



**Arab American University of Palestine  
Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**The Impact of Digital Content Marketing Strategy on  
Customer Purchase Intention in Palestinian Services  
SMEs: Assessing the Mediating Role of Customer  
Loyalty**

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**This Thesis was submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for Master's degree in Strategic Planning  
and Fundraising**

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## Thesis Approval

“The Impact of Digital Content Marketing Strategy on Customer Purchase Intention in Palestinian Services SMEs: Assessing the Mediating Role of Customer Loyalty”

This Thesis was defended successfully on 20/08/2022 and approved by:

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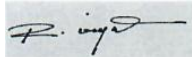
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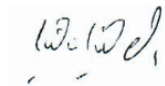
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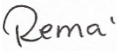


## Declaration

I declare that all the work in this thesis titled “The Impact of Digital Content Marketing Strategy on Customer Purchase Intention in Palestinian Services SMEs: Assessing the Mediating Role of Customer Loyalty” has been done to fulfill the requirements for the degree of Master’s in Strategic Planning and Fundraising and submitted to Arab American University Palestine. all work is original and it has been written by me and I have duly acknowledged all the sources of information have been used in this thesis.

This thesis has also not been submitted to any other degree or university.

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Date: 23/10/2022

## **Abstract**

This study aims to investigate the mediating role of customer loyalty on the effect of digital content marketing strategy on customer purchase intention in Palestinian services SMEs. By using advanced statistical methods. It relied on the quantitative method in answering study questions and testing hypotheses. This study's population was all individuals from digital channel users in Palestine who were willing and able to answer the questionnaire. And the sampling method was (convenience) non-random sampling, and the size was (385) participants. Data were collected using a questionnaire, the primary method for collecting data.

This study supports that customer loyalty plays a significant role in the impact of digital content marketing strategy dimensions on customer purchase intentions in the Palestinian services SMEs.

In the end, many recommendations to improve digital content marketing strategy are provided for marketers and decision-makers, including: they have to improve their digital content marketing strategy continuously to include its dimensions like: entertaining content, informational content, content related to social interaction and subjective norms, and content that reflects self-expression. Also, service providers consider the steps of purchase intention in their minds when they are creating their strategy.

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### Table of Definitions

Term	Definition	Reference
Digital Content Marketing Strategy	Marketing and business process for creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action	Balteş, (2015)
Content Entertainment	The extent of fun and enjoyment individuals feels from using online network to interact with other people.	Ku, Chen et al., (2013)
Content Information	The degree of useful, sensible, and resourceful information that any website can provide to the users.	Lim & Ting, (2012)
Social Interaction	Is using social media platforms in order to interact with others and communicate with them	Whiting & Williams, (2013)
Self-Expression	The extent to which individuals try to control others' impressions of them	Choi et al., (2016)
Subjective Norms	The combination of belief, strength, and motivation to comply	Hughes, et. al, (2009, P.40)
Purchase Intention	The motivation of intention to perform a behavior	Subasinghe & Weerasisri, (2019)
Customer Loyalty	It's the behavior of repurchase by the customers because they like a particular brand or service.	Jiang et al., (2015)
SMEs	It's the small and medium enterprises. And it was classified as the number of employees. Here in Palestine, the small ones had 1-4 employees, and the medium ones had 5-20 employees.	Palestinian Business Report (2014),

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### List of Abbreviations

CE	Content Entertaining
CI	Content Information
CL	Customer Loyalty
DCM	Digital Content Marketing Strategy
PI	Purchase Intention
SE	Self-Expression
SI	Social Interaction
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
UGT	Uses and Gratification Theory

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## **Chapter One:**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1. Background**

In 1996, Bill Gates famous saying “Content is King” quoted and today it inspired curiosity to dive deep on this study. It was the brainwave to understand how a specific, strong, unique, well-organized type of information could be the most critical step in the whole purchase decision process. Today both the easy access to the internet, and the widespread of smartphones, have increased customers’ interest in digital content. They consider the internet as the primary source of information, and they need to find everything they want to know there. So, it has become essential for marketers to keep pace with the trend and smartly get the maximum advantage of it and convert the potential customers into customers (Yazgan-Pektas and Hassan, 2020).

According to Vinerean (2017), marketers started using digital content marketing (DCM), considered it the most vital element in the digital marketing field, and used it to engage, interact, convert, and remind customers of their products and brands. To do so, they include different forms and types of it in their marketing strategy, such as text, images, videos, email marketing, webinars, infographics, user-generated content and others to bring value to them. Moreover, they started improving it’s features which could help to increase customers’ satisfaction levels, and maintain their relationship to be long-term by enhancing their general content, brand education, financial benefit, recommendation, etc... (Khandelwal et al., 2018).

According to Erlangga et al. (2021), this strategy plays a significant role in affecting customer purchase intention (PI). That means it could affect companies’

profitability which is the main goal for any business. This study and by taking into consideration uses and gratification theory dimensions: content information, content entertainment, social interaction, and self-expression, and a dimension of behavioral theory dimensions: subjective norms, aims to find the main elements that affect customer behavior in the Palestinian services SMEs and how could customer loyalty change this relationship.

Here in Palestine, companies are using digital channels -especially social media platforms, but there are no studies about DCM. So, this study aims to identify how the Palestinian services SMEs could use the DCM strategy to keep pace with the digitalization explosion and communicate data in the best way. Moreover, this study analyzes to what extent this strategy affects customer purchase intention and customer loyalty.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

DCM process goes beyond selling, it aims to influence customers behavior by communicating with them in the right way. Therefore, this process is vital for companies to affect customers purchase intention.

This study investigates the impact of DCM strategy on customer purchase intention in Palestinian services SMEs by assessing the role of customer loyalty as a mediating factor, using related theories, which are uses and gratification and behavioral theory, in order to take into consideration the dimensions of DCM strategy (content entertainment, content information, social interaction and subjective norms, and self-expression).

Thus, it aims to analyze the gap between the DCM strategy and the purchase intention in the Palestinian SMEs to find the key reasons that could help services SMEs match and exceed their customers' expectations on digital channels. Also, it's the first study that analyzes the relationship between the variables here in Palestine, and one of the leading studies in general who studies the mediating role of customer loyalty.

It's important to study this topic, and the relationship so many people can benefit from this study: at first, all marketing departments in the SMEs that provide services to improve their digital marketing content to match their targeted audience's information needs and help them make a purchase decision. Secondly, it helps the decision-makers in these companies to add this strategy to their plans. And finally, it's a starting point for future studies and help other researchers to start over the results. The importance of this study comes from the importance of the digital marketing concept, as recently it has become at the top of marketing strategies and tools.

### **1.3. Significance of the Study**

This study helps examine effective DCM dimensions that aids and encourages SMEs, especially those that provide services, to use this strategy to give value to gain customers' trust and build long-term relationships that enhance profitability.

Customer loyalty role is also tested as a mediator factor to understand how it affects the purchase intention through this strategy. Moreover, it's one of the first studies that analyzes the relationship between DCM and Purchase intentions along with customer loyalty in the Palestinian market. It's imperative to focus on the Palestinian SMEs because of their significant role in the economy as it's the most prominent sector here in Palestine, with a percentage about 92% - 93%. (Diek & Jawabra, 2020)

After reviewing multiple kinds of research related to the topic:

Febrian & Bangsawan (2021), recommended future research to study the effect of DCM on purchase intentions. Also, Milhinhos (2015) recommended that further studies should be done because of the unique nature of content marketing and the limited research in this area. Moreover, another study stated that DCM significantly affects customer purchase intentions, purchase behavior, and trust. (Sethna, Hazari & Bergiel, 2017). On the other side, Malthouse, Calder, Kim & Vandebosch (2016), discussed much evidence about user-generated content and purchase intention and concluded that DCM has no influence on customer behavior and sees it as just a reminder.

So, it's essential to study this topic in order to fill this gap and examine the relationship between DCM strategy and customer purchase intention here in Palestine. But to make an addition, this study tests customer loyalty as a mediator.

#### **1.4. Study Objectives**

The main objective of this study is to examine the mediating role of customer loyalty in the impact of DCM strategy on purchase intention in the Palestinian services SMEs. The main objective of this study is divided into the following sub-objectives:

- To identify the degree of digital content marketing dimensions in Palestinian services SMEs.
- To identify the degree of purchase intention in Palestinian services SMEs.
- To identify the degree of customer loyalty in Palestinian services SMEs.

- The measure of the relationship between digital content marketing strategy dimensions, purchase intention, and customer loyalty in Palestinian services SMEs.

### **1.5. Study Questions**

This study investigates the main question of what is the impact of digital content marketing strategy on the purchase intention of Palestinian services SMEs? And to answer this main question, the thesis focuses on the following sub-questions:

**Study Question 1:** What is the degree of digital content marketing strategy in the Palestinian services SMEs?

**Study Question 2:** What is the degree of customer loyalty in the Palestinian services SMEs?

**Study Question 3:** What is the degree of customer purchase intentions in the Palestinian services SMEs?

### **1.6. Study Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** Digital content marketing strategy, customer loyalty, and customer purchase intentions are correlated to each other in the Palestinian services SMEs.

**Hypothesis 2:** Customer loyalty plays a significant role in the impact of digital content marketing strategy dimensions on customer purchase intentions in the Palestinian services SMEs.

## **1.7. Study Structure**

This study is presented in five chapters. Having outlined the contents of it in the first chapter, and mentioned the aim, objectives, study problem, hypothesis, questions and the significance of it. Chapter two discusses the literature review which contains what other researcher found, where they stopped and the gap that this research addresses. Chapter three discusses the conceptual model methodology, and it contains the methods of collecting and analyzing data, the study instrument and how it built and its validity and reliability, the design of this study, sampling method, population and sample size and data analysis method. Chapters four presents an analysis of the collected data and findings. The final chapter concludes this research, give practical implementations, list the limitations that the researcher face, and give future recommendations.

## **Chapter Two:**

### **Literature Review**

#### **3.1. Summary of Literature Review:**

This study investigates the mediating role of customer loyalty in the impact of digital content marketing strategy on consumer purchase intention in Palestinian services SMEs, reporting on the main findings in the literature. It is, therefore, divided into five main parts: (1) DCM: the concept, its importance, and strategies, (2) PI: concept, significance, and dimensions, (3) CL, (4) UGT, and (5) Palestinian SMEs.

This chapter also explains the theoretical framework that explains the UGT aspects. Also, the empirical structure includes evidence from literature and studies on the concept and dimensions of DCM. An in-depth summary of the information at the end of the review provides a recap of this literature review.

#### **3.2. Theoretical literature review:**

##### **3.2.1. The Concept of Digital Marketing**

First, what is marketing in general? Marketing is “The process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from customers in return” (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010:29). Marketers and companies must find a way to execute marketing activities to communicate value, satisfy customers’ requirements, and attract attention. They also must keep their actions and methods updated to stay in the intense competition (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015; Yazgan-Pektas & Hassan, 2020).

In recent years, due to the current digital era and the limitations in the communication of the traditional tools, marketing has changed from traditional to digital in many companies, bringing enormous opportunities for them (Balteş, 2015; Febrian et al., 2021; Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015).

The era of mobile internet played a significant role in this change. When people had fixed internet access, they used their desktops or laptops to explore job-related things or search for formal things. But today, by using mobiles to explore the internet, their attitude changed, and they started searching for life-related content and interacting with other users; they became 24 hours audience (Bu et al., 2020). That was supported by the trend of digital marketing and social media. According to Chaffey (2015), digital marketing means using technology to match customers' needs by improving their knowledge.

However, social media it's a form of electronic communication. Using it, people can make online communities and share content like information, ideas, personal messages, videos, and photos. Marketers exploit social media and use it for marketing purposes because of the vast advantages offered by social media platforms (Social Media Dictionary). These trends expose users to a massive number of information and products/services and give them the ability to compare things head-to-head easier than ever (Khandelwal et al., 2018; Yazgan Pektas & Hassan, 2020).

Moreover, it made consumers' access to information more accessible. It made a more intelligent customer who understands the power and importance of knowledge and information and how it helps to make a better purchase decision, so they start to demand more and more and expect to be answered and entertained 24/7 (Balteş, 2015; Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Further, these audiences know they have the right to choose the kind of information they want to receive and whether to believe it or not (Hipwell & Reeves, 2013; as cited in Bala & Verma, 2018). Because of that, marketers had to find a way to promote their brands and feed customers' curiosity. To do that, they start creating accurate and great content without any manipulation of information. This introduced a new major trend, and it's one of the most rapidly growing concepts in marketing which is "Digital Content Marketing." (Kee & Yazdanifard, 2015; Bu et al. 2020).

### **3.2.2. Digital Content Marketing: History and Concept**

The concept of digital content marketing was introduced long ago by Koiso-Kanttila (2010). According to Kee and Yazdanifard (2015), it's trending in the marketing world, as mentioned before, due to consumer behavior change and the shift in technological aspects. Moreover, it's a compelling marketing tactic in the digital, fast-moving, information-driven world; consequently, many researchers defined it in many ways.

Balteş (2015) mentioned there is no universally accepted definition of content marketing. Other researchers defined it as the art of communicating with your customer without selling to them but by influencing their behavior. It works on providing consistent, ongoing, and valuable information that they need and makes them more intelligent by improving their loyalty and satisfying their need for information (Khandelwal et al., 2018; Febrian et al., 2021).

Rowley (2008) found out, "content marketing can be defined as a management process where a firm identifies, analyze and satisfy customer demand to gain profit with the use of digital content distributed through electronic channels" (p. 522).

Furthermore, according to Yazgan-Pektas & Hassan (2020), Kotler et al. (2018: 167) defined it as an “approach aimed at developing interesting and useful content for the target audience to spread and have people comment on it.” In addition, the Content Marketing Institute defined content marketing as: “the marketing and business process for creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action.”

Balteş (2015) agreed with this definition and added that it’s a well-defined content marketing strategy could attract, engage and retain an audience in the long term. Furthermore, Barry Graubart in Content Marketing Institute defined content marketing as an approach used by companies seeking to share contextually relevant content to create or reinforce their brand messaging.

This concept weighted the business world, and according to Kee and Yazdanifard (2015), enterprises gradually began to engage with the concept of DCM. It became an integral part of their marketing plans as it brought enormous opportunities for them. It is being practiced by all sizes and types of organizations and businesses, and it has become the most important and critical tool for the success of digital marketing. They started measuring companies’ communication failure and success depending on the quality of their content, which means companies who wish to remain competitive must rethink their marketing strategies (Balteş, 2015). Also, there is a significant positive role of DCM on PI, which means it would help them to achieve profits according to Nawaz & Kaldeen (2020), and increase customer loyalty as there is a significant positive between it and customer loyalty according to Ilyas et al. (2021).

### **3.2.3. Dimensions of Digital Content Marketing**

Many researchers before used the uses and gratification theory and planned behavior theory to explain the dimensions of digital content marketing as follows:

#### **3.2.3.1. Uses and Gratification Theory**

Uses and gratification are used in the context of both traditional and new media. Previously, it has been used in the traditional media such as radio, TV, and newspaper (Luo, Chea, & Chen, 2011; McQuail, 2010; Pai & Arnott, 2013; Tankard Jr. and James, 2000; West & Turner, 2007; as cited in Ifinedo, 2016). Later, as mentioned in the same study, it was introduced in the context of computer-mediated communication (CMC) technologies (Cheung & Lee, 2009; Cheung et al., 2011; Dholakia et al., 2004; Ku, Chu, & Tseng, 2013; Luo et al., 2011).

Generally, it is considered a main theoretical approach for studying how and why individuals utilize particular media for many decades (Plume & Slade, 2018). It was defined as an influential sociological theory or paradigm and a main theoretical method to study and explain individuals' reasons, needs, and desires and understating their motivations for using a specific media channel to satisfy particular needs. (Katz et al., 1974 as cited in; Ifinedo, 2016 and Bu et al., 2020). Other researchers added that people use specific channels in addition to communication because they are seeking to fulfill particular gratification needs. (Ku, Chen, et al., 2013; as cited in Ifinedo, 2016).

Whiting & Williams (2013) agreed and mentioned that this theory gives an understanding of social media uses by explaining why and how consumers use it, the varied reasons that make them like using it, and its primary objective. Larissey et al. (2011) added in the same study that the theory mainly assumes that people review

media that fulfill their needs and lead to ultimate gratification. Febrian et al. (2021) added that it explains consumer motivation from functional, hedonic, and authentic sides.

Rubin (1994), as cited in Lim & Ting (2012), agreed and added up that the primary objective of this theory is to explain and understand people's psychological needs, which specify the reasons and motivations behind engaging with certain media. Both Febrian et al. (2021), and Lim & Ting (2012), discover that this theory had five assumptions:

- 1- It assumes that the active audience and media use are goal-oriented.
- 2- The first step in connecting the satisfaction needs for confident media choices depends on the audience.
- 3- Media compete with other sources to satisfy customer needs.
- 4- A person has enough self-awareness of their media use, interests, and motives to provide an accurate picture of their use.
- 5- The audience can only assess media content.

Many researchers studied this theory and identified many themes and factors for it:

Whiting & Williams (2013), had discussed seven themes which were: (1) social interaction; (2) information seeking; (3) pass time; (4) entertainment; (5) relaxation; (6) communicatory utility; (7) convenience utility; (8) expression of opinion; (9) information sharing; and (10) surveillance/knowledge about others. Lim & Ting (2012) used it in terms of (1) entertainment gratification; and (2) information gratification. Bu et al. (2020) used: (1) information content; (2) entertainment content; (3) social interaction; (4) and self-expression and considered the same four classifications in order to study DCM in food tourism.

However, as the interactive nature of internet users, UGT has been classified as a very suitable theory for investigating these users (Azam, 2015; as cited in Febrian et al., 2021). Consequently, social media marketers must use this theory to develop better instruments and scales to measure social media platforms (Whiting & Williams, 2013), as many researchers have used it to explain the measurement of digital content marketing (Hollebeek and & Macky, 2019). Furthermore, Plume & Slade (2018) mentioned that marketers could measure good digital marketing content by using this theory, which helps understand the motivations for using social media. And according to Maczuga (2014), as cited in Bu et al. (2020), using this theory in DCM also helps marketers develop their brand by increasing brand awareness, attention, traffic, engagement, sales, and so on.

### **3.2.3.2. Social interaction “SI”**

The first dimension of UGT is social interaction. It's defined by Whiting & Williams (2013) as using social media platforms to interact with others and communicate with them. And this definition was proved by one of the study's main findings: 88% of people used social media for SI. Bu et al. (2020), and according to previous studies, proposed that SI helps transfer knowledge (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995), as people can easily, effectively, and efficiently share their knowledge and adopt opinions through virtual communities (Kim et al., 2011) As digital marketing and social media a two-way interaction between customers and brands, it facilitates knowledge transformation and communication between them (Quinn, 2016; as cited in Bu et al., 2020). As noted by other researchers and mentioned before, DCM helps the consumer to understand the products and services better. Ko et al.'s (2005) scale and as cited in

Whiting & Williams (2013), included two main factors in this dimension: meeting people with the same interests and keeping updated with ongoing news.

### **3.2.3.3. Content Information “CI”**

The second dimension of UGT is CI, and it was introduced by Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) in their research about seeking out information and internet usage. And it means using social media to self-educate or search for information (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Moreover, Ducoffe (1995), as cited in Febrian et al. (2021), defined it as the degree of useful, sensible, and resourceful information that any website can provide. Plume & Slade (2018) cited in their research that it's the most commonly identified gratifications of social media, and it's defined as the search for information and consume it as an act of learning. Moreover, one of the most important reasons for people to go online is to search for and gather information (Maddox, 1998; as cited in Lim & Ting, 2012), and as people's need for more and more information is increasing day by day, they start searching about it outside their reference groups (Hsu and Lu, 2004; as cited in Bu et al., 2021).

Social media today is one of the primary sources of information, as Whiting & Williams (2013) found out that 80% of the respondents of their research outline that they use social media to seek out information about products, sales, deals, events, birthdays, parties and businesses. Haq (2009), as cited in Lim & Ting (2012), suggested that the customers' perceptions of the company in general and the products/services it provides were directly influenced by the quality of information their website offers.

In the same study, Bauer and Greyser (1968) mentioned that the main reason people choose a specific media source is its ability to provide information. For example,

Xiang and Gretzel (2010), as cited in Bu et al. (2021), said that users who travel seek to collect information about their destination through social media, assisting them in decision making. According to Chung and Han (2017), in the study of Bu, the sources of information on social media vary, and it may be people like influencers or organizations like service or product providers. They mentioned that people are willing to adopt information for another group member expecting the same experience. In addition, the demand for CI is increasing because consumers are not taking information passively but are willing to choose the CI that satisfies their specific needs (Hur et al., 2017; as cited in Bu et al., 2021).

#### **3.2.3.4. Content Entertainment “CE”**

The third dimension of UGT is content entertainment. According to Bu et al. (2021), most brands have used brand entertainment on social media platforms. According to Whiting & Williams (2013), 64% of respondents used social media as a source of entertainment. Many researchers defined CE. In general, entertainment value means the extent of fun and enjoyment individuals feel from using the online network to interact with others (Ku, Chen, et al., 2013; Pai & Arnott, 2013; as cited in Bu et al., 2021). It's also defined in social media and websites as using these channels to provide entertainment, enjoyment, and fun to the users and the extent to which it can entertain them (Febrian et al., 2021; Whiting & Williams, 2013).

Besides, users will be motivated to use media or re-visit the website more often if it provides them higher entertainment value, increasing the benefits provided for them. (Luo, 2002; as cited in Lim & Ting, 2012). CE brings back a lot of benefits to brands. According to Bu et al. (2021), it helps build an emotional connection and

provides continuous sensory immersion between audience and brand. The audience prefers this type of content because it has both informational impact and informational value directly related to internet advertising content (Goldsmith & Lafferty, 2002; as cited in Bu et al., 2021). Moreover, some research in the tourism sector found that people are willing to search for more information and entertainment on social media in the future if they got reliable and complete (Hur et al., 2017).

#### **3.2.3.5. Self-Expression “SE”**

The fourth dimension of UGT is self-expression. It is defined as “the extent to which individuals try to control others’ impressions of them” (Choi et al., 2016). Plume & Slade (2018) defined it as people’s need to express themselves and their personal experiences with others. Also, most social media platforms encourage users to share and express their personalities through personal images, information, graphic design, and other content to positively influence how others perceive them (Choi et al., 2016). And this happens increasingly today, and it’s supported by Whiting & Williams (2013); respondents’ answers showed that 56% of them used social media to express their thoughts and opinions, and, as a result, they rated it as the most effective platform to express personalities of brands and customers. It brings a higher value being ever (Orehek and Human, 2016; as cited in Bu et al., 2021).

Choi et al. (2016) assured that it had been listed as a primary motivation for the users to use social media as they can express themselves to people outside their groups by providing specific information. The main purpose is to find out the mutual social norms between individuals among members of the social group (Wooten and Reed, 2004; as cited in Bu et al., 2021). Moreover, this feature gave users a powerful

motivation for participating in online activities, so it has been considered one of the social media's unique and distinctive features (Lee and Ma, 2012; as cited in Bu et al., 2021).

#### **3.2.4. Planned Behavior Theory**

The second theory is planned behavior theory which is one of the most influential theories that the researcher thinks could be linked to this topic.

According to Hughes et al. (2009), when customers intend to buy, their intentions are predictable by three antecedents: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These are the dimensions of planned behavior theory, developed by Icek Ajzen, and it explains intentions to predict an individual's behavior through attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (PBC). Every dimension of these varies for individuals according to the situation and behavior (Ferdous, 2010).

The most profound explanation of each term was best by (Hughes et al., 2009, P.40), as follows:

- Behavioral Beliefs "Attitude": a customer's belief that behavior leads to a particular result and his evaluation of this
  - Attitude towards behavior: a combination of belief, strength, and evaluation.
- Normative Beliefs: a customer's belief that specific peers think he should perform the behavior and his motivation to comply with these peers
  - Subjective norms: a combination of belief, strength, and motivation to comply.
    - Control beliefs: a customer's belief that he has the opportunity, knowledge, ability, skill, and resources to perform the behavior.

- Perceived behavioral control combines belief, strength, and perceived power.

As Hughes et al. (2009) found, perceived behavioral control was significantly stronger than attitudes and subjective norms.

### **3.2.5. Purchase Intentions**

Purchase Intention (PI) is “what we think we will buy” (Park, J. 2002; as cited in Rezvani et al., 2012). According to Nawaz & Kaldeen (2020), purchase intention is similar to decision-making (Mirabi et al., 2015). In this process, customers explain their likelihood, willingness, or plan to purchase specific brands, and according to Schiffman & Kanuk (2004); as cited in Subasinghe & Weerasisri (2019), it measures the possibility of buying it. Also, as cited in the same study, it had been identified by Keller (2001); as a key indicator to predict consumption behavior and measure the effectiveness of purchase behavior. So they conclude the difference between attitude and purchase intention; they defined attitude as the evaluation of products/services, and purchase intention as the motivation to perform a behavior. And they measured purchase intention as a substitute for actual choice. They defined it as the consumer’s behavioral tendency to purchase the product.

The online purchase process is arranged into three categories: pre-sales, sales, and post-sales. In the first phase, retailers had to provide all possibilities for customers to access the products easily and offer reasonable prices in order to draw their attention (Khandelwal et al., 2018). Kotler & Armstrong (2011); as cited in Subasinghe & Weerasisri (2019), mentioned this stage and stated it as the evaluation stage of the Buyer Decision Process in which the consumer ranks brands to form purchase intentions. Then in the second phase, customers decide to buy, so they order and pay.

The last phase is where retailers and customers build long-term communication; they provide essential services and solutions for problems. In this process, and according to Lim & Ting (2012), they need to be given an entertaining and informative online shopping experience, which agrees with the uses and gratification theory.

The study of Febrian et al. (2021) provides evidence that the uses and gratification theory and user-generated content – classified as the two main theories of digital content marketing-had, had a significant positive effect on customer engagement and purchase intention. Also, according to Ajzen (1991), in the same study, many researchers linked purchase intention with planned behavior theory. This agrees with Soebagyo (2014); as cited in Nawaz & Kaldeen (2020), this process was also considered a component of consumer behavior, such as the attitude towards products/services. As for social media specifically, their study provided evidence that it had a significant effect on the intention of customers to purchase a product or service (Akhtar, Tahir, & Asghar, 2016).

And this was supported by the study of Toor et al., (2017) and Rudyanto (2018), which prove the influence on purchase intention specifically via online communication or word of mouth. In the end, it's noteworthy that many factors have a relationship with purchase intention like (1) demographic factors such as age, gender, profession, and education, (2) other particular features of products, (3) perception of consumers, (4) country of origin and (5) perception of country of origin (Lu, M. 2007 & C. L. Wang, Li, Barnes, & Ahn, 2012; as cited in Rezvani et al., 2012).

### **3.2.6. The Concept of Customer Loyalty**

There are many descriptions and definitions for brand loyalty. According to Gronholdt (2010), it is the extent to which consumers have attached to the brand and entails repeated purchases and recommendations of a brand to others. Researchers divided customer loyalty into two definitions: behavioral and attitudinal. From the behavioral side, it's the customer's behavior of repurchasing because they like a particular brand or service. It includes a proportion, probability of purchase, and purchase sequence (Jiang et al., 2015 & Zeithaml et al., 1996). From the attitudinal side, it reflects the emotional and psychological desire of the customer to repurchase the product and recommend it to others (Baumann et al., 2012).

Many empirical studies have demonstrated that brand loyalty directly affects purchase intentions (Dick and Basu, 2017). But companies, according to Khandelwal et al. (2018), can't affect consumers' decisions and gain customer loyalty through traditional marketing methods. So, they started using digital marketing and considered it as one of the primary and most powerful strategies today to gain customer loyalty, as it's become easier to find their needs and communicate with them. This strategy ultimately increases the chances of purchase.

Moreover, according to Febrian et al. (2021), this strategy helps in engaging the company's customers to be long-term loyal customers, as it is considered an adaptive process that allows companies to collaborate with customers and partners to jointly create, communicate, deliver, and maintain value for all stakeholders (Kannan & Li, 2016).

### **3.2.7. Palestinian Services SMEs**

There is no universally standard definition of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). It depends on the criteria used to define the conditions and situation of these enterprises: sales, market size, employment rate, and invested capital (Dindees, 2018). Ministries and governments worldwide have recognized SMEs for their contributions to economic prosperity and growth, new job creation and employment, and social cohesion and development (Morrison, Breen, & Ali 2003) (OECD, 2004).

Around the world, small enterprises are projects or businesses with 10 – 20 employees or less. And the medium-sized ones are defined as businesses with 100 – 500 employees (Palestinian Business Report, 2014). The EU classified a business as small when the number of its employees is less than 50, and the medium-sized one is less than 250. In the Arab countries, according to Al-Sarayrah (1996), as cited in; Dindees (2018), it had been classified from activity size as follows:

- Micro enterprises: less than five employees, investing less than 5000\$ (in addition to real estate and buildings)
- Small enterprises: 5 – 15 employees, investing less than 15,000\$ (in addition to real estate and buildings)
- Medium enterprises: 16 – 25 employees, investing 15,000 – 25,000\$ (without real estate and buildings)

Here in Palestine, and according to PCBs, these numbers in small business is 1-4, and for the medium ones is 5 – 20. And according to the Palestinian Business Report (2014), the proportion of these enterprises is 95% of the GDP, which means it's critical and vital to the economy.

### 3.3. Empirical Literature Review

Title of study	Aim of Study	Design of study	Findings	Further research
Febrian, A. & Bangsawan, S. & Ahadiat, A.& Ms, M. (2021). Digital Content Marketing Strategy in Increasing Customer Engagement in Covid-19 Situation. International Journal for Pharmaceutical Research Scholars. 10.31838/ijpr/2021.13.01.684.	To study the effect of two digital content marketing strategies (UGT, UGC) on purchase intention: customer engagement as a mediator.	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- User-generated content and Uses and gratifications theory have a significant effect on customer purchase intention.</li> <li>- Customer engagement plays a mediating role in the relationship between the two variables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To test more kinds of online or digital media.</li> <li>- To test the effect of DCM on more variables.</li> <li>- To do the same study in deferent cultures.</li> </ul>
Nawaz, S. S., & Kaldeen, M. (2020). Impact of digital marketing on purchase intention. <i>Int. J. Adv. Sci.</i>	This study aims to determine the relationship between social media, email marketing, customer engagement and	Quantitative	-All the variables are significantly and positively impacting the dependent variables.	-

<p><i>Technol</i>, 29(4), 1113-1120.</p>	<p>purchase intention in ICT company named CoderFirst Sri Lanka.</p>			
<p>Yazgan-Pektas, S., &amp; Hassan, A. (2020). The effect of digital content marketing on tourists' purchase intention. <i>Journal of Tourismology</i>. Advance online publication.</p>	<p>To study the effect of digital contents on tourists' purchase intention, using persuasion knowledge model.</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>There is a significant positive relationship between tourists' purchase intention, e-WOM and suspicion sub dimensions</p>	<p>- In future studies to add the cultural dimension and involve participants from many countries. - To focus on the process of using persuasion knowledge is suggested.</p>
<p>Bu, Y., Parkinson, J., &amp; Thaichon, P. (2020). Digital content marketing as a catalyst for e-WOM in food tourism. <i>Australian Marketing Journal</i>,</p>	<p>To investigate how DCM can generate social impact, and in turn, it explores how this social impact can lead to e-WOM</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>- Positive relationship between CE and Informational Social Impact (ISI). - Positive relationship between SE and Normative Social Impact (NSI). - CI and SI had a</p>	<p>- To study the same variables with mixed-methods sequential exploratory strategy. - To consider some factors as potential moderating variables. - To study the same topic in other</p>

<p>j.ausmj.2020.01. doi: 10.1016/j.ausmj.2020.01.001</p>			<p>positive relationship with both NSI and ISI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NSI and ISI positively influenced e-WOM.</li> <li>- Social impact played a mediating role between DCM and e-WOM.</li> </ul>	<p>countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To study why the CE of DCM does not create NSI in food tourism contexts, and whether it could result in social impact with moderating factors.</li> </ul>
<p>Subasinghe, U., &amp; Weerasisri, R. A. S. (2019). The Impact of Digital Content Marketing on the Purchase Intention of Connected Consumers: A Study Based on Natural Ingredient-Based Personal Care Products. Sri Lanka Journal of Marketing, 5(1), 59-71.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To examine the impact of DCM on the PI of connected consumers towards natural ingredient based personal care products</li> <li>- To examine the role of Perceived Trust as a mediator variable between DCM and PI</li> </ul>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is a direct relationship between DCM and PI.</li> <li>- The DCM impact on PI is mediated by trust.</li> <li>- Age acts as a moderator within the mediated relationship of trust between DCM and PI.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To cover more areas, different types of consumers and more cultural backgrounds.</li> <li>- To dive into understanding of different ways of improving the perceived trust.</li> </ul>
<p>Plume, C. J., &amp;</p>	<p>This study aims</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>- Information</p>	<p>- To study if the</p>

<p>Slade, E. L. (2018). Sharing of sponsored advertisements on social media: A uses and gratifications perspective. Information Systems Frontiers, 20(3), 471-483.</p>	<p>to determine salient motivations for users' intentions to share sponsored advertisements, in the tourism context, using uses and gratification theory.</p>		<p>sharing had a negative effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-expression had no significant effect.</li> <li>- The motivations were not found to significantly differ between males and females.</li> </ul>	<p>motivations mentioned on it are valid in other industries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To test age and personal innovativeness as mediator variables.</li> <li>-To use experimental approach utilizing gender-specific tourism-related sponsored advertisements to explore differences.</li> <li>- To utilize random samples to test the proposed model.</li> <li>- To utilize the validated model in other cultures.</li> </ul>
<p>Khandelwal, M., Sharma, A., Deepika Varshney, D., &amp; Arti Dagur, A. (2018). To analyze Consumer Satisfaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To understand the use and importance of DCM strategy deployed by companies to gain new customers and keep exciting.</li> <li>-To evaluate the</li> </ul>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DCM has a high significant impact on customers, and it is an important marketing tool type which cannot be ignored by companies.</li> <li>- Some features of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-</li> </ul>

<p>level in Digital Content Marketing with Emphasis on Shopping Websites. International Journal of Engineering &amp; Technology, 7(3.12), 637. doi: 10.14419/ijet.v7i3.12.16444</p>	<p>content marketing factors that affects buying behavior and analyzing customers satisfaction.</p>		<p>DCM strategy which can help to gain more satisfaction.</p>	
<p>Ifinedo, P. (2016). Applying uses and gratifications theory and social influence processes to understand students' pervasive adoption of social networking sites: Perspectives from the Americas. <i>Inte</i></p>	<p>This study aims to provide information on university students' needs to adopt social networking sites (SNSs) pervasively using the uses and gratifications theory (UGT) and social influence (SI) processes as framework.</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>The cultural factors had a positive impact on the pervasive adoption of SNSs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To consider sampling views from more countries.</li> <li>- To use longitudinal data which may offer more conclusive information.</li> <li>- To collect data from all populations, including professionals.</li> <li>- To expand the proposed research model by adding relevant factors.</li> <li>- To examine the</li> </ul>

<i>International Journal of Information Management</i> , 36(2), 192-206.				possible effects of relevant antecedents on the categories of UGT and SI.
Balteș, L.P. (2015). Content marketing - the fundamental tool of digital marketing. Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov. Series V: Economic Sciences, 111-118.	To define the concept of content marketing, and its importance within the marketing policy as well as the proper means of developing a correct strategy for content marketing.	Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A successful digital marketing strategy needs a quality content marketing.</li> <li>- An extensive research should be conducted to discover targeted audience needs and meet their interests.</li> </ul>	-
Kee, A. W., & Yazdanifard, R. (2015). The Review of Content Marketing as a New Trend in Marketing Practices.	To discuss the use of content marketing in businesses and how it brings benefits to the companies	Qualitative	Six strategies companies use during the implementation of content marketing in their businesses	-
Whiting, A., & Williams, D.	To explore and discuss the UGT	Qualitative	- Ten uses and gratifications for	-

<p>(2013). Why people use social media: a uses and gratifications approach. <i>Qualitative market research: an international journal</i>.</p>	<p>that consumer receive from using social media, and to provide a better understanding of why they use it.</p>		<p>using social media.</p>	
<p>Lim, W. M., &amp; Ting, D. H. (2012). E-shopping: An analysis of the uses and gratifications theory. <i>Modern Applied Science</i>, 6(5), 48.</p>	<p>To understand how consumers form their attitude and online shopping intention based on the uses and gratifications.</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>- Consumers' need to be provided with a online shopping experience that is entertaining, informative and free from irritation.</p>	<p>- To examine these constructs from the UGT structure in light of the different categories of products and services.  - To use qualitative method and use interpersonal individual interviews and focus group discussions.  - To do the same study in other Asian countries or other populations.</p>

Table (1) Empirical Literature Review

### **3.4. Study Gap**

The researcher has benefited from the previous studies in designing the study and building the study tool, the questionnaire. The questionnaire of this study was built and developed depending on dimensions, scales, and items from previous studies. The difference between this study compared to the other studies that it's the first one in Palestine talking about digital content marketing strategy in general not only social media or digital marketing. Moreover, it's the first study that analyzes the relationship between the digital content marketing strategy and customer purchase intention in Palestine as the other studies have been done in other geographical areas. In addition, this is the first study that takes into consideration customer loyalty as a mediating variable.

This study is a leading one as it used two main theories instead of one planned behavior theory and uses and gratification theory. The field of this study services SMEs in Palestine. And the targeted sample is the customers of these companies in West bank.

## **Chapter Three:**

### **Methodology**

This chapter outlines and presents the used methodology in this study by explaining the study design, data sources, study instrument (Questionnaire) steps, and design, questionnaire validity and reliability, study conceptual model, the population of the study, sample size, and analytical method.

#### **5.1. Study Design**

This study used a quantitative approach in order to reach the findings and investigate the mediating role of customer loyalty in digital content marketing strategy and purchase intention in the Palestinian services SMEs. To do that, a structured questionnaire was used as a primary source of data tool to gather information from the targeted population. The sample of this study was chosen non-randomly (convenience) sample of digital channels users.

#### **5.2. Data Collection**

In this study, two data sources are involved in collecting data: primary source and it were collected by distributing a structured questionnaire to Palestinian digital channels users. And secondary sources, like data gathered in the literature review, which already exists from previous studies, research papers, articles, journals, books, dissertations, etc.

#### **5.3. Study Instrument**

As mentioned before, a structured questionnaire was used after wording modifications in order to make it clear and related to the main topic, and it was distributed online.

### 5.3.1. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire is designed in four sections; the first one studies demographic and general information about the respondents and their digital behaviors. It's divided into five variables; gender, academic level, digital channels they use, their behavior towards Palestinian services SMEs, and content preferences.

The second section is "Digital Content Marketing Strategy", and it consists of four sub-sections: 1) content entertainment, which consists of five items, 2) content information, which consists of six items 3) social interaction, which consists of four items and 4) self-expression, and consisted of three items.

The third section, "customer loyalty", consists of four items. And the last section is "purchase intention", which consists of four items.

### 5.3.2. Questionnaire Steps And Items

After reviewing the previous studies, the questionnaire was built as follows:

Variable	Dimension	Scale	Source
Digital Content Marketing Strategy	Content Entertainment	The (funny or social) content intends me to purchase the services. Exciting content by the services providers intends me to purchase their service. I enjoy engaging with service providers' online content. Services providers online content is exciting. Services providers online content is entertaining.	Febrian, Ahadiat, Bangsawan, 2021

Table (2): Content Entertainment Scale

Variable	Dimension	Scale	Source
Digital Content Marketing Strategy	Content Information	<p>The online content by services providers is efficient to get information.</p> <p>The online content by services providers provides the least information.</p> <p>The online content by services providers satisfies my need.</p> <p>The availability of information about services by the service provider is useful in aiding my decision.</p> <p>Accurate information by service providers on online channels improves my decision effectiveness.</p> <p>Timely information on online channels improves my performance of taking the decision.</p>	Bu, Parkinson, Thaichon, 2020; Febrian, Ahadiat, Bangsawan,2021

Table (3): Content Information Scale

Variable	Dimension	Scale	Source
Digital Content Marketing Strategy	Social Interaction	<p>The online content by the service provider can stimulate me to purchase the service.</p> <p>I care about what other consumers have to say online about their experience with the services</p> <p>I care what my friends have to say about their experience with the service</p> <p>I care what online users are saying about service experiences</p>	Yin, 2019; Bu, Parkinson, Thaichon, 2020

Table (4): Social Interaction Scale

Variable	Dimension	Scale	Source
Digital Content Marketing Strategy	Self-Expression	<p>The online content by services providers can meet my expectations to present my personality</p> <p>The online content by services providers can make me gain a sense of belonging</p> <p>Engaging with online content by service providers make me feel that other people think I am friendly</p>	Bu, Parkinson, Thaichon, 2020

Table (5): Self-Expression Scale

Variable	Dimension	Source
Customer Loyalty	<p>I intend to say positive things online about services providers I deal with</p> <p>I am willing to recommend family and friends to purchase services that I'm satisfied with.</p> <p>I recommend the service to anyone who seeks online advice</p> <p>I will continue buying more services from services providers who can satisfy all my needs online.</p>	Tabrani, Amin, Nizam 2018

Table (6): Customer Loyalty Scale

Variable	Dimension	Source
Purchase Intention	<p>I plan to buy services that offers information on digital channels</p> <p>I intend to buy services that offers information on digital channels</p> <p>I think of buying services that offers information on digital channels</p> <p>I make an effort buy services that offers information on digital channels</p>	Pektas, Hassan 2019

Table (7): Purchase Intention Scale

## 5.4. Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

### 5.4.1. Validity of The Questionnaire

Before distributing the final version to the targeted respondents, the questionnaire was developed, edited, approved, and passed all needed steps. It was sent to the supervisor and six more evaluators to evaluate each dimension and its consistency validation with the main objectives to achieve this study's main aim.

Digital content marketing strategy dimensions, purchase intention and customer loyalty, are identified from previous literature and tested by the supervisor and other

people before publishing to the final respondents, so the validity of this instrument content for the present study was ensured. The evaluators agreed it would achieve the main objectives and answer the questions.

#### **5.4.2. Reliability of the Questionnaire**

According to Fink (2013), the minimum number of questionnaires in a pilot should be above ten questionnaires. It's considered a critical step in the earlier observation of pretesting the questionnaire and its reliability. So, the questionnaires for this study were tested before final distribution to a sample of digital users.

To calculate the score of reliability, Cronbach's Alpha test was used, and it was used for the instrument before and after the main survey. The researcher distributed thirty questionnaires to the sample with the same characteristics of targeted digital users and discussed it with them.

As done internationally, and to achieve the meaning of data reliability, before respondents started answering, a full clarification was given to them; as a result, they were able to answer the questionnaire easily.

Also, to ensure that the acceptable Alpha value that meets the statistical requirement for the instrument to be characterized as reliable should be equal to or above 0.70, according to Tavakol & Dennick (2011).

The reliability of this questionnaire was tested as the following: It was compared to the suggested (0.7) thresholds. The researcher examined the result of insignificant factor loadings and low factor loadings. Its can be seen that (see table 8) the P-values are all less than 0.01, suggesting that all remaining factor loading are significant. In addition, based on the threshold suggested by Bagozzi, Yi, & Philips (1991) is (0.7) and

(0.5), respectively, for the values of reliability and mean of item variance, the result of each construct is shown below its threshold, which implies that the reliability and convergent validity are acceptable. Therefore, the measurement model is proved to be adequate, as shown in table (8):

Dimensions	No. of Items	Reliability	Result
Content Entertainment	5	0.891	Pass
Content Information	6	0.787	Pass
Social Interaction	4	0.772	Pass
Self-Expression	3	0.851	Pass
Digital Content Marketing	18	0.900	Pass
Customer Loyalty	4	0.874	Pass
Purchase Intention	4	0.862	Pass

Table (8): Cronbach's Alpha Value of Each Dimension

The above table illustrates that this questionnaire is valid, and all variables are considered reliable as all Cronbach Alpha scores are above 0.70.

### 5.5. Conceptual Model

The main objective of this study is to test the role of mediating variable “Customer Loyalty” in the impact of the independent variable “Digital Content Marketing Strategy” on the dependent variable “Purchase Intention” on Palestinian SMEs using the uses and gratification theory and planned behavioral theory.

The conceptual framework is developed from the literature review as shown in the questionnaire scale, and the below figure UGT adopted by many researchers and consists of four main dimensions. According to Bu, et al. (2020), and Ifinedo (2016), these dimensions are content information (CI), content entertainment (CE), social

interaction (SI), and self-expression (SE). The behavioral theory was used by Ferdous (2010).



## CONCEPTUAL MODEL

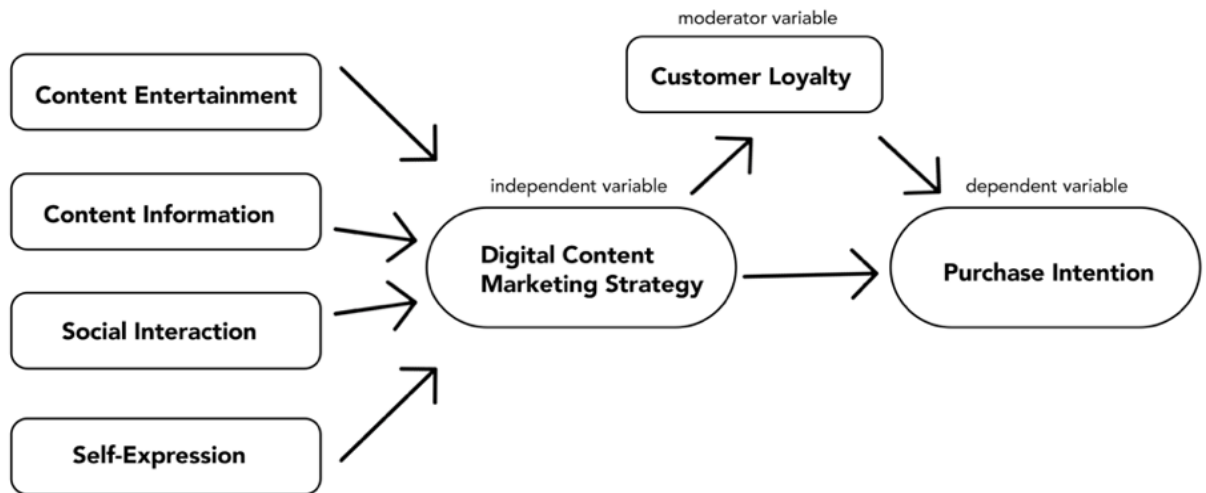


Figure (1): Conceptual Model

The figure above illustrates the study three types of variables which are: independent variable “Digital Content Marketing Strategy” and its dimensions, (1) Content-Entertainment, (2) Content Information, (3) Social Interaction and Subjective Norms, and (4) Self-Expression. The dependent variable is “Purchase Intention”, and the moderate variable is “Customer Loyalty.”

### 5.6. Population of Study

The population of this study is all people who have the ability and willingness to help in this study and who share the required characteristics needed to understand and achieve the study objectives. Therefore, the targeted population is all users of digital channels. And the number of the target population is 1,800,000. (Meta, 2022).

### 5.7. Sample of Study

The sample of this study was chosen based on scientific rules and methods, and it was a non-random (Convenience) sampling method.

The Minimum Sample Size of this study was 385, and it was calculated based on the following equation and according to Daniel's (1999) equation.

$$(n) = \frac{z^2 P(1-P)}{d^2}$$

Where:

$n$  : Sample size required,

$z$ : Z statistic for a level of confidence required,

$P$  : Expected prevalence or proportion (If the expected prevalence is 20%, then  $P= 0.2$ ), and

$d$ : Precision (if the precision is 5%, then  $d = 0.05$ ).

$$\text{The sample size} = \frac{0.95^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2} = 385$$

Collected sample size = 396 observations

### 5.8. Method of Data Analysis

The primary data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

In this study, the researcher used frequency to describe the demographic variables. And used mean and standard deviation to answer the study question, Pearson correlations to test the hypothesis, hierarchical regression analysis to test the significant impact of the digital content marketing strategy on customer purchase intention in Palestinian SMEs, and the mediating role of customer loyalty.

## Chapter Four:

### Data Analysis and Discussion

This chapter analyzes the data collected from the targeted sample using a questionnaire. And the findings presented in three sections: Participant Profile, Study Questions, and Testing Hypothesis.

In order to achieve the main aim, a quantitative method was utilized. The sample size was 384 participants with a 77% respondent rate. 384 were distributed, 296 questionnaires were answered, while 50 of them were invalid. Data were collected by using the Fifth-Likert scale.

#### 4.1 Respondents Profiles

Table (9) presents the demographic data of respondents in terms of gender, academic level, and their general behavior towards online channels of their services providers.

Demographic Variables	Sample size (n=246)	Percent
	Frequency	
Gender		
Male	165	67.1
Female	81	32.9
Academic level		
Diploma or Less	33	13.4
BA	147	59.3
Masters or higher	67	27.2
Do you usually follow your services providers online? (ISPs – electricity company – dentist – insurance ... )		
Yes	168	68.3
No	78	31.7

Table (9): Demographic Variables of Study

As shown above, the number of respondents was (246), 67.1% of them were male and 32.9% were women.

The variance between genders' percentage, was due to inability to monitor the respondents as it was distributed online, and it reached a higher number of male than female.

The largest percentage of them, which were 59.3%, got BA degree, 27.2% got master's degree and the remaining percentage got diploma or less which forms only 13.4% of the respondents.

Respondents were also asked if they are following services providers that they benefit from them on their digital channels, and the result shows that 68.3% already did. Meanwhile 31.7% of the respondents answered no. These numbers help

in understanding respondents' behavior towards digital content marketing and taking purchase decision.

## 4.2 Study Questions

In this section, the aim is to answer study questions: How do digital content marketing strategy dimensions affect consumer purchase intentions in the Palestinian services SMEs with the mediating role of customer loyalty.

To judge the level of items on the Likert-Scale, the study considered that if the mean of the item is (1-2.33), then the level is low, (2.34-3.66) moderate, but for the high-level item, the mean will be (3.67-5.00).

Degree	Range
High	5-3.67
Moderate	3.66-2.34
Low	2.33-1

Table (9): Submitted Data Analysis Procedures for Likert Scale Data Source:

Iriqat and Diebes (2019)

#### 4.2.1 Question One

To answer the study question: “What is the reality of digital content marketing strategy in the Palestinian services SMEs?”

Items	Mean	S.D	Degree	Rank
The (funny or social) content intends me to purchase the services.	2.8008	1.21763	Moderate	5
Exciting content by the services providers intends me to purchase their service	3.2967	1.21107	Moderate	1
I enjoy engaging with service providers' online content	3.0407	1.19111	Moderate	4
Services providers' online content is exciting	3.2846	1.19195	Moderate	2
Services providers' online content is entertaining	3.2561	1.14440	Moderate	3
Content Entertainment	3.1358	.99449	Moderate	
The online content by services providers is efficient to get information	3.1626	1.14553	Moderate	3
The online content by services providers provides the least information	3.1220	1.22615	Moderate	4
The online content by services providers satisfies my need.	3.0894	1.00210	Moderate	6
The availability of information about services by the service provider is useful in aiding my decision.	3.2724	1.07429	Moderate	1
Accurate information by service providers on online channels improves my decision effectiveness	3.1098	1.14292	Moderate	5
Timely information on online channels improves my performance of taking the decision	3.2073	1.11103	Moderate	2
Content Information	3.1606	.77917	Moderate	

The online content by the service provider can stimulate me to purchase the service.	3.4187	1.11369	Moderate	4
I care about what other consumers have to say online about their experience with the services	4.0854	1.03649	High	2
I care what my friends have to say about their experience with the service	4.3577	.90016	High	1
I care what online users are saying about service experiences	4.0325	1.06472	High	3
Social Interaction + Subjective norms	3.9736	.79527	High	
The online content by services providers can meet my expectations to present my personality	3.0935	1.03184	Moderate	2
The online content by services providers can make me gain a sense of belonging	3.0894	1.06528	Moderate	3
Engaging with online content by service providers make me feel that other people think I am friendly	3.1667	1.09202	Moderate	1
Self-Expression	3.1165	.93312	Moderate	
Digital Content marketing	3.3270	.67777	Moderate	

Table (10): Descriptive Statistics of Digital Content Marketing Strategy

As shown in table (10), the “Digital Content Marketing Strategy” dimensions have a moderate degree. That means people are aware, to some extent, of the type of content that they are receiving from service providers and how and when to make a purchase decision. And also, companies are aware of the entertaining content provided and try to make it influential to their target to affect their purchase decision (M= 3.3270, SD=.67777).

The degree of the first dimension in digital content marketing strategy, “Content Entertainment,” is moderate ( $M = 3.1358$ ,  $SD = .99449$ ). According to respondents’ answers, the most item of entertaining content they like and intends them to make a purchase decision is “*Exciting content by the services providers intends me to purchase their service*” with a moderate degree ( $M = 3.2967$  –  $SD = 1.21107$ ). In the second place comes “*Services providers’ online content is exciting*”, with a moderate degree as well ( $M = 3.2846$ ,  $SD = 1.19195$ ). The third item, according to respondents’ answers, is “*Services providers’ online content is entertaining*” with a moderate degree also ( $M = 3.256$ ,  $SD = 1.1444$ ). The fourth one is also had a moderate degree ( $M = 3.407$ ,  $SD = 1.1911$ ) which is “*I enjoy engaging with service providers’ online content*” And the last one is “*The (funny or social) content intends me to purchase the services*” ( $M = 2.8008$ ,  $SD = 1.2176$ ).

These results show that users enjoy the exciting and entertaining content provided by service providers more than the funny content and are willing to make the purchase decision more than just engaging with them. In my opinion, this brings many benefits to the brands. Besides encouraging them to make the decision that achieves the primary goal of any business, which is profitability, the brand will be recognized by the users and stay at the top of their minds.

These results also, comply with the study of Luo (2002), as it mentioned that users would be motivated to or re-visit the website more often if it provides them higher entertainment value. And also, Bu et al. (2021) emphasized that it brings back many benefits and builds an emotional connection which also makes them recognizable by users.

“Content Information”, the second dimension of digital content marketing strategy, also achieved a moderate degree ( $M = 3.1606$ ,  $SD = .77917$ ). The respondents selected the fourth item, *“The availability of information about services by the service provider is useful in aiding my decision,”* as the most essential item. It got a moderate degree ( $M = 3.272$ ,  $SD = 1.0742$ ). The second-ranked item was the sentence number six, *“Timely information on online channels improves my performance of taking the decision,”* with a moderate degree and high deviation ( $M = 3.2073$ ,  $SD = 1.1110$ ). The third-ranking was the first sentence, *“The online content by services providers is efficient to get information”*, and got a moderate degree with a high deviation ( $M = 3.1626$ ,  $SD = 1.1455$ ). The fourth item was the second sentence, *“The online content by services providers provides the least information”*, as shown in the table with a moderate degree and high deviation ( $M = 3.1220$ ,  $SD = 1.22615$ ). The fifth-ranked sentence was, *“Accurate information by service providers on online channels improves my decision effectiveness,”* with a moderate degree and high deviation ( $M = 3.1098$ ,  $SD = 1.14292$ ). And the last one was the sixth sentence with a moderate degree and high deviation ( $M = 3.0894$ ,  $SD = 1.00210$ ), which says, *“The online content by services providers satisfies my need.”*

These numbers mean, in other words, that service providers here in Palestine do not provide the least needed information to the audience. But the audience would like to get more information, and it may improve their ability to make the decision. In my opinion, the availability of information by the service providers will enhance the purchase decision of the targeted audience. So, services providers have to focus on providing data about their services and offer continuously and make sure it reaches the higher possible number of targeted audiences at the right time with a higher frequency

in order to affect their decision. Also, they have to make access to this data as convenient as possible to be the main reference of information for their customer, which will strengthen their connection, and for noncustomers to attract them.

These results fit Lim & Ting (2012) results, as they mentioned a relationship between customer perceptions about the company and the quality of information their website provides. And also fit with Bu et al. (2021), as they mentioned that people would choose the source that satisfies their specific information needs. And also noted that people seek to collect information about the service through digital channels to assist them in decision-making.

The third dimension of digital content marketing strategy is “Social Interaction and Subjective norms”, which had a high degree and low deviation ( $M = 3.9736$ ,  $SD = 0.79627$ ). The most important sentence was the third item *“I care what my friends have to say about their experience with the service*, with a high degree and low deviation ( $M = 4.3577$ ,  $SD = 0.90016$ ). The second-ranked item was the second sentence with a high degree but a high deviation ( $M = 4.0854$ ,  $SD = 1.03649$ ), and it says, *“I care about what other consumers have to say online about their experience with the services.”* The third-ranked item also with a high degree was sentence four, which says, *“I care what online users are saying about service experiences”*, it’s also got a high degree with a high deviation ( $M = 4.0325$ ,  $SD = 1.0647$ ). The least ranked item was sentence number one *“The online content by the service provider can stimulate me to purchase the service*, with a moderate degree and high deviation ( $M = 3.4187$ ,  $SD = 1.11369$ ).

The results of “Social Interaction and Subjective Norms” show that audiences are greatly affected by their friends’ experiences and opinions about the service. In the second place comes the experience and opinion of other consumers and online users.

And at the last place comes the content by the provider itself. In my opinion, these results are very near to reality and match the user-generated content mentioned in the Febrian et al. (2021) study in the literature review, which says that content provided by users has a stronger effect on purchasing decisions and it's more trustworthy.

Regarding the fourth and last dimension of the strategy, "Self-Expression", the results show a moderate degree and low deviation ( $M = 3.1165$ ,  $SD = 0.93312$ ), and all items achieved the same degree. The higher ranking one was sentence three: "*Engaging with online content by service providers make me feel that other people think I am friendly*", with a high deviation ( $M = 3.1667$ ,  $SD = 1.09202$ ). The second was sentence number one, which says, "*The online content by services providers can meet my expectations to present my personality*", with high deviation ( $M = 3.0935$ ,  $SD = 1.03184$ ). And the last one was the second sentence with a high deviation ( $M = 3.0894$ ,  $SD = 1.06528$ ), and it says, "*The online content by services providers can make me gain a sense of belonging*".

In my opinion, the results also of this dimension considerably reflect reality, as people are willing to engage with any page in order to show their personality, express their opinion, and show off in case of the luxuries services.

These results fit with many parts of the literature review, as Whiting & Williams (2013) results show that people use digital channels to express their personalities, thoughts, and opinions. And Choi et al. (2016) as they noted that users are sharing content that positively influences how others perceive them.

In conclusion, the results above emphasize the importance of each dimension of "Digital Content Marketing Strategy" and how the audience on the digital channels deals with each one. As respondents' answers, each aspect has an important role in

shaping their decision, from entertaining content to the availability of needed data at the right time and sequence to personal preferences like self-expression and social norms.

#### 4.2.2 Question Two

To answer the study question: “What is the degree of customer loyalty in the Palestinian services SMEs?”

Items	Mean	S.D	Degree	Rank
I intend to say positive things online about services providers I deal with	3.9675	.98092	High	4
I am willing to recommend family and friends to purchase services that I'm satisfied with.	4.1260	.94133	High	1
I recommend the service to anyone who seeks online advice	4.1220	.91326	High	2
I will continue buying more services from services providers who can satisfy all my needs online.	4.1179	.92047	High	3
Customer Loyalty	4.0833	.80062	High	

Table (11): Descriptive Statistics of Customer Loyalty

As shown in the table above, “Customer Loyalty” got a high degree with a low deviation ( $M = 4.0833$ ,  $SD = .80062$ ). The most important item to the respondents was the second one: *“I am willing to recommend family and friends to purchase services that I'm satisfied with.”* It had a high degree with a low deviation ( $M = 4.1260$ ,  $SD = 94133$ ). The second item too got a high degree and low deviation ( $M = 4.1220$ ,  $SD = .91326$ ) which says, *“I recommend the service to anyone who seeks online advice”*. In addition, the third item in importance was the fourth sentence, *“I will continue buying more services from services providers who can satisfy all my needs online”*, with a high degree and low deviation ( $M = 4.1179$ ,  $SD = 0.92047$ ). At last, the fourth important item was the first one, *“I intend to say positive things online about services providers I deal with”*, with a high degree and low deviation ( $M = 3.9675$ ,  $SD = 0.98092$ ).

The high degree results above emphasize that the Palestinian customers are loyal to the SMEs that satisfy their needs. And they are willing to recommend it to their close groups such as families and friends and give advice to anyone who seeks it online. They also will continue dealing with them and say positive things about the service. In my opinion, SMEs have to focus on building a long-term relationship with their customers and satisfy their needs by providing online information and high-quality service to take advantage of the online word-of-mouth effect and make their customers recommend them proudly.

This fit with the definition of customer loyalty mentioned in the literature review, as it's the behavior of repurchase by the customers because they like a particular brand or service (Jiang et al., 2015 & Zeithaml et al., 1996). And according to Baumann et al. (2012), it increases customers' desire to recommend the service. And also meets the study by Dick and Basu (2017), finding that it affects purchase intentions directly.

### 4.2.3 Question Three

To answer the study question: "What is the degree of customer purchase intentions in the Palestinian services SMEs?"

Items	Mean	S.D	Degree	Rank
I plan to buy services that offers information on digital channels	3.6138	.93528	Moderate	3
I intend to buy services that offers information on digital channels	3.6220	.94727	Moderate	2
I think of buying services that offers information on digital channels	3.6545	.95539	Moderate	1
I make an effort buy services that offers information on digital channels	3.2561	1.05534	Moderate	4
Purchase Intention	3.5366	.81952	Moderate	

Table (12): Descriptive Statistics of Purchase Intention

As shown in the table above, “Purchase Intention” got a moderate degree ( $M = 3.5366$ ,  $SD = .81952$ ). This variable had four items. The respondents’ highest rank item is sentence three, which says, *“I think of buying services that offer information on digital channels,”* with a moderate degree and low deviation ( $M = 3.6545$ ,  $SD = .95539$ ). The second-ranked item is *“I intend to buy services that offer information on digital channels,”* with a moderate degree and low deviation ( $M = 3.6220$ ,  $SD = 0.94727$ ). The third-ranked item is sentence number one, with a moderate degree and low deviation ( $M = 3.6138$ ,  $SD = 0.93528$ ), and it says, *“I plan to buy services that offer information on digital channels”*. And the last one is *“I make an effort buy services that offer information on digital channels”*, with a moderate degree but high deviation ( $M = 3.2561$ ,  $SD = 1.05534$ ).

In my opinion, these results show the steps of purchase intention audience when getting the offer/details on digital channels for the first time, they start thinking of it, then intends to buy, after that start planning then make an effort to buy it. And this meets the study of Kotler & Armstrong (2011) mentioned in chapter two as the categories of purchase intention.

Here comes the importance of “Digital Content Marketing Strategy” as a strategy that helps develop consistent and planned content to force people to move from one step to another until they reach the final one and take the decision. And this fit with the study of Akhtar, Tahir, & Asghar (2016), who found out that social media significantly affected customer intention to purchase.

### 4.3 Testing Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Digital content marketing strategy, customer loyalty, and consumer purchase intentions are correlated to each other in the Palestinian services SMEs.

Dimensions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Content Entertainment	1	.473**	.358**	.529**	.099	.196**	.804**
Content Information		1	.462**	.562**	.252**	.401**	.825**
Social Interaction			1	.437**	.599**	.513**	.684**
Self-Expression				1	.290**	.446**	.775**
Customer Loyalty					1	.552**	.360**
Purchase Intention						1	.469**
Digital Content marketing							1

\*: confidence level at 0.05, \*\*: confidence level at 0.01.

Table (13): Correlation Coefficient among digital content marketing strategy, customer loyalty, and customer purchase intentions.

Pearson correlation coefficient matrix among content entertainment, content information, social interaction, self-expression, customer loyalty, and purchase intention.

The table above shows a significant positive relationship between Digital Content marketing, customer loyalty, and purchase intention. There is a significant weak positive correlation between content entertainment and content information ( $r = .473$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), social interaction ( $r = 0.359$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and purchase intention ( $r = 0.196$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). There is significant moderate positive correlation with self-expression ( $r = 0.529$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and significant strong positive correlation with digital content

marketing strategy ( $r = 0.804, p < 0.01$ ). And there is no significant correlation between the content entertainment and customer loyalty ( $r = 0.099, p < 0.05$ ).

Regarding the correlation between content information and digital content marketing strategy in general, there is a significant strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.825, p < 0.01$ ). Also, there is a significant weak positive correlation between it and social interaction ( $r = 0.462, p < 0.01$ ), customer loyalty ( $r = 0.252, p < 0.01$ ) and purchase intention ( $r = 0.401, p < 0.01$ ). It has significant moderate positive correlation with self-expression ( $r = 0.562, p < 0.01$ ). The third one its Social interaction, and there is a significant moderate positive correlation between this dimension and customer loyalty ( $r = 0.599, p < 0.01$ ), purchase intention ( $r = 0.513 < 0.01$ ), and digital content marketing ( $r = 0.684, p < 0.01$ ). and a significant weak positive correlation with self-expression ( $r = 0.437, p < 0.01$ ). The self-expression dimension has a significant weak positive correlation with customer loyalty ( $r = 0.290, p < 0.01$ ), purchase intention ( $r = 0.446, p < 0.01$ ), and a significant strong positive correlation with digital content marketing ( $r = 0.775, p < 0.01$ ).

Regarding customer loyalty there it has a significant moderate positive correlation with purchase intention ( $r = 0.552, p < 0.01$ ), and a significant weak positive correlation with digital content marketing ( $r = 0.360, p < 0.01$ ). And the last relationship is purchase intention and digital content marketing, is a significant weak positive correlation ( $r = 0.469, p < 0.01$ ).

Hypothesis 2: Consumer loyalty plays a significant role in the impact of digital content marketing strategy dimensions on consumer purchase intentions in the Palestinian services SMEs.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> adj.
1	Regression	57.094	4	14.274	32.014	.000 <sup>b</sup>	0.589	0.347	0.336
	Residual	107.452	241	.446					
	Total	164.546	245						
2	Regression	70.317	5	14.063	35.820	.000 <sup>c</sup>	0.654	0.427	0.415
	Residual	94.228	240	.393					
	Total	164.546	245						

Table (14): Model Summary

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		T- value	Sig.
		B	Std. Error		
1	(Constant)	1.143	-2.469	4.851	.000
	Content Entertainment	-.130	2.073	-2.469	.014
	Content Information	.147	6.256	2.073	.039
	Social Interaction	.392	4.136	6.256	.000
	Self-Expression	.250	1.930	4.136	.000
2	(Constant)	.480	-1.512	1.930	.055
	Content Entertainment	-.076	2.308	-1.512	.132
	Content Information	.153	2.293	2.308	.022
	Social Interaction	.162	3.677	2.293	.023
	Self-Expression	.210	5.803	3.677	.000
	Loyalty	.370	4.851	5.803	.000

Table (15): Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for variables predicting purchase intention

The table above (14) shows the summary of the two models. Model number one refers to the hierarchical regression analysis when digital content marketing strategy dimensions support variable is used as a predictor.

Whereas model number two refers to the second step in the hierarchy when digital content marketing strategy dimensions and customer loyalty are used as predictors. The “R” column simple correlation among digital content marketing strategy dimensions and purchase intention (0.589) in the first model, while, in model number two, “R” presents multiple correlations among DCMS, customer loyalty, and purchase intention (0.654). “R2” for model number one indicates that the Digital Content Marketing Strategy account for 34.7% of the variation in purchase intention. Since by adding a moderate variable (customer loyalty) in model number two, the value of “R2” increases to 42.7% of the variation of purchase intention. Therefore, the addition of customer loyalty significantly enhances the prediction of purchase intention, added an extra (0.427 - 0.336) 41.5% of the variation of purchase intention.

Table (14) shows that (F= 32.014, P= .000b) for the initial model, while for the second model (F=35.820) which is highly significant (P=.000c). That mean that customer loyalty significantly improve prediction (R2 change = 0.415, P=.000c). Hierarchical regression analysis was performed to test if the digital content marketing strategy dimensions significantly predicted purchase intention. As shown in table (15), there are two models; the regression of the first model indicated that all digital content marketing strategy dimensions significantly predicted purchase intention.

As for content entertainment it is significantly predicted purchase intention negatively by 13% ( $\beta = -0.130$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). for content information significantly predicted purchase intention positively by 14.7% ( $\beta = 0.147$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). 39.2% for Social Interaction ( $\beta = 0.392$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and it's positive. And also, for Self-Expression 25% ( $\beta = 0.250$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). For the second model, the regression indicated that customer loyalty significantly predicted purchase intention ( $\beta = 0.370$ ,  $P < 0.00$ ).

Here also content entertainment it is significantly predicted purchase intention negatively but less than the first model by 7.6% ( $\beta = -0.076$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). For content information significantly predicted purchase intention positively by 15.3% ( $\beta = 0.153$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). 16.2% for Social Interaction ( $\beta = 0.162$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and it's positive. And also, for Self-Expression 21% ( $\beta = 0.210$ ,  $P < 0.00$ ). Thus, the results from hierarchical multi-regression support the second hypothesis that customer loyalty plays a mediating role in enhancing the impact of digital content marketing strategy on purchase intention in Palestinian SMEs.

## **Chapter Five:**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter shows the findings of this study. It discusses the results and provide recommendations to enhance the digital content marketing strategy for Palestinian SMEs to influence their targeted audience purchase decision. Also, it adds recommendations for future studies where they can cover a new or a narrower area of this topic.

#### **4.4 Discussion about Study Questions**

In this section, the researcher briefly discusses the results of every variable in this study.

##### **4.4.1 Digital Content Marketing Strategy:**

The results of this study show a moderate level of digital content marketing strategy dimensions in the Palestinian SMEs, which indicates that knowledge about it has to be improved in this sector. Different results were found regarding the dimensions of content marketing, and the recommendations is on the moderate degree dimensions.

- **Content Entertainment**

The overall Entertainment dimension and all its items got a moderate degree. That means the exciting, social, fun, engaging, and entertaining content is still not considered as much as it should. It will not affect the purchase intention directly as well, but it can affect people's behavior towards the company.

- Content Information

This dimension and all its items got a moderate degree. This also means that SMEs, especially those who provide services, still can't satisfy their audience's needs for information about their services, offers, and general information about the sector overall.

- Social Interaction + Subjective norms

This dimension and all its items got a high degree except the first one, which is about content's ability to stimulate the audience to purchase the service. That means that companies still can't use content from customers in a suitable form.

- Self-Expression

All items for this dimension and the overall degree of it were moderate. That means services providers are still weak in helping people to express their personalities by engaging with their content, and they still miss the sense of belonging towards these companies.

#### **4.4.2 Purchase Intention**

This dimension and all items got a moderate degree; meaning service providers still don't have enough understanding for the process of purchase intention and how they can stimulate it using the right content.

#### **4.5 Discussion of Study Hypotheses**

The main result of this study hypothesis indicates a significant relationship between digital content marketing strategy and its dimensions with purchase intention during the existence of customer loyalty as a mediating variable.

Moreover, results show that customer loyalty plays a significant role in the impact of digital content marketing strategy dimensions on consumer purchase intentions in the Palestinian services SMEs.

#### **4.6 Recommendations**

After reviewing the results, I recommend including digital content marketing strategy dimensions in the marketing plan by adding more entertaining content to their digital channels. As users like to engage and see this type of content. Examples of entertaining content: Viral trends like TikTok videos style, contests with special prizes.

Also, I recommend the services providers develop their content marketing strategy and consider informational content in their monthly plan. As audience think that if providers could satisfy their needs of information, and if this information were efficient, accurate, and at the right time, it would help them in aiding their decision and improve their decision efficiency. So at least they must work on providing the least quantity of data. Examples of this type: Infographics, tips, how-to videos, and general information about the sector, service, and company.

In order to social interaction and subjective norms, I recommend service providers focus on creating content correctly and recruit their customers' feedback and recommendations very well. Examples of this type: Use user-generated content in what they share, feedback, recommendations, and electronic word-of-mouth. Also, they can create a space for the audience to open discussions and share their experiences.

Regarding self-expression, I recommend companies include suitable content that encourages people to share content in order to express their personalities, opinions, and thoughts. Moreover, to ask to make a conversation with the audience to create a sense of

belonging, so they feel friendly and unique and improve how others perceive them. Examples of this type: Ask about personal thoughts and knowledge, share their designs, photos they took, or any other related content.

Moreover, I recommend service providers consider the steps of purchase intention in their minds when they are creating their strategy. They have to develop well-structured content for every phase of it, from thinking, to intention, to planning, then force them to take action.

Last but not least, I recommend them to improve their overall digital content marketing strategy to include the four main dimensions discussed above, give everyone specific attention and be careful about their audience needs and what they like and don't like in order to improve their strategy continuously. Also, they have to take into consideration how to maintain their customers' loyalty and try to make their loyal customers feel like they are an important part of their company through personalized content. These steps will help them influence purchase intention and intend them to make the decision.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

This study aimed to understand the digital content marketing strategy dimensions, how it affects purchase intention, and how customer loyalty plays a mediating role in the Palestinian SMEs providing services.

The results showed a moderate level of digital content marketing strategy dimensions application in this sector, pointing out that its application in line with customer loyalty plays a significant role in affecting purchase intention positively, as the statistical analysis showed.

Moreover, the results reveal a strong significant relationship between digital content marketing strategy and its dimension: content entertainment, content information, self-expression, social interaction, and subjective norms.

#### **4.8 Limitations**

Few limitations faced this study during the whole process. At first, the Covid-19 pandemic, which affected all life aspects, delayed the process. Secondly, there was a lack of cooperation from the targeted audience. At last, there was a lack of secondary data sources, as many essential articles were costly.

#### **4.9 Future Studies**

In the future, researchers could study the effect of digital content marketing strategy with other variables and a different mediator, for example, the impact of digital content marketing strategy on customer engagement, lead generation, and electronic word-of-mouth. Also, they could choose tangible products instead of services to understand how the effect changes and if the strategy is performed better. Moreover, they have to take companies as a target population to understand how they are practicing, how they are dealing with digital tools, and what their strategies are.

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## Appendix (A): Questionnaire English Version



الجامعة العربية الأمريكية  
ARAB AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

This study aims to test the impact of Digital Content Marketing Strategy in Customer Purchase Intention in the Palestinian Services SMEs: Customer Loyalty as a Mediator Variable. In order to complete the requirements for obtaining a master degree Strategic Planning and Fundraising at Arab American University. The data extracted from the survey will be used for scientific research purposes only.

P1	Gender: Male / Female
P2	Academic level Diploma    BA degree    MA degree    Other
P3	What type of social media channels do you always use? Facebook – Instagram – Twitter – LinkedIn – Other
P4	Do you usually follow your services providers online? (ISPs – electricity company – dentist – insurance ... ) Yes – No
P5	When it's related to these providers: what type of content would you like to see on their online channels? (you can choose more than one) Entertainment and conversations (Funny – games – giveaways - polls) Inspiration (Facts – quotes – success stories) Education (Tips – case studies – video training – informative blogs/posts) Connection (Reviews – features) Promotion (Prices – discounts – information about the product)

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A1	Content Entertainment					
A1.1	The (funny or social) content intends me to purchase the services.					
A1.2	Exciting content by the services providers intends me to purchase their service					
A1.3	I enjoy engaging with service providers' online content					
A1.4	Services providers online content is exciting					
A1.5	Services providers online content is entertaining					
A2	Content Information					
A2.1	The online content by services providers is efficient to get information					
A2.2	The online content by services providers provides the least information					
A2.3	The online content by services providers satisfies my need.					
A2.4	The availability of information about services by the service provider is useful in aiding my decision.					
A2-5	Accurate information by service providers on online channels improves my decision effectiveness					

A2-6	Timely information on online channels improves my performance of taking the decision					
A3	Social Interaction					
A3.1	The online content by the service provider can stimulate me to purchase the service.					
A3.2	I care about what other consumers have to say online about their experience with the services					
A3.3	I care what my friends have to say about their experience with the service					
A3.4	I care what online users are saying about service experiences					
A4	Self-Expression					
A4.1	The online content by services providers can meet my expectations to present my personality					
A4.2	The online content by services providers can make me gain a sense of belonging					
A4.3	Engaging with online content by service providers make me feel that other people think I am friendly					

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
B1	Customer Loyalty					
B1.1	I intend to say positive things online about services providers I deal with					
B1.2	I am willing to recommend family and friends to purchase services that I'm satisfied with.					
B1.3	I recommend the service to anyone who seeks online advice					
B1.4	I will continue buying more services from services providers who can satisfy all my needs online.					

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
C1	Purchase Intention					
C1.1	I plan to buy services that offers information on digital channels					
C1.2	I intend to buy services that offers information on digital channels					
C1.3	I think of buying services that offers information on digital channels					
C1.4	I make an effort buy services that offers information on digital channels					

## Appendix (B): Questionnaire Arabic Version



**الجامعة العربية الأمريكية**  
**ARAB AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**

الجامعة العربية الأمريكية - جنين

كلية الدراسات العليا

تخطيط استراتيجي وتجنيذ أموال

تحية طيبة،

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على أثر استراتيجية المحتوى التسويقي الإلكتروني على نية الشراء عند ذلك استكمالاً. المستهلك في الشركات الخدمانية الفلسطينية الصغيرة والمتوسطة: ولاء العملاء كعامل وسيط لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في التخطيط الاستراتيجي وتجنيذ الأموال في كلية الدراسات العليا، الجامعة العربية الأمريكية، أرجو من حضرتكم التكرم بالإجابة على فقرات الاستمارة بكل صدق وموضوعية. علماً بأن البيانات والمعلومات المستخلصة من استمارة الدراسة سوف تستخدم لأغراض البحث العلمي فقط.

شاكرين لكن حسن تعاونكم

الباحثة: رماء قبوي

القسم الأول: معلومات عامة: الرجاء التكرم بوضع إشارة (X) أمام الاختيار المناسب.

P1	الجنس: <input type="checkbox"/> ذكر <input type="checkbox"/> أنثى
P2	المؤهل العملي: <input type="checkbox"/> دبلوم فأدنى <input type="checkbox"/> بكالوريوس <input type="checkbox"/> ماجستير فأكثر
P3	ما هي وسيلة التواصل الاجتماعي التي تستخدمها بكثرة؟ <input type="checkbox"/> فيسبوك <input type="checkbox"/> انستغرام <input type="checkbox"/> لينكد ان <input type="checkbox"/> توتير <input type="checkbox"/> غيرها
P4	هل تتابع عادة مزودي الخدمات الذين تستفيد من خدماتهم على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي؟ (أمثلة على مزودي الخدمات: شركات خدمات الانترنت، شركة الكهرباء، طبيب الأسنان، شركة التأمين) <input type="checkbox"/> نعم <input type="checkbox"/> لا
P5	ما طبيعة المحتوى الذي تفضل أن تراه على صفحات مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي الخاصة بمزودي الخدمات؟ (تستطيع اختيار عدة حقول في ذات الوقت) <input type="checkbox"/> محتوى ممتع (مثل: محتوى مضحك، ألعاب، هدايا، استطلاعات رأي)

<input type="checkbox"/> محتوى ملهم (مثل: حقائق، اقتباسات، قصص نجاح) <input type="checkbox"/> محتوى تعليمي (مثل: نصائح، دراسات حالة، تدريبات عبر الفيديو، مدونات ومنشورات تعليمية) <input type="checkbox"/> محتوى يربط العميل بمزود الخدمة مباشرة (مثل: تغذية راجعة، ميزات الخدمات والمنتجات) <input type="checkbox"/> محتوى ترويجي (مثل: أسعار، تنزيلات، معلومات عن المنتج)
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القسم الثاني: عن المحتوى الرجاء التكرم بوضع إشارة (X) أمام الإختيار المناسب.

الرقم	العبارة	موافق بشده	موافق	محايد	غير موافق	غير موافق بشده
A1	المحتوى الممتع					
A1.1	المحتوى المضحك أو التفاعلي يحفزني على اتخاذ قرار شراء الخدمات (أو الخدمة).					
A1.2	المحتوى المثير للاهتمام الذي قد يقوم مزود الخدمة بنشره يحفزني على اتخاذ قرار شراء الخدمات (أو الخدمة).					
A1.3	أجد متعة في التفاعل مع المحتوى الذي يقوم مزود الخدمة بنشره من خلال الانترنت.					
A1.4	محتوى مزودي الخدمات الذي يتم نشره من خلال الانترنت هو محتوى يثير اهتمامي.					
A1.5	محتوى مزودي الخدمات الذي يتم نشره من خلال الانترنت هو محتوى ممتع.					
A2	المحتوى الذي يقدم المعلومات					
A2.1	المحتوى الذي يتم نشره من خلال الانترنت من قبل مزودي الخدمات هو محتوى كافي للحصول على ما أحتاجه من معلومات.					
A2.2	المحتوى الذي يتم نشره من خلال الانترنت من قبل مزودي الخدمات هو محتوى قليل وغير كافي لتزويدي بالمعلومات التي أحتاج إليها حول الخدمات.					
A2.3	المحتوى الذي يتم نشره من خلال الانترنت من قبل مزودي الخدمات هو محتوى كافي لتلبية احتياجاتي.					
A2.4	توفر المعلومات التي أحتاجها عن الخدمات					

					المطروحة من خلال الانترنت من قبل مزود الخدمة يساعدني على اتخاذ قرار الشراء للخدمة.	
					دقة المعلومات المتاحة من خلال الانترنت من قبل مزود الخدمة تحسن من قدرتي على اتخاذ قرار الشراء للخدمة بفاعلية وكفاءة.	A2-5
					قيام مزود الخدمة بإتاحة بعض المعلومات الهامة على الانترنت في التوقيت المناسب يساعدني على تحسين قدرتي على اتخاذ قرار الشراء للخدمة.	A2-6
المحتوى التفاعلي الاجتماعي						A3
					المحتوى الذي يقوم مزود الخدمة بمشاركته على الانترنت يمكن أن يحفزني لأقوم بطلب وشراء الخدمة.	A3.1
					أهتم بمعرفة ما يقوله المستهلكون عبر الانترنت حول تجاربهم الشخصية مع الخدمات المطروحة.	A3.2
					أهتم بأراء أصدقائي النابعة من تجربتهم الشخصية للخدمة.	A3.3
					أهتم بما يقوله المستخدمون أونلاين حول تجاربهم الشخصية مع الخدمات المطروحة.	A3.4
التعبير عن الذات						A4
					المحتوى الذي يقوم مزودو الخدمات بنشره عبر الانترنت يوافق توقعاتي، فهو يعكس شخصيتي بطريقة صحيحة.	A4.1
					المحتوى الذي يقوم مزودو الخدمات بنشره عبر الانترنت يمكن أن يجعلني أشعر بنوع من الانتماء.	A4.2
					قيامي بالتفاعل مع المحتوى الذي ينشره مزودو الخدمات من خلال الانترنت يشعرنني بأن الآخرين لديهم انطباع إيجابي شخصيتي.	A4.3

القسم الثالث: نولاء العملاء/ Customer Loyalty الرجاء التكرم بوضع إشارة (X) أمام الإختيار المناسب.

الرقم	العبارة	موافق بشده	موافق	محايد	غير موافق	غير موافق بشده
B1	ولاء العملاء					
B1.1	أنوي أن يكون ما أقوله أونلاين حول مزودي الخدمات الذين أتعامل معهم إيجابياً في حال كنت راضي عن الخدمة					
B1.2	أنا على أهبة الاستعداد للتوصية بالخدمات التي نالت إعجابي لأصدقائي ولأفراد عائلتي لتحفيزهم على شرائها والاستفادة منها.					
B1.3	سوف أوصي بالخدمة التي أشعر بالرضى عنها لأي شخص قد يطلب المساعدة والنصيحة أونلاين.					
B1.4	سوف أستمر في شراء المزيد من الخدمات من مزودي الخدمات الذين أجد أنهم يستطيعون تلبية كافة احتياجاتي من المعلومات والتفاصيل والدعم الفني أونلاين.					

القسم الرابع: نية الشراء Purchase Intention الرجاء التكرم بوضع إشارة (X) أمام الإختيار المناسب

الرقم	العبارة	موافق بشده	موافق	محايد	غير موافق	غير موافق بشده
C1	نية الشراء					
C1.1	أخطط لشراء الخدمات التي يتم طرح تفاصيلها والمعلومات المتعلقة بها على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي.					
C1.2	أنوي القيام بشراء الخدمات التي يتم طرح تفاصيلها والمعلومات المتعلقة بها على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي.					
C1.3	أفكر في شراء الخدمات التي يتم طرح تفاصيلها والمعلومات المتعلقة بها على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي.					
C1.4	أبذل جهداً لشراء الخدمات التي يتم طرح تفاصيلها والمعلومات المتعلقة بها على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي.					

### Appendix (C): Evaluators List

Name	Academic Rank	Affiliation
Dr. Ahmad Hirzallah	Associate Professor	Al-Quds University
Dr. Emad Wald-Ali	Assistant Professor	AAUP
Dr. Majeed Mansour	Associate Professor	AAUP
Dr. Shahir Obaid	Associate Professor	Al-Quds Open University
Dr. Salwa Barghothi	Assistant Professor	Al-Quds University
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## الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة المتغير الوسيط وهو ولاء العملاء في التأثير على العلاقة بين استراتيجية تسويق المحتوى الرقمي ونية للشراء عند العملاء في شركات الخدمات الفلسطينية الصغيرة والمتوسطة. تم استخدام الأساليب الإحصائية المتقدمة. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج الكمي في الإجابة على أسئلة الدراسة واختبار الفرضيات. كان مجتمع هذه الدراسة جميع مستخدمي القنوات الرقمية في فلسطين الراغبين في الإجابة على الاستبيان. وكانت طريقة أخذ العينات غير عشوائية، وبلغ حجمها (385) مشاركًا. تم جمع البيانات باستخدام الاستبيان، وكانت هي الطريقة الأساسية.

استخلصت الدراسة عدد من النتائج أهمها أن ولاء العملاء يلعب دورًا مهمًا في التأثير على العلاقة بين أبعاد استراتيجية تسويق المحتوى الرقمي ونوايا الشراء لدى العملاء في شركات الخدمات الفلسطينية الصغيرة والمتوسطة.

في النهاية، قدم البحث مجموعة من التوصيات لتحسين استراتيجية التسويق بالمحتوى الرقمي للمسوقين وصناع القرار، بما في ذلك: يجب عليهم تحسين استراتيجية تسويق المحتوى الرقمي باستمرار لتشمل عدة أبعاد مثل: المحتوى الترفيهي، المحتوى المعلوماتي، محتوى متعلق بالتفاعل الاجتماعي والمعايير الذاتية والمحتوى الذي يعكس التعبير عن الذات. أيضًا، يجب أن يأخذ مقدمو الخدمات في الاعتبار خطوات نية الشراء في أذهانهم عندما يقومون بإنشاء استراتيجيتهم.