

# BRAND IDENTITY, CUSTOMER RETENTION, AND THE DIGITAL MARKETING CAPABILITIES THE MARKET COMPETITION INTENSITY AS A MODERATOR

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## Abstract

This study examines the intricate relationships among digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, E-CRM, brand personality, and customer retention, focusing on how market competition intensity influences these relationships among entrepreneurial ventures, primarily in the Saudi market. The focal objective is to understand how these factors collectively influence brand identity while highlighting the role of market competition structure as a moderating factor. Data were collected from 266 managers across various departments of Saudi entrepreneurial ventures, and the analysis was conducted using structural equation modeling. This approach allowed for the investigation of both direct and indirect relationships, as well as the moderating effects of competition structure. The findings indicate that the relationships among digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, E-CRM, and brand identity vary, with market competition structure serving as a significant moderator. This suggests that digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, and E-CRM should be tailored to effectiveness based on the level of competition of the entrepreneurial ventures. In practice, the research emphasizes the importance of adjusting marketing strategies to competitive conditions and identifies areas of marketing that require modification.

**Keywords:** Brand Identity, Customer Retention, Digital Marketing Capabilities, Digital Marketing Orientation, E-CRM, Entrepreneurial Ventures, KSA.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the biggest challenges that entrepreneurial ventures face in terms of brand identity and customer retention arises from their unique characteristics and limitations. Most successful Entrepreneurial Ventures operate with limited financial and human resources while navigating immense uncertainty with nearly every decision. They also compete in highly saturated digital environments (Al-Nsour, 2025). A significant struggle for entrepreneurial ventures is the need to increase brand exposure, which complicates efforts to attract customers, establish market share, and foster brand loyalty (Al-Ayyaf & Al-Nsour, 2024). The novelty of the entrepreneurial ventures necessitates that these businesses build consumer trust, which directly influences customer retention. To tackle these challenges, entrepreneurial ventures must adopt various strategies, such as

utilizing digital marketing tools, focusing on customer experience and engagement, and cultivating strong consumer relationships through personalized communication and services (Al-Nsour, 2020). Some studies indicate that the market competition structure moderates the relationships among digital marketing orientation, digital marketing strategy, brand identity, and customer retention. This highlights the competitiveness and rivalry within the market or industry in which the entrepreneurial ventures operate. According to Cao et al. (2024) and Reimann et al. (2022), who reference Xie & Li (2017) and Schmidt (2013), the market competition structure affects how relationships among digital marketing constructs manifest.

In highly competitive markets, entrepreneurial ventures must sharpen their focus and enhance their digital marketing efforts and capabilities to stand out and build awareness. Thus, effective e-CRM becomes crucial for generating customer retention and differentiating the entrepreneurial ventures. In less competitive markets, the influence of digital marketing orientation and capabilities on brand identity and customer retention is expected to be weaker, and entrepreneurial ventures will require additional support to build awareness and retain customers. Nevertheless, even with a moderating variable, effective e-CRM can still significantly improve customer retention (Aziz et al., 2018; Talari & Khoshroo, 2022; Sanusi et al., 2023). Including market competition intensity as a moderating variable helps explain how the relationships among digital marketing constructs vary across different competitive landscapes and provides new insights into entrepreneurial ventures. Digital marketing strategy has a significant positive impact on brand identity, enhancing a firm's ability to employ digital marketing platforms for marketing effectively (Pscheidt-Gieseler et al., 2018). Digital marketing capabilities encompass skills related to using digital marketing strategies and tools, such as search engine optimization, social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, video marketing, and mobile marketing (Hollenbeck & Patrick, 2023). A solid understanding of these motives is vital for any business, as it enables them to expand their reach in the digital space, locate their target audience, and attract more customers (Malkawi et al., 2025).

Digital marketing orientation serves as a mediator between digital marketing capabilities and brand identity (Al-Nsour, 2023). Specifically, digital marketing orientation shapes a firm's strategic position in digital marketing. When a firm has a strong digital marketing orientation, it is more likely to utilize various digital tools, technologies, and platforms effectively to engage its target audience (Al-Nsour, 2023). This focus on digital marketing enhances the firm's digital marketing capabilities, ultimately strengthening its brand identity (Al-Nsour, 2024). Furthermore, digital marketing orientation reflects a firm's strategic commitment to adopting digital tools, data-driven insights, and online customer engagement to enhance competitiveness and market responsiveness. It emphasizes continuous innovation, real-time analytics, and integrated digital communication to strengthen value creation and customer relationships (Alshammary, 2023; Al-Hassan, 2024). Therefore, digital marketing orientation acts as a driver that facilitates the development and application of digital marketing capabilities, which in turn enhance brand identity. E-CRM also plays a crucial role in brand identity by fostering unique relationships

with customers and other stakeholders through various digital channels, ensuring customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the market competition structure moderates the impacts of digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, and e-CRM on brand identity by influencing the strategic focus and effectiveness of marketing activities (Naqrash et al., 2025). In highly competitive markets, where firms face substantial pressure to differentiate themselves and capture market share, a digital marketing strategy becomes increasingly vital. Companies with strong digital marketing can adopt more strategic and innovative digital marketing approaches to outperform rivals (Naqrash et al., 2025). Additionally, the market competition structure shapes firms' digital marketing orientation. In competitive environments, businesses are motivated to implement tailored digital marketing strategies. Consequently, market competition intensity also moderates the impact of e-CRM on brand identity. In markets with minimal product differentiation and fluctuating prices, companies must prioritize e-CRM strategies to retain customers. As a result, firms become more focused on e-CRM to differentiate themselves from key competitors. Thus, high market competition intensity can negatively affect the effectiveness of digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, and E-CRM in enhancing brand identity.

The entrepreneurial ventures ecosystem in Saudi Arabia has seen significant expansion, attracting both local and global entrepreneurs. According to Monshaat, the country's venture investment scene experienced unprecedented growth in 2023, showcasing the rising potential and success of its leading Entrepreneurial Ventures. Although it is difficult to determine the exact number of entrepreneurial ventures in Saudi Arabia, it is noteworthy that 200 emerging companies demonstrated the highest average of venture investment from 2014 to 2023. In recent years, the venture investment landscape in Saudi Arabia has undergone a remarkable transformation, with SMEs entering a bull market. Data indicate that most entrepreneurial ventures were founded by teams of two, and these ventures accounted for the majority of venture capital investment (Alsahli et al., 2025). Currently, all 200 entrepreneurial ventures were founded exclusively by men, highlighting the dominance of this demographic. However, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of female-only and mixed-gender-founded entrepreneurial ventures. This change is largely attributed to the launch of Vision 2030 in 2023, which aims to diversify the economy and reduce reliance on oil. Venture capital funding in Saudi Arabia surpassed the \$1 billion mark, and reaching 62% of total funding and private equity constituting the remaining 38%. Remarkably, Saudi Arabia's total funding exceeded the United Arab Emirates for example. The country remains committed to the continued development of a vibrant technology ecosystem.

An article published on February 21, 2023, noted that "despite the challenges of low budgets, intense competition, and brand marketing dynamics, entrepreneurial ventures often utilize a common brand image until their brand gains traction. Entrepreneurial ventures need to creatively find ways to market their brand, build trust among consumers through genuine testimonials, and identify avenues for providing value corrections." Additionally, Ramizares et al. (2024) mentioned on the same day that "strategic branding from all angles indicates how budgets should be allocated – determining what requires

more funding and what can be scaled back. Furthermore, customer retention regularly necessitates a case-by-case approach. All these aspects must be continuously addressed and monitored to ensure long-term success." Moreover, the digital marketing capabilities of a firm significantly influence its overall digital marketing orientation. Researchers such as Liang et al. (2025), Harrigan et al. (2024), Mehrabi et al. (2024), and Alharthey (2023) suggest that firms with stronger digital marketing capabilities are more likely to adopt a strategy-oriented approach. These capabilities enable firms to effectively use digital tactics and tools and integrate various digital channels and technologies, thereby influencing the firm's overall digital marketing orientation.

Digital marketing orientation plays a crucial mediating role in the relationship between digital marketing capabilities, e-CRM, brand identity, and customer retention. digital marketing orientation strengthens digital marketing capabilities by fostering data-driven responsiveness (Alshurideh, 2022). It also enhances e-CRM through personalized digital interactions (Hassan, 2023). Moreover, it supports e-brand identity development and improves e-customer retention by creating consistent, value-driven digital experiences (Rahman & Salem, 2024). Several studies, including those by Yagüe and Romero (2016), Chinakidzwa and Phiri (2020), and Nadino Rinaldi et al. (2024), highlight the importance of digital marketing orientation in enhancing brand identity and customer retention. A strong digital marketing orientation enables a firm to effectively leverage its digital capabilities and maintain strong relationships with customers, ultimately, its brand identity. In conclusion, digital marketing capabilities and e-CRM are key factors that impact digital marketing orientation within firms. Additionally, digital marketing orientation significantly mediates the impact of these capabilities and management practices on brand identity and customer retention. All these variables are interconnected and play a vital role in determining a firm's success in the electronic market. However, contemporary literature reveals a notable research gap regarding the combined effects of digital marketing capabilities, e-CRM, and digital marketing orientation on brand identity and customer retention for new start-up firms. While some scholars have examined each variable independently, there has been limited research on their interactions and their collective influence on brand outcomes (Al-Nsour, 2024).

Furthermore, this study aims to bridge a theoretical gap by examining the interplay—whether significant or minor—of various capabilities in the entrepreneurial ventures. Specifically, it will investigate the influence of digital marketing capabilities, e-CRM, digital marketing orientation, and the combined impact of these factors on brand identity and customer retention. For the first time, the research will explore the conditioning role of digital marketing orientation and the moderating role of market competition intensity in shaping these interrelationships. Existing research has primarily focused on the impact of digital marketing capabilities on brand identity, as seen in studies by Harrigan et al. (2024), Shoemaker (2007), and Al-Nsour (2024). Many studies have also analyzed the effect of e-CRM on customer retention. In contrast, the current study takes a more integrated approach by providing evidence-based policy insights, drawing from the research of Al-Nsour (2023), Pscheidt-Gieseler et al. (2018), and Ferreira & Coelho (2017). Additionally, this research expands on the existing literature by introducing market

competition structure as a moderating variable in the relationships between digital marketing capabilities, e-CRM, digital marketing orientation, and performance. While previous studies have acknowledged the critical role of market competition structure, there is limited evidence regarding its moderating effect within the entrepreneurial venture's context (Al-Nsour, 2023; Al-Nsour, 2017). Consequently, this research contributes to the understanding of how digital marketing strategies can be leveraged by entrepreneurial ventures operating in competitive environments.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND DEVELOPING HYPOTHESES

### 2.1 Brand Identity and Customer Retention:

Brand identity plays a pivotal role in shaping customer retention by providing consumers with a clear, consistent, and meaningful understanding of what a brand represents. A strong brand identity communicates distinct values, personality, and promises, which enhances emotional attachment and long-term engagement (Keller, 2020). When customers perceive a brand's identity as authentic and aligned with their expectations, they are more likely to remain loyal and reduce switching behavior. Recent studies emphasize that brand identity strengthens trust and perceived value—two critical drivers of retention in competitive markets (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2021). E-CRM strengthens organizational performance by fostering trust, commitment, and continuous engagement with stakeholders (AL-Nsour, 2025). Through effective communication, value co-creation, and long-term collaboration, firms enhance loyalty, reduce conflict, and build stable strategic partnerships that support sustainable competitive advantage (Palmatier et al., 2006). Moreover, a coherent identity reinforces customers' psychological ownership of the brand, encouraging repeat purchases and continued advocacy (Hsu & Lin, 2023). As brands invest in maintaining consistent identity cues across touchpoints, they create stability and familiarity, which further solidifies customer retention.

Therefore, brand identity functions not only as a differentiation tool but also as a strategic foundation for sustaining customer relationships. Building brand identity and nurturing brand Customer Retention are critical objectives for entrepreneurial ventures navigating the vibrant context of the digital era (Al-Nsour, 2025). The revolving nature of these constructs shows the pivotal role of strategic digital marketing plans in building a strong presence and maintaining long-term relationships with customers (**Al-Nsour et al., 2024**). The importance of brand identity as one of the foundations of entrepreneurial ventures' success is evident in the context of competitive and resource-constrained environments, which impacts consumer perceptions, trust, and engagement (Al-Nsour & Al-Sahli, 2024). Entrepreneurial ventures striving to establish their presence in the market must think about how to increase their identity and draw consumers away from the rich innovation coming from online-only platforms. Research showcases that increasing Brand identity helps with brand recognition and promotes positive associations with the brand, ensuring that more individuals trust and engage with the Entrepreneurial Ventures.

Digital marketing tools integrated with digital marketing orientation and capabilities represent an essential strategy for increasing an entrepreneurial venture's identity with

aspects such as social media, content creation, and innovative approaches to branding (Setiarini et al., 2023; Al-Nsour et al., 2024; Al-Qahtani & Al-Nsour, 2025). Saudi Arabia's entrepreneurial environment has rapidly evolved through strong governmental support, improved regulatory frameworks, and expanding funding mechanisms. Vision 2030 initiatives have strengthened innovation capacity, enhanced digital infrastructure, and empowered local talent, creating a dynamic and competitive ecosystem for startups (Alharbi, 2023; Aminova et al., 2020). In an entrepreneurial environment, such as the one in KSA, marked by rich entrepreneurial activity, brand identity is strategically important even outside mere presence in the marketplace. Entrepreneurial ventures harness this identity to pique investors' interest, establish partnerships and collaborations, and grow their consumer base; thus, enabling them to grow sustainably and become prominent within the market. The relationship between brand identity and customer retention has previously been supported in literature on digital marketing (Aziz et al., 2024; Al-Nsour & Al-Sahli, 2024). A strong brand identity positively influences customer retention by fostering recognition, trust, and emotional connection. When customers perceive a brand as consistent, authentic, and aligned with their values, they are more likely to remain loyal and engage in repeat purchases. Effective brand identity strategies enhance satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately reducing churn and strengthening long-term relationships (Keller & Swaminathan, 2023; Nguyen & Lee, 2024). Current studies indicate that a considerable presence of brand identity equals higher customer engagement and customer retention. Therefore, consistent and well-distributed brands across platforms facilitate a high level of customer trust and customer retention. We propose the following hypothesis:

***H1: Brand identity Positively Influences Customer Retention in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

## **2.2 Digital -Marketing and Brand Identity**

Digital marketing capabilities refer to a firm's ability to integrate digital tools, data analytics, and online platforms to enhance customer engagement and competitive advantage. These capabilities enable organizations to optimize targeting, personalize communication, and improve performance in dynamic markets (Alvarez, 2023; Alshammari et al., 2024). Digital marketing capabilities have become a critical driver of brand identity development within entrepreneurial ventures, largely because such firms depend on agility, digital visibility, and rapid market adaptation to establish a distinctive presence. Strong digital marketing capabilities—such as data-driven customer targeting, social media proficiency, digital content creation, and online relationship management—enable entrepreneurs to articulate and reinforce a coherent brand identity across interactive digital touchpoints. Recent studies highlight that digital marketing competence enables entrepreneurial firms to maintain consistent brand messaging while simultaneously personalizing communication, thereby enhancing brand clarity and authenticity (Li & Wang, 2022).

Moreover, firms with advanced digital marketing capabilities are better equipped to leverage user-generated content and online engagement to co-create brand meanings, thus strengthening brand identity resonance with niche markets (Zhang & Chen, 2023).

In emerging entrepreneurial ecosystems, digital capabilities also help mitigate resource constraints by offering cost-effective channels for brand storytelling and differentiation (Liu, 2024). Consequently, digital marketing capabilities not only facilitate strategic brand identity construction but also serve as a mediating mechanism linking entrepreneurial innovation with long-term brand equity. This relationship underscores the critical role of digital competence in shaping how new ventures develop, communicate, and sustain a unique Brand identity in competitive digital environments. Digital marketing capabilities enhance firms' ability to analyze customer data, personalize communication, and optimize online engagement (Taiminen & Karjaluoto, 2023). These capabilities support strategic decision-making, strengthen competitive advantage, and improve customer value through effective integration of digital technologies and analytics-driven marketing processes (Morgan et al., 2022).

Furthermore, digital marketing plays a crucial role in shaping the startup's operational framework, influencing how its strategic approach to digital marketing impacts brand identity. Digital marketing enables entrepreneurial ventures to enhance market reach, improve customer engagement, and compete effectively through cost-efficient online tools (Chaffey, 2022). Entrepreneurial Ventures leveraging social media, analytics, and digital platforms achieve higher brand visibility and performance, supported by agile decision-making and rapid customer feedback loops (Alqahtani & Bajnaid, 2023). Pscheidt-Gieseler et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of digital marketing capabilities. Notably, other scholars, such as Hollenbeck and Patrick (2023), and Al-Nsour & Hasnin (2024), also emphasize the importance of entrepreneurial ventures possessing diverse digital marketing skills to establish their identity in the expansive digital landscape. Capitello et al. (2014) further suggest that an effective social media strategy can significantly enhance a corporate brand identity. By developing relevant digital marketing capabilities that incorporate social media platforms as a core aspect of their identity, entrepreneurial ventures can positively influence their brand presence. This aligns with the notion that entrepreneurial ventures equipped with advanced digital marketing capabilities adopt strategic marketing methodologies and make appropriate investments in essential tools and technologies to engage their audience effectively.

Moreover, Al-Nsour et al. (2021) and Pscheidt-Gieseler et al. (2018) underscore the vital mediating role of digital marketing orientation in this relationship. Digital marketing capabilities and digital marketing orientation interact with each other, thereby influencing how both are developed and utilized to shape brand identity (Al-Nsour & Alsahli, 2025). Digital marketing enables entrepreneurial ventures to strengthen Brand identity by enhancing online exposure, delivering consistent brand messages, and creating interactive digital experiences (Kaur & Gupta, 2022). Through social media, analytics, and content strategies, entrepreneurial ventures build clearer brand meanings that improve customer recognition and trust (Al-Mahdi, 2023). Entrepreneurial ventures with a strong understanding of digital marketing can enhance their online presence and boost brand recognition (Ciunova-Shuleska et al., 2016). Given this entrepreneurial venture's power to create strategic models and invest wisely in digital systems (Aziz et al., 2018), the

connection between digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, and brand identity becomes quite evident. The following hypotheses are formulated as follows:

***H2: Digital Marketing Capabilities Positively Influence Brand Identity in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

***H3: Digital Marketing Capabilities Positively Influence Digital-Marketing Orientation in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

***H4: Digital Marketing Orientation Mediates the Impact of Digital -Marketing Capabilities on Brand Identity in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

### **2.3 E-CRM, Digital Marketing Orientation, and Brand Identity:**

E-CRM enhances digital customer loyalty by enabling personalized communication, timely service responses, and data-driven engagement (Kim & Park, 2022). By integrating analytics with interactive platforms, firms strengthen trust, improve satisfaction, and build long-term online relationships that support sustainable competitive advantage (Hassan, 2023). E-CRM, which emphasizes strategic interactions with customers and stakeholders through digital platforms, significantly impacts brand identity. According to Stăncioiu et al. (2023), and Al-Nsour & Alsahli (2025), businesses that effectively use electronic tools and channels to connect with their audience, employ personalized messaging and communication, and conduct data analysis can enhance customer satisfaction in various ways, ultimately influencing brand identity (Hosseini et al., 2024). The success of this strategy relies on how well entrepreneurial ventures are received by their brand and the nature of their relationships with their audience (Capitello et al., 2014). By effectively engaging with their target market, entrepreneurial ventures can gain immediate recognition and build a positive reputation in the digital space (AL-Share et al., 2023). E-CRM plays a crucial role in shaping digital marketing orientation (Cao et al., 2020). Research by Novixoxo et al. (2018), and Lawal & Adejuwon (2022) indicates that effective relationship marketing influences how firms strategically utilize marketing tools. A customer-centered approach to E-CRM encourages a strong digital marketing orientation, which is essential for fostering customer interaction, satisfaction, and retention among Entrepreneurial Ventures (Khalaf,2023).

E-CRM enhances customer interaction through digital platforms, integrating data analytics, personalized communication, and automated service processes. It strengthens customer satisfaction and long-term retention by delivering timely, customized experiences and improving organizational responsiveness in competitive digital markets (Thanh & Binh,2019; Alharbi& Aloud, 2024). E-CRM supports long-term customer connections by utilizing digital platforms to personalize interactions and strengthen trust (Hassan, 2023). Effective systems integrate analytics, responsive communication, and service automation, resulting in improved satisfaction, loyalty, and relational value in online environments (Kim & Park, 2022). E-CRM plays a critical role in enhancing customer engagement by integrating digital communication tools, personalized services, and data-driven interaction. It enables firms to understand customer behavior, anticipate needs, and deliver consistent value across online touchpoints.

By improving responsiveness, service efficiency, and relationship quality, E-CRM strengthens customer satisfaction and fosters long-term loyalty in highly competitive digital environments (Khan, 2023; Alshammari, 2024). E-CRM has a central role in strengthening the correlation between digital marketing orientation and brand identity, particularly within digitally driven business environments. Firms that adopt a strong digital marketing orientation prioritize interactive digital communication, customer data utilization, and online value creation, which enhances their ability to build long-term electronic relationships with customers. Effective e-CRM enables organizations to maintain personalized, timely, and trust-based interactions, reinforcing the clarity and consistency of brand identity across digital platforms (Kim & Park, 2022).

Moreover, when digital marketing orientation guides strategic digital actions, it helps translate relational engagement into meaningful brand cues that shape how customers perceive and internalize brand identity (Lin & Hsu, 2023). Research further indicates that strong electronic relationship practices facilitate co-creation and deepen customer–brand bonds, ultimately enhancing the distinctiveness and authenticity of Brand identity in competitive markets (Zhou, 2024). Successful E-CRM ensures that a firm's digital marketing orientation aligns with its E-CRM strategies, especially when entrepreneurial ventures focus on one-way communication (Farida et al., 2017). Digital marketing orientation serves as a bridge between E-CRM and brand identity. As noted by Stăncioiu et al. (2023), a well-executed digital marketing orientation enhances the effectiveness of E-CRM in shaping brand identity (Alnsour et al., 2025). Entrepreneurial ventures that implement a customer interaction-focused digital marketing approach are likely to enjoy a stronger brand identity, as their customers are more inclined to engage with them across digital platforms, including social media (Aziz et al., 2024). Thus, the evidence suggests a clear link between effective E-CRM, digital marketing orientation, and the development of brand identity (Harrigan et al., 2012). The following hypotheses are formulated as follows:

***H5: Effective E-CRM Positively Influences Brand Identity in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

***H6: Effective E-CRM Positively Influences Digital Marketing Orientation in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

***H7: Effective Digital Marketing Orientation Mediates the Impact of E-CRM on Brand Identity in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

## **2.4 The Moderating Effect:**

### **2.4.1 Market Competition Intensity, Digital Marketing Capabilities, and Brand Identity.**

High market competition intensity compels firms to strengthen their brand identity to differentiate themselves from rivals. A strong and distinctive brand identity enhances customer recognition and loyalty, directly influencing customer retention even in highly competitive environments (Keller, 2022; Aaker, 2023). Companies that effectively communicate their brand values are more likely to retain customers, mitigating the

adverse effects of intense market rivalry (Keller, 2022). More specifically, the intensity of market competition may moderate the relationship between digital marketing capabilities and Brand identity in Entrepreneurial Ventures. As postulated by Reimann et al. (2022), the competitive environment impacts the alignment between a company's marketing resources and capabilities and improves the organization's positioning and unique identity in the market. In the highly competitive market, Entrepreneurial Ventures are under constant pressure to differentiate themselves from well-established competitors and attract customers' attention in the short- and long-term perspective (Bin Khunin & Al-Nsour, 2024; Moodhi et al., 2024). Therefore, the impact of digital marketing capabilities on Brand identity is likely to vary based on the level of competition (Novixoxo et al., 2018). For example, the influence on highly competitive markets suggests that Entrepreneurial Ventures with more advanced digital marketing capabilities will be more successful in finding innovative ways to differentiate themselves among many more well-established companies. In less competitive markets, companies would have to invest fewer efforts to be visible to customers. The following hypothesis can be formulated:

***H8: Market Competition Intensity Moderates the Influence of Digital Marketing Capabilities on Brand Identity in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

#### **2.4.2 Market Competition Intensity, Digital Marketing Capabilities, and Brand Identity.**

Market competition intensity encourages firms to strengthen their digital marketing orientation to maintain relevance in dynamic markets. Effective use of digital platforms supports a clearer brand identity and improved customer connection. As competition rises, companies that align digital strategies with brand values are more capable of achieving differentiation and long-term market advantage (Kotler & Keller, 2022; Chaffey & Smith, 2021). Market competition intensity also moderates the association between digital marketing orientation and Brand identity among the Entrepreneurial Ventures. The more competitive a market is, the four forces form a more informed mass, and attention is the only form of capital that is likely to be well aligned. According to Reimann et al. (2022), in a competitive market, founders have to get consumers' attention intensely if they have to compete based on who has it. As a result, there is a need for Entrepreneurial Ventures to be more market-oriented in the area of digital marketing orientation by using more customer engagement communication methods to increase brand Identity. Therefore, in a less competitive market, display a lower level of digital marketing orientation due to facing less reflection pressure. Therefore, digital marketing orientation will be more positively associated with Brand identity for Entrepreneurial Ventures in more competitive markets. Thus, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

***H9: Market Competition Intensity moderates the impact of Digital Marketing Orientation on Brand Identity in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

#### **2.4.3 Market Competition Intensity, E-CRM, and Brand Identity:**

Third, market competition intensity moderates the relationship between E-CRM and Brand identity within Entrepreneurial Ventures (Albashtawi et al., 2025).

High market competition intensity drives firms to strengthen electronic customer relationship marketing in order to enhance customer engagement and loyalty. Effective e-CRM systems allow companies to personalize communication, improve responsiveness, and reinforce a consistent brand identity across digital channels. As competition increases, organizations that integrate e-CRM with clear brand positioning are better able to differentiate themselves and sustain long-term customer trust (Chaffey & Smith, 2021; Kotler & Keller, 2022). Fiercely competitive markets characterized by limited Customer Retention among customers and high churn require Entrepreneurial ventures to adopt E-CRM strategies to build strong relationships with customers and enhance their brand Identity. According to Omidvar et al. (2025), entrepreneurial Ventures are more likely to engage in relational initiatives to distinguish themselves from other firms and attract and retain customers. In relatively less competitive market contexts, Entrepreneurial Ventures firms may face minimal challenges doing business in terms of attracting and retaining customers and other stakeholders (Sanusi et al., 2023). Therefore, the relationship between E-CRM and Brand identity may be weaker among firms in this group (Al-Nsour & Al-Saleh, 2025; Nuseir et al., 2022). Market competition intensity thus acts as a moderator of the effect of E-Relationship with respect to Entrepreneurial Ventures firms. Hence:

***H10: Market Competition Intensity Moderates the Impact of E-CRM on Brand Identity in Entrepreneurial Ventures.***

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 The Research Instrument:**

A meticulously drafted questionnaire was developed to assess the variables and test the hypotheses posited in this study, drawing upon established scales from extant literature. Notably, these scales have been employed in prior research surveys, with their validity and reliability rigorously scrutinized and affirmed. Furthermore, pre-validation of face and content validity was conducted through expert evaluation and consultations with stakeholders representing the target demographic, alongside input from academic experts, thereby enhancing the robustness of the final data collection instrument. A total of 34 items in the final draft of the questionnaire are designed to measure various dimensions of the digital marketing landscape of an entrepreneurial venture. Digital marketing orientation, assessed through questions such as prioritizing digital marketing initiatives, investing in innovative practices, and developing competitive strategies, reflects the strategic focus of these entrepreneurial ventures in leveraging digital channels (Farida et al., 2017; Mandal, 2017; Puspita et al., 2020; Huang & Chen, 2019). Similarly, e-CRM items gauge the extent to which companies prioritize personalized communication, utilize electronic tools for customer data analysis, and engage in regular interactions to build strong relationships (Alharthey et al., 2023; Al-share et al., 2023; Harrigan et al., 2012; Stăncioiu et al., 2023).

Furthermore, Digital marketing capabilities, evaluated through factors such as investment in digital tools, emphasis on innovative practices, and adoption of customer-centric

approaches, provide insights into Entrepreneurial Ventures' readiness to navigate the digital landscape (Huang & Chen, 2019; Farida et al., 2017; Puspita et al., 2020; Jafari et al., 2023; Hosseini et al., 2024; Mandal, 2017; Capitello et al., 2014; Sumague & Briones, 2022). Brand identity dimensions encompass leveraging digital tools, prioritizing customer engagement, and monitoring brand perceptions to enhance identity and recognition (Rather et al., 2022; Capitello et al., 2014; Avicenny & Rahayu, 2022; Sumague & Briones, 2022; Jafari et al., 2023; Hosseini et al., 2024; Setiarini et al., 2023; Yousafzai, 2023; Nadino Rinaldi et al., 2024; Yagüe & Romero, 2016). Moreover, brand Customer Retention items explore Entrepreneurial Ventures commitment to building long-term relationships, prioritizing customer satisfaction, and utilizing digital tools for enhanced engagement and Customer Retention (Al-share et al., 2023; Bhanot et al., 2023; Adinata et al., 2023; Harrigan et al., 2012; Stăncioiu et al., 2023). Finally, market competition intensity questions assess the perception of operating in competitive environments, facing challenges in gaining identity, and the inclination toward customer-centric digital marketing orientations in response to intense competition (Talari & Khoshroo, 2022; Reimann et al., 2022; Sanusi et al., 2023; O'Leary et al., 2022). We employed a 5-point Likert scale to gather insights from participants in entrepreneurial ventures in KSA.

### **3.2 Sampling and Data Collection:**

Due to challenges in establishing an exact figure for the study population and the lack of consistent statistics regarding the number of Saudi Entrepreneurial Ventures encompassing registered and unregistered entities, the researchers opted for a convenience sampling approach to fulfill the study's objectives. Engaging with the managers of these companies proved arduous owing to the need for precise records, facilitating communication with such entities. Consequently, Entrepreneurial Ventures companies were identified through online searches and leveraging personal connections within the research team to establish contact with the managers. Data was collected via direct communication with managers, email correspondence, or WhatsApp, utilizing Google Forms. Two hundred eighty-three complete responses were garnered from diverse managerial positions within entrepreneurial ventures in Saudi Arabia. Subsequent scrutiny of the data led to the exclusion of 17 responses deemed unsuitable for analysis due to outliers or lack of engagement. Thus, the resulting sample size of 266 individuals furnishes a robust dataset for scrutinizing the proposed hypotheses utilizing SMART PLS. The findings in Table 1 offer valuable insights into the demographic composition of the study sample, encompassing 266 managers in different functional positions within entrepreneurial ventures in Saudi Arabia. The demographic profile of the study sample offers valuable insights into the managerial landscape within Saudi entrepreneurial ventures. Most respondents, comprising 53% of the sample, fall within the age bracket of 30 to less than 40 years, indicating a relatively young cohort of managers. Notably, male representation dominates the sample, constituting 94% of the respondents, highlighting an insignificant presence of women in managerial roles within the KSA entrepreneurial ventures sector (women's representation is 6%). Regarding professional experience, 43% of respondents have less than ten years of experience, indicating a mix of relatively

early-career professionals. In comparison, 26% possess over 15 years of experience, suggesting a presence of seasoned individuals in managerial positions. Chief Marketing Officer and Chief Technology Officer emerge as the most prevalent job positions among respondents, accounting for 23% and 17%, respectively, underscoring a strong emphasis on marketing and technology-related roles within entrepreneurial ventures in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the sector representation in the sample reflects the diversity of industries within the entrepreneurial ventures ecosystem in Saudi Arabia, with social media services (21%), e-commerce (18%), and entertainment (12%) being the most prominent sectors. The demographic composition of the study sample paints a picture of a dynamic and diverse managerial landscape characterized by youthfulness, varied levels of experience, and a predominant focus on marketing and technology-related roles across diverse industry sectors.

**Table 1: Demographic information of the study sample**

		n	%
Age	Less than 30	57	21%
	30 - Less than 40	141	53%
	Above 40	68	26%
Gender			
	Male	249	94%
	Female	17	6%
Years of Experience			
	Less than 10	114	43%
	10-Less than 15	83	31%
	Above 15	69	26%
Job Position			
	Founder/CEO	27	10%
	Chief Operating Officer	14	5%
	Chief Technology Officer	46	17%
	Chief Financial Officer	18	7%
	Chief Marketing Officer	62	23%
	Director of Sales	39	15%
	Product Manager/Director	11	4%
	Human Resources (HR) Manager/Director	21	8%
	Operations Manager/Director	9	3%
	Customer Success Manager	19	7%
Sector			
	Innovation and design	19	7%
	E-commerce	48	18%
	Financial technology	18	7%
	Health technology	19	7%
	Educational technology	12	5%
	Supply chains and logistics	17	6%
	Entertainment	33	12%
	Social media services	56	21%
	Cybersecurity	25	9%
	Other	19	7%
	Total	266	100%

### 3.3 Data Analysis:

Following Hair et al. (2014), the analysis used the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, utilizing SmartPLS 3 software. This process included verifying the measurement model's reliability and validity and testing the hypotheses within the structural model.

## 4. RESEARCH RESULTS

### 4.1 The Measurement Model:

We thoroughly assessed the validity and reliability of our measurement model by scrutinizing the factor loadings of items measuring the constructs under investigation. As recommended by Hair et al. (2011), items with factor loadings exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.7 were retained in the model, resulting in the exclusion of 8 out of the 34 items due to their relatively low factor loadings, as detailed in Appendix 1. Furthermore, we computed the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values to gauge the potential impact of multicollinearity on the robustness of the results.

Typically, VIF values below 5 indicate acceptable levels of multicollinearity, while values surpassing ten warrant further scrutiny. However, our analysis revealed that all construct items exhibited acceptable levels of multicollinearity, thus bolstering the reliability of our findings.

Moreover, we evaluated the internal consistency reliability of the model by assessing Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values, as presented in Table 2. Both metrics surpassed the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2011), signifying satisfactory reliability. Convergent validity was ensured by examining the average variance extracted (AVE), with all construct values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2014), further corroborating the validity of our model (See Table 2).

Finally, we employed Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion to ascertain discriminant validity, which entails comparing the square root of the AVE of each construct with the intercorrelations between constructs. As illustrated in Table 3, the square root of the AVE surpassed the intercorrelations, thus confirming discriminant validity by the criteria Fornell and Larcker (1981) set forth. This meticulous validation process enhances confidence in the reliability and validity of our study's outcomes.

Table 4 presents the results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) for assessing discriminant validity. The diagonal elements (bolded) represent the correlations between each construct and itself, while the off-diagonal elements display the correlations between different constructs.

Based on the HTMT ratios presented in Table 4, we can conclude that discriminant validity is established among the constructs in our study. This implies that each construct measures a distinct and unique aspect of the underlying theoretical constructs, enhancing the robustness and credibility of our measurement model (Hair et al., 2014).

**Table 2: Measurement Model Reliability and Validity**

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Customer Retention	0.851	0.899	0.69
Brand Identity	0.855	0.896	0.632
Digital Marketing Capabilities	0.858	0.898	0.637
Digital Marketing Orientation	0.797	0.868	0.623
E-CRM	0.808	0.874	0.635
Market Competition Intensity	0.739	0.834	0.557

**Table 3: Discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)**

	Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Brand Customer Retention	0.83					
2	Brand Visibility	0.58	0.8				
3	Digital Marketing Capabilities	0.62	0.49	0.8			
4	Digital Marketing Orientation	0.65	0.5	0.62	0.79		
5	E-CRM	0.63	0.51	0.64	0.61	0.8	
6	Market Competition Intensity	0.58	0.55	0.48	0.47	0.59	0.75

**Table 4: Assessment Discriminant Validity (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT))**

	Construct	1	2	3	4	5
1	Brand Visibility	0.65				
2	Digital Marketing Capabilities	0.71	0.56			
3	Digital Marketing Orientation	0.78	0.6	0.74		
4	E-CRM	0.75	0.6	0.76	0.75	
5	Market Competition Intensity	0.74	0.66	0.61	0.61	0.75

#### **4.2 Testing the Structural Model, Direct and Indirect Effect, and Moderation:**

Table 5 presents comprehensive insights into the research model's direct hypotheses, mediation, and moderation effects, contributing to a deeper understanding of the relationships among the variables under study. Each hypothesis is assessed based on the path coefficient ( $\beta$ ), mean, standard deviation (STDEV), T-value, P-value, and the decision regarding whether the hypothesis is supported. Starting with direct hypotheses, H1 explores the relationship between Brand identity and customer Retention. The path coefficient is 0.575, with a highly significant T-value of 11.025 and a P-value of 0.000, strongly supporting the hypothesis. H2 examines the relationship between digital marketing capabilities and brand identity. The path coefficient is 0.130, with a T-value of 2.023 and a P-value of 0.059, indicating that the relationship is marginally significant but not fully supported. Moving to H3, which explores the link between digital marketing capabilities and digital marketing orientation, the path coefficient is 0.384, with a significant T-value of 5.521 and a P-value of 0.000, indicating strong support for the hypothesis. H4 extends the relationship from digital marketing capabilities to brand identity through digital marketing orientation. The path coefficient is 0.064, with a significant T-value of 2.370 and a P-value of 0.018, supporting the hypothesis. For H5, examining the relationship between E-CRM and brand Identity, the path coefficient is

0.123, with a T-value of 1.882 and a P-value of 0.059, indicating a lack of full support for the hypothesis.

Moving to H6, which investigates the connection between E-CRM and Digital Marketing Orientation, the path coefficient is 0.362, with a significant T-value of 5.254 and a P-value of 0.000, supporting the hypothesis. H7 extends the relationship from E-CRM to Brand Identity through Digital Marketing Orientation. The path coefficient is 0.060, with a significant T-value of 2.022 and a P-value of 0.044, supporting the hypothesis. Finally, regarding moderation effects, H8, H9, and H10 assess the impact of Market Competition Intensity on the relationships between Digital Marketing Capabilities, Digital Marketing Orientation, E-CRM, and Brand Identity. H8 and H9 are not supported, as indicated by non-significant P-values. However, H10 is supported by a path coefficient of 0.205, a T-value of 1.999, and a significant P-value of 0.036.

**Table 5: Testing Direct Hypotheses, Mediation, and Moderation**

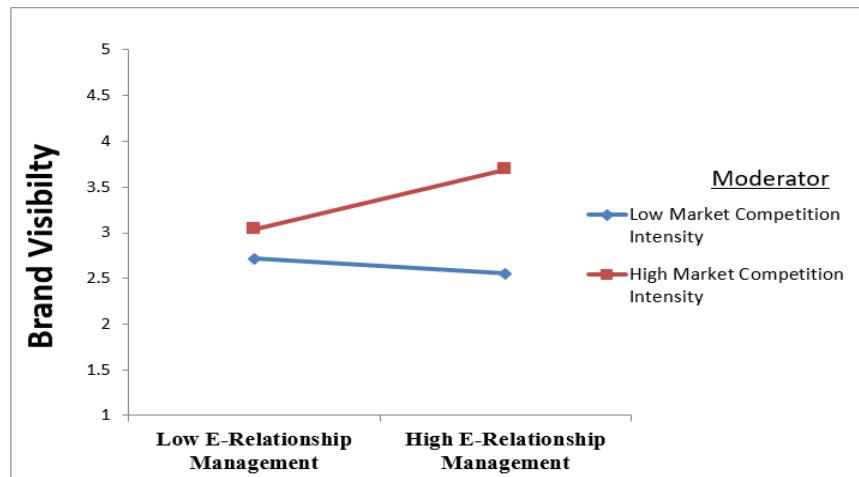
Hypotheses		$\beta$	Mean	STDEV	T Value	P Values	Decision
H1	Brand Identity-> Brand Customer Retention	0.575	0.579	0.052	11.025	0.000	Supported
H2	Digital Marketing Capabilities -> Brand Identity	0.130	0.128	0.064	2.023	0.059	Not Supported
H3	Digital Marketing Capabilities -> Digital Marketing Orientation	0.384	0.383	0.07	5.521	0.000	Supported
H4	Digital Marketing Capabilities -> Digital Marketing Orientation -> Brand Identity	0.064	0.064	0.027	2.37	0.018	Supported
H5	E-CRM -> Brand Identity	0.123	0.12	0.066	1.882	0.059	Not Supported
H6	E-CRM -> Digital Marketing Orientation	0.362	0.362	0.069	5.254	0.000	Supported
H7	E-CRM -> Digital Marketing Orientation -> Brand Identity	0.060	0.062	0.03	2.022	0.044	Supported
H8	Market Competition Intensity moderates the impact of Digital Marketing Capabilities on brand identity	-0.067	-0.06	0.098	0.683	0.470	Not Supported
H9	Market Competition Intensity moderates the impact of Digital Marketing Orientation on brand identity	-0.136	-0.13	0.091	1.49	0.122	Not Supported
H10	Market Competition Intensity moderates the impact of E-CRM on brand Identity	0.205	0.178	0.102	1.999	0.036	Supported

*Note:  $\beta$  = Path coefficient; P value is significant P<0.05, bootstrapping 1000 subsamples*

## 5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

However, rejecting the moderating variable hypotheses (H8 and H9) highlights the nuanced influence of market competition intensity on the relationships between marketing capabilities, orientation, and brand identity. While literature suggests a moderating effect of competitive dynamics on marketing strategies and outcomes, the non-significance of H8 and H9 in this context may reflect the unique market dynamics and varying competitive landscapes within the entrepreneurial ventures sector in KSA. In practical terms, these findings hold significant implications for entrepreneurial ventures in KSA. By understanding the nuanced relationships between digital marketing capabilities, orientation, and brand outcomes, entrepreneurial ventures can tailor their digital marketing strategies to navigate competitive market environments and enhance brand identity effectively. Moreover, recognizing the mediating role of digital marketing orientation underscores the importance of strategic alignment between digital marketing capabilities and orientation in driving brand identity. Additionally, while the non-significance of market competition intensity as a moderator may seem counterintuitive, it emphasizes the need for entrepreneurial ventures to adopt a holistic approach to digital marketing strategy formulation, considering various contextual factors beyond competitive intensity (Alsolamy, 2023; Talari & Khoshroo, 2022). The findings from testing the hypothesis regarding the moderation effect of Market Competition Intensity on the relationship between E-CRM and brand Identity (H10) reveal a statistically significant association ( $\beta = 0.205$ ,  $p = 0.036$ ), thereby supporting the hypothesis. This outcome suggests that the impact of E-CRM on brand identity is contingent upon the level of market competition intensity. In highly competitive market environments, where firms compete fiercely for consumer attention and market share, the effectiveness of relationship management strategies in enhancing brand identity becomes more pronounced. Entrepreneurial ventures operating in such competitive landscapes are inclined to adopt and invest in E-CRM strategies to differentiate themselves and retain customers amidst intense competition (Talari & Khoshroo, 2022). This finding is consistent with theoretical expectations and empirical evidence suggesting that the effectiveness of relationship management strategies may vary depending on the market's competitive dynamics (Cao et al., 2020). In intensely competitive markets, prioritizing personalized communication and engagement with customers through digital platforms becomes imperative for entrepreneurial ventures to enhance Brand identity (Aziz et al., 2018). Actively managing customer relationships in such environments strengthens customer retention and increases brand identity, thereby providing entrepreneurial ventures with a competitive edge (Reimann et al., 2022). This moderation effect underscores the importance of considering contextual factors, such as market competition intensity, in shaping the effectiveness of marketing strategies within entrepreneurial ventures (Xie & Li, 2017). For entrepreneurial ventures in KSA, understanding the nuanced relationship between relationship management and competitive dynamics can inform strategic decision-making processes to enhance brand identity and market competitiveness (Alsolamy, 2023). By recognizing the interplay between relationship management and competitive intensity, entrepreneurial ventures can strategically allocate resources and develop tailored

marketing strategies to navigate competitive market environments effectively and achieve sustainable growth (Schmidt, 2013; Sanusi et al., 2023)—figure 1. Plots the moderation of market competition intensity on the impact of e-CRM on brand identity. Market competition intensity strengthens the positive impact of e-CRM on brand identity.



**Figure 1: Plotting the moderation of Market Competition Intensity on the impact of E-CRM on the brand identity**

### 5.1 Theoretical Implications:

The research contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on the interplay between digital marketing capabilities, orientation, E-CRM, and brand identity within entrepreneurial ventures in KSA. Theoretical implications include insights derived from RBV theory and dynamic capabilities, highlighting the strategic importance of aligning resources, capabilities, and market orientation to enhance brand identity and achieve sustainable competitive advantage in dynamic market environments. The findings of this paper underscore the significance of digital marketing capabilities as strategic resources that Entrepreneurial Ventures can leverage to enhance brand identity (Barney et al., 2021). According to the RBV theory, firms gain a competitive advantage by acquiring and deploying valuable, rare, and non-substitutable resources. In this context, advanced digital marketing capabilities represent such resources, enabling entrepreneurial ventures to differentiate themselves in competitive markets and augment brand recognition. Secondly, the study emphasizes the importance of digital marketing orientation in driving brand identity (Madhavaiah & Rao, 2007). Based on RBV theory, which posits that firms must align their resources with their strategic objectives, entrepreneurial ventures prioritizing a customer-centric digital marketing orientation can effectively utilize their digital marketing capabilities to enhance brand identity. Moreover, the mediation analysis suggests that digital marketing orientation is a crucial link between digital marketing capabilities/relationship management and brand identity, indicating its role in translating these resources into tangible outcomes. This research highlights the dynamic nature of digital marketing capabilities and their interaction with market competition intensity (Teece et al., 1998; Jung & Shegai, 2023). Dynamic Capabilities theory posits that firms must

adapt and evolve their capabilities in response to changing market conditions to sustain competitive advantage. The moderation effect of market competition intensity on the relationship between e-CRM and brand identity underscores the need for entrepreneurial ventures to dynamically adjust their relationship management strategies in highly competitive environments to maintain Brand identity effectively (Talari & Khoshroo, 2022; O'Leary et al., 2022).

### **5.2 Practical Implications:**

The insights provided by this research offer actionable recommendations for entrepreneurial ventures to optimize their digital marketing efforts, strengthen brand identity, and achieve sustainable growth in dynamic market environments. The practical implications of current research are multifaceted. For entrepreneurial ventures, understanding the pivotal role of digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, and e-CRM in enhancing brand identity is crucial. By investing in advanced digital marketing skills, entrepreneurial ventures can effectively leverage various online platforms to increase their online presence and brand recognition. Furthermore, fostering a customer-centric digital marketing orientation and prioritizing personalized communication through e-CRM strategies can build solid relationships with customers and stakeholders, enhancing brand identity and customer retention. Moreover, recognizing the influence of market competition intensity on the effectiveness of marketing strategies allows entrepreneurial ventures to adapt their approaches accordingly. In highly competitive environments, entrepreneurial ventures should implement innovative and tailored digital marketing strategies to stand out and increase brand identity. Conversely, entrepreneurial ventures can capitalize on their relative advantage in less competitive markets to consolidate their brand presence through targeted marketing efforts.

### **5.3 Limitations and Future Research:**

While this research offers significant insights into the relationships between digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, e-CRM, and Brand identity in entrepreneurial ventures, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations and propose directions for future research. Firstly, the reliance on a convenient sampling approach may limit the generalizability of the findings, suggesting the need for more diverse and representative samples in future studies. Secondly, adopting a cross-sectional design restricts understanding how these relationships evolve, highlighting the potential benefit of longitudinal studies. Thirdly, using self-reported data raises concerns about response bias and social desirability effects, urging the incorporation of objective measures or alternative methodologies to enhance validity. Lastly, the focus on entrepreneurial ventures in the Saudi context may constrain the applicability of the findings to other cultural or geographic settings, emphasizing the importance of exploring diverse contexts in future research. Moving forward, future studies could explore mediating mechanism in entrepreneurial ventures such as customer engagement or brand reputation, adopt a dynamic capabilities perspective to understand how entrepreneurial ventures adapt their digital marketing strategies, conduct comparative analyses across different sectors or

regions, and employ longitudinal approaches to track the evolution of digital marketing practices over time. By addressing these limitations and pursuing avenues for future research, scholars can advance our understanding of digital marketing in entrepreneurial ventures and offer practical guidance for entrepreneurs and managers navigating the digital landscape.

## CONCLUSION

This research highlights the pivotal role of digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation, and e-CRM in influencing brand identity within entrepreneurial ventures. Our findings underscore the significance of advanced digital marketing capabilities and a customer-centric orientation in positively impacting brand recognition, emphasizing the strategic importance of digital marketing strategies. Moreover, digital marketing orientation emerges as a crucial mediator between digital marketing capabilities, e-CRM and brand identity, emphasizing the need for entrepreneurial ventures to align their digital marketing efforts with a strategic orientation toward digital channels. Effective e-CRM significantly influences brand identity, particularly in highly competitive market environments, where personalized communication and engagement strategies are imperative for fostering long-term customer Retention. While market competition intensity was found to moderate the relationship between e-CRM and brand identity, its moderation effect on digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing orientation was insignificant, highlighting the nuanced influence of competitive dynamics on marketing strategies and outcomes. These insights provide valuable implications for entrepreneurial ventures, particularly in Saudi Arabia, guiding them in formulating effective digital marketing strategies to navigate competitive market environments and achieve sustainable growth.

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