observed

Table 2 Significant Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Business Performance

Variables	r value	p value	$\alpha=0.05$	Decision	Remarks
Social Media Marketing and Business Performance	0.367	< 0.002	<	Reject	Significant

Table 3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis on the Social Media Marketing that Greatly Influences the Business Performance of Freelance Photographers

Predictor	Standardized	Remarks
Intercept	--	
Identity Functionality	0.201	Not Significant
Conversation Functionality	0.226	Not Significant
Relationship Functionality	0.037	Not Significant
Visibility Functionality	-0.044	Not Significant