



Digital Marketing Maturity Models: A Comprehensive Literature Review

Endang Amalia^{1*}, Feri Sulianta², Ucu Nugraha³

Widyatama University, Indonesia¹

Widyatama University, Indonesia²

Widyatama University, Indonesia³

Corresponding Email: endang.amalia@widyatama.ac.id*

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Abstract

Digital marketing has become a critical enabler of organizational transformation, requiring firms to adopt customer-centric strategies and optimize processes in increasingly complex environments. However, the conceptualization and measurement of digital marketing maturity remain inconsistent across the literature. This study addresses this gap by conducting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of evolutionary digital marketing maturity models published between 2020 and 2024. Following a four-stage methodological framework—comprising selection and exclusion criteria, database search, quality assessment, and data extraction and synthesis—the review identifies similarities, differences, strengths, and limitations among existing models. The findings reveal that while current models provide useful structures for guiding digital transformation, they lack a precise conceptual definition and standardized measurement framework. The study contributes theoretically by advancing the operationalization of digital maturity and practically by offering executives a framework to assess, benchmark, and monitor progress in digital transformation. Furthermore, it establishes a foundation for future research on the relationship between digital maturity and corporate performance across cultural and regional contexts.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Digital Maturity, Digital Transformation, Maturity Models, Systematic Literature Review.

Introduction

Digital marketing is a modern concept that necessitates a shift from conventional marketing perspectives (Al-Thagafi et al., 2020; Chaffey, 2010). It engages customers in generating value for products and services (Bakhtieva, 2017). Additionally, it adopts a pull strategy, meaning companies must focus on being customer-centric rather than relying on one-way communication (Rowley, 2008). This approach requires significant resources, making the optimization of processes and structures crucial for organizations (Järvinen et al.,

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2013)(Ayswarya et al., 2019)(Yuceer et al., 2024)(Mohammadpour et al., 2014)(Nwokah & Aeenee, 2017)(Nwokah & Irimagha, 2017). Without a structured strategy, companies risk becoming overwhelmed by the numerous tools and tactics available to them.

A framework designed to enhance the processes and tools of digital marketing could provide an effective solution(Al-Lami et al., 2024). One such framework might be a maturity model, which helps organize a company's strategic plans and encourages ongoing improvement (Septeria & Ali, 2025).

This paper focuses on the third category: evolutionary digital marketing maturity models (Barbosa et al., 2025; Eftekharian Qamsari et al., 2025). Our aim is to examine all existing maturity models found in the literature within this category and identify their similarities, differences, strengths, and weaknesses. The insights gained from this analysis will be valuable in developing a new maturity model for digital marketing.

This paper seeks to deliver a comprehensive analysis of digital marketing maturity models. The structure is as follows: Section II outlines the methodology used for the analysis, Section III offers an overview of the maturity models gathered from the literature along with their key characteristics, and Section VII concludes with a summary of the main findings and recommendations for future research.

Literature Review

This section provides an overview of the digital marketing maturity models found in the literature, including the following models:

1. SWOT Analysis (Blokdyk, 2024)

- **Strengths**
Strengths highlight what an organization excels at and what distinguishes it from competitors, such as a strong brand, a loyal customer base, a solid financial position, or unique technology. For instance, a hedge fund might have developed a proprietary trading strategy that outperforms the market, leading it to consider how to leverage those results to attract new investors.
- **Weaknesses**
Weaknesses hinder an organization from achieving its full potential. These are areas needing improvement to stay competitive, such as a weak brand reputation, high employee turnover, significant debt, an inefficient supply chain, or limited capital.
- **Opportunities**
Opportunities are favourable external conditions that could provide an organization with a competitive edge. For example, if a country reduces tariffs, a car manufacturer could export its vehicles to a new market, boosting sales and market share.
- **Threats**
Threats are factors that could negatively impact an organization. For example, a drought poses a risk to a wheat-producing company by potentially damaging or reducing crop

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yields. Other common threats include rising material costs, increased competition, and a tight labor market.

2. Adobe's Maturity Self-Assessment Tool (Adobe, 2023)

- Channels
Media utilized for the digital marketing of products.
- Audiences
The degree of engagement a target audience has with a brand and its digital content, such as websites, social media, and online advertisements. This is measured by metrics like website visitor counts, visit duration, pages viewed, and social media shares.
- Context
Marketing strategies that are deemed highly significant in the current digital landscape.
- Content
A set of information, materials, and media created and shared digitally to promote a product or brand, aiming to achieve favorable marketing outcomes through online platforms and capture audience attention.
- Assets
Any digital item used to market a business and generate revenue, including images, videos, web domains, and data sets. Digital assets possess tangible financial value and are essential for brand development and audience engagement.
- Campaigns
Marketing initiatives designed to leverage various digital channels owned by the brand to foster interaction between the brand and its target customers.
- Data
The process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting data to inform decision-making and enhance marketing effectiveness across all channels.

3. Digital Marketing Maturity Index (Davies, 2024)

- Crawl
In the crawl stage, you rely on established, traditional channels. Your main methods for reaching and engaging the target audience include face-to-face interactions with representatives, print media, and phone calls.
- Walk
During the walk stage, you employ a combination of digital and traditional channels, but they operate in isolation. For instance, while you might use online ads, a website, and social media, these elements are not integrated.
- Run
At the run stage, you leverage all available channels and actively track audience preferences and engagement. Your channels collaborate to convey effective messaging, and you utilize a CRM and CDP for precise monitoring.
- Fly
The fly stage involves a comprehensive approach where all channels are interconnected, contributing to a well-informed strategy with a high degree of

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personalization. With your channels informing one another, you can deliver the right message through the appropriate channel at each stage of the customer journey.

4. Five Stage Maturity Model (Boufim & Barka, 2021)

- Initiation

At this level, there is no formal framework guiding the implementation of digital marketing. Variables operate freely without being structured within a strategic plan. With no established objectives, actions arise from individual initiatives, leading to a lack of coordination among the business units involved. Each department acts independently in the digital space. The company is in a phase of exploration and learning, with management unaware of the significance and breadth of digital marketing. This stage is characterized by experimentation.

- Expansion

In the expansion stage, management becomes involved and recognizes the potential of digital marketing. A strategy is developed, and organizational changes are initiated to create a cohesive approach. Implementation gains significant momentum, setting the stage for change across all levels of the enterprise.

- Formalization

At this stage, the digital marketing strategy is formalized, communicated, and approved. Supporting plans are put in place both internally and externally, defining processes and interactions among all stakeholders involved in the transformation (including top management, employees, clients, and providers). The new marketing organization begins to take shape in alignment with the new direction, and team skills are assessed.

- Integration

The integration stage involves embedding the evolution of the marketing strategy into the overall company strategy, leading to subsequent strategies. The digital marketing strategy becomes a key component for the board to ensure business continuity. Coordination among variables is essential to align efforts, and information systems across departments are integrated to provide a comprehensive view of customers and centralized information for predictive decision-making.

- Maturity

Maturity is marked by a complete adoption of digital marketing concepts. Return on investment (ROI) and customer costs, as well as conversion rates, are continually evaluated. Control mechanisms are focused on business value. Both offline and online efforts are integrated, and there is an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement to keep pace with the evolving digital landscape and anticipate the challenges of a constantly changing environment.

5. Smart Insights Digital Marketing Toolset (SMART) (Insights, 2024)

- Reach

Reach focuses on increasing website traffic and enhancing brand awareness across various platforms, including other websites and offline media. The goal is to drive visits to different online presences, such as the main site, microsites, or social media pages.

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This involves maximizing reach over time to foster multiple interactions through various paid, owned, and earned media touchpoints.

- Act

Act refers to encouraging interaction. This stage is distinct because motivating visitors on websites and social media to generate leads is a significant challenge for online marketers. It's about persuading site visitors or potential customers to take the next step in their journey when they first arrive at your site or social media presence. For many businesses, particularly in the B2B sector, this means generating leads, but it can also involve learning more about a company or its offerings, searching for a product, or reading a blog post. These actions should be defined as key goals in your analytics. Google Analytics goals may include "Viewed product," "Added to Basket," "Registered as a member," or "Signed up for a newsletter." Additionally, Act encompasses encouraging participation, such as sharing content on social media or writing customer reviews. Specific goals and dashboards should be tailored for each business.

- Convert

Conversion refers to the process of turning potential customers into paying ones, whether online or offline. This involves prompting your audience to take that crucial next step, resulting in sales through e-commerce transactions or offline channels.

- Engage

Engagement is about building long-term relationships with first-time buyers to foster customer loyalty and encourage repeat purchases. This is achieved through customer communications on your site, social media, email, and direct interactions, ultimately enhancing customer lifetime value. Engagement can be measured by repeat actions such as additional sales and content sharing on social media. It's also important to track the percentage of active customers (or email subscribers) and assess customer satisfaction and recommendations using various systems.

6. Digital capabilities maturity (Rossmann, 2019)

- Self-Description of Digital Maturity

This term refers to how an organization views and assesses its own advancements and capabilities regarding digital transformation. It enables the organization to evaluate its digital maturity based on its perceptions and internal benchmarks, offering insights into the extent of its integration of digital technologies, strategies, and competencies throughout its operations.

- Identification of Items Executives Use to Describe Digital Maturity

This process involves identifying specific indicators or criteria that executives use to measure and express their organization's level of digital maturity. These items provide a framework for assessing progress, evaluating readiness, and identifying gaps in digital transformation initiatives.

- Supplementation of the Items

This phrase pertains to the addition of new indicators or dimensions to improve the existing framework used for assessing an organization's digital maturity. The goal of this practice is to ensure the model is comprehensive, relevant, and in alignment with the continuously changing landscape of digital transformation.

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- **Item Reduction**
Item Reduction in a Digital Maturity Model refers to the process of streamlining or reducing the number of items or indicators employed to measure an organization's digital maturity. This approach is typically undertaken to improve the model's effectiveness, simplicity, and usability, ensuring it remains relevant and practical for assessment and implementation.
- **Identification of Digital Maturity Dimensions in a Reflective Measurement Model**
This process involves recognizing the different dimensions or constructs that represent an organization's overall digital maturity, where each dimension is interrelated and acts as an indicator of a shared underlying concept. In a reflective measurement model, it is assumed that changes in the core construct will result in changes in the observed indicators.
- **Evaluation of the Digital Maturity Scale in a Formative Measurement Model**
This refers to the assessment of the components or items that define digital maturity as inputs that together shape or "form" the overall concept, rather than being reflective measures where all indicators are closely correlated. In a formative model, each item or dimension uniquely contributes to the digital maturity score, instead of reflecting a singular underlying factor.

7. Digital Maturity Benchmark (Field et al., 2018)

- **Nascent**
Marketing campaigns primarily rely on external data and direct purchases, with minimal connection to sales.
- **Emerging**
Marketers begin to utilize owned data for automated purchasing, focusing on single-channel optimization and testing.
- **Connected**
Marketers depend on data that is integrated and activated across various channels, showing a clear link to ROI or sales indicators.
- **Multi-moment**
The organization enhances dynamic execution across channels to achieve specific business outcomes for individual customers.

8. DMMM by Aslanova (Aslanova & Kulichkina, 2020)

- **Strategy**
A digital transformation strategy should exist within the organization and align seamlessly with its overall development plan. It should outline specific, actionable steps to achieve a high level of digital maturity. Rather than disrupting the existing strategy, the digital transformation plan should complement and enhance it by introducing essential changes, technologies, and resources aimed at improving organizational performance.
- **Organization**
To reach a high level of digital maturity, management must be prepared to embrace

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change, including adjustments to organizational culture, restructuring of business processes, and the enhancement of leadership skills.

- People

Effective strategy implementation depends on staff readiness and awareness of upcoming changes. The involvement, motivation, and engagement of employees in strategic changes are essential for success.

- Technologies

Technologies are central to driving digital transformation. Achieving high digital maturity requires employees involved in the transformation process to possess advanced digital skills.

- Data

Data management and utilization form the foundation of digitalization, covering data creation, generation, and related processes. As data volumes and quality increase, organizations need a focused approach to manage consistent, reliable data. Well-organized data is crucial not only for financial operations but also as a core prerequisite for digital transformation.

9. The McKinsey Digital Quotient (DQ) Model (Catlin, 2015)

- Strategy

A crucial element in organizational management, strategy guides the organization by identifying a strategic plan that addresses internal issues, assesses their impacts on operations, and explores alternative approaches. This planning enables the organization to build a competitive edge.

- Capability

The capacity of a company to perform a coordinated range of digital-related tasks—whether operational or adaptive—leveraging digital resources to achieve a competitive advantage.

- Culture

Cultural identity, rather than being a point of division, should transcend stereotypes and act as a unifying standard that supports cultural diversity. Universality acknowledges that cultural diversity is not just a fact but a valuable process, essential for survival. All cultural variations demonstrate that universality as a concept today can only be fully understood by examining culture as a structure of identity.

- Organization

Organizations that embrace digitalization and implement digital technologies transform their operations to gain a competitive advantage.

- Digital Maturity

The level of an organization's ability to drive value through digital means, serving as a key indicator of success for companies undertaking digital transformation initiatives.

10. The Capgemini Digital Maturity Model (Capgemini, 2018)

- Initiate

Digital transformation is not yet a priority, and the organization needs to prepare for its digital journey.

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- Experiment
Several digital projects are in progress, with both business processes and technology functioning effectively.
- Scale
Foundational digital capabilities have been established, with data recognized as a valuable resource. Business processes and technology are well integrated.
- Integrate
Digital capabilities are fully developed, with a strong emphasis on customer focus and an innovative mindset. Integration is complete, while efforts are ongoing to optimize and simplify processes.
- Transform
Customer-centricity, process optimization, agile methodologies, and a culture of innovation are well-rooted. Channels are integrated, systems are highly secure, and real-time data is used for operations, forecasting, and simulations.
- Optimize
Automated, data-driven optimization forms the foundation, complemented by intuitive studies that reveal new design pathways and refine existing ones, leading to groundbreaking design solutions.

11. The Gartner Digital Business Maturity Model (Gartner, 2021)

- Initiating
The act of starting or setting something in motion at the beginning.
- Experimenting
Carrying out procedures or trials to explore or verify certain outcomes.
- Scaling
The process of measuring, organizing, or adjusting based on a specific scale.
- Transforming
Changing the character or appearance of something entirely to enhance or improve it.
- Digital Leadership
The skill of steering an organization toward digital transformation to remain competitive and adaptable in a fast-paced digital and social media environment.

12. The Digital Capability Framework by Deloitte (Deloitte, 2018)

- Strategy
A plan to increase online visibility by leveraging various channels, considering factors such as target audience, strengths and weaknesses, and competitor insights. An effective strategy should be informed by data from across the business to guide planning and make accurate predictions.
- Customer
A digital customer may interact with the business through multiple channels. It's essential to recognize each customer's unique journey while also understanding common usage patterns across demographics, such as preferred contact methods (e.g., mobile or web-based) and typical issues encountered. Future data integration efforts

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should incorporate the latest technologies to enhance the digital customer experience in a way that aligns with their needs.

- Operations

In a digitally mature organization, automation and analytics tools may be used to streamline and optimize core business processes, including manufacturing, supply chain, and customer service. For instance, a manufacturing company might monitor production in real-time with digital sensors and analytics, while a logistics company could employ machine learning to optimize delivery routes and reduce costs.

- Culture

Cultural identity should rise above stereotypes, acting as a unifying force that supports cultural diversity. Universality recognizes cultural diversity not only as a fact but as an essential and valuable process. Today, understanding universality requires examining culture as an identity structure, where diverse cultural forms contribute to a broader sense of unity.

13. The Optimizely Digital Experience Maturity Model (Faster Capital, 2024)

- Ad-hoc

At the ad-hoc level, organizations begin to prioritize work through backlogs, establish some basic processes that are minimally documented, and encourage developers to make frequent commits to version control.

- Basic

At the basic level, teams become more stable across projects, and testing starts to integrate with development. Teams consolidate multiple backlogs into a single backlog, adopt basic agile practices, and work together to handle setbacks, building resilience.

- Intermediate

In the intermediate stage, broader team collaboration is achieved, with roles such as Database Administrators (DBAs), Configuration Managers (CMs), and Operations becoming involved or regularly consulted. Processes are streamlined, and all changes—whether bug fixes, new features, or urgent patches—follow a unified path to production. Teams are empowered with ownership of components, promoting quality and sustainable improvements.

- Advanced

At the advanced level, teams are skilled and self-assured in taking changes all the way to production. Continuous improvement practices are established, and a dedicated tools team supports others by enhancing tools and automation. Releases are decoupled from deployments, allowing projects to focus on requirements for one or multiple teams. Once verified in production, releases to users are organized separately, enabling teams to maintain workflow efficiency without waiting for coordinated project releases.

- Leading

At the leading level, some organizations form fully cross-functional, autonomous teams. With minimal cycle times and a highly mature delivery pipeline, these organizations can adopt a "roll-forward-only" approach to manage production failures, confidently progressing through issues.

Research Method

This study was conducted in accordance with Systematic Literature Review (SLR) guidelines, structured around a four-stage methodological framework as detailed below:

1. Selection and rejection criteria

Subject Relevance: All selected papers must pertain to digital marketing maturity between 2020-2024.

Publisher: Papers must be sourced from one of the following four databases: IEEE, ACM, Springer, or Elsevier.

Repetition: Only one paper is to be selected for each specific context, with similar papers being excluded.

Effective Techniques: Selected papers should focus on digital marketing maturity models or tools.

2. Search process

This study utilized four scientific databases as specified in the selection and exclusion criteria to conduct a comprehensive literature search. The search strategy employed Boolean AND operators alongside four predefined keywords: digital marketing, maturity models, benchmarking digital maturity and maturity model evaluation.

3. Quality Assessment

To ensure the validity of the selected research papers, we created quality questions based on established criteria. Each paper must meet the quality checklist outlined, which we developed to evaluate the findings and authenticity of each selected study.

4. Data extraction and synthesis

Data extraction and synthesis from the selected studies were conducted to address our research questions.

Data extraction, as outlined in points 2-4, involves gathering substantial information from specific studies based on our selection and rejection criteria. Data synthesis is performed through a detailed examination and analysis of the selected research to accurately digital marketing maturity models, as defined in the next chapter.

Result

Present the results of your work. Use graphs and tables if appropriate, but also summarize your main findings in the text. Do NOT discuss the results or speculate as to why something happened; that goes in the Discussion.

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1. Comparative summary of digital maturity model

The comparative summary of digital maturity models shows that each framework offers distinct strengths and limitations. Marketing-focused models, such as Smart Insights and the Digital Marketing Maturity Index, emphasize customer engagement, while broader frameworks like Deloitte and McKinsey address strategy, technology, and organizational culture more comprehensively. Overall, the choice of model depends on an organization's goals, resources, and readiness for digital transformation as shown below:

Table 1. Comparative summary of digital maturity models

Model	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
SWOT Analysis (Blokdyk, 2024)	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	-	-
Adobe Self-Assessment Tool (Adobe, 2023)	Channels	Audiences	Context	Content	Assets	Campaigns
Digital Marketing Maturity Index (Davies, 2024)	Crawl	Walk	Run	Fly	-	-
Five Stage Maturity Model (Boufim & Barka, 2021)	Initiation	Expansion	Formalization	Integration	Maturity	-
Smart Insights Digital Marketing Toolset (SMART, 2024)	Reach	Act	Convert	Engage	-	-
Digital Capabilities Maturity (Rossmann, 2019)	Self-Description	Identification	Supplementation	Item Reduction	Reflective Model	Formative Model
Digital Maturity Benchmark (Field et al., 2018)	Nascent	Emerging	Connected	Multi-moment	-	-
DMMM (Aslanova & Kulichkina, 2020)	Strategy	Organization	People	Technology	Data	-
McKinsey Digital Quotient (Catlin, 2015)	Strategy	Capability	Culture	Organization	Digital Maturity	-
Capgemini Digital	Initiate	Experiment	Scale	Integrate	Transform	Optimize

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Maturity Model (Capgemini, 2018)						
Gartner Digital Business Maturity Model (Gartner, 2021)	Initiating	Experimenting	Scaling	Transforming	Digital Leadership	–
Digital Capability Framework (Deloitte, 2018)	Strategy	Customer	Operations	Culture	-	-
Optimizely Digital Experience Maturity Model (Faster Capital, 2024)	Ad-hoc	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading	-

2. Concise comparative matrix

The concise comparative matrix highlights the differences among digital maturity frameworks in terms of scope and focus. Some models, like Smart Insights and the Digital Marketing Maturity Index, concentrate on marketing and customer engagement, while others, such as Deloitte and McKinsey, provide a more comprehensive view of strategy, technology, and organizational culture. The comparison shows that no single framework fits all contexts; organizations must select the one that aligns with their goals and resources as shown below:

Table 2. Concise comparative matrix

Model	# of Levels	Lowest Stage	Highest Stage	Focus
SWOT Analysis (Blokdyk, 2024)	4	Strengths	Threats	Organizational analysis
Adobe Self-Assessment Tool (Adobe, 2023)	7	Channels	Campaigns	Digital marketing components
Digital Marketing Maturity Index (Davies, 2024)	4	Crawl	Fly	Channel integration
Five Stage Maturity Model (Boufim & Barka, 2021)	5	Initiation	Maturity	Strategy adoption
Smart Insights Digital Marketing Toolset (SMART, 2024)	4	Reach	Engage	Customer journey
Digital Capabilities Maturity (Rossmann, 2019)	6	Self-Description	Formative Model	Maturity assessment
Digital Maturity Benchmark (Field et al., 2018)	4	Nascent	Multi-moment	Data-driven marketing
DMMM (Aslanova & Kulichkina, 2020)	5	Strategy	Data	Transformation readiness
McKinsey Digital Quotient (Catlin, 2015)	5	Strategy	Digital Maturity	Digital capabilities
Capgemini Digital Maturity Model (Capgemini, 2018)	6	Initiate	Optimize	Digital optimization

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Gartner Digital Business Maturity Model (Gartner, 2021)	5	Initiating	Digital Leadership	Digital leadership
Digital Capability Framework (Deloitte, 2018)	4	Strategy	Culture	Capability framework
Optimizely Digital Experience Maturity Model (Faster Capital, 2024)	5	Ad-hoc	Leading	Team/process maturity

3. Thematic dimensions instead of levels

The thematic dimensions approach assesses digital maturity across key domains such as strategy, people, technology, and culture, rather than through linear stages. This method recognizes that organizations may advance differently in each area, offering a more flexible and targeted view of digital transformation as shown below:

Table 3. Thematic dimensions

Model	Strategy	Organization/Structure	People/Skill	Technology	Data	Customer	Culture
SWOT Analysis (Blokdyk, 2024)	Strategic evaluation	–	–	–	–	–	–
Adobe Self-Assessment Tool (Adobe, 2023)	Marketing strategy	–	–	Digital tools	Marketing data	Audience engagement	–
Digital Marketing Maturity Index (Davies, 2024)	Channel strategy	–	–	–	Audience tracking	Customer reach	–
Five Stage Maturity Model (Boufim & Barka, 2021)	Strategy adoption	Unit integration	Skills assessment	–	Customer data	Customer alignment	–
Smart Insights Digital Marketing Toolset (SMART, 2024)	Customer journey	–	–	–	Interaction data	Customer engagement	–
Digital Capabilities Maturity (Rossmann, 2019)	Self-assessment	–	Executive evaluation	Digital competencies	Maturity metrics	–	–
Digital Maturity Benchmark (Field et al., 2018)	Data-driven strategy	–	–	–	Multi-channel data	Customer targeting	–
DMMM (Aslanova &	Transformation strategy	Organizational readiness	Employee	Digital infrastructure	Data management	Customer-centric approach	Organizational culture

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Kulichkina, 2020)			engage ment				
McKinsey Digital Quotient (Catlin, 2015)	Digital strategy	Organizational transformation	Capabil ity buildin g	Digital technologi es	–	Customer focus	Culture integration
Capgemini Digital Maturity Model (Capgemini, 2018)	Compreh ensive strategy	Process integratio n	Digital skills	Capabilitie s	Data resource	Customer- centric	Innovative culture
Gartner Digital Business Maturity Model (Gartner, 2021)	Transfor mation planning	Structura l adaptatio n	Leaders hip	–	–	Customer orientation	Leadership culture
Digital Capability Framework (Deloitte, 2018)	Strategic planning	Operatio ns integratio n	Digital skills	Automatio n & analytics	Operationa l data	Customer experience	Cultural alignment
Optimizely Digital Experience Maturity Model (Faster Capital, 2024)	Delivery strategy	Team collabora tion	Techni cal skills	DevOps & automation	–	Customer delivery	Team culture

4. Comparative resume of digital maturity models by dimension

The comparative resume by dimension shows how digital maturity models evaluate areas such as strategy, technology, people, data, and culture. While some frameworks emphasize marketing and customer engagement, others provide a broader balance across governance and organizational aspects. This dimensional view helps organizations focus on specific strengths and gaps in their digital transformation journey.

Table 4. Comparative resume of digital maturity models by dimension

Dimension	Key Focus Across Models	Examples of Models Highlighting This
Strategy	Development and implementation of digital or marketing strategy; alignment with business objectives	SWOT Analysis, Adobe Self-Assessment, Five Stage Maturity Model, Capgemini, McKinsey DQ, DMMM
Organization	Structural adaptation, integration of units, process alignment to support digital initiatives	Five Stage Maturity Model, Capgemini, McKinsey DQ, DMMM, Deloitte Framework
People / Skills	Capability building, employee engagement, leadership development, digital competencies	Five Stage Maturity Model, DMMM, McKinsey DQ, Deloitte Framework, Optimizely
Technology	Adoption and deployment of digital tools, infrastructure, automation, and analytics	Adobe Self-Assessment, Capgemini, DMMM, Deloitte Framework, Optimizely
Data	Collection, integration, and utilization of data for decision-making, customer insights, and ROI	Digital Maturity Benchmark, SMART Toolset, Rossmann, Capgemini, DMMM

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Customer	Customer-centric approaches, engagement, journey management, experience optimization	SMART Toolset, Adobe Self-Assessment, DMMM, Capgemini, Deloitte Framework, Digital Marketing Maturity Index
Culture	Organizational culture supporting digital adoption, innovation, and leadership	DMMM, McKinsey DQ, Capgemini, Gartner, Deloitte Framework, Optimizely

5. Comparative benchmarking across models

The comparative benchmarking shows how digital maturity models differ in scope, usability, and resource demands. Simpler frameworks like Smart Insights are easy to apply, while comprehensive ones such as Deloitte and McKinsey cover more dimensions but require greater investment. This helps organizations choose the model that best fits their goals and capacities.

Table 5. Comparative resume of digital maturity models by dimension

Model	Strengths	Limitations
SWOT Analysis (Blokdyk, 2024)	Simple, widely applicable, clear internal/external factors	Qualitative, lacks prioritization, no maturity progression
Adobe Self-Assessment Tool (Adobe, 2023)	Comprehensive marketing evaluation, multi-channel focus	Marketing-specific, limited organizational scope
Digital Marketing Maturity Index (Davies, 2024)	Progressive channel integration, clear stages	Marketing-focused, limited organizational/technology coverage
Five Stage Maturity Model (Boufim & Barka, 2021)	Structured maturity, organizational adoption focus	Limited technology and data emphasis
Smart Insights Digital Marketing Toolset (SMART, 2024)	Customer journey-centric, engagement and conversion focus	Narrow scope, less focus on technology/culture
Digital Capabilities Maturity (Rossmann, 2019)	Reflective/formative assessment, executive-driven	Abstract, requires extensive internal benchmarking
Digital Maturity Benchmark (Field et al., 2018)	Data-driven, links maturity to ROI	Marketing-only, limited stages, people/culture absent
DMMM (Aslanova & Kulichkina, 2020)	Holistic, integrates strategy, people, technology, data	Complex, challenging practical implementation
McKinsey Digital Quotient (Catlin, 2015)	Covers strategy, capability, culture, organization	Abstract scoring, extensive data collection needed
Capgemini Digital Maturity Model (Capgemini, 2018)	Full lifecycle, technology and data integration	Complex, requires mature organizational context
Gartner Digital Business Maturity Model (Gartner, 2021)	Leadership-focused, transformational stages	Less prescriptive on technology/data
Digital Capability Framework (Deloitte, 2018)	Integrates strategy, customer, operations, culture	Broad framework, may lack specificity
Optimizely Digital Experience Maturity Model (Faster Capital, 2024)	DevOps and team maturity, continuous improvement	IT/software focus, limited strategic guidance

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6. Benchmarking table of digital maturity by dimension

The benchmarking table by dimension reveals both shared priorities and unique emphases across digital maturity models, guiding organizations in selecting the most suitable framework.

Table 6. Benchmarking table by dimension

Model	Strategy	Organization/ Structure	People/ Skill	Technology	Data	Customer	Culture
SWOT Analysis (Blokdyk, 2024)	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Adobe Self-Assessment Tool (Adobe, 2023)	High	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Low
Digital Marketing Maturity Index (Davies, 2024)	High	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Low
Five Stage Maturity Model (Boufim & Barka, 2021)	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Low
Smart Insights Digital Marketing Toolset (SMART, 2024)	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High	Low
Digital Capabilities Maturity (Rossmann, 2019)	High	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Low	Low
Digital Maturity Benchmark (Field et al., 2018)	High	Low	Low	Low	High	Medium	Low
DMMM (Aslanova & Kulichkina, 2020)	High	Medium	High	High	High	High	Medium
McKinsey Digital Quotient (Catlin, 2015)	High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High	High
Capgemini Digital Maturity Model	High	High	High	High	High	High	High

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(Capgemini, 2018)							
Gartner Digital Business Maturity Model (Gartner, 2021)	High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High	High
Digital Capability Framework (Deloitte, 2018)	High	Medium	High	High	High	High	High
Optimizely Digital Experience Maturity Model (Faster Capital, 2024)	Medium	Medium	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium

Fig 1. describes heatmap comparison of thirteen digital maturity models across seven dimensions (Strategy, Organization, People, Technology, Data, Customer, and Culture), categorized as High, Medium, or Low. The visualization highlights differences in scope and comprehensiveness, with some frameworks providing holistic coverage while others emphasize selective dimensions.

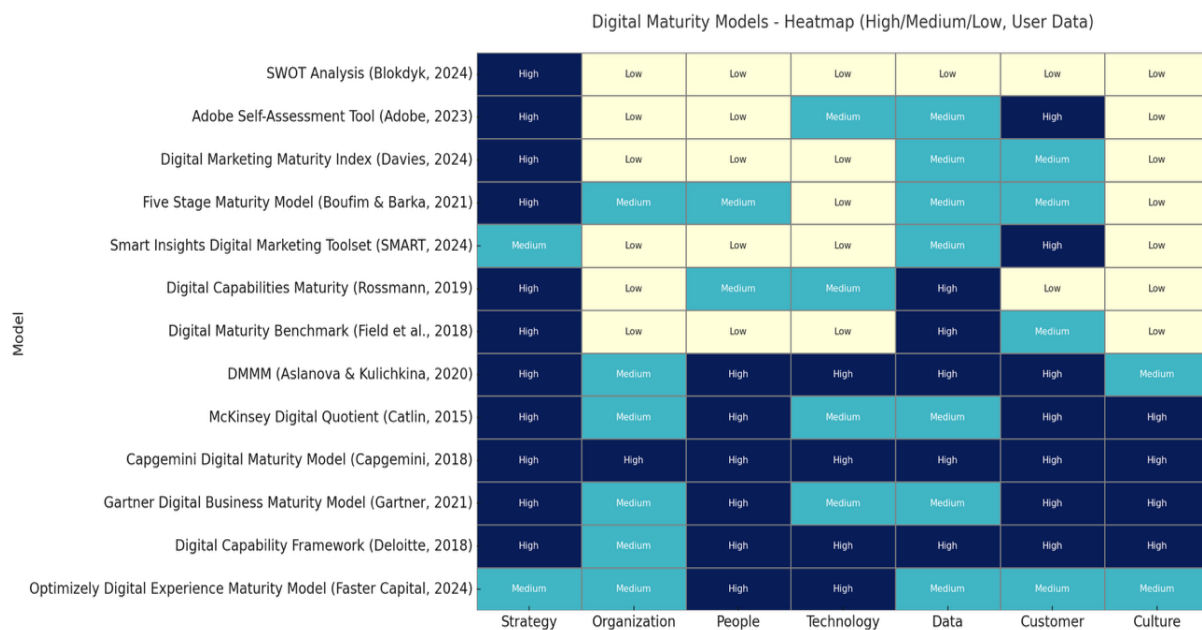


Fig. 1. Heatmap of Digital Maturity Models

7. Mapping of digital maturity models by dimension

The mapping of digital maturity models by dimension shows how frameworks align on core areas such as strategy and technology while differing in emphasis on culture, governance, or customer engagement. This view highlights both common ground and unique priorities across models. It helps organizations choose or adapt the framework that best fits their digital transformation needs.

Table 7. Benchmarking table by dimension

Model	Strategy	Organization/ Structure	People/ Skill	Technology	Data	Customer	Culture
SWOT Analysis (Blokdyk, 2024)	Digital advantage	Digitally enabled org.	Skills, capabilities	Deployment of digital capabilities	Value from digital	–	Culture of digital
Adobe Self-Assessment Tool (Adobe, 2023)	–	–	–	Integration, security	Data as asset, real-time	Customer focus	–
Digital Marketing Maturity Index (Davies, 2024)	Governance, agility	–	–	–	–	–	–
Five Stage Maturity Model (Boufim & Barka, 2021)	Digital planning	Operations, agility	Workforce agility	Automation, analytics	Customer data integration	Customer-centricity	Adaptability, diversity
Smart Insights Digital Marketing Toolset (SMART, 2024)	Product backlog prioritization	Collaboration, pipelines	Autonomous teams	Delivery pipelines, DevOps	–	–	–
Digital Capabilities Maturity (Rossmann, 2019)	Digital advantage	Digitally enabled org.	Skills, capabilities	Deployment of digital capabilities	Value from digital	–	Culture of digital
Digital Maturity Benchmark (Field et al., 2018)	–	–	–	Integration, security	Data as asset, real-time	Customer focus	–
DMMM (Aslanova & Kulichkina, 2020)	Governance, agility	–	–	–	–	–	–
McKinsey Digital Quotient (Catlin, 2015)	Digital planning	Operations, agility	Workforce agility	Automation, analytics	Customer data integration	Customer-centricity	Adaptability, diversity
Capgemini Digital Maturity Model (Capgemini, 2018)	Product backlog prioritization	Collaboration, pipelines	Autonomous teams	Delivery pipelines, DevOps	–	–	–

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Gartner Digital Business Maturity Model (Gartner, 2021)	Digital advantage	Digitally enabled org.	Skills, capabilities	Deployment of digital capabilities	Value from digital	–	Culture of digital
Digital Capability Framework (Deloitte, 2018)	–	–	–	Integration, security	Data as asset, real-time	Customer focus	–
Optimizely Digital Experience Maturity Model (Faster Capital, 2024)	Governance, agility	–	–	–	–	–	–

8. Digital maturity by company size

Digital maturity varies across company sizes, with small firms emphasizing agility and cost efficiency, medium firms focusing on scaling and customer engagement, and large enterprises prioritizing integration and innovation. These differences show that digital transformation strategies must be tailored to organizational capacity and goal.

Table 8. Digital maturity by company size

Dimension	Small Companies (SMEs/Startups)	Medium Companies (Growing Enterprises)	Large Companies (Corporates/Multinationals)
Strategy	Basic digital awareness, ad-hoc initiatives.	Basic digital awareness, ad-hoc initiatives.	Basic digital awareness, ad-hoc initiatives.
Organization	Simple, entrepreneurial, limited governance.	Formalized roles, emerging governance.	Cross-functional governance, multiple digital units.
People / Skills	Basic literacy, external support.	Upskilling, internal champions.	Continuous reskilling, leadership pipelines.
Technology	Essential tools (e-commerce, cloud).	Scalable platforms (ERP, CRM).	Advanced tech (AI, IoT, robotics).
Data	Basic analytics (reports, feedback).	Data integration, BI dashboards.	Enterprise-wide governance, real-time analytics.
Customer	Basic digital presence.	CX programs, omnichannel.	Customer journey orchestration, loyalty ecosystems.
Culture	Entrepreneurial mindset.	Adaptive culture, openness to change.	Embedded digital-first culture, global innovation.

Conclusion

The findings advance the theoretical understanding of digital maturity as a concept, highlighting various factors that drive digital transformation in organizations. Currently, scholarly literature lacks a precise conceptual definition and measurement framework for digital maturity and its associated capabilities. This paper, therefore, makes a significant theoretical contribution to conceptualizing and operationalizing the construct, building upon prior work by Westerman et al. (2014), Isaev et al. (2018), Poruban (2017), and Valdez-de-

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Leon (2016). Additionally, the results offer practical guidance for executives on key areas to focus on and steps to follow for successful digital transformation within their organizations. The digital maturity scale developed can be used as a framework for assessing the current digital transformation status and for ongoing monitoring.

Moreover, the formative measurement model for digital maturity supports further theoretical analysis of its relationship with other constructs. This research lays the groundwork for future studies exploring links between digital maturity and corporate performance, particularly testing Westerman et al.'s (2014) hypotheses on causal effects. A limitation of this study is its empirical foundation, which is based on findings from Central Europe; future research could apply the model in different cultural contexts to enhance generalizability.

In summary, this research provides a conceptual basis and a structured measurement model for digital maturity, serving as an essential foundation for further research. Practitioners can adopt this framework immediately, utilizing the established metrics to assess and track their digital transformation progress.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The authors agree that this research was conducted in the absence of any self-benefits, commercial or financial conflicts and declare the absence of conflicting interests with the funders.

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