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## **Digital Marketing: The New Core Corporate Capability**

Ricardo Emanuel dos Santos Gil

Master in Applied Management

Supervisor:

Dr Leandro Pereira, Assistant Professor with Habilitation, ISCTE -  
IUL

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BUSINESS  
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## **RESUMO**

Com a evolução do digital, a capacitação das empresas em marketing digital tornou-se imprescindível para a captação de resultados de negócio. Tornou-se assim pertinente apurar junto dos gestores de topo e gestores de marketing em Portugal, quais as características e habilidades que as empresas mais procuram nos profissionais de marketing digital. Verificou-se, neste estudo, não apenas as características fundamentais que os profissionais de marketing digital devem ter, como uma alta procura do mercado por estes profissionais, uma vez que o reconhecimento da importância do marketing digital para a obtenção de resultados de negócio é reconhecido e valorizado pelo mercado nesta era digital.

## **PALAVRAS-CHAVE**

Marketing digital, capacitação, habilidades, empregabilidade, formação.

## **CLASSIFICAÇÃO JEL**

M31

## **ABSTRACT**

Through digital evolution, digital marketing capabilities for companies have become essential for capturing business results. It, therefore, became relevant to find out from top managers and marketing managers in Portugal what characteristics and skills companies are most looking for in digital marketing professionals. As a result, it was verified, in this study, not only the fundamental characteristics that digital marketing professionals must have but also a high market demand for these professionals since the recognition of the importance of digital marketing for obtaining business results is recognized and valued by the market in this digital age.

## **KEYWORDS**

Digital marketing, capability, skills, employment, training.

## **JEL CLASSIFICATION**

M31

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## **GLOSSARY**

SEO - Search engine optimisation

SEM - Search engine marketing

C-Level - High-ranking executive titles

## **1 - INTRODUCTION**

Technological advances are reshaping the world of marketing and sales, so digital marketing has become a critical capability for success in the digital age.

Nowadays, digital is considered one of the most effective means of communication for marketers and advertisers. As a result, the reliance on qualified and experienced professionals is growing (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Digital marketing is a global phenomenon. The spread of digital marketing is expanding, and companies rely on digital marketing to increase their productivity (Kingsnorth, 2019).

The new marketing landscape has forced companies to search for strategies to compete and co-exist in the digital marketing arena (Agus Masrianto, 2022).

The fast-paced development of digital marketing is generating a demand for new skills. Educational institutions must adapt to these transformations to equip students with the right skills to meet the changing labour market expectations (Szabó & Bartal, 2020).

Due to a need for more qualified digital marketing professionals, marketing capability is a valuable resource (TEKsystems, 2017). Companies must have digital marketing capabilities to capture opportunities in the new marketing landscape (Agus Masrianto, 2022).

This dissertation intends to identify and classify the critical digital marketing capabilities, including soft and hard skills, that C-level and marketing managers are looking for in their companies.



## **2 - LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 - Digital Marketing Capabilities**

Firms are developing digital marketing capabilities (Verhoef & Bijmolt, 2019). As significant drivers of firm performance marketing capabilities are complex skills and knowledge embedded in organisational processes that carry out marketing tasks (Moorman & Day, 2016; Morgan et al., 2012, 2018).

The ability of firms to use digital technology-enabled processes to interact with customers in a targeted, measurable, and integrated way is a digital marketing capability (Kannan & Li, 2017; McIntyre & Virzi, 2019; Sridhar & Fang, 2019).

Digital marketing capability is planning, managing and implementing digital marketing. This capability refers to the processes, structures, and skills to succeed in the digital age (Chaffey, D. 2016; Chadwick, F. 2016).

### **2.2 - Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing has attracted the attention of marketers (J. Mark, 2017). Nowadays, digital marketing represents a new concept for businesses because it brings new ways for businesses to communicate and shares information with customers (J. Theor, 2019). The global adoption of digital networks and technologies has transformed how businesses interact with customers (Degbey & Pelto, 2021).

Using digital marketing with a data-driven approach allows businesses to compete with more data-centric customer acquisition and engagement. (Degbey & Pelto, 2021; Schiavone et al., 2021). In addition, digital marketing facilitates non-just interactions between businesses and customers as well as interactions between customers (T. Gillpatrick, 2020).

Examples of digital marketing techniques businesses use: are websites, e-commerce, social media marketing, email marketing, SEO, SEM, digital PR, digital advertising, digital CRM, content marketing, affiliate marketing, online newsletter, display advertising, mobile marketing, and digital analytics. (Gibson, 2018)

### **2.3 - Digital Marketing Strategy**

Businesses attain a competitive advantage through their resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991). In the digital era, the capacity to integrate multiple digital channels could provide more engagement (Luxton et al., 2015). A digital marketing strategy refers to strategy and execution to generate business performance (Chinakidzwa & Phiri, 2020).

Digital marketing strategies enable the opportunity to reach a higher position in the market (Morgan, Whitler, Feng & Chari, 2019) because digital marketing strategies and capabilities are positively related to customer satisfaction. (El Refae & Nuseir, 2022).

Failure of digital marketing strategy can result in missed opportunities in digital marketing and digital transformation, narrow integration of new technology into the existing business system, insufficient seamless process, and inability to develop metrics for accessing digital marketing efforts (Haarhaus & Liening, 2020).

Some digital marketing strategies include social media networks like Facebook and Instagram and company websites. (Hanaysha, 2021).

### **2.4 - Educational Institutions:**

Business schools face a radically changing environment. There is a genuine concern about the value of a business school degree in the job market today (Schlegelmilch, 2020). Educational institutions must keep up with the skills and qualifications currently required and desired in marketing. Higher education increasingly relies on market requirements to deliver practical courses and knowledge in the actual context (Elhajjar, 2022).

Marketing education can become a powerful engine for building a better society, enhancing productivity, and encouraging growth to enable the future (Finch et al., 2013). New digital marketing education aims for students and employees to acquire the skills needed in the market (Kelley & Bridges, 2005). In addition, digital marketing education helps students master the multifunctionality of social media, digital marketing strategies, and digital transformation (Langan, Cowley, & Nguyen, 2019).

Unlike other occupations where people must graduate to start a career, digital marketing can accommodate self-taught profiles. In addition, digital offers multiple opportunities to start a job without professional experience or graduation. For example, people can quickly start building content on social media networks and create a large community of fans. They can also do online certifications like Google Ads (Staton, 2016).

## **2.5 - Digital Marketing Certifications**

The adoption of third-party certifications to achieve relevant competencies is emerging in the digital marketing field (Cohen, 2012). There are two types of marketing-related certifications: certifications focused on a marketing technology platform, such as Google Ads and those focused on key marketing topics (Rosso et al., 2009).

The market recognises an urgent need for strategic knowledge and hands-on experience. Certifications fill this need within the marketing curriculum (Scott Cowley, William Humphrey Jr., and Caroline Muñoz, 2020). Digital marketing certifications appear to generate positive perceptions regarding career and job search relevance (Laverie et al., 2020; Humphrey et al., 2020).

Several organisations provide marketing certificates (e.g., Google Partners, Facebook Blueprint, Hubspot Academy) (Rosso et al., 2009).

## **2.6 - Digital Marketing Job Landscape**

Digital marketing is the top marketing speciality area. As a result, most new marketing hires are for digital marketing positions (McKinley Marketing Partners, 2019). Due to market needs, candidates with a strong specialisation in digital marketing are the most sought-after (McArthur, Kubacki, Pang, & Alcaraz, 2017).

Digital marketing technology skills dominate the list of desired hard skills by employers. A previous LinkedIn study showed that sales, social media, and digital marketing were the primary marketing skills among a tech-heavy list of skills (Lewis, 2019).

Digital Marketing is one of the categories expected to see growth in jobs; however, companies often need help finding qualified digital marketing applicants. As a result, the industry has a digital skills gap (McKinley Marketing Partners, 2019). However, nowadays, learning digital marketing is a critical professional advantage (Barker, 2014). Unfortunately, the talent gap is a reality: Businesses are experiencing lower-quality deliverables and customer dissatisfaction due to a lack of available qualified marketing professionals. (The TEKsystems, 2017).

In the past, studies identified the most required digital marketing skills: web analytics, e-mail marketing, inbound marketing, and social media. (Staton, 2016). These skills remain relevant, but more recent studies show a need for new critical skills across the most relevant

areas of digital marketing: digital advertising, analytics, social media marketing, digital strategy, web presence, project management, content marketing, search engine optimisation, mobile marketing and customer experience. Notably, some of the desired digital marketing skills are platform based, looking for valuable expertise with specific platforms such as Facebook and Google (TEKsystems, 2017).

## **2.7 - Digital Businesses Skills**

The transformation of marketing drives marketing in practice, requiring businesses to rethink approaches and strategies. To succeed in the digital age, businesses need to hire new skilled profiles (Harrigan & Hulbert, 2011; Lamberton & Stephen, 2016; Royle & Laing, 2014).

Soft skills for businesses are primary skills (Cimatti, 2016). Soft skills are more relevant when employers need to work closely with others (Fazekas, 2020). The most relevant soft skills for businesses are integrity, communication, courtesy, responsibility, social skills, positive attitude, professionalism, flexibility, teamwork, and ethic (Robles, 2012). Recently and according to another author, the most relevant soft skills were adaptability, collaboration, creativity, emotional intelligence and persuasion. (Lambert, 2021).

On the other hand, technical skills or hard skills are essential for a successful digital marketing job (Doyle, 2019). With the acceleration of digital and data sources, businesses need employers capable of handling multiple digital tools (Fazekas, 2020).

Digital Marketing Institute (2018) refers to content curation, social media, technology, search engine optimisation, data analytics, and user experience are the most desirable skills.

## 2.8 - Main Topics

Table 1 - Main topics & authors

Author, Year	Main Topics	Main Issues   Future Research
A. Di Gregorio, I. Maggioni, C. Mauri, A. Mazzucchelli (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employability skills for future marketing professionals;</li> <li>- Most promising job positions of the future;</li> <li>- Employability skills and level of digitalisation</li> </ul>	<p>The study provides a perspective on the digital marketing job positions evolution.</p> <p>Further research is required to understand future patterns and identify emerging opportunities for current marketing students.</p>
Masrianto, A.; Hartoyo, H.; Hubeis, A.V.S.; Hasanah (2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital marketing adoption;</li> <li>- Digital transformation;</li> <li>- Digital marketing capability;</li> <li>- Digital capability index;</li> </ul>	<p>This study discovered that transformation has a direct effect on digital marketing adoption as well as digital marketing capabilities.</p> <p>The importance of digital marketing adoption for business results.</p> <p>The relevance of digital marketing capabilities (skills) for business results.</p>

<p>Ildiko Kovacs (2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital marketing employability skills;</li> <li>- Must-have soft skills;</li> <li>- Desirable job transition options and opportunities;</li> <li>- Skill categories in digital marketing;</li> </ul>	<p>The common skills required by employers across digital marketing.</p> <p>This study could be a basis for future studies to help education institutions to master the skills for the job market.</p>
<p>Darlin Apasrawirote; Kritcha Yawised; Paisarn Muneesawang (2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social media marketing and marketing tools capability;</li> <li>- Digital marketing strategy capability;</li> <li>- Digital relationship capability;</li> <li>- Leadership capability;</li> <li>- Digital technology;</li> <li>- Performance: business performance and customer satisfaction;</li> </ul>	<p>This study proposed the relevance of digital marketing capabilities for businesses and the critical measurement of business performance.</p> <p>The proposed dimensions of the digital marketing capabilities framework are to identify new research directions for marketing strands.</p>

<p>Lisa Spiller<sup>1</sup> and Tracy Tuten (2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Industry demand for marketing knowledge and skills;</li> <li>- The digital marketing education challenge;</li> <li>- Certifications as a source of digital marketing educational materials;</li> <li>- Sources of digital certification and training programs;</li> <li>- Educational value and branded digital marketing certification programs;</li> </ul>	<p>This study reviewed the course materials and certification programs offered by branded, third-party platforms and service providers. Studies of the market demand for digital marketing professionals.</p>
<p>Samer Elhajjar (2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital marketing jobs: what are recruiters looking for?;</li> <li>- Digital marketing education &amp; digital marketing:</li> <li>- Education requirements to deliver practical courses and knowledge for digital marketing</li> <li>- Job titles, required skills and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<p>Analysis of digital marketing job descriptions in terms of job titles, required skills, knowledge, and responsibilities. Analysis of the relevance of educational institutions to capacity students for the digital marketing world. Studies of the most desirable skills for digital marketing professionals.</p>

### **3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research aims to identify and classify the critical digital marketing capabilities, including soft and hard skills, that C-level and marketing managers are looking for in their companies.

Qualitative research inquiry and posterior content analysis are used to critically analyse in deep to enable a comprehensive understanding of the analysis data.

The methodology considered identifying the main issues from the previous research, followed by interviews with C-level and marketing managers, which required a minimum of 5 years of experience, with open questions based on the previously identified issues from the literature review. After that, all interviews were transcribed in a text to apply data mining and open AI advanced techniques to identify patterns and extract valuable insights to enable an in-depth analysis of the research instrument.

The interviews aim to absorb as much feedback as possible from executives motivated by the research scenario. In this way, twenty interviews were conducted with twenty executives from various sectors of activity in Portugal who use digital marketing regularly.



### 3.1 - Research Questions and Research Objective

Table 2 - Topics, research questions and objectives

<b>Topic, Author, Year</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Research Objective</b>
Studies about digital marketing skills (Ildiko Kovacs, 2022).	What are the most relevant characteristics (soft skills) a digital marketing professional should have?	Identify the most relevant soft skills for a digital marketing professional.
Studies about digital marketing skills (Ildiko Kovacs, 2022).	What are the most relevant technical characteristics (hard skills) should a digital marketing professional have?	Identify the most relevant hard skills for a digital marketing professional.
Studies about high education increasingly rely on market requirements to deliver practical courses and knowledge in the actual context (Samer Elhajjar, 2022).	Do universities prepare students to work in digital marketing? What competence should be developed during university?	Identify the actual relevance of universities in preparing students for digital marketing roles.
Studies about digital marketing jobs (Samer Elhajjar, 2022).	What are the most requested job positions within digital marketing?	Identify the most requested digital marketing jobs and functions.
Studies about digital marketing index for business results (Masrianto, A.; Hartoyo, H.; Hubeis, A.V.S.; Hasanah, 2022).	How critical is digital marketing for generating business results for companies?	Identify the importance of digital marketing adoption for business results.

### 3.2 - Research Instrument

The interviews were prepared to gather responses for this study. The structure script consisted of two sections: three questions characterising the interviewee and five general open questions.

- 1) The first section looks to characterise the interviewee in the three direct questions:

*Table 3 - Questions for interviewee characterization*

Q1	Q2	Q3
The sector of work	Job title/function	Years of work experience.

- 2) Does the second section ask the interviewee's opinion and knowledge in the five open questions:

*Table 4 - Open questions for the interviewees*

Q1	What are the most relevant characteristics (soft skills) that a digital marketing professional should have?
Q2	What are the most relevant technical characteristics (hard skills) should a digital marketing professional have?
Q3	Do universities prepare students to work in digital marketing? What competence should be developed during university?
Q4	What are the most requested job positions within digital marketing?
Q5	How important is digital marketing for generating business results for companies?

## 4 - DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 - Sample Characterization

The study carried out had a sample of twenty executive professionals based in Portugal at the C-level or Marketing Managers from sectors such as Marketing Consulting, Startups, the Public Sector, Education, IT Consulting and Industry. Interviewees required at least five years of experience to guarantee knowledgeable and experienced results.

Of the twenty interviewees, eleven are marketing managers (55%), and nine are from C-Level loads (45%).

*Table 5 - Interviewees job titles/functions*

<b>Job Title / Function</b>	<b>Total of Interviewees</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Marketing Manager	11	55%
C-Level	9	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Related to the work sector, half of the participants with 50% representation are from the Marketing Consultancy sector. The other half are from Startups (20%), Education (10%), IT Consultancy (10%), and Public Sector and Industry with 5% each.

*Table 6 - Interviewees sector of work*

<b>The sector of work</b>	<b>Total of Interviewees</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Marketing Consultancy	10	50%
Startups	4	20%
Education	2	10%
IT Consultancy	2	10%
Public Sector	1	5%
Industry	1	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

One of the requirements was to guarantee a minimum experience of five years for each participant interviewed, in order to get experienced and knowledgeable answers to the actual context.

In this study, the average years of experience of interviewees is eleven years, with the most experienced having twenty-two years of experience and the least experienced having a minimum of five years.

*Table 7 - Interviewees work experience*

<b>Years of work experience</b>	<b>Total of Interviewees</b>	<b>Avg of work experience</b>
22	1	<b>11 years</b>
19	1	
15	1	
14	2	
13	1	
12	2	
11	3	
10	2	
9	1	
7	1	
6	1	
5	4	

## 4.2 - Results Analysis and Discussion

### 4.2.1 - Research objective no.1: Most relevant soft skills for digital marketing professionals

The first research objective pretends to identify the most relevant soft skills for a digital marketing professional. Analysing the word frequency in the answers to the question: *What are the most relevant characteristics (soft skills) that a digital marketing professional should have?* It was possible to identify a panoply of soft skills that professionals most value.



Figure 1 - Interviewees word frequency

According to the word frequency analysis was possible to identify some of the most critical soft skills for digital marketing professionals' success. The most relevant soft skills are Communication, as mentioned by 45% of the interviewees, and Empathy and Curiosity (mentioned by 30%). Creativity and Teamwork (mentioned by 25%) and Flexibility, Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving, were mentioned by 20% of interviewees.

More soft skills were mentioned in the study, Resilience, Strategic Thinking and Adaptability (mentioned by 15%), Risk-Taking and Proactivity (mentioned by 10%), and fewer mentioned by 5%: Constant Learning, Attention to Detail and Multitasking.

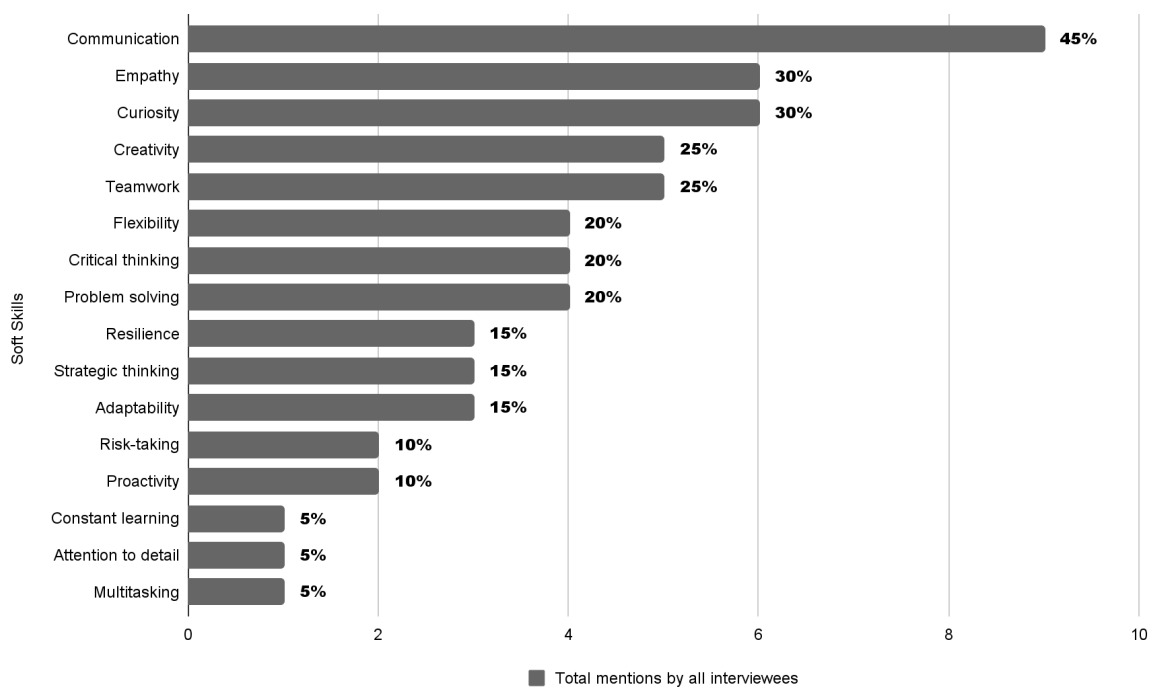


Figure 2 - Soft skills mentioned by interviewees

According to Lember (2021), the essential soft skills are adaptability, teamwork and creativity. For Robles (2012), communication, flexibility, and teamwork are the most relevant soft skills for business professionals.

Based on the collected data, it was concluded that with these soft skills in abundance, Digital Marketing professionals are prepared to tackle market challenges and meet their expectations.

#### 4.2.2 - Research objective no.2: Most relevant hard skills for digital marketing professionals

The second research objective pretends to identify the most relevant hard skills for a digital marketing professional. Analysing the word frequency in the answers to the question: *What are the most relevant characteristics (hard skills) that a digital marketing professional should have?* It was possible to identify the eight most valuable hard skills.

Through data mining and word frequency analysis, it was possible to identify some of the most valuable hard skills for digital marketing professionals' success. 80% of the interviewees mentioned SEO as the most important hard skill, followed by Paid Media Advertising (mentioned by 70%), Data Analytics (mentioned by 60%), Social Media (mentioned by 55%), Multimedia Skills (mentioned by 40%), Copywriting (mentioned by 35%), Content Marketing (mentioned by 30%) and E-commerce (mentioned by 20%).

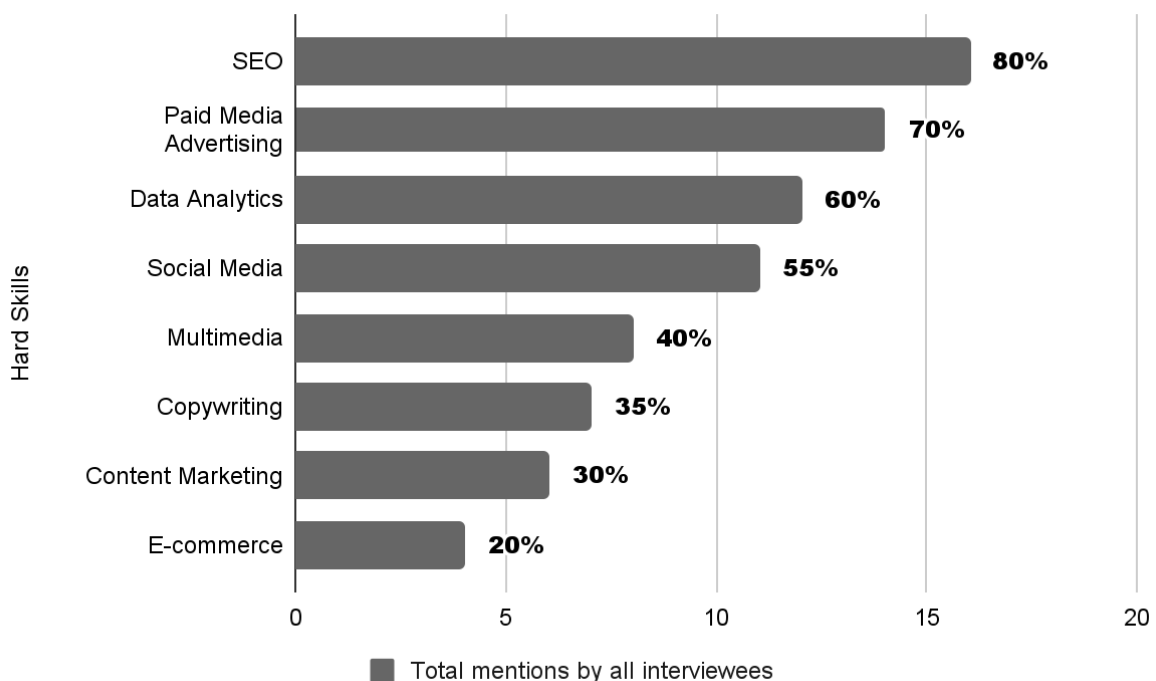


Figure 3 - Hard skills mentioned by interviewees



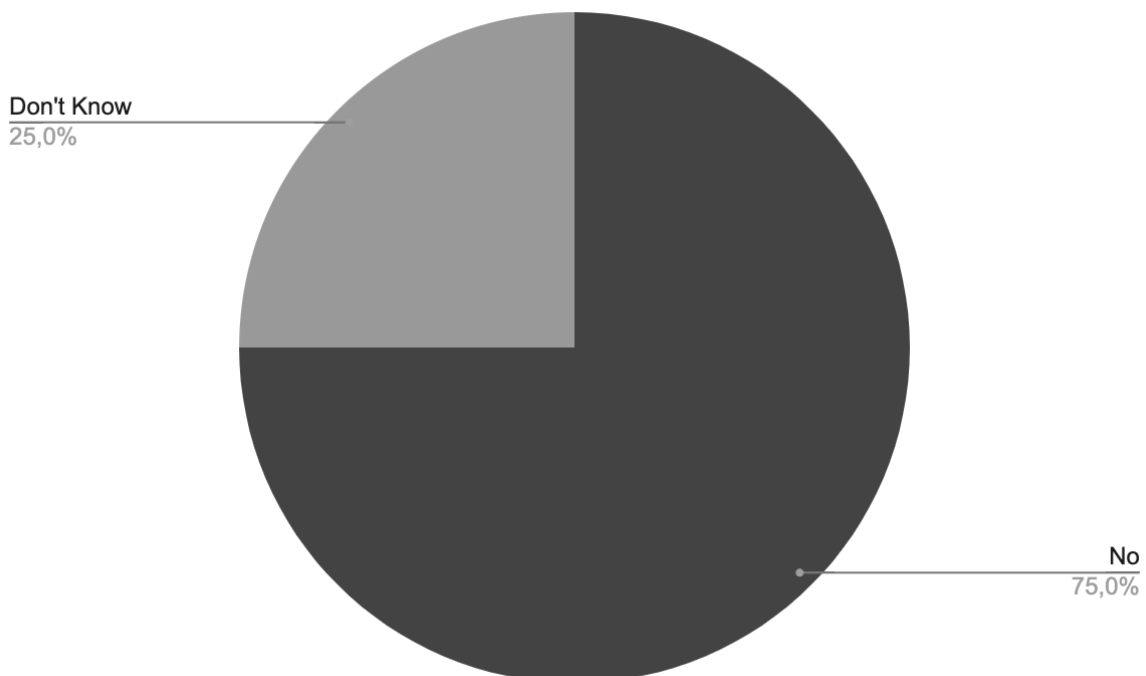
According to the Digital Marketing Institute (2018), SEO, content marketing, social media, and analytics are among the most desirable hard skills, conforming to the analysis carried out in this study.

Based on the collected data, an accurate alignment between C-level and marketing managers was concluded about the most desirable hard skills for digital marketing professionals. It was observed that there is a high demand for marketing knowledge and skills noticing digital marketing capabilities are a valuable resource for businesses.

#### **4.2.3 - Research objective no.3: Actual relevance of universities in preparing students for digital marketing roles.**

The third research objective pretends to clarify the interviewees' opinion of the actual relevance of universities in preparing students for digital marketing roles.

Fifteen (75%) of twenty interviewees believe universities do not adequately prepare students for the digital marketing market. 25% of the interviewees express a need for more knowledge to answer.



*Figure 4 - Relevance of universities for interviewees*

According to the data analysis, some of the reasons are that the curriculum is too theoretical, not practical enough and lacks integration with companies and market needs. There is a clear desire for universities to adapt to the new digital age, develop students for strategic thinking, use practical subjects, and develop technical skills.

*Table 8 - Interviewees mention*

<b>Ask for Less</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Ask for More</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
➤ too theoretical	12	➤ strategic thinking	13
➤ not practical	10	➤ practical subject	11
➤ lack of integration	8	➤ technical skills	11
➤ superficial	3	➤ marketing tools	5
➤ outdated	2	➤ real case studies	5
		➤ advertising culture	1

According to Elhajjar (2022), educational institutions must keep up with the skills and qualifications currently required and desire in marketing. Through the data analysis, it was possible to verify that the market misses more specialisation on the part of the universities to train the following digital marketing professionals.

#### 4.2.4 - Research objective no.4: Identify the most requested digital marketing jobs and functions

The fourth research objective pretends to identify the most requested digital marketing job positions. Analysing the data in the answers to the question: *What are the most requested job positions within digital marketing?* It was possible to identify the top in-demand job roles.



Figure 5 - Job roles mention frequency

According to the data analysis, 85% of the interviewees mentioned Paid Media Manager as the most required job role in digital marketing, followed by Data Analyst (mentioned by 80%), SEO Manager and Social Media Manager (mentioned by 65%), Content Producer (mentioned by 60%), Analytics Manager (mentioned by 50%) E-commerce Manager (mentioned by 45%), Influencers Manager as Email Marketing Specialist (mentioned by 30%), Digital Strategist, Performance Manager and Copywriter (mentioned by 20%) Web Developer (mentioned by 20%) and finally, Automation Specialist and Web Designer by 10% each.

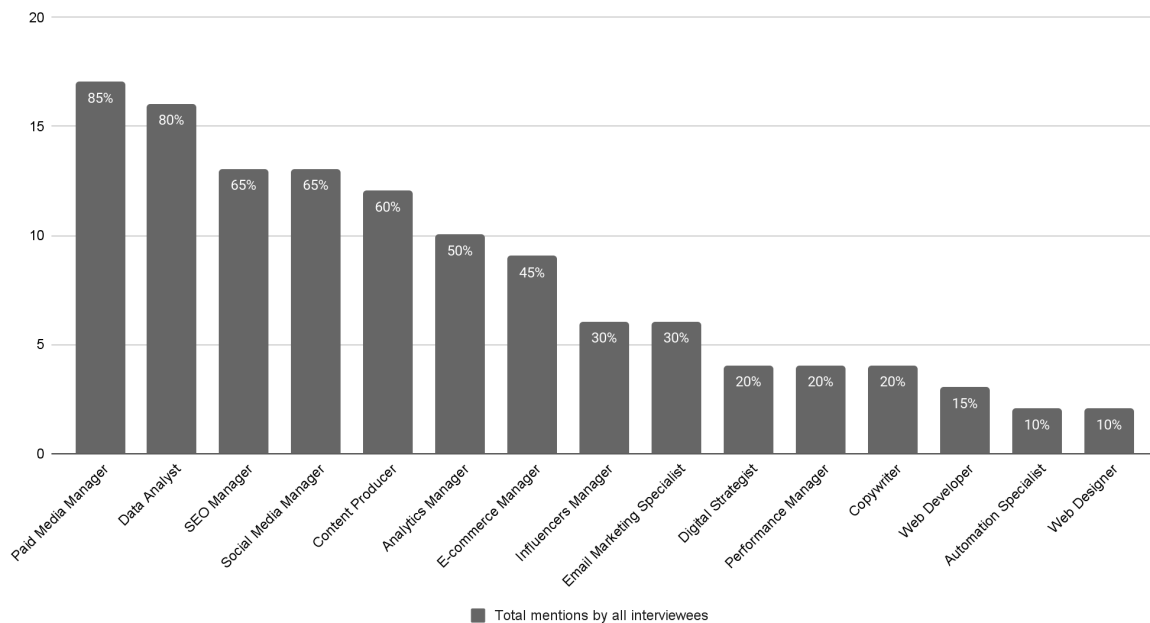


Figure 6 - Job roles mentioned by interviewees

There is a high demand for digital marketing professionals for different job positions. Analytical functions, such as Paid Media Advertising or Data Analysts, are the most requested; however, engagement and community management specialities, such as Social Media Managers or Content Producers, are also part of the most requested areas according to C-level and Marketing Managers interviewed.

#### 4.2.5 - Research objective no.5: The importance of digital marketing adoption for business results.

The fifth research objective pretends to identify the importance of digital marketing adoption for business results. Verifying the answers to the question: *How critical is digital marketing for generating business results for companies?* Identifying all interviewees who considered digital marketing adoption essential to get business results nowadays was possible.

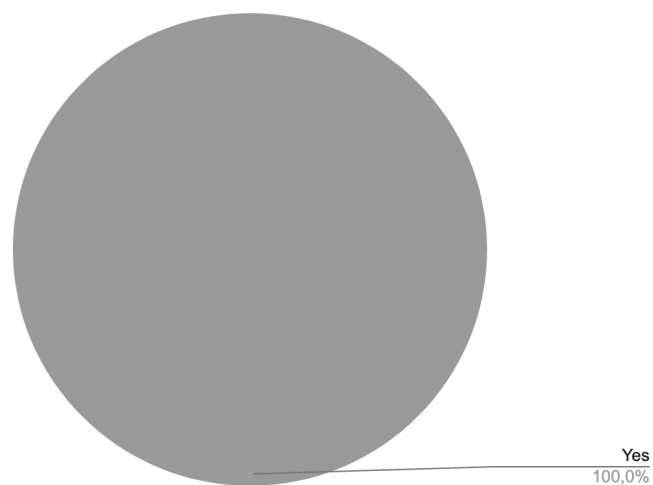


Figure 7 - Crucial digital marketing adption

Analysing the word frequency, it was possible to identify the main reasons why the interviewees considered digital marketing adoption essential. It was verified that a digital presence is essential for direct communication with consumers. However, the possibility of the digital being highly measurable is super-valued. The potential that digital marketing brings to generate sales and build brand awareness, according to this study, digital marketing becomes indispensable for business growth in the digital age.

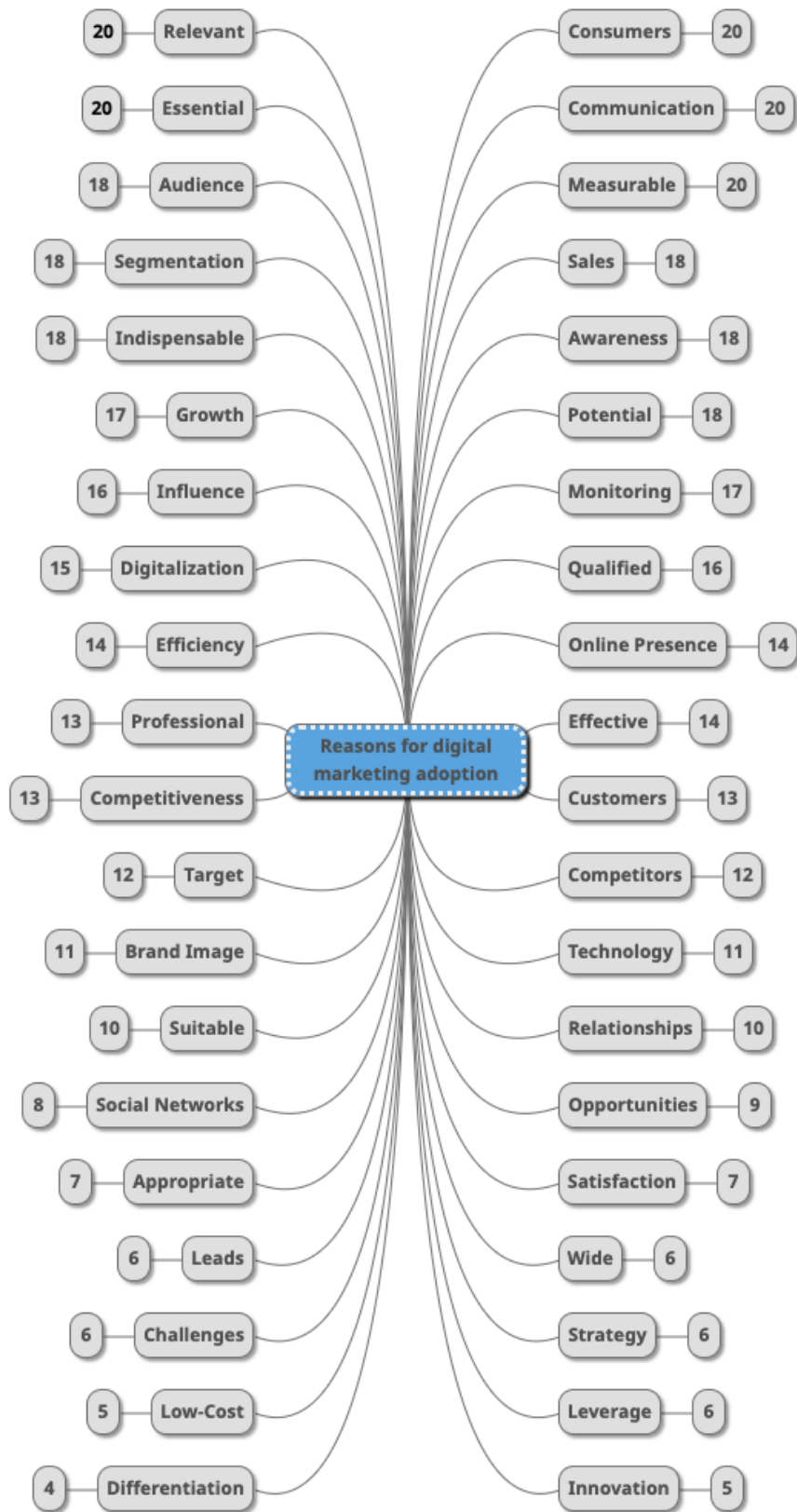


Figure 8 - Digital marketing adoptions word frequency

According to Masrianto (2022), in the literature review, digital marketing brings new opportunities, and businesses must guarantee digital marketing capabilities. In addition, digital marketing adoption attracts new customers and maintains customer loyalty and support. The analysis is in line with the literature, thus reinforcing the fundamental importance digital marketing has today to obtain high-value business results. To improve a business's performance, one must have digital marketing capabilities.

## **5 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This dissertation allowed the identification of the critical digital marketing capabilities that C-level and marketing managers are looking for in their companies, as also the real importance of digital marketing adoption for high-value business results.

Based on the collected evidence, it was possible to identify the most critical soft skills for digital marketing professionals' success: communication, empathy, curiosity, creativity and teamwork. On the other hand, related to hard skills, it was possible to find the most valuable for digital marketing professionals: SEO, paid media advertising and data analysis are specialities that should be the domain of marketing professionals. It was noticed that combining hard and soft skills is essential for digital marketing, so it will be fundamental for professionals to develop both digital marketing skills.

Performed research verified that the majority of interviewees feel universities do not adequately prepare students for the digital marketing market. Additionally, when requested to identify improvements, strategic thinking, use of practical subjects, and development of technical skills has required as a must-have.

According to this research, Paid Media Advertising and Data Analysts are the most requested roles. Social Media Managers and Content Producers are also roles highly requested by companies.

Additionally, when requested to recognise the importance of digital marketing for businesses, the responses were unanimous in confirming the high relevance of digital marketing. It was observed that one must have digital marketing capabilities to improve a business's performance.

This study was theoretical-practical, containing a sample of real professional experts in the market field. For future research, it will be interesting to deepen knowledge about how each combination of soft and hard skills can impact the performance of digital marketing professionals.

## **6 - LIMITATIONS**

The study had a reduced sample of 20 experienced professionals, which may condition the results. There needs to be more literature in this area, which limited knowledge acquisition from past studies.



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