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Developing a Neuro-Digital Marketing Model for Home-Based Businesses

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to design and explain a neuro-digital marketing model for home-based businesses using the grounded theory method. Given the increasing growth of home-based businesses in Iran and their role in reducing unemployment and increasing GDP, the need for effective and low-cost marketing models for these businesses is felt more than ever. This research was conducted within the framework of a qualitative approach. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with 25 experts and specialists in the fields of neuromarketing, digital marketing, and home-based businesses who were selected using a purposive snowball sampling method. Data analysis was performed in three stages of open, axial, and selective coding using MAXQDA 10 software. In this study, independent coding methods by two researchers and the calculation of Cohen's kappa coefficient (0.92) were used to assess reliability and validity. Also, the test-retest reliability was 87% by recoding four interviews in two different time periods, indicating high validity and stability of the results. The results of the study led to the identification of 88 subcategories and 13 main categories. The model presented in this study proposes a combination of neuro and digital marketing techniques at the lowest cost for home-based businesses. This model helps home-based business owners achieve sustainable growth and development by effectively influencing the subconscious mind of customers. This model can be used as a framework for implementing neuro-digital marketing in home-based businesses.

Keywords:
Neuromarketing, Digital Marketing, Home-Based Businesses, Sustainable Competitiveness, Advertising Customization, Digital Shopping

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

In recent years, the increasing growth of home-based businesses in Iran has been considered as one of the effective solutions in reducing the unemployment rate and increasing the GDP. According to statistics, about 30 percent of micro-businesses in the country are home-based (Dorodi & Hemati, 2022). Despite this potential, these business owners face serious challenges such as lack of marketing skills and limited financial resources (Seyyed Ghaffari et al., 2024). Meanwhile, digital marketing has been recognized as an efficient method for growing these businesses due to its low costs and easy access (Moradi Ziba et al., 2023). In such circumstances, the mere use of digital marketing may not be enough to attract customer attention and create differentiation (gholipourdamieh, 2023). Consumers today are faced with a huge amount of advertising and content in the online space, and this has made it more difficult to influence their purchasing behavior. Therefore, there is a need for new and more efficient approaches that can have a deeper impact on the audience in this competitive environment (Salehi & Bourghani, 2025). By focusing on influencing the subconscious mind of customers, neuromarketing has been able to create significant changes in purchasing behavior (Amiri & Davari, 2022). However, the high costs of implementing this method have limited it to large organizations and made it inaccessible to small and home businesses (Nilashi et al, 2020). The necessity of conducting this research is that despite the high potential of home businesses, marketing challenges and resource constraints have hindered the growth of this sector. In this regard, combining neuromarketing and digital marketing can be a new solution to influence the subconscious mind of customers and increase marketing efficiency at lower costs. Inspired by previous studies, including those that emphasize the importance of digital marketing and innovation in small businesses, this research attempts to fill the gap in the literature on the subject. The main issue of this research is the lack of a practical and low-cost model for implementing neuro-digital marketing in home businesses. Given the need to support this economic sector and its role in the development of the country, designing such a model can be an effective step towards empowering home business owners. Using grounded theory and interviews with 25 experts in the fields of neuromarketing, digital marketing, and home-based businesses; this study identifies key components and presents a hybrid model. The case study of this research is home-based businesses in Isfahan province, which is selected as a representative sample of this field in Iran. This issue has created a significant gap in the marketing literature: How can we design an efficient and low-cost model that combines neuromarketing and digital marketing to lead to sustainable growth of home-based businesses?

Theoretical Framework

Definitions of Neuromarketing : As a modern research method, neuromarketing examines and analyzes people's unconscious information through observation of neural processes, without the need to directly ask about their thoughts, feelings, or decision-making strategies (Marc, 2018). This field has specifically expanded traditional marketing methods by using instinctive brain stimuli to intentionally shape consumer responses (Quiles peres et al., 2025). Neuromarketing refers to the interaction of consumer behavior science with neuroscience and, in another definition, is the application of scientific findings from the consumer brain and neuroscience in the field of practical management. This type of marketing also has social aspects (Pileliene & Grigaliunaite, 2017).

Digital Marketing: Overall, the commercial use of the Internet has expanded dramatically over the past quarter century. During this time, the business landscape has changed at a rapid pace and intensity. Large multinational corporations such as Google, Facebook, Amazon, Alibaba, eBay, and Uber have emerged as major players in the modern economy over the past two decades. According to statistics, in 2015, online sales accounted for 7.4% of total retail spending in the United States, the highest percentage recorded since records began in 1999

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(naghizade et al., 2023). Also, the share of sales via mobile devices has increased rapidly from about 22% to 27%. Currently, companies are focusing on creating a "digital relationship" with customers. In addition, digital technologies and tools such as smartphones, smart products, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, and deep learning all promise significant changes in the lives of consumers in the near future (Noraee, 2025).

The Role of Digital Marketing in the Success of Home-Based Businesses: Digital marketing, as a strategic tool, plays a key role in addressing the challenges faced by home-based businesses. One of the main advantages of digital marketing is easy and low-cost access to vast markets (Amiri & Naderi, 2020). Home-based businesses often face geographical limitations and lack strong distribution networks, but by using digital platforms such as social networks, websites, and online marketplaces, they can offer their products and services to a global audience (Malik et al., 2024). This not only reduces the challenge of limited market access, but also creates new opportunities for increased revenue and business growth (Mahdavian & Kolour, 2022). In addition, digital marketing allows home businesses to accurately measure and improve their performance by providing advanced analytical tools (Dorodi & Hemati, 2022). This is especially crucial when facing challenges such as lack of access to market data and competition from larger businesses. By analyzing customer data, home businesses can update their strategies and design targeted campaigns (Malik & Alkhaldi, 2022). Also, using methods such as SEO, email marketing, and paid advertising, digital marketing allows them to attract new customers and retain existing ones at the lowest cost (Magidi, 2024). These features make digital marketing the best approach for home-based businesses, as it not only reduces financial and structural challenges, but also propels them towards sustainable growth (Safayie & Naghavi, 2021).

Neuro-Digital Marketing Combination: The combination of neuro-marketing and digital marketing allows for the creation of effective advertising and marketing messages. On the other hand, digital marketing allows for the dissemination of these messages to the widest possible range by using platforms such as social networks, search engines, and email marketing (gholipourdamieh, 2023). This combination allows businesses to target the largest number of audiences at the lowest cost and maximize the return on their advertising (Gonzalez & Soto, 2024). For example, using SEO and PPC techniques along with content designed based on neuromarketing principles can lead to attracting target audiences and increasing their engagement (Chaffey, 2019). As a result, this combination not only reduces the challenges of attracting and retaining customers, but also helps businesses succeed in today's competitive environment (Fallah, 2018).

Research Methodology

The research method is applicable in terms of its purpose, and qualitative and phenomenological in terms of its implementation, and has inductive and deductive approaches. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with 25 university professors, experts, and specialists in the field of home business management nationwide, estimated to take approximately 40 minutes for each interview and were selected using non-probability judgmental (purposive) sampling. The data collection tool includes semi-structured interviews.

Research findings

Data analysis was performed using MAXQDA 10 software. The results indicate that the following 12 main factors were identified in the constructed paradigm model. The requirement for modern marketing practices and cost management as causal factors, internal and environmental challenges as intervening factors, cultural, social and technological readiness as contextual factors, digitalization of processes based on psychological factors, digital advertising design with neuromarketing teachings and digital content production with artificial intelligence as strategies, and sustainable competitiveness, positive impact on society

and the economy, and development and productivity as outcomes were introduced in this paradigm model.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of designing a neuro-digital marketing model for home businesses. The results of this study are consistent with the results of Kalour & Azarbaijani (2022), Manani et al. (2021), Safayi & Naghavi (2025), Mahdavian (2022), Magidi (2024), Ariely & Brens (2018), Ghodsi (2022), Reaschke & Mason (2022), Parchami & Jalili (2019), and Afshar et al. (2022). Also, in this study, for the first time, three strategies were proposed for the implementation and execution of neuro-digital marketing for home businesses that do not exist in previous studies. These are: digitizing processes based on psychological factors, designing digital advertisements with neuro-marketing teachings, and producing digital content with artificial intelligence.

Based on the results of this research, the following suggestions are made:

Based on the results of past neuromarketing research, home-based businesses can improve their marketing systems to make digital advertising more effective. They can also increase the effectiveness of their digital marketing at the lowest cost by using artificial intelligence techniques. By combining neuro-digital marketing, home-based business owners can increase the development and productivity of their businesses, create sustainable competitiveness, and have a significant impact on society and the economy in the long term.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no financial or non-financial, personal, professional, or institutional conflicts of interest relevant to this work.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

AI Use Statement

The authors declare that no generative artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted technologies were used in the preparation, writing, or editing of this manuscript.

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Ethics Approval

All procedures performed in this study were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the responsible institutional and national research committee.