

# DIGITAL MARKETING ADOPTION AND LIBRARIANS' SERVICE DELIVERY IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN IMO STATE IN A DIGITIZED ECONOMY

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## Abstract

This study examined digital marketing adoption and its implications for library service delivery in university libraries in Imo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated librarians' adoption of digital marketing tools, the influence of digital marketing strategies on service delivery, the factors facilitating or hindering implementation, and the relationship between digital marketing adoption and the effectiveness of library service delivery in a digitized economy. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 86 professional librarians in university libraries in Imo State. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire validated by experts. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that librarians moderately adopted digital marketing tools with Grand mean = 2.88), with social media, instant messaging applications, and library websites being the most frequently used, while Search Engine Optimization (SEO) was the least adopted. Digital marketing strategies positively influenced accessibility, visibility, user engagement, and user satisfaction (grand mean = 3.08). Furthermore, ICT infrastructure, management support, staff training, and collaboration facilitated implementation, whereas inadequate funding, poor internet connectivity, unstable power supply, and limited digital marketing competencies were the major barriers mean = 3.11). It recommends increased investment in ICT infrastructure, continuous professional training in advanced digital marketing competencies, particularly SEO, and sustained institutional and government support through funding and policy initiatives to strengthen digital marketing implementation in university libraries.

**Keywords:** Digital Marketing, Library Service Delivery, University Libraries, Digital Marketing Adoption, Digitized Economy

## **Introduction**

Libraries worldwide are undergoing profound transformation in response to the digital economy. The traditional role of libraries as custodians of print collections is being redefined by advances in information and communication technologies (ICT), user expectations for instant access, and global competition from online platforms. In Nigeria, these pressures are intensified by systemic challenges such as poor funding, weak infrastructure, and limited awareness of library services. Scholars argue that digital marketing offers a pathway to revitalization, enabling libraries to promote their services, engage users, and remain relevant in the knowledge economy (Oguntoye, Olafimihaan & Ajibare, 2024). Digital marketing refers to the use of online platforms, social media, search engine optimization (SEO), and virtual campaigns to promote services and engage users. Horsfall (2020) emphasizes that Nigerian librarians must adopt web 2.0 tools such as WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn to reach diverse audiences and satisfy information needs. This approach transforms libraries from passive repositories into dynamic knowledge hubs, capable of competing in a digitized economy.

Globally, Wang, Wang, and Liu (2025) highlight that library marketing strategies must integrate modern marketing theories such as segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) to foster innovation and user-centered services. Nigerian libraries can adapt these frameworks to local realities, ensuring that digital marketing aligns with non-profit objectives while enhancing visibility and relevance. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital adoption in Nigerian academic libraries, forcing institutions to expand digital access and restructure operations. Nwachokor and Chegwe (2025) note that libraries rapidly subscribed to open access materials, organized training for lecturers, and shifted to hybrid

service models. This transformation underscored the importance of digital marketing in sustaining user engagement during crises and beyond.

Similarly, Onuoha and Chukwueke (2025) argue that government-owned libraries must embrace digital and policy-based strategies, including marketing, to reposition themselves for equitable access and cultural preservation. Without proactive marketing, many Nigerian libraries risk irrelevance in a rapidly digitized society. Hamza, Abubakar, and Lawal (2025) stress that librarians must acquire 21st-century ICT skills — including digital publishing, knowledge management, and automated services — to deliver effective information services. Digital marketing complements these skills by ensuring that services are not only available but also visible and attractive to users. Haruna (2026) further emphasizes that revitalizing Nigerian libraries requires integrated digital infrastructure and coordinated governance, with marketing strategies playing a key role in promoting inclusivity and knowledge equity[africanscholarpub.com](https://africanscholarpub.com).

Despite its potential, digital marketing in Nigerian libraries faces obstacles. Uwaechina and Echezona (2025) identify poor funding, inadequate facilities, and limited ICT skills among librarians as barriers to effective digital library operations. Horsfall (2020) adds that ignorance among librarians and lack of awareness among the public hinder marketing efforts[pdfs.semanticscholar.org](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org). Addressing these challenges requires sustained investment in infrastructure, continuous professional development, and policy reform. Yet opportunities abound. Oguntoye et al. (2024) conclude that effective marketing can serve as a panacea for sustainable Nigerian libraries, promoting access, visibility, and user satisfaction. By leveraging digital tools, libraries can align with Nigeria's Vision 2050 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, positioning themselves as engines of academic excellence and socio-economic transformation.

This paper argues that digital marketing is not a peripheral activity but a strategic necessity for librarianship in a digitized economy. It situates digital marketing as a driver of improved accessibility, user satisfaction, and institutional resilience. By embedding marketing strategies into library practice, Librarians in Nigeria can strengthen professional identity, foster innovation, and ensure equitable access to information.

### **Research Questions**

1. What digital marketing tools are adopted by librarians in Nigerian university libraries?
2. How do digital marketing strategies influence accessibility, visibility, user engagement, and satisfaction?
3. What factors hinder the implementation of digital marketing in Nigerian university libraries?

### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between the adoption of digital marketing tools by librarians and the effectiveness of library service delivery in a digitized economy.

### **Literature Review**

Digital marketing in librarianship is defined as the strategic use of online platforms, social media, SEO, and virtual campaigns to promote services and engage users. Horsfall (2020) argued that Nigerian librarians must adopt Web 2.0 tools such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and LinkedIn to expand reach and improve service delivery. Globally, bibliometric analyses confirm growing scholarly attention to digital marketing in library

science, underscoring its relevance in the knowledge economy (Wani, 2024). Otobrise and Omagbon (2019) surveyed 100 librarians in South-South Nigeria, finding that 65 respondents expressed positive attitudes toward digital marketing of library products and services, noting improved awareness and user satisfaction. Muazu and Mohammed (2025) studied university libraries in Kano State, revealing that WhatsApp (84.5%), LinkedIn (81%), and Zoom (82.8%) were the most widely adopted platforms, though challenges included inadequate training and poor infrastructure. These findings highlight both the potential and limitations of digital marketing adoption in Nigerian libraries.

Internationally, Wani (2024) mapped research trends in digital marketing within librarianship, showing significant growth in scholarly output but weak collaboration patterns among authors. The conceptual framework for this study is anchored on the assumption that digital marketing adoption directly influences effective library service delivery in a digitized economy. The framework integrates three core dimensions: Digital Marketing Adoption Tools: Social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn), SEO, email campaigns, webinars and. Purpose is to: enhance visibility, promote resources, and engage users. Service Delivery Outcomes details accessibility, user satisfaction, visibility, innovation. And also, the expected outcome is improved effectiveness of librarianship in Nigeria's knowledge economy. While the challenges and Moderating factors details: Poor funding, inadequate ICT infrastructure, limited skills, and resistance to change as well as the moderating factors such as: Training, policy support, Vision 2050 alignment, Sustainable Development Goal frameworks.

The framework posits that while digital marketing adoption positively impacts service delivery, the strength of this relationship is moderated by challenges and enabling factors. This details opportunities for Nigerian scholars to contribute to global discourse.

Studies applying the Technology–Organization–Environment (TOE) framework demonstrate that digital marketing literacy directly influences patron engagement strategies, reinforcing the need for professional training (Acta Psychologica, 2025). Nwachokor and Chegwe (2025) examined Nigerian academic libraries post-COVID-19, finding that digital marketing strategies such as online training, open access subscriptions, and hybrid services were critical for sustaining user engagement. Onuoha and Chukwueke (2025) further argued that government-owned libraries must adopt digital and policy-based strategies, including marketing, to reposition themselves for equitable access and cultural preservation. Abdullahi (2025) investigated Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integration in 15 Nigerian academic libraries, revealing that automation, digitization, and cloud computing were increasingly adopted but hindered by insufficient funding and weak policy frameworks. This is to say that digital marketing complements ICT adoption by ensuring visibility and user satisfaction, bridging the gap between infrastructure and service delivery. Haruna (2026) proposed a blueprint for revitalizing Nigerian libraries through digital infrastructure, emphasizing marketing as central to inclusivity and knowledge equity. Social media platforms are critical tools for library marketing. Empirical studies show that Nigerian libraries use WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter/X extensively, though adoption of Instagram and YouTube remains moderate (Muazu & Mohammed, 2025). Globally, social media marketing has transformed communication patterns, enabling libraries to engage users in real time and promote new acquisitions (Hudron & Oyeneran, 2019).

Despite progress, challenges persist: inadequate training, poor facilities, low user awareness, and insufficient institutional support (Muazu & Mohammed, 2025). Horsfall (2020) identified ignorance among librarians and lack of ICT infrastructure as barriers. Uwaechina and Echezona (2025) added that poor funding and limited ICT skills hinder

digital library operations. These findings underscore the need for capacity building, sustainable funding, and policy reform to optimize digital marketing in Nigerian libraries. Oguntoye, Olafimihan, and Ajibare (2024) concluded that effective marketing can serve as a panacea for sustaining Nigerian libraries, promoting access, visibility, and user satisfaction. By leveraging digital tools, libraries can align with Nigeria's Vision 2050 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, positioning themselves as engines of academic excellence and socio-economic transformation.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a survey research design. The design is appropriate because it allows for systematic collection of librarians' perceptions, experiences, and adoption patterns of digital marketing tools in service delivery. The population comprised of all the 86 professional librarians working in selected university libraries in Imo State, Nigeria including federal and state-owned universities namely: Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri 15; Federal University of Technology, Owerri, 48; Kingsley Ozumba Mbadiwe University, Ogboko, 6; Imo State University Owerri, 10; and University of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Umuagwo, 6 respectively. Census Enumerative sampling technique was adopted because is small and can be managed. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into three sections: Section A: Digital marketing tools adoption, Section B: Perceived impact on service delivery Section C: Challenges and opportunities. The questionnaire used was a 4-point Likert rating scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) to measure perceptions. The instrument was validated by three experts in library and information science. Reliability of the instruments were tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold of 0.70 considered acceptable for internal consistency. The questionnaires were distributed electronically via Google Forms

and physically in selected libraries. Respondents were given two weeks to complete the survey. Follow-up reminders were sent to maximize response rates.

Data was analyzed using SPSS (version 26). Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were used to summarize adoption patterns. The hypothesis was tested using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) at the 0.05 level of significance. Pearson correlation was considered appropriate because it determines the strength and direction of the relationship between the adoption of digital marketing tools and the effectiveness of library service delivery, both of which were measured using composite scores derived from Likert-scale questionnaire items. Decision Rule: Mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as Agree, while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as Disagree.

## Result

### Digital marketing

**Table 1: Responses of 86 Professional Librarians on the Extent to which Librarians in Nigerian University Libraries Adopt Digital Marketing Tools in Service Delivery (N = 86)**

| S/N | Item Statements                                                                                                                   | SA | A  | D  | SD | Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1   | I use social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn) to promote library resources and services to users. | 41 | 29 | 10 | 6  | 3.22               | 0.87      | Agree    |

|   |                                                                                                                                  |    |    |    |    |      |      |          |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|------|------|----------|
| 2 | I employ email campaigns or mailing lists to disseminate information about library services and activities.                      | 25 | 30 | 18 | 13 | 2.78 | 0.96 | Agree    |
| 3 | I organize or participate in webinars and virtual orientation programmes to engage library users.                                | 22 | 28 | 20 | 16 | 2.65 | 1.02 | Agree    |
| 4 | I use Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategies to improve the visibility of the library's online content and webpages.        | 14 | 23 | 27 | 22 | 2.34 | 0.99 | Disagree |
| 5 | I utilize instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp or Telegram to communicate with and provide services to library users. | 48 | 25 | 8  | 5  | 3.35 | 0.84 | Agree    |
| 6 | I create and share digital promotional content (e.g., videos, infographics, flyers, or blog posts) to market library services.   | 30 | 31 | 15 | 10 | 2.94 | 0.93 | Agree    |
| 7 | I use the university library website as a digital marketing tool to publicize library collections, programmes, and updates.      | 34 | 29 | 14 | 9  | 3.02 | 0.91 | Agree    |
| 8 | I monitor and respond to users' enquiries and feedback through digital marketing platforms.                                      | 32 | 30 | 15 | 9  | 2.99 | 0.90 | Agree    |
| 9 | I integrate multiple digital                                                                                                     | 20 | 31 | 21 | 14 | 2.66 | 0.98 | Agree    |

marketing tools to enhance the delivery and awareness of library services among users.

Mean/Standard Deviation

2.88

0.93 Agree

**Decision Rule:** Mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as Agree, while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as Disagree

The findings in Table 1, indicate that librarians in Imo State adopt digital marketing tools in service delivery to a considerable extent, as evidenced by the Grand mean of 2.88, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. The respondents reported high usage of instant messaging applications, social media platforms, and university library websites in marketing library services. They also agreed that they employ email campaigns, webinars, digital promotional content, and user feedback mechanisms. However, the use of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategies recorded a mean score below the criterion mean, suggesting that SEO remains one of the least adopted digital marketing practices among professional librarians. Overall, the result implies that professional librarians in Imo State have embraced digital marketing tools, although greater emphasis is needed on advanced digital marketing techniques such as SEO. Also, the standard deviation values ranged from **0.84 to 1.02**, indicating relatively low to moderate variability in the responses of the professional librarians. This suggests that respondents expressed fairly consistent opinions regarding the adoption of digital marketing tools in service delivery.

**Table 2: Responses on How Digital Marketing Strategies Influence Accessibility, Visibility, User Engagement, and User Satisfaction in Nigerian University Libraries (N = 86)**

| S/N | Item Statements              | SA | A  | D  | SD | Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|-----|------------------------------|----|----|----|----|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1   | Digital marketing strategies | 42 | 28 | 10 | 6  | 3.23               | 0.86      | Agree    |

|   |                                                                                                                      |    |    |    |    |      |      |       |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|------|------|-------|
|   | enhance users' <b>accessibility to library resources and services.</b>                                               |    |    |    |    |      |      |       |
| 2 | The use of digital marketing tools increases the visibility of library resources and programmes among users.         | 39 | 31 | 10 | 6  | 3.20 | 0.87 | Agree |
| 3 | Social media interactions improve user engagement with library services and activities.                              | 37 | 30 | 12 | 7  | 3.13 | 0.89 | Agree |
| 4 | Email notifications and online updates help users stay informed about library services and events.                   | 30 | 32 | 15 | 9  | 2.97 | 0.92 | Agree |
| 5 | Webinars and virtual programmes encourage active participation and interaction among library users.                  | 28 | 31 | 17 | 10 | 2.90 | 0.94 | Agree |
| 6 | Digital marketing strategies contribute to improved user satisfaction with library services.                         | 36 | 29 | 13 | 8  | 3.08 | 0.90 | Agree |
| 7 | Prompt responses to users' inquiries through digital platforms enhance users' perception of library service quality. | 34 | 33 | 11 | 8  | 3.08 | 0.88 | Agree |
| 8 | Personalized digital communication strengthens users' loyalty and continued use of library services.                 | 29 | 32 | 16 | 9  | 2.94 | 0.93 | Agree |
| 9 | Overall, digital marketing strategies positively influence accessibility, visibility, user                           | 40 | 28 | 11 | 7  | 3.18 | 0.87 | Agree |

engagement, and user satisfaction in university libraries.

**Grand Mean/Standard Deviation**

**3.08      0.89      Agree**

**Decision Rule:** Mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as Agree, while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as Disagree.

The result in Table 2, revealed that digital marketing strategies positively influence accessibility, visibility, user engagement, and user satisfaction in university libraries in Imo State. This is evidenced by the grand mean score of 3.08, which exceeded the criterion mean of 2.50. In addition, the standard deviation values generally range from 0.86 to 0.93, indicating low to moderate dispersion in the responses of the 86 professional librarians. The respondents agreed that digital marketing enhances users' access to library resources and services, increases the visibility of library programme, and promotes user engagement through social media interactions and virtual programme. They further agreed that timely digital communication, personalized interactions, and prompt responses to enquiries contribute to improved user satisfaction and perceptions of service quality. Therefore, the study concludes that the effective application of digital marketing strategies significantly improves the overall user experience and effectiveness of service delivery in Nigerian university libraries.

**Table 3: Responses of Professional Librarians on the Factors that Facilitate or Impede the Implementation of Digital Marketing in Nigerian University Libraries (N = 86)**

| S/N | Item Statements                                             | SA | A  | D  | SD | Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| 1   | Availability of adequate ICT infrastructure facilitates the | 38 | 30 | 11 | 7  | 3.15               | 0.88      | Agree    |

|   |                                                                                                                                     |    |    |    |    |             |             |              |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-------------|-------------|--------------|
|   | implementation of digital marketing in university libraries.                                                                        |    |    |    |    |             |             |              |
| 2 | Management support and commitment enhance the adoption of digital marketing initiatives in university libraries.                    | 36 | 31 | 12 | 7  | 3.12        | 0.89        | Agree        |
| 3 | Continuous training and capacity-building opportunities encourage librarians to implement digital marketing strategies effectively. | 40 | 28 | 11 | 7  | 3.18        | 0.87        | Agree        |
| 4 | Inadequate funding hinders the implementation of digital marketing practices in university libraries.                               | 45 | 26 | 10 | 5  | 3.29        | 0.84        | Agree        |
| 5 | Poor internet connectivity and unstable power supply impede digital marketing activities in university libraries.                   | 47 | 24 | 9  | 6  | 3.30        | 0.83        | Agree        |
| 6 | Lack of digital marketing competencies among librarians limits the effective use of digital marketing tools.                        | 34 | 30 | 14 | 8  | 3.05        | 0.91        | Agree        |
| 7 | Institutional policies and administrative bureaucracy influence the implementation of digital marketing initiatives.                | 29 | 32 | 16 | 9  | 2.94        | 0.93        | Agree        |
| 8 | Resistance to change among library staff constitutes a barrier to the adoption of digital marketing practices.                      | 27 | 31 | 18 | 10 | 2.87        | 0.96        | Agree        |
| 9 | Collaboration and sharing of best practices among librarians facilitate successful digital marketing implementation.                | 35 | 30 | 13 | 8  | 3.07        | 0.90        | Agree        |
|   | <b>Mean/SD</b>                                                                                                                      |    |    |    |    | <b>3.11</b> | <b>0.89</b> | <b>Agree</b> |

**Decision Rule:** Mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as Agree, while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as Disagree.

The findings in Table 3, indicate that several factors both facilitate and hinder the implementation of digital marketing in university libraries in Imo State. The overall cluster mean of 3.11, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50, shows that the respondents generally agreed on the influence of these factors. Specifically, the respondents identified the availability of ICT infrastructure, management support, continuous staff training, and collaboration among librarians as major facilitators of digital marketing implementation. Conversely, inadequate funding, poor internet connectivity and erratic power supply, insufficient digital marketing competencies, administrative constraints, and resistance to change among staff were identified as significant barriers. The highest mean scores were recorded for poor internet connectivity and unstable power supply ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ) and inadequate funding ( $\bar{x} = 3.29$ ), suggesting that these are the most critical obstacles affecting the successful implementation of digital marketing practices in university libraries. Overall, the findings imply that addressing infrastructural, financial, and human capacity challenges is essential for the effective adoption and sustainability of digital marketing initiatives in university libraries, the standard deviation values generally range from 0.83 to 0.9, indicating low to moderate dispersion in the responses of the 86 professional librarians. This suggests that respondents' opinions were relatively homogeneous, with broad agreement on the adoption of digital marketing tools, their positive influence on library service delivery, and the facilitating and inhibiting factors affecting their implementation. Such consistency enhances the reliability of the descriptive findings.

### Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between the adoption of digital marketing tools by librarians and the effectiveness of library service delivery in a digitized economy.

**Table 4: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis of the Relationship Between Adoption of Digital Marketing Tools and Effectiveness of Library Service Delivery (N = 86)**

| Variables                                                        | N  | Mean | $\alpha$ | Std. Dev. | r     | Sig. (2-tailed) | Decision     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------|----------|-----------|-------|-----------------|--------------|
| Adoption of Digital Marketing Tools                              | 86 | 2.88 |          | 0.93      |       |                 |              |
| Effectiveness of Library Service Delivery in a Digitized Economy | 86 | 3.08 | 0.05     | 0.89      | 0.621 | 0.000           | Reject $H_0$ |

Decision: Since the probability value ( $p = .000$ ) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected.

The result revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between the adoption of digital marketing tools by librarians and the effectiveness of library service delivery in a digitized economy ( $r = .621$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The positive correlation indicates that increased adoption of digital marketing tools is associated with greater effectiveness of library service delivery. The correlation coefficient of 0.621 suggests a moderately strong positive relationship between the two variables. Therefore, the study concludes that librarians who adopt digital marketing tools more extensively are more likely to achieve improved service delivery outcomes in university libraries in Imo State.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study, as presented in Table 1, indicate that librarians in university libraries in Imo State moderately adopt digital marketing tools in service delivery (mean = 2.88). The findings align strongly with the position of Horsfall (2020), who emphasized that Nigerian librarians must leverage Web 2.0 tools such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and LinkedIn to improve service delivery and expand user reach. The present study confirms this assertion, as social media and instant messaging platforms were among

the most widely adopted tools. Both studies highlight the dominance of informal, interactive platforms in library marketing practices in Nigeria. Similarly, the results are consistent with Muazu and Mohammed (2025), who reported high adoption rates of WhatsApp (84.5%), LinkedIn (81%), and Zoom (82.8%) among librarians in Kano State. The current findings reinforce this pattern, showing that communication-oriented platforms are more widely embraced than technical tools like SEO. However, both studies converge on the challenge of inadequate skills and infrastructure limiting full-scale adoption of advanced digital marketing strategies. The study also agrees with Otoberise and Omagbon (2019), who found that a majority of librarians (65%) demonstrated positive attitudes toward digital marketing and acknowledged its role in improving service awareness and user satisfaction. The moderate adoption level observed in the present study reflects this positive disposition, suggesting that attitude is not the primary barrier; rather, implementation capacity and technical competence may be more limiting factors. At the global level, Wani (2024) observed increasing scholarly interest in digital marketing in librarianship but weak collaboration among researchers. This supports the current finding that while adoption is growing, it remains fragmented and not fully optimized across institutions, particularly in developing contexts such as Nigeria.

The result in Table 2 strongly aligns with the conceptual framework underpinning the study, which posits that digital marketing adoption enhances key service delivery services such as accessibility, visibility, user engagement, and satisfaction. The framework further assumes that these findings contribute to improved effectiveness of library services in a digitized economy. This also supports the broader argument within the Technology–Organization–Environment (TOE) framework, which explains that technological tools such as digital marketing platforms improve organizational performance when properly adopted and supported by institutional structures.

The observed positive outcomes reinforce the notion that digital marketing literacy directly enhances patron engagement strategies, as noted in recent studies (Acta Psychologica, 2025). The findings are consistent with Nwachokor and Chegwe (2025), who reported that digital marketing strategies, including online training and hybrid services, played a critical role in sustaining user engagement in Nigerian academic libraries after the COVID-19 pandemic. Both studies converge on the idea that digital engagement tools significantly improve library-user interaction and service responsiveness. Similarly, Onuoha and Chukwueke (2025) emphasized that government-owned libraries must adopt digital and policy-driven marketing strategies to enhance equitable access and cultural preservation. This aligns with the present study's finding that digital marketing improves accessibility and visibility of library services, thereby strengthening inclusive service delivery.

The study also corroborates Abdullahi (2025), who found that ICT integration—such as automation, digitization, and cloud computing enhances library visibility and service delivery but is constrained by funding and policy challenges. The present findings extend this argument by showing that digital marketing functions as a complementary layer to ICT infrastructure, translating technological investment into improved user engagement and satisfaction. Furthermore, Haruna (2026) emphasized that digital infrastructure and marketing are central to revitalizing Nigerian libraries for knowledge equity and inclusivity. This supports the current finding that digital marketing strategies are essential for enhancing overall service effectiveness and user satisfaction in academic libraries.

At the global level, Hudron and Oyeneran (2019) reported that social media marketing has transformed library communication by enabling real-time engagement and

promotion of resources. This supports the present finding that digital marketing strategies significantly enhance user interaction and satisfaction. Additionally, Wani (2024) observed increasing scholarly attention to digital marketing in librarianship, although collaboration among researchers remains weak. This reflects the broader context in which the current findings are situated an expanding but still developing field with uneven implementation across regions.

The findings in Table 3 revealed that both facilitating and inhibiting factors significantly influence the implementation of digital marketing in Nigerian university libraries, with grand mean of 3.11, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. The present findings are strongly consistent with Muazu and Mohammed (2025), who reported that inadequate training, poor facilities, low user awareness, and weak institutional support constrain effective digital marketing adoption in libraries in Imo State. Both studies converge on the central role of capacity gaps and infrastructural limitations as major impediments to digital transformation. Similarly, the identification of funding and infrastructure challenges in the present study aligns directly with their findings, reinforcing the persistent structural weaknesses within the Nigerian library system. It also agrees with Horsfall (2020), who identified ignorance among librarians and inadequate ICT infrastructure as key barriers to effective digital library services.

The current findings extend this position by empirically ranking poor internet connectivity and unstable power supply as the most critical constraints ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ), indicating that infrastructural deficits remain more pressing than attitudinal issues in many Nigerian university libraries. In the same vein, Uwaechina and Echezona (2025) emphasized that poor funding and limited ICT skills hinder digital library operations. This is consistent with the present study, where inadequate funding ( $\bar{x} = 3.29$ ) and insufficient

digital marketing competencies were identified as major obstacles. Both studies highlight that financial constraints and human capacity deficits jointly undermine effective digital marketing implementation

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. University library management should strengthen the adoption of digital marketing tools by encouraging librarians to integrate a wider range of platforms, including Search Engine Optimization (SEO), email marketing, webinars, blogs, and other emerging digital technologies into routine library service delivery. This will improve the visibility and accessibility of library resources and services.
2. Also, continuous professional development programme should be organized by university management, the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), and the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) to equip librarians with advanced digital marketing competencies, particularly in SEO, content creation, social media analytics, and digital campaign management.
3. Librarians should adopt user-centred digital marketing strategies by providing timely responses to users' inquiries, personalizing digital communication, organizing virtual orientation programme and webinars, and regularly evaluating users' information needs to improve accessibility, visibility, user engagement, and overall satisfaction with library services.
4. University administrators and government should increase investment in ICT infrastructure by providing reliable internet connectivity, stable electricity supply, modern digital facilities, and up-to-date software to support the effective implementation of digital marketing initiatives in university libraries.

5. Adequate funding should be allocated specifically for digital marketing activities in university libraries to facilitate the acquisition of digital technologies, subscription to relevant online marketing tools, staff training, and maintenance of digital infrastructure. Library management should develop institutional digital marketing policies and strategic plans that promote the systematic use of digital marketing tools in library operations, while encouraging collaboration among librarians for sharing best practices and innovative marketing approaches.

## Conclusion

This study examined the adoption of digital marketing tools and their implications for library service delivery in university libraries in Imo State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that librarians moderately adopted digital marketing tools, with social media, instant messaging applications, and library websites being the most commonly used. Digital marketing significantly improved accessibility, visibility, user engagement, and user satisfaction. ICT infrastructure, management support, and staff training facilitated adoption, while inadequate funding, poor internet connectivity, unstable power supply, and limited digital competencies hindered implementation. The study concluded that digital marketing enhances effective library service delivery and requires sustained investment in infrastructure, training, and institutional support.

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