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How CRM Mediates and Firm Size Moderates the Relationship between Digital Transformation and B2B Marketing Performance in the UK

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine the role played by CRM in moderating the link between digital conversion strategy and B2B Marketing outcomes among UK organizations and the role played by firm size in moderating this relationship. A literature review shows that digital transformation has undergone some changes in recent years, and its effects on the B2B marketing context need to be evaluated systematically. The analysis delves into the ways that CRM systems and business size play a mediating and moderating role in establishing digital capabilities that enhance customer interactions and marketing results. Furthermore, the theoretical framework of the study resorts to the RBV to develop the hypothesis that the firm size as an organizational context factor can define the relations between digital transformation, CRM, and B2B marketing performance. This research adopts a positivist research philosophy and a deductive research strategy. The survey data was sampled from 100 B2B firms in the United Kingdom. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, and regression analysis are the methods used to analyze the data and determine the existence of the hypothesized relations. To sum up, this study shows that digitalization increases B2B marketing effectiveness and that the CRM capabilities of the firm moderate this impact. Furthermore, the analysis confirms that firm size mediates the relationship between innovation types, digital transformation, and CRM, where large firms benefit more from synergies. The research adds value to the literature by offering data-driven insights into the dynamics of digital transformation, CRM, and organizational size in B2B marketing.

KEYWORDS: Digital Transformation, Customer Relationship Management, Firm Size.

1. Introduction

The worldwide market is expected to total \$3.4 trillion by 2026, and therefore, more and more companies today have realized that digital transformation cannot wait. Digital technology has expanded the scope of various businesses through internet media such as websites, email, and Social media platforms (Deborah et al., 2021). In addition, due to the combination of data analytics tools, companies may now understand the specifics of industry activity and may, therefore, adjust the concepts of marketing based on the analysis of trends and customers even more effectively (Bock & Wiener, 2017).

Although the digital transformation agenda is becoming more and more critical for the business sector (Chwiłkowska-Kubala et al., 2023; Feliciano-Cestero et al., 2023). Regrettably, there is not enough literature available in the current knowledge pool to comprehend this shift and the consequent impact on the performance of

B2B marketing (Lasrado, Thaichon, & Nyadzayo, 2023). Even though digital transformation is recognized and accepted as an organizational necessity (Vaska et al., 2021), however, there is still an explicit deficiency of information involving the extent to which this expansive change influences the detailed particulars of business-to-business marketing. Moreover, future research concerning the influence of contextual factors on B2B marketing performance, one of the aspects of the digital revolution that is taking place, might not include the effect of the CRM system in mediating the process (Pereira et al., 2022). The literature on CRM and its implications for business advantages cannot compete for attention with the current literature because it lacks studies that have tried to analyze how CRM mediates to either strengthen or weaken the effects of digital transformation on B2B marketing performance. This leads to the general public's poor understanding of this particular aspect of the relationship. This is important because it

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Student at Ulster University, London. Email: <u>muhammadsalman4340@gmail.com</u> Student at Hailey College of Commerce, University of the Punjab, Lahore. Email: <u>nabeeharauf928@gmail.com</u> Lecturer at Superior University, Lahore. Email: <u>imjunaidarshad@gmail.com</u> hides the reasons that can make it possible to develop effective strategies for the use of digital transformation in B2B marketing (Krizanic, Sestanj-Peric, & Tomicic-Pupek, 2019).

Therefore, more work needs to be done to understand the interactions between different forms of organizational structures and how the size of a company influences the relationship between digital transformation and B2B marketing and its impact on the performance of the firm (Sundaram, Sharma, & Shakya, 2020). Therefore, the presence of the moderator strengthens and brings into focus the role of context-specific research findings where it is essential to get to the study of organizational characteristics that condition digitalization as a determinant of marketing performance, as well as reveal signs of its strategic management in the increasing futuristic conditions of the modern B2B environment (Ghosh & Dash, 2019).

The purpose of this research study is to examine the mediating role of CRM in the relationship between digital transformation efforts and the digital transformation success of firms in the United Kingdom context, considering the size of the firm.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review analyses relevant literature to help enlighten the previous studies.

2.1. DIGITAL SHIFT AND BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS MARKETING

Digital shift is the change process in business activities and plans using physical media or hand-operated activities and changing to electronic systems or computerized activities (Hess et al., 2016). This change entails deploying digital to work, collaborate, learn, and transact Cloud, data, analytics, and automation for efficiency, productivity, and improved customer relations (Verhoef et al., 2021). B2B can also be explained as business-to-business marketing; it is, therefore, the marketing of products or services by an organization to other commercial sellers and not to the final consumer (Wiersema, 2013). This means that B2B marketing is mainly concerned with establishing what other businesses require and desire and how they use their resources to make purchases and then marketing products accordingly (Guesalaga & Johnston, 2010).

The first thing that should be noted is that the terminology of digitalization and B2B marketing poses certain intricacies, and, therefore, many scholars define the subject as dynamic and evolving rapidly (Jung et al., 2019). Digitalization of business processes seems to be more a managerial imperative and a variable that enforces revolutionary change in the B2B marketing environment (Breuer et al., 2019). This underlines the importance of digitalization as a critical strategy for doing business today, with a specific focus on marketing. Some changing dynamics that define digital transformation include the progressive change-management approach, which replaces conventional approaches to escalating acceptance of detailed digital plans within organizations (Abumandil et al., 2021). This is not just a mere progression from traditional blueprints using technological advancement; it is a reinvention of the whole business regime to achieve better outcomes for operational improvement and consumer relations.

The main objectives of digital transformation in B2B marketing are mentioned to be the optimization of all the functional activities and the achievement of even more ultimate levels of business

performance and interaction with customers (Trautner, 2023). Based on this, there is a shift towards such a model or approach because the authors acknowledge that the fundamental business environment is changing rapidly compared to the current paradigms of working, which entail most of the business practices to be manual and operate primarily on a face-to-face basis. Supply networks, customers' intentions, and business transactions need to be connected by digital artifacts (Terho et al., 2022).

Among these factors, one that is designated as this effect is the movement of marketing associations (Apasrawirote, Yawised, & Muneesawang, 2022). The growing influence of digital technology has led B2B marketers to view traditional methods substantially and shift towards more fluid, analytically oriented, and customer-centered techniques (Lin et al., 2020). Digitalization opens new possibilities related to the use of information in decision-making, individual customer interactions, and advertising (Battisti & Brem, 2020). In addition, because digital communication channels and media landscapes are constantly evolving, B2B marketers experience both benefits and barriers (Kian Chong, Shafaghi, & Leing Tan, 2011). Many applications can be associated with digital technologies, including the specific appeal to the relevant target audience, the search for new customers, and communication with existing ones. However, due to this dynamic characteristic of these media, the marketing approaches and plans should, therefore, be dynamic and flexible (Yongvongphaiboon & Chantamas, 2021).

H1: Digital Transformation has a positive impact on B2B marketing performance.

2.2. MEDIATING ROLE OF CRM

CRM is a crucial application that holds a pivotal position in giving direction to the relationship between digital transformation and B2B marketing which is in the process of change continuously (Zeynep Ata & Toker, 2012). Business-to-business organizations cannot underestimate the importance of CRM in the organization and analysis of customer interactions and data (Wongsansukcharoen, Trimetsoontorn, & Fongsuwan, 2015). Wongsansukcharoen et al. (2015) defined these platforms not as mere databases but as tools to improve customer relations, deliver timely information, and give firms all they need to harness data to make better decisions effectively. With the increasing digitalization of firms, the role of CRM systems devoted to the management and development of relationships with customers cannot be overestimated (Richard, Thirkell, & Huff, 2007).

Thus, CRM is an essential mediator due to its centralization and customer data analytic skills (Nuseir et al., 2023). In the modern world with digital technological advancement witnessed in B2B businesses where data is voluminous and comes from various sources, CRM systems link data from several touchpoints (Hasan, 2018). This single database can help companies fully understand the consumers, and better market segmentation and more customized operations can be provided, which makes sense for the following marketing strategies (Hasan, 2018). Another advantage of CRM systems is the automation of marketing processes (Iftikhar Ahmad, 2014). In the race where speed and efficiency are essential while dealing with aspects of digital transformation, automation has become a competitive edge. Through the optimization and handling of repetitive tasks. customers' relationship management systems enable B2B marketers to accomplish other challenging and strategic tasks

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of marketing campaigns (Nuseir et al., 2023). Consequently, developing a higher level of such initiatives' influence on marketing performance is possible. CRM also helps organizations foster more enduring customer relationships by engineering and synchronizing customer-interface processes across several channels (Richard, 2008). Understanding how CRM systems assist in managing the implications of digital transformation on B2B marketing performance is essential to improving the efficacy of businesses' digital initiatives (Siemieniako & Gębarowski, 2017).

H2: The relationship between B2B marketing performance and digital transformation is mediated by Customer Relationship Management.

2.3. THE ROLE OF FIRM SIZE

Business-related digital activities improve B2B marketing and increase company performance, depending on the business size, which introduces a novel aspect (Algahtani, Uslay, & Yeniyurt, 2022). The second hypothesis is based on the idea that various organizations have distinct organizational qualities, resources, and capacities. It suggests that company size moderates the relationship between digital transformation experience, B2B marketing, and firm success (Xue & Li, 2023). These different organizational settings feel the impact of digital activities in different ways; it all depends on the underlying attributes/competencies that are inherent in the size of the company (Tuominen et al., 2022). Despite their often more efficient administrative frameworks and fewer financial assets, there is a specific set of prospects and challenges for small organizations during the process of digital transformation (Rodriguez et al., 2023). Even though they are highly integrated, adaptable, and versatile, their digital operations may be small-scale and smaller because of the finance issue. However, it would be possible for larger enterprises to execute more far-reaching initiatives in the digital field since they have more capital available (Koch & Hartmann, 2023). Still, they may face difficulties in rapidly identifying and adapting digital opportunities because of organization-enforced structural factors and conservatism (Koch & Hartmann, 2023).

Differences also influence the kind and intensity of the customer relationship in the B2B domain in the company's size (Merrilees, Rundle-Thiele, & Lye, 2011). A more individualized and active approach which also creates good customer relationships, might also be of benefit to smaller enterprises (Ryu & Hung, 2009). On the other hand, large organizations may incorporate sophisticated CRM systems and automate many of the processes due to a high client base (O'cass & Ngo, 2012). Big companies operate on a large scale, and they deal with multicultural clients (Liu, 2020). For them, digital transformation is a strategy to address the complexity of extensive supplier relationships, multiple

customers, and complex markets. On the other hand, small companies could center their strategies on specific geographic areas and adapt their digital strategies to fit better.

H3: The relationship between B2B marketing performance and digital transformation is moderated by firm size.

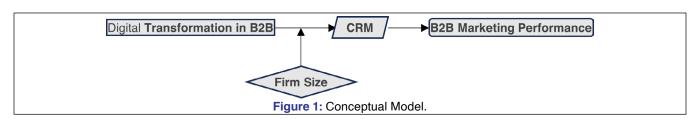
2.4. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Several theories can be used to understand how CRM acts as a mediator and firm size as the moderator in the relationship between DT and B2B_MP, one of which is the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory. In the light of the Resource-Based View, it is argued that a company would sustain a superior advantage over rivals by deploying resources and skills that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and unique (Barney, Ketchen Jr, & Wright, 2021; Madhani, 2010; Utami & Alamanos, 2023). From these studies, one can deduce that CRM systems and digital transformation capabilities can be considered strategic resources contributing to a company's overall marketing capabilities.

Verhoef et al. (2021) define digital transformation as integrating digital technologies into an organization to substantially revolutionize how it operates and delivers value to its clients. However, the RBV posits that when a company applies specific assets for digital transformation, which encompasses practices like automation, data analysis, and customer-facing technologies, into a context in which rivals cannot easily copy it and where it has conferred much value, it attains a competitive advantage. These digital capabilities may enhance B2B marketing outcomes, enabling companies to engage clients in more intelligent, targeted, and personalized ways.

However, the company's ability to handle client relations may influence the effectiveness of digital transformation in marketing success. Thus, CRM systems and procedures can be viewed as related organizational enablers. The latter encompasses the systematic collection, analysis, and application of customer information to enhance customer communications and interactions. According to the RBV, combining CRM with digital transformation skills may have a positive feedback loop that improves marketing results.

Furthermore, the RBV theory states that the market value of a firm could be influenced by the size and other contextual factors of the company. More prominent companies could be more equipped to use CRM and digital transformation than smaller companies since they have more infrastructure, resources, and managerial know-how (Leeflang et al., 2014). Thus, it is reasonable to anticipate that the link between CRM, digital transformation, and B2B marketing success will be moderated by business size.



3. METHODOLOGY

Positivist studies limit the researcher's role to the collection of data and the objective evaluation of it (Tsang, 2016). Under these

circumstances, positivism makes it possible to conduct a participantdriven inquiry into the complex dynamics of CRM practices, firm size's role in moderating B2B marketing performance, and digital transformation. This study used a deductive research technique, meaning that theoretical reviews were the foundation for developing hypotheses. In this study, a cross-sectional research design is employed to explore relationships, characteristics, or occurrences within a particular population at one time.

3.1. DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLE SIZE

A sample size of one hundred participants was chosen to ensure coverage of the UK B2B sector and guarantee adequate representation. At the same time, the sample had to be manageable in the context of collecting and analyzing the data. Research that seeks to balance the sample size with practicality and statistical power is likely to recommend a sample size of 100 or above (Hair et al., 2014). For the current study, the sample size includes a sufficiently large number of participants from different organizational structures and sectors in the UK B2B company, making the results relevant for broader applications. Also, the number of participants involved in the study is statistically sufficient to represent the main findings for 100 participants in the wanted dynamic and characteristics of the population (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

In line with purposive sampling, where and when described by Acharya et al. (2013). The bias levels are kept at the minimal catchment possible while maximum variations in the population are captured well in the sample. Survey questionnaires were sent to the chosen participants throughout the data-collecting process to get quantifiable information on their views, experiences, and understanding of how digital transformation affects B2B marketing performance. Cronbach's Alpha approach was used to verify the validity and reliability of the study and preserve credibility. All participants were given information about the research aims and approaches in this research. All subjects' involvement in the study was strictly based on their willingness, and each participant could withdraw from the study at any time without charge.

3.2. COMMON METHOD VARIANCE

Some approaches have been employed to avert this study's potential common method variance. First, as stated by Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012), measures are adopted, such as reverse-coded items and different sequences of questions to reduce conventional method bias in the structuring of the questionnaire. Respondents were also informed that their identities and responses would be kept anonymous and confidential; this helped to eliminate social desirability bias, where participants provide answers that are perceived to be socially acceptable as opposed to their actual responses (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In addition, data has been tested for common method variation using statistical tools such as the Normality Test to provide insights into the level of variation and the necessary adjustments made in the findings (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

In light of previous research and theory, the Likert-scale questions in the questionnaire have been changed so that there is content validity and reliability for the scale items (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014). For instance, the questions built on the structures and dimensions found in the literature test the extent to which B2B marketing performance is perceived to be impacted by digital transformation and the role played by CRM (Hasan, 2018). Likewise, demographic questions aim at obtaining data that could in some way affect participants' perception and understanding of business-to-business marketing and the stage of the digital revolution (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014).

3.3. QUESTIONNAIRE

Researchers use quantitative data from various industry practitioners in sales and marketing. Based on this data, the questions for the "Digital Transformation in B2B" variable were derived. To determine factors that shape the relational approaches in the B2B digital environment, the researchers adopted the "Digital Transformation in B2B" variable developed by the authors, who aimed to capture digitalization's perceived usefulness and power regarding the B2B marketing performance, strategies, and results.

In 'B2B Marketing Performance', A prior study collected quantitative data consisting of 682 questionnaires from SME and primary firm respondents. Because of this study, they identify ten crucial related factors and a four-phase cognitive unlearning model. The insights gathered from investigating how managers may support and enable the departure of antiquated and ineffective methods of knowing and doing in their sales organizations during digital transformation were used to build the questions for the B2B Marketing Performance variable. The study's emphasis on the function of cognitive unlearning offers a fresh viewpoint on digital transformation in B2B sales.

A prior study investigated the function of CRM as a mediator in the interaction between digital marketing and small and medium-sized enterprises' (MSMEs') financial performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researchers created Three sections in the questionnaire: one on CRM, one on digital marketing, and one on company performance. The customer relationship management questionnaire developed by a prior study served as the basis for the CRM questions. The ability to assess how much CRM systems offset the advantages of digital transformation for business-to-business marketing outcomes was thus made feasible for the researchers. This approach was also utilized to create the study's questions.

4. Analysis

This section will use primary data from surveys to examine the relationships and interactions between significant variables. The table data was examined to clarify the study's limitations and results.

4.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

A demographic analysis of the sample of respondents is shown in Table 1, with differences across age groups, gender, qualifications, and years of experience in different sectors.

An understanding of the characteristics of the respondents of this B2B marketing research may be gained from the demographic data supplied. Most of these participants, 32.7%, are male 65. 4% and the majority of them are between 25 and 34 years old, which makes the sample slightly young and biased in male dominance. The survey revealed that the respondents were highly educated, with 38.3% having a bachelor's degree and 37.4% having a master's degree. The biggest group (33.6%) has one to five years of B2B marketing experience, and the second largest proportion of the respondents (31.8%) has less than one year of experience, meaning that there is a blend of professionals with significant amounts of experience and students who are still establishing themselves in the course. This way, there is a diversity of industry fields, giving a broad vision of B2B marketing perspectives. The top three are Services at 32.7%, the Financial sector at 19.6%, and the



Manufacturing sector at 18.7%. From the provided sample, one can get a demographical picture of the B2B marketing

professionals in the research, including age, gender, education level, and working experience.

Table 1: Demographic Data.

Age	%	Gender	%	Educational Background	%	Years of Experience in B2B Marketing	%	Industry Sector	%
25-34	32.70%	Female	29.90%	Bachelor	38.30%	1-5 years	33.60%	Education	2.7%
35-44	28.00%	Male	65.40%	PhD	16.80%	11-15 years	9.30%	Technology	13%
45-54	13.10%		4 /0%	High School	7.50%	16 years or more	7.50%	Finance	19.60%
55-64	0.90%					6-10 years	17.80%	Food	0.90%
		I prefer not to say						Healthcare	8.40%
				Masters	37.40%	Less than one year		Healthcare Immigration	0.90%
Under 25	25.20%						31.80%	Manufacturing	18.70%
Officer 23 2							01.0070	Marketing	1.90%
								Services	32.70%
								Student	0.90%

4.2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND NORMALITY

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics, which give a general overview of the variable's tendencies, variability, and distribution.

B2B_MP is somewhat higher at 4.0966, and DT in B2B was found at 3.8505. As for the mean values, these reveal the primary connections. These values suggest that organizations generally perceive themselves as engaged in digital transformation and marketing performance. This is depicted in the standard deviations and variances of the answers; CRM and Firm Size have standard deviations of 0.86361 and 0.71947, respectively.

The distribution shape can be observed by analyzing skewness and kurtosis values. CRM and B2B_MP have negative skewness, which means that they are skewed to the left, and have positive kurtosis, which means the distribution is more pealed. Firm Size has a slight negative skewness; thus, it has a normal distribution. More details about the respondents are given by age, gender, education level, and industry working experience. These suggest that the population is relatively diverse in experience and education and, therefore, is heterogeneous. These findings show how CRM and the company's size help enhance the relationship between marketing outcomes and digital strategies in the UK B2B market.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics.

	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
DT_in B2B	3.8505	0.07085	0.73292	0.537	-0.507	0.234	0.136	0.463
B2B_MP	4.0966	0.08102	0.83805	0.702	-1.301	0.234	1.693	0.463
C_R_M	3.8692	0.08349	0.86361	0.746	-1.205	0.234	1.661	0.463
Firm_Size	3.1028	0.06955	0.71947	0.518	-0.195	0.234	0.634	0.463
Age	2.58	0.151	1.566	2.454	0.608	0.234	-1.175	0.463
Gender	1.75	0.052	0.534	0.285	-0.154	0.234	-0.307	0.463
Educational Background	2.44	0.129	1.333	1.777	0.121	0.234	-1.775	0.463
Experience in the industry	3.05	0.165	1.707	2.913	-0.097	0.234	-1.729	0.463

4.3. RELIABILITY STATISTICS

In light of the statistics highlighted by the Cronbach alpha coefficients, measurement scales for the variables under analysis are highly reliable (. B2B Marketing Performance has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.756 for the three items to be satisfied, a cutoff higher than the acceptable one of 0.7 (see Table 3). Cronbach's Alpha for Measurement of DT in B2B Firms = 0.777, which suggests a slightly higher reliability and demonstrated internal consistency for all three facets of the instrument. CRM was found to have high internal consistency with all three components and a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.859, as we inferred from the results depicted above, and it has the highest dependability among the four different systems. Thus, the high-reliability data strengthens the findings concerning the mediating role of CRM and the moderating role of Firm Size on the relationship between Digital Transformation and B2B Marketing Performance in UK contexts. They also provide evidence that the items used in assessing each variable are Valid and that the variables are highly reliable.

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Analysis.

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
B2B Marketing Performance	0.756	3
Digital Transformation in B2B Firms	0.777	3
Customer Relationship Management	0.859	3

4.4. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

As is seen in Table 4, the results of the ANOVA test indicate that the regression model is very significant (F (1, 105) = 81. 161, p <. 001) with B2B Marketing Performance (B2B_MP) as the dependent variable and Digital Transformation in B2B Firms (DT_in_B2B_Firms) as the independent variable. The following is an implication, meaning that B2B marketing performance is mostly determinable by digital transformation. An R-value of

0.660 in the model summary shows that marketing success positively correlates with digital transformation. In summary, the level of significance, regression coefficients, predicted value, standard error, coefficient of determination (R2), or the R Square value was found to be 0.436. Thus, it explains about 6% of the variability in B2B marketing results. The modified R square of 0.431 demonstrates its dependability when applied to the population. It is also apparent that the composition of

the residuals does not depart noticeably from the random terms; no apparent autocorrelation is apparent in the residuals based on the Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.894. Consequently, the implications of these findings include a focus on the role of digital transformation in enhancing the prospects of B2B marketing success, as well as the exploration of the CRM-company size relationship in the context of UK firms.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of the Dependent and Independent Variable

ANOVA ^a											
Model	Model Sum of Squares df Mean Square F Sig.										
1	1 Regression 32.457 1 32.457 81.161 <.001 ^b										
	Residual 41.99 105 0.4										
	Total 74.447 106										
				a. D	V: B2B_MP						
			b. I	V: Digital_Trans	sformation_i	n_B2B_Firms	3				
				Mode	el Summary	b					
Model	Model R R Square Square Square the Estimate Change F Change df1 df2 Sig. F Durbin-Watson										
1	1 .660 ^a 0.436 0.431 0.63238 0.436 81.161 1 105 0 1.894										
	a. IV: DT_in_B2B_Firms										
				b. D	V: B2B_MP			•			

The ANOVA and model summary indicate that DT_in_B2B_ Firms strongly influence B2B_MP in UK companies. The regression analysis qualitatively reveals the F-value of 81, implying its significance at less than 0.05 levels (chi-square = 161, p <. 001), which influenced the conclusion that digital transformation is an important variable contributing to the overall levels of marketing performance. Slightly, the R Square value equals 0.436. Thus, digital transformation accounts for 6% of the variability of B2B marketing performance. The Adjusted R Square for this study is 0.431, meaning that the model explained no variance in the outcome variable above chance, which suggests a reasonable level of the model goodness explained by the number of predictors in the model. The standard error of the estimate is nil 0.63238, which is the average distance that observed values are from the regression line. This characteristic has a Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.894. This shows no high degree of autocorrelation in the residuals, which also explains why the above model is valid. Hence, these studies underscore the importance of digital transformation in improving the B2B marketing performance and lay down the platform to investigate the mediating influence of CRM and the moderating impact of firm size.

The results in Table 5 show how essential digital transition is to organizations within the United Kingdom to excel in B2B marketing. The shallow level of calculated p-value and the significantly high calculated F-value provide solid evidence for concluding that the effect of the independent variable, digital transformation, is very significant on the dependent variable, marketing performance. In light of the obtained R Square value, it was expected that approximately half of the marketing effectiveness in a company could be explained by the level of success in implementing digital transformation. This tells you that the association is not a coincidence and is most likely to be so even if it is studied in a larger population because the modified R Square has been done. The standard error reflects the model's accuracy, which denotes the difference between the predicted and actual values. Finally, using the Durbin-Watson statistic, it can be inferred that there is no apparent issue with the residual autocorrelation, which means the model has been properly fitted. The lack of significance or an actual decline in the relationship between digital transformation and B2B marketing effectiveness when the additional impact of CRM practices and business size is considered is verified in these findings and highlights the importance.

Table 5: Moderation Analysis.

ANOVA ^a													
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.							
1	Regression	33.235	2	16.618									
	Residual	41.211	104	0.396	41.936	<.001 ^b							
	Total	74.447	106	17.014									
a. DV: B2B_MP													
			b. IV: (Constant), Inter	raction.Term	FS.DT, DT i	n B2B Firms						
					lodel Summ	naryb							
Model	Adjusted B Std Error of B Square Sig F Durbin-												
1	1												
a. IV: (Constant), Interaction.Term_FS.DT, DT in B2B Firms													
					b. DV: B2B_	MP							

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Table 6 displays the result of the mediation analysis, which investigates the extent to which CRM mediates the relationship between B2B Marketing Performance (B2B MP) and Digital Transformation in B2B Firms (DT_B2B). The digitization technique contributes 52% to the current study. The first model built with CRM as the dependent variable indicates that around 65% of CRM variation is explained by the model, the R-value is quite acceptable at 0.73, and the R-square is equal to 0.5265. Digital transformation significantly determines the success of B2B marketing in the total effect model for B2B_MP, with a coefficient of 0.76 and a t-statistic of 9.0089; R squared = 0.66 and has found a strong positive correlation. This implies partial mediation when CRM is added to the equation; the coefficient for DT_B2B is reduced to 0.57 (t = 4.7678). Likewise, the CRM variable is affirmed to possess a reasonable amount, contributing to the mediating function. This means that with all variables being fully normalized, the indirect effect is fully normalized as well, having a size of 0.16; it is also possible to see the other effect of CRM tools upon B2B_MP, which is somewhat indirect. Accordingly,

CRM plays an influential mediating role in the set relationship between the extent of digitization and marketing effectiveness.

The results reveal that while digital transformation enhances marketing success right from the get-go, suitable CRM methods will bolster this effect. The high R-square value in the models suggests that the digital transformation aspirations might explain a large proportion of the total variance in both CRM and B2B_MP. When CRM is added to the model, the coefficient for DT_B2B reduces, suggesting that improved CRM has a part in the relationship between DT and marketing performance. Thus, the importance of the CRM coefficient and the standardized indirect effect suggest that CRM is essential in turning digital change investments into higher marketing outcomes. This stresses how important it is to have effective CRM systems incorporated to obtain the benefits of digital business transformation, and it recommends that organizations focus on enhancing their CRM competencies to get superior business-to-business marketing results.

Table 6: Mediation Analysis.

Outcome Variable	Model	R	R-square	MSE	F	df1	df2	
C_R_M	0.73	0.5265	0.3565	116.7616	1	105	-	
	0.68	0.4592	0.3871	44.1488	2	104	-	
B2B_MP (Total Effect)	0.66	0.4360	0.3999	81.1611	1	105	-	
	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	р	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI	Standardized Coefficient	
DT_B2B	0.76	0.0838	9.0089	-	1	1	0.66	
	0.57	0.1198	4.7678	=	0	1	0.50	
C_R_M	0.21	0.1017	2.1121	0.0371	0	0	0.22	
	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	CI Completely Standardized Indirect Effect				
C_R_M	0.18	(0.0009)	0.5331	0.16				

5. DISCUSSIONS

Based on this study, we found that B2B marketing performance (B2B_MP) and digital transformation characteristics (DT_B2B) are significantly positively related. This relationship draws attention to a significant notion in the digital marketing debate. The current study also supports the argument that leveraging technology improves overall marketing outcomes (Apasrawirote et al., 2022; Battisti & Brem, 2020). This evidence supports the assumption that the actions taken to develop strategies for their digital transformation are positively related. The findings also corroborate earlier research regarding the assertion that the companies that sustain innovation and the introduction of the digital transition may be linked to better economic performance. Understanding the outcomes of digital transformation at organizations, we can state that it is a critical factor for organizations in gaining and maintaining competitive advantages, given the complexity of issues that organizations face today. Apasrawirote et al. (2022) and Battisti and Brem (2020) have also come up with similar conclusions, further supporting this idea that digital technology is an ingredient that has better marketing outcomes rather than a fad.

The findings of this study also support previous studies done in the sector by establishing a strong positive relationship between C_R_M and B2B_MP. CRM systems have information management, marketing automation, and individualistic communications since they are the source of consumer data (Hasan, 2018; Wongsansukcharoen et al., 2015). Positive relationships have been established between CRM and B2B

marketing success, implying the importance of using CRM systems as strategic tools in the modern world. In light of the literature above, our research supports the stances of Hasan (2018) and Wongsansukcharoen et al. (2015), specifically about how CRM remains a key system solution for companies that seek to forge their ways through the challenging landscapes presented by digital transitions in B2B marketing contexts. Since organizations use digital technology to sustain competitiveness in a dynamic market, implementing CRM systems is now more critical. Companies can easily leverage CRM systems to accelerate marketing processes, individualize relations, and leverage consumer information. Thus, it opens new opportunities for development and diversification in the world, which is gradually becoming digital.

The results on the moderating role of firm size may be partly explained by prior work that underlined the heterogeneity of the B2B context and showed differences in the effects of digital initiatives across organizational scales (Alqahtani et al., 2022; Xue & Li, 2023). Although the more prominent organizations could leverage the size advantage to pursue more broad digital activities, some of the possibilities that the smaller firms may be unable to achieve could be due to such restricted resources and the size of the organization's information technology environment determining the extent of integration possible. It is, therefore, pivotal towards the deployment of strategies reliant on digital when the organization in question is making applications of the same, depending on the size of the firm and the market in which it holds a stake. Alqahtani et al. (2022) and Xue and Li (2023)

have revealed the firms' size influences yet have a moderate positive impact on the relationship between DT and B2B marketing effectiveness. This paper confirms the effectiveness of digital activities in organizations of various sizes. This is also because small firms cannot be as organizationally flexible or possess the requisite resources to adapt to or utilize digital technology in marketing as effectively (Algahtani et al., 2022). Constraints like limited funding and integration problems put smaller firms under pressure to go through digital change in a more systematic way, which, to an extent, weakens and hinders the effectiveness of digital initiatives. However, because they are more prominent in organizational structure and resources, larger organizations might be able to attempt even more elaborate digital initiatives (Xue & Li, 2023). Because of the large size, they can afford best-in-class technology, assign dedicated teams, and be better at integrating difficulties. However, this could pose problems concerning the organizational structure and dynamics by possibly being unable to shed its centralized structure and become agile enough to introduce digital changes. The B2B industry is vast and multifaceted, so it is necessary to adjust digital initiatives to the specific characteristics of companies' size (Algahtani et al., 2022; Xue & Li, 2023). Focusing on speed and creativity in precise, minimal resource utilization activities might benefit small firms. Meanwhile, large organizations may leverage their massive market influence to establish elaborate digital environments that revolutionize efficiency and improve the quality of consumer interactions with products and services at multiple stages of the process.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This research examined the mediating effect of CRM and the moderating factor of firm size to assess the impact of digital transformation on B2B marketing performance in the UK. The findings confirmed the importance of digital technology in marketing strategies. Marital relationships depicted a positive and significant association between B2B marketing performance improvement and digital transformation initiatives. Moreover, the study established that CRM uses tasks in a significant mediating role since, through the integrated CRM systems, data-driven decision-making, customized interactions, and automated marketing processes were enhanced, which enhances the efficacy of digitization undertaking and marketing performances. Further, the study also explained the more detailed mediating role that firm size used in the research where large firms may implement large-scale projects buoyed by firm financial muscle. Still, at the same time, small firms may experience problems in task segregation, coordination of resources, and integration difficulties. These findings enhance the knowledge in the B2B marketing field about the drivers of marketing effectiveness across digitally enabled organizations and provide helpful information to both marketer practitioners and academic researchers, thus fulfilling the purpose of answering the research question and the objectives outlined for this study.

The recommendations imply that companies should employ large-scale B2B marketing strategies, which would be as detailed as digital transformation initiatives, the possibilities of which have been discussed above; CRM systems should be exploited fully. However, some of the research limitations include the fact that the study was only conducted on the B2B sector in the UK, the lack of ability to show causality due to the cross-sectional research, and self-reported data in surveys may be prejudiced. However, there are certain limitations. First,

emphasizing digital transformation can lead to a competitive advantage in the B2B environment; second, appropriate implementation can improve the effectiveness of marketing activities and maintain successful CRM implementation. Notably, essential to realizing superior execution of digital plans is the ability to identify aspects that may not be consistent with the form and type of the enterprise in consideration.

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