

**DIGITAL MARKETING AND THE GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-
SCALE ENTERPRISES IN ESIT EKET LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, AKWA
IBOM STATE**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of digital marketing on the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Esit Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study examined the effects of social media marketing, content marketing, and search engine marketing on the growth of SMEs. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population comprised 85 workers from four selected small and medium-scale enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area. A sample of 70 respondents was selected using a sample size determination table. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which was validated by experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach's Alpha reliability technique through SPSS, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.62. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that social media marketing, content marketing, and search engine marketing each had a positive but statistically insignificant effect on the growth of SMEs in the study area. The study concluded that although digital marketing practices have the potential to enhance business growth, their current level of adoption and utilization among SMEs in Esit Eket Local Government Area has not significantly influenced business growth. One of the recommendations made was that SME owners and managers improve their digital marketing skills through regular training, invest in appropriate digital technologies, and adopt more strategic digital marketing practices to maximize business growth.

KEYWORDS: Digital Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises, Business Growth.

INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises are acknowledged as crucial components of the global economy, contributing significantly to creation of diversified source of national income, innovation, and overall economic development which leads to resilience of economies (Ayyagari et al., 2018). According to USAID 90% of the businesses worldwide are small and medium-sized businesses which accounts for 60% to 70% of the employment and a 50% of the GDP globally, their contributions have been seen in many countries as the stepping stone for industrialization. In countries like the USA small and medium-sized businesses contributes to

65% of GDP, In Japan and China small and medium-sized businesses contributes up to 60% of their GDP, this is according to Steering Group (2011). The influence of small and medium-sized businesses in the African economy cannot go unnoticed. From agriculture and manufacturing to services and technology, these enterprises contribute significantly to GDP, improved social sector because of providing employment, and promoting innovation. In Ghana for example the small and medium-sized enterprises accounts for 70% of Employments as well as over 50% of the country's GDP (Ansah, 2022).

In recent times, firms of different classification in virtually all industrial sectors are constantly enriching their domain with digital tools (Boksa et al., 2020). Digitalization is perceived to be a major issue in all aspects of the society, with a key note on the effects it poses on political, economic and social elements (Topi et al.2020). Li et al. (2018) asserts that the introduction of the Internet since the 1960s has propelled many firms to network via multiple computers, reaching out to each for sole purposes of expansion and growth. In this regard, almost all management domains and employees in both large and medium firms, now access the computers via the Internet to constantly create awareness.

A brand without an effective digital marketing strategy can be likened to a car without tires. Its efficiency and essence is bound to be limited. The turn of the century experienced lots of business brands ditch with analog medium of conducting business and embrace diverse digital tools, to solidify their presence in the business environment and project their brands with a view to increasing their customer base, making a significant impact on small and medium-sized companies and large companies (Kim et al., 2013). The application of digital tools on business activities have been found to improve business competitiveness and opportunity base for SMEs to compete on closer terms with larger organisations (Herzallah et al. 2021). The purpose for SMEs is not only to sell goods and services, but also to build relationships with customers.

As noted by Antunes et al. (2021), these challenges are particularly pronounced in rural areas and small towns where small businesses are concentrated. This study seeks to address this research gap by examining the current state of digital marketing adoption among small-scale businesses in Esit Eket Local Government Area and identifying the barriers and opportunities for its effective implementation. According to Uyi-Aigbogie (2019), small businesses in Nigeria face several barriers to the adoption of digital marketing strategies, including lack of infrastructure, inadequate training and education, and low awareness of the benefits of digital marketing. This study will investigate these barriers (challenges) in the context of Esit Eket Local Government Area and identify potential solutions to overcome them. According to Opara and Ekeneme (2021), digital marketing can enhance customer engagement, increase brand awareness, and improve sales performance for small businesses in Nigeria. This study will explore the extent to which small businesses in Esit Eket L.G.A. are experiencing these benefits and identify the key factors that contribute to their success in digital marketing implementation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the contemporary business landscape, SMEs constitute the backbone of economies worldwide, contributing significantly to job creation, innovation, and economic growth (Kuckertz, 2013). So, SMEs are an essential contributor to the economic growth and development of many countries worldwide, including Esit Eket Local Government Area. However, the journey to sustained success for SMEs is fraught with challenges, including limited resources and intense competition. To overcome these hurdles and achieve enduring prosperity, SMEs are increasingly turning to online marketing as a powerful lever for enhancing

their performance (Binbasioglu & Turk, 2020). Despite the numerous benefits, SMEs in Nigeria face several challenges in implementing online marketing strategies and using it to enhance their performance. Despite the numerous benefits, SMEs in Nigeria face several challenges in implementing online marketing strategies and using it to enhance their performance. This aligns with the broader understanding that digital competition, target audience identification, and budget constraints present significant hurdles to entrepreneurial promotional efforts (Akpan & Anthony, 2024).

A major challenge encountered by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria and by extension Esit Eket L.G.A is the absence of digital literacy and competencies. Numerous small business proprietors and workers lack proficiency in online marketing strategies and resources, impeding their capacity to efficiently exploit internet platforms. In addition, the digital infrastructure in Nigeria, although making progress, nevertheless encounters challenges such as internet connectivity and speed, especially in rural regions. Technological barriers, such as issues with internet connectivity and outdated technology, also hinder the effective implementation of online marketing. Slow internet speeds and unreliable connections can disrupt online activities, making it difficult for SMEs to maintain a consistent and professional online presence. Additionally, the use of outdated technology can limit the functionality and effectiveness of digital marketing tools. The presence of these infrastructural limitations can hinder the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to effectively take advantage of online marketing opportunities. Another obstacle lies in the dynamic and ever-changing landscape of online marketing. The digital environment is in a perpetual state of flux, as novel trends, algorithms, and technologies arise on a regular basis. SMEs, lacking dedicated marketing teams or sufficient resources, may find it challenging to keep pace with these developments and engage in ongoing learning. Cyber security concerns are also a significant challenge.

The increased reliance on digital platforms and online transactions exposes SMEs to cyber security risks, such as data breaches and cyber-attacks. Many SMEs lack the resources and expertise to implement robust cyber security measures, making them vulnerable to these threats. Ensuring the security of customer data and maintaining the trust of their customers is a critical concern for SMEs. Based on the foregoing, this study investigated the effect of digital marketing on the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Esit Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study was to investigate the effect of digital marketing on the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Esit Eket Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. The specific objectives were:

1. To determine the effect of social media marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area .
2. To investigate the effect of content marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area.
3. To ascertain the effect of search engine marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What is the effect of social media marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area ?
2. What is the effect of content marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area ?
3. What is the effect of search engine marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area ?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated in a null form to guide the study .

H₀₁: Social media marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area .

H₀₂: Content marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area.

H₀₃: Search engine marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area .

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Social Media Marketing

Utilizing social media websites and platforms to advertise a good or service is known as social media marketing (Kaur, 2016). Social media marketing is growing in popularity among both practitioners and researchers, despite the fact that e-marketing and digital marketing are still the most used terminology in academia. The majority of social media networks include data analytics tools, allowing businesses to monitor the development, effectiveness, and engagement of marketing efforts (Dwivedi et al. 2015). Companies, including SMEs, use social media marketing to communicate with a variety of stakeholders, including existing and potential clients, workers, bloggers, journalists, and the general public (Brenner, 2018). Within the Nigerian urban context, integrating these digital platforms with traditional media channels is increasingly recognized as a hybrid pathway to optimize brand visibility and local consumer engagement (Akpan & Lion, 2026).

Social media marketing is extensively utilized by enterprises nowadays since it is a representation of a cost-effective strategy for marketing (Leminen et al., 2014). Compared to other marketing instruments, Social Media Marketing tools can be predominantly utilized for free and very easily (Levinson, & Gibson, 2010). The core goals of using Social Media Marketing are to amplify word-of-mouth advertising, research, and analysis, overall advertising, generating ideas and development of new products, coinnovation, customer service, public relations, staff communication systems, and reputation management (Heinze et al., 2020).

Content Marketing

Content marketing is a type of marketing that involves the creation and sharing of online material Such as videos, blogs, and social media posts that do not explicitly promote a brand but is intended to stimulate interest in its products or services (Chaffey et al. 2019). Content marketing also regarded as a type of online marketing that focuses on producing, disseminating, and publishing material for a specific audience. Businesses frequently utilize it to draw interest, create leads, grow their clientele, enhance online sales, build brand awareness or reputation, and engage an online user community (Chaffey, 2019). Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) noted that content form of online marketing applies a format that includes engaging various customers by creating

and sharing of content. These specific contents are usually disseminated on blogs, videos, E-Books and info graphics. Increase of traffic on the company's website to aid brand building is basically responsible for adopting this digital marketing strategy.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

Search engine is a web software program or web based script available over the Internet that searches documents and files for keywords and returns the list of results encompassing those keywords (Gurneet 2017). Google, Yahoo, Bing, AOL, Baidu are among the topmost search engines of the world and account for most of the Internet traffic. Google accounts for over 69.80% of all global desktop search traffic, followed by Bing at 13.31%, Baidu at 12.53% and Yahoo at 2.11% (Net Market Share, 2017).

Search engine marketing (SEM) has become an important strategic tool for online marketing. Most firms utilize an informal SEM strategy, where Website optimization is perceived most effective in attracting traffic (Barry & Charleton, 2009). SEM has emerged as one of the main method companies use to successfully increase the visibility of their Website. According to Jalang'o (2015) Search Engine Marketing refers to the process where companies pay to have their adverts on search engines and this happens when companies buy certain keywords that relate to their business and their adverts show up when users search the keywords they have paid for.

Sales growth

This is defined as the positive change in sales per year. Juniar (2014), also states that sales growth (growth of sales) is an increase in the number of sales from year to year or from time to time. Sales growth is an indicator of the demand and competitiveness of companies in an industry. If sales growth is high, it will reflect increased income so that dividend payments tend to increase. Companies that have increased profits have a larger amount of retained earnings. An increase in company profits increases the amount of own capital that comes from retained earnings. Sales are relatively stable and always increase in a company, making it easier for the company to obtain external funds or debt flows to improve its operations. In achieving sustainable sales growth, trust-based marketing mechanisms—such as customer referral programs—play a vital role by driving organic acquisition, lowering marketing costs, and generating long-term economic value for expanding enterprises (Gold & Akpan, 2026).

Companies with relatively stable sales levels can be safer to obtain more loans and bear higher fixed costs compared to companies with unstable sales (Rakasiwi, 2017). The higher the sales of a company, the more profit earned also increases. Companies that have relatively stable sales have relatively stable cash flows, so they can use more debt than companies with unstable sales. Sales growth is the total change in sales change. This ratio also describes the percentage growth of company posts from year to year. It can be calculated as: $\text{Sales Growth} = \frac{\text{this year's sales} - \text{last year's sales}}{\text{Last year's sales}}$.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Jeza and Lekhanya (2022), investigated the influence of digital technologies on South African business sectors. The sample includes SMEs (SMEs) in the KwaZulu-Natal province. Being qualitative by design, the study used semi-structured interviews for data collection, with eight interviews in the Durban area. SME managers were purposefully selected as participants based on their management positions in the business/company and that they oversee the

business operation and understand the influence of digital transformation in the business. The interviews were then transcribed after data collection to determine any recurring themes. In the effectiveness of digital transformation, the study identified themes such as “gaining exposure” and “gaining effective sales figures” as a result of implementing digital transformation, which was indicated by six of eight participants. The findings showed that digital transformation significantly affects building customer relationships and ensuring easy accessibility of the business.

Hachimi et al. (2021), researched on the relationship between digital marketing and the business performance of companies in the northern region of Morocco. They conducted a quantitative survey carried out among 120 companies in the northern region of Morocco using the PLS path modeling, a method particularly suited for academic development and predictive applications. According to our empirical study, we found that digital marketing has a positive impact on the performance of companies in the northern region of Morocco. This study is carried out outside the present study area and does not conceptualized digital marketing dimensions as in the present study.

Kalei (2020), investigated digital marketing strategies and the marketing performance of Top 100 SMEs in Kenya. The study employed a regression design. The researcher developed a set of questionnaire for data collection from Top 100 SMEs and 100 SMEs constituted the target population for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to thirty (30) Top 100 SMEs in the Commercial and Trade, Service, Construction and Technology sectors. The study was limited to the SMEs that were in the Top 100 list in 2016. The researcher issued questionnaires to the sampled SMEs and data was collected using the drop and pick method. Quantitative data was collected and analyzed by use of regression analysis to establish the significance of correlation coefficient on the association between the variables. The study found that digital marketing strategies had a significant influence on the marketing performance of SMEs. The study considers some dimensions as used in this present study but this study has more proxies.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised of eighty five workers of four small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Esit Esit Local Government Area. The sample size of the study was seventy workers determined sampling size determination table. Three research questions were developed for the study as well as three hypotheses formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection and was validated by my supervisor. The reliability of the research instrument was determined using reliability coefficient technique via SPSS and a reliability coefficient of 0.62 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Question One:

What is the effect of social media marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area ?

Table 1:

Analysis of the effect of social media marketing on the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area responses .

S/N	Item Statements	SA (F) (%)	A (F) (%)	N (F) (%)	SD (F) (%)	D (F) (%)	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Social media marketing has helped my SME to increase brand awareness.		4 5.7	21 3.0	33 47.1	12 17.1	2.24	.806	Disagreed
2.	Social media marketing has helped my SME to increase brand awareness.		2 2.9	28 40.0	30 42.9	10 14.3	2.31	.753	Disagreed
3.	Social media marketing has helped my SME to reach a wider audience.		12 17.1	25 35.7	24 34.3	9 12.9	2.57	.926	Agreed
4.	Social media marketing has helped my SME to build a community of loyal customers.		16 22.9	14 20.0	27 38.6	13 18.6	2.47	1.046	Agreed
5.	Social media marketing has helped my SME to improve customer engagement and communication.		11 15.7	25 35.7	22 31.4	12 17.1	2.50	.959	Agreed

Source: Researcher's Computation (2025).

Weighted Average = $2.24+2.31+2.57+2.47 + 2.50/5 = 2.42$

Data presented in Table 1 above showed the mean score of the data from the respondents' opinion about the effect of digital marketing on the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area . Item 5 showed the highest mean score of 2.50 , showing the

highest level of agreement while items 3 and 4 respectively agreed that social media marketing affected the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area with the following mean scores 2.57 and 2.47. Also, items 1 and 2 respectively, with the mean scores of 2.24 & 2.31 and disagreed, showing the level of respondents disagreement. In terms of standard deviations, table 4.2 above showed that the respondents were not very far from their respective opinions and perceptions about the effect of social media marketing as observed in the respective standard deviation values of .806, .753, .926, 1.046, and .959 respectively. On the whole, the respondents' opinion on the effect of social media marketing showed the weighted average of 2.42, depicting a low effect.

Research Question Two:

What is the effect of content marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area?

Table 2:

Analysis of the effect of content marketing on the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area responses.

		SA (F) (%)	A (F) (%)	N (F) (%)	SD (F) (%)	D (F) (%)	Mean	SD	Decision
6.	Our business has experienced significant revenue growth because of our content marketing efforts.		11 15.7	29 41.4	25 35.7	5 7.1	2.66	.832	Disagreed
7.	High-quality, relevant content that we produce regularly contributes to increased customer engagement and sales.		9 12.9	27 38.6	32 45.7	2 2.9	2.61	.748	Disagreed
8.	Diversifying our content formats (e.g., blog posts, videos, infographics) has positively impacted our business growth.		12 17.1	21 30.0	35 50.0	2 2.9	2.61	.804	Disagreed
9.	Our long-term commitment to content marketing has led to more sustained revenue growth		13 18.6	20 28.6	35 50.0	2 2.9	2.63	.820	Disagreed

	compared to sporadic efforts.								
10.	Investing in content marketing has enhanced our brand authority and driven higher conversion rates.		13 18.6	28 40.0		29 41.4	2.77	.745	Agreed

Source: Researcher's Computation (2025).

Weighted Average = $2.66+2.61+2.61+2.63 + 2.77/5 = 2.67$

Data presented in Table 2 above showed the mean score of the data from the respondents' opinion about the effect of digital marketing on the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area . Item 10 showed the highest mean score of 2.77 , showing the highest level of agreement while items 6,7,8 and 9 respectively showed the respective level of disagreement by the respondents that social media marketing never affected the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area with the following mean scores 2.66 , 2.61 , 2.61 and 2.63 . In terms of standard deviations , table 4.3 above showed that the respondents were not very far from their respective opinions and perceptions about the effect of content marketing as observed in the respective standard deviation values of .832 , .748 , .804 , .820 , and .745 respectively . On the whole , the respondents' opinion on the effect of content marketing showed the weighted average of 2.67 , depicting a low effect.

Research Question Three: What is the effect of search engine marketing on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area ?

Table 3:

Analysis of the effect of search engine marketing on the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area responses .

Source: Researcher's Computation (2025).

$$\text{Weighted Average} = 2.84 + 2.79 + 2.87 + 2.63 + 2.86 / 5 = 3.79$$

Data presented in Table 3 above showed the mean score of the data from the respondents'

S/N	Item Statements	SA (F) (%)	A (F) (%)	N (F) (%)	SD (F) (%)	D (F) (%)	Mean	St.Dev.	Decision
11.	Our annual marketing budget allocates a significant portion to SEO activities.		20 28.6	21 30.0	27 38.6	2 2.9	2.84	.879	Disagreed
12.	SEO has had a significant impact on our overall revenue growth		18 25.7	26 37.1	19 27.1	7 10.0	2.79	.946	Disagreed
13.	A substantial percentage of our total revenue growth can be attributed to our SEO efforts.		12 17.1	42 60.0	11 15.7	5 7.1	2.87	.779	Disagreed
14.	We have observed a significant increase in revenue since implementing SEO strategies.		11 15.7	18 25.7	21 30.0	14 20.0	2.63	1.22	Disagreed
15.	We effectively track the revenue generated from our SEO activities through conversion tracking and customer feedback.	7 10.0	12 17.1	25 35.7	16 22.9	10 14.3	2.86	1.17	Disagreed

opinion about the effect of search engine marketing on the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area . Item 13 showed the highest mean score of 2.87 , showing the highest level of disagreement in the mean score while items 11 ,12 , 14 ,

and 15 respectively showed the respective level of disagreement by the respondents that social search engine marketing never affected the growth of small and medium enterprises in Esit Eket Local Government Area with the following mean scores 2.84 , 2.79 , 2.87 ,2.63 and 2.86 . In terms of standard deviations

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: H₀₁: Social media marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area .

Table 4 **Coefficients**

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
			Beta				
Model						Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.668	.895		1.863	.067		
Social media marketing	.106	.104	.127	1.022	.310	.965	1.036

a. Dependent Variable: SMES GROWTH

Source : Researcher's Computation(2025)

The result in Table 4 showed that social media marketing (SMM) has positive insignificant effect(Beta = .127 or 12.7%, p=0.310 ,p> 0.05 , t= 1.022) .Thus , the null hypothesis one which states that social media marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area was not rejected . The finding of this study was inconsistent with the findings of Negedu(2020) whose study revealed that social media marketing had significant positive effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises . Similarly, the findings of Bayer etal.(2020), who investigated the effect of social media marketing on the growth of SMES never supported this finding .

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: H₀₂: Content marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area.

Table 5:
Coefficients

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
Model						Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.668	.895					
Content marketing	.013	.123	.013	0.108	.914	.968	1.039

a. Dependent Variable: SMES GROWTH

Source : Researcher's Computation(2025)

The result in Table 5 showed that content marketing (CM) has positive insignificant effect (Beta = .013 or 1.3%, $p=0.914$, $p>0.05$, $t=0.108$). Thus, the null hypothesis two which states that content marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area was not rejected. The finding of this study was inconsistent with the findings of Atirah et al. (2020) whose study revealed that content marketing had significant positive effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises. Similarly, the findings of Bayer et al. (2020), who investigated the effect of social content marketing on the growth of SMES never supported this finding.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: Search engine marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area.

Table 6:
Coefficients

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
Model	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.668	0.895					
Search engine marketing	0.008	0.132	0.008	0.062	0.951	.960	1.041

a. Dependent Variable: SMES GROWTH

Source : Researcher's Computation(2025)

The result in Table 6 showed that search engine marketing (SEM) has positive insignificant effect (Beta = .008 or 0.8%, $p=0.951$, $p>0.05$, $t=0.062$). Thus, the null hypothesis three which

states that search engine marketing has no significant effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMES) in Esit Eket Local Government Area was not rejected. The finding of this study was inconsistent with the findings of Tajvidi and Karami(2021) whose study revealed that search engine marketing had significant positive effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises. Similarly, the findings of Haihimi et al.(2021), who investigated the effect of search engine marketing on the growth of SMES never supported this finding.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study used social media marketing, content marketing, and search engine marketing respectively as independent variables measured via the use of questionnaires and the dependent variable which is growth of small and medium scale enterprises was measured using questionnaires in line with the previous studies. The data analysis was carried out by employing descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis techniques via SPSS. Weighted average and percentages were adopted to analyze the questionnaire responses. The result of this study empirically showed social media marketing revealed insignificant positive effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in Esit- Eket Local Government Area. Content marketing showed insignificant positive effect on the on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in Esit- Eket Local Government Area, search engine marketing revealed insignificant positive effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in Esit- Eket Local Government Area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The owners of the studied small and medium scale enterprises should not implement social media marketing as it has not affected their growth significantly.
2. The owners of the studied small and medium scale enterprises should not implement content marketing since it revealed insignificant impact on their growth.
3. The managers of the studied small and medium scale enterprises should not implement search engine marketing since it revealed insignificant impact on their growth.

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