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Analysis of Social Media User Growth and Its Implications for Digital Marketing Strategies in Indonesia 2024

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Abstract: This article examines the rapid growth of social media users in Indonesia and explores how these trends are transforming digital marketing strategies in 2024. Drawing on comprehensive secondary data from industry analytics and digital reports, the study describes key demographic shifts, user behavior patterns, and platform-specific engagement metrics. Major social media platforms, including TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, are analyzed to determine their respective impacts on audience reach and content consumption, with a special focus on the rising popularity of short-form video content.

The research identifies a significant increase in active social media users, driven largely by mobile-first consumption and the dynamic content preferences of younger demographics. The findings reveal that platforms like TikTok are not only attracting substantial user bases but also fostering higher interaction rates compared to traditional media channels. As a result, digital marketing efforts have increasingly pivoted toward tailored video campaigns and innovative influencer collaborations, which are proving effective in engaging the target market and boosting brand visibility.

In conclusion, this study underlines the need for digital marketers to adapt their strategies to accommodate the evolving landscape of social media in Indonesia. By embracing platform-specific approaches and investing in creative content formats, businesses can better capitalize on the opportunities presented by this digital revolution. The insights provided by this analysis offer actionable recommendations for optimizing digital marketing efforts and achieving sustainable competitive advantage in a rapidly changing environment.

Keywords: social media growth, digital marketing, Indonesia 2024, user behavior, TikTok, content strategy, mobile engagement, marketing trends

INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution has significantly reshaped communication patterns, consumer behavior, and marketing strategies across the globe. In Indonesia, this transformation is particularly evident in the rapid growth of internet penetration and the widespread adoption of social media platforms. By early 2024, Indonesia reported over 185 million internet users and approximately 139 million active social media users, reflecting a major shift toward digital connectivity in everyday life. The digital era has revolutionized communication, information consumption, and consumer behavior worldwide. In Indonesia, this shift is particularly striking, with internet penetration reaching 66.5% (185.3 million users) by early 2024, and active social media users numbering around 139 million—almost half of the country's population.

This surge in social media adoption is not merely a technological trend but a cultural and economic force that influences how businesses interact with consumers. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook have become essential tools for both personal expression and commercial engagement. Among these, TikTok has emerged as a dominant force, especially among Generation Z, due to its highly engaging short-form video content and algorithm-driven personalization. On average, Indonesians spend 7 hours 38 minutes online each day, with 3 hours 11 minutes dedicated to social media—surpassing traditional media like TV and radio. This

intense digital engagement underscores the central role social platforms now play in everyday life. TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram are the leading platforms in Indonesia. TikTok, in particular, stands out with 127 million users, and boasts an advertising reach of 68.5% among internet users. YouTube reaches 75% of internet users (139 million users), while Facebook and Instagram maintain high penetration especially among female demographics.

The rapid evolution of user behavior poses a significant challenge and opportunity for digital marketers. Traditional marketing strategies are no longer sufficient in addressing the dynamic preferences of digitally savvy users. Marketers must now understand platform-specific behaviors, content preferences, and engagement patterns to craft effective campaigns.

This study aims to analyze current trends in social media user growth in Indonesia and examine how these trends are shaping digital marketing strategies in 2024. By exploring platform reach, user demographics, content engagement, and marketing outcomes, this research provides practical insights for businesses seeking to optimize their digital presence in a highly competitive and rapidly changing environment.

Indonesia has shown significant growth in the number of social media users, with TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram emerging as the most dominant platforms. Each platform has distinct demographic characteristics and varying levels of user engagement, which are important factors in determining effective digital marketing strategies.

Table 1. Social Media Trends and Strategic Implications for Digital Marketing in Indonesia: An Analysis for 2024

No	Platform	Number of Users (in millions)	Percentage of Internet Users (%)	Key Characteristics
1	TikTok	126.8	68.5	Most popular video platform; majority female users (53.1%); ad reach: 50% of population
2	YouTube	139.0	75.0	Second most used platform; male-dominated (53.5%); ad reach: 68.5% of internet users
3	Facebook	118.0	63.5	More female users (58.1%); ad reach: 63.5% of internet users
4	Instagram	100.9	54.5	Youth-dominated; majority female users (54.5%); ad reach: 54.5% of internet users
5	WhatsApp	92.0*	~50 (estimated)	Daily communication, used in families and communities
6	LinkedIn	26	14	Professional network; ad reach: 14% of internet users
7	X (Twitter)	25	13.3	Discussion & trending topics; ad reach: 13.3% of internet users

Note: The percentages are based on 185.3 million internet users in Indonesia (as of early 2024).

The surge of digital connectivity in Indonesia has reshaped how people consume information, communicate, and interact with brands. Social media platforms—once merely tools for personal networking—have evolved into dominant forces in shaping consumer behavior, brand visibility, and market competition. TikTok, with its algorithm-powered discovery feed and short-form video content, has emerged not just as an entertainment hub, but also as a powerful vehicle for product discovery and direct engagement. The exponential increase in active users across various platforms indicates not only a shift in media preference but also a broader transformation in digital identity and consumption habits.

As digital natives, particularly Gen Z and younger millennials, increasingly rely on mobile-first platforms, the need for marketers to develop agile, platform-specific strategies becomes more urgent than ever. The dynamic between

content and audience is no longer passive; it is participatory, fast-paced, and deeply rooted in community trends. Consequently, digital campaigns must now account for not only reach and frequency, but also the tone, format, and contextual relevance of each message delivered.

Marketers who continue to rely on static visuals or traditional ads without personalization risk being ignored or even rejected by today's highly selective digital audiences. In contrast, those who embrace micro-influencers, real-time interaction, and localized narratives often find stronger resonance and engagement. As Indonesia marches forward in its digital transformation, mastering the nuances of social media behavior is no longer optional—it is essential for sustaining relevance and driving measurable results in an increasingly competitive and saturated digital marketplace.

To better understand the demographic composition of social media users, this study also examines gender-based usage patterns across major platforms. Data indicates that platforms like Facebook and Instagram tend to attract more female users, while TikTok and YouTube show a relatively balanced or male-dominated user base. WhatsApp, although primarily a messaging app, also plays a central role in digital communication and marketing ecosystems. The following figure visualizes the gender distribution (male and female users) across key platforms in Indonesia, providing deeper insight into audience segmentation and potential targeting strategies for digital marketers in 2024.

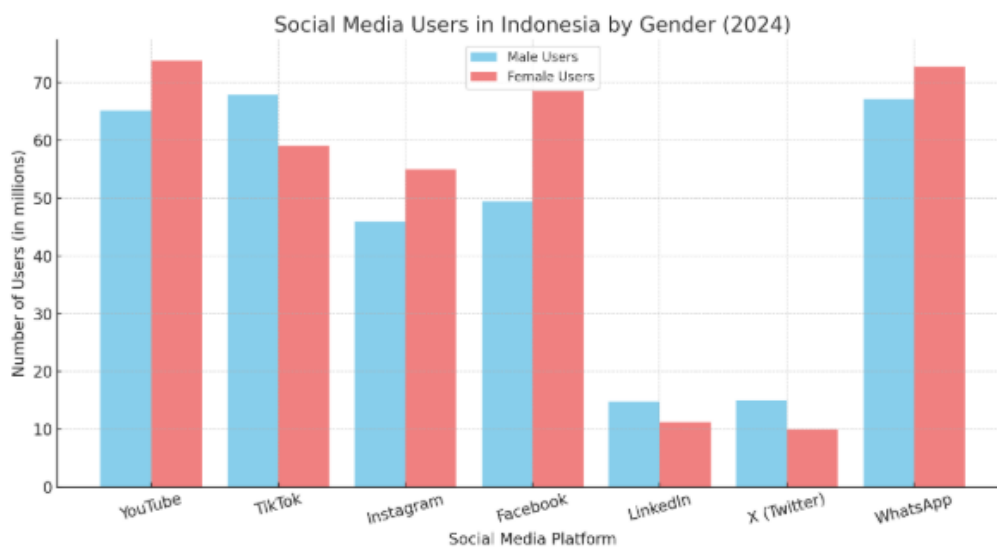


Figure 1. Gender Distribution of Social Media Users in Indonesia (2024)

Social media users in Indonesia also use these platforms to search for detailed product information. Some users actively share information on review sites, Q&A platforms, and forums, where the information obtained is often more accurate and up-to-date compared to using search engines.

Rank	Source of Product Research	Percentage (%)
1	Social Networks	63.0%
2	Search Engines	55.3%
3	Consumer Reviews	51.6%
4	Product & Brand Websites	32.5%
5	Mobile Apps	26.0%
6	Price Comparison Sites	23.1%
7	Brand & Product Blogs	21.3%
8	Video Sites	21.0%
9	Discount Voucher Sites	20.8%
10	Specialist Review Sites	20.7%

11	Q&A Sites	17.8%
12	Messenger Services	12.3%
13	Micro-Blogs	10.3%
14	Forums & Message Boards	7.8%

Figure 2. Top Online Sources Indonesians Use to Discover Product Information (2024)

Problem Formulation

The rapid growth of social media users in Indonesia has significantly altered the landscape of digital communication and consumer behavior. With platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp dominating daily digital activities, marketers are compelled to adapt their strategies to align with evolving user preferences and platform characteristics. However, the diversity in user demographics, behavior patterns, and content engagement across different platforms presents challenges for businesses aiming to optimize their digital marketing strategies effectively. Given this context, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How has the number of social media users in Indonesia evolved as of 2024, and what are the dominant platforms?
2. What are the demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, age) of users on key social media platforms in Indonesia?
3. How do Indonesian consumers utilize social media and other online platforms to conduct product research?
4. What are the implications of these trends for businesses and digital marketers in formulating effective marketing strategies in Indonesia?

Literature Review

The increasing integration of social media into daily life has become a global phenomenon with profound implications for marketing practices. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media platforms serve as vital tools for interaction, content sharing, and community building, thereby offering new opportunities for brands to engage consumers. In Indonesia, where internet and smartphone penetration has rapidly increased, these platforms have become essential channels for product discovery, peer recommendations, and brand interactions (We Are Social, 2024).

Several studies emphasize the strategic role of social media in shaping consumer purchasing behavior. Mangold and Faulds (2009) argue that social media represents a hybrid element of the promotional mix, combining paid, owned, and earned media. This integration allows businesses to foster direct communication with consumers, influence purchase decisions, and generate organic brand advocacy. In the Indonesian context, platforms such as TikTok and Instagram have gained prominence among younger demographics, especially Gen Z, due to their focus on short-form video content and visual storytelling (Slice.ID, 2024).

Furthermore, consumer behavior has shifted from relying solely on search engines to seeking peer-generated content and real-time reviews on platforms such as forums, Q&A sites, and social networks (DataReportal, 2024). Research by Tuten and Solomon (2017) highlights that consumer trust is more frequently placed in user-generated content than in traditional advertising. This behavioral shift reinforces the importance of influencer marketing, user reviews, and personalized video campaigns within digital strategies.

Other scholars, such as Chaffey and Smith (2017), highlight the necessity of data-driven digital marketing. They argue that understanding platform-specific metrics and user engagement patterns is essential for effective targeting. This perspective is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where differences in gender preferences, platform usage frequency, and advertising reach vary significantly between platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp (NapoleonCat, 2025).

In summary, the literature indicates that effective digital marketing in a fast-evolving environment like Indonesia requires a nuanced understanding of platform dynamics, consumer behavior, and real-time content strategies. The current study builds upon these findings by offering updated, localized insights from Indonesia in 2024 and examining how marketers can leverage user growth trends to develop sustainable and targeted strategies.

Theoretical Perspectives on Social Media and Digital Marketing

This subtitle is used when the literature review focuses on foundational theories related to social media and digital marketing. It may include communication theories, digital consumer behavior, interactive media, and digital marketing mix models. It is suitable if the study aims to establish a strong conceptual framework.

Previous Studies on Social Media User Behavior and Marketing Impact

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This subtitle is appropriate when highlighting prior empirical studies that explore user behavior on social media and its impact on marketing effectiveness. It focuses on how users interact with content, respond to digital campaigns, and how these behaviors influence brand engagement, purchase decisions, or loyalty.

Understanding Platform-Specific Trends in the Digital Landscape

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This subtitle is ideal for reviews that compare characteristics across different platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook. It explores user demographics, content consumption behavior, and ad effectiveness per platform—crucial for crafting platform-specific marketing strategies.

Consumer Engagement and the Shift in Digital Marketing Channels

This subtitle emphasizes how consumer engagement has shifted from traditional media to digital, especially social media. It focuses on new forms of interaction such as two-way communication, user-generated content, and influencer-based marketing. This is suitable for analyzing behavioral changes in the digital age.

Review of Relevant Literature on Social Media Growth and Its Strategic Implications

This is a broad and academic subtitle suitable for comprehensive reviews that discuss the overall growth of social media users and the resulting strategic implications for digital marketing. It allows the author to combine theory, prior research, and trend analysis under one cohesive theme.

Framework

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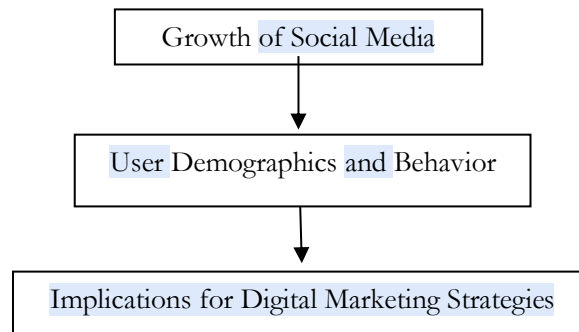
The substantial increase in social media users in Indonesia not only signifies the advancement of digital technologies but also marks a paradigm shift in consumer behavior and marketing practices. In this evolving landscape, social media platforms are increasingly recognized as critical channels for product information search, brand communication, and purchasing decision-making. This study adopts a conceptual framework that integrates three interrelated components: (1) the growth in social media usage, (2) user demographic profiles and behavioral patterns, and (3) the strategic implications for digital marketing.

Firstly, the surge in user numbers across platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp reflects the growing reliance of Indonesian consumers on these platforms as primary sources of information and entertainment. Secondly, each platform exhibits unique demographic compositions—for example, female users are predominant on Instagram and Facebook, while TikTok and YouTube tend to attract a male-majority audience. These distinctions are critical for gaining nuanced insights into market segmentation and consumer targeting.

Thirdly, an in-depth understanding of these platform-specific trends enables marketers to formulate more precise and data-driven strategies. This includes identifying the most effective platforms for outreach, selecting suitable content formats (such as short-form videos or user-generated reviews), and implementing personalized marketing approaches. In this regard, the rapid growth of social media users necessitates the development of adaptive and

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consumer-centric digital marketing strategies that align with the dynamic behaviors of contemporary digital audiences.



Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach supported by quantitative secondary data to analyze the rapid growth of social media users in Indonesia and its implications for digital marketing strategies in 2024. The research primarily relied on desk research and content analysis, utilizing up-to-date and credible digital reports, market research databases, and social media analytics.

Data Sources

The data used in this study were obtained from various credible secondary sources, including reports from We Are Social and Hootsuite (2023–2024), Data Reportal Indonesia (2024), user statistics from Statista and NapoleonCat, insights published by Slice.ID along with other relevant industry briefings, as well as government reports and publicly accessible online analytics platforms. These sources provided comprehensive information such as demographic profiles, platform usage metrics, behavioral insights, advertising reach, and levels of user engagement across major social media platforms, including TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp.

Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

The data collection process in this study was carried out systematically by gathering digital marketing trend reports and user behavior analytics that focused on Indonesian users in early 2024. Following the data collection, a thematic content analysis was employed to identify and interpret patterns emerging from the data. These patterns included platform-specific usage trends, gender-based and demographic segmentation, consumer engagement behavior, and the role of social media as a source for product research. Furthermore, a comparative analysis was conducted to evaluate each social media platform based on several indicators, including the number of users, gender composition, the percentage of internet users reached, and the platform's relevance for targeted marketing campaigns. This combined approach provided a comprehensive understanding of user behavior across different platforms and its strategic implications for digital marketing in Indonesia.

Limitations

This study is limited to secondary data available up to the first quarter of 2024. The results are also subject to the accuracy of the original data sources. No primary survey or interview was conducted, and therefore interpretations depend solely on previously published metrics.

Ethical Consideration

As this study exclusively used open-access and publicly available secondary data, no ethical clearance was required. However, proper attribution and citation of all sources have been maintained throughout.

Results / Findings

Based on secondary data collected from reports such as DataReportal Indonesia 2024, NapoleonCat, and We Are Social, the study presents a comprehensive overview of social media user growth in Indonesia, the demographic characteristics of each platform, and their implications for digital marketing strategies.

As of early 2024, Indonesia recorded 185.3 million internet users, of which approximately 139 million (74.9%) were active social media users. This number reflects a significant increase in social media penetration compared to previous years, reinforcing the role of digital platforms as primary spaces for communication, content consumption, and commercial engagement.

Among the platforms analyzed, YouTube had the highest number of users at 139 million, representing 75% of the total internet users. This was followed by TikTok with 126.8 million users, accounting for 68.5% of internet users. Facebook had 118 million users (63.5%), while Instagram followed closely with 100.9 million users (54.5%).

Demographically, there were noticeable gender differences across platforms. TikTok had a slight female majority with 53.1% of its users being women. Instagram also showed a female dominance at 54.5%, while Facebook had an even stronger female presence, with 58.1% of its user base being women. Conversely, YouTube was more male-oriented, with 53.5% of its users being men.

In terms of consumer behavior, the study found that 63.0% of Indonesian users rely on social networks as their primary source of product information. This figure surpasses other channels such as search engines (55.3%), consumer reviews (51.6%), and even brand websites (32.5%). These numbers reflect a growing consumer preference for peer-driven content, influencer opinions, and social media interactions when evaluating products.

The comparative analysis further revealed that each social media platform offers distinct strategic implications for marketers, depending on its user characteristics and content features. TikTok emerged as an effective channel for engaging younger, mobile-first audiences through short-form video content and algorithm-driven personalization, making it highly suitable for viral and trend-based campaigns. Meanwhile, YouTube provides access to a broader audience across various age groups and is particularly effective for delivering educational or how-to content due to its long-form video format and high viewer retention.

On the other hand, Instagram excels in visual storytelling and influencer marketing, especially among younger users and female demographics, making it a powerful platform for brand positioning and lifestyle-related promotions. Facebook continues to be relevant, particularly in reaching older demographic groups and facilitating community-based engagement through groups and shared content. Lastly, although WhatsApp functions primarily as a private messaging application, it has evolved into a strategic tool for direct consumer engagement, particularly in localized marketing campaigns and within family-based or community networks.

Table 1. Sensing Stages in the Analysis of Social Media User Growth in Indonesia

Stage	Description	Data Sources
1. Environmental Scanning	Observing macro trends in digital technology, internet penetration, and mobile usage across Indonesia.	We Are Social (2024), DataReportal, BPS Indonesia
2. Platform Trend Monitoring	Identifying the most used social media platforms and analyzing growth in user base and engagement across TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook.	NapoleonCat (2024), Statista, Slice.ID
3. Behavioral Pattern Recognition	Analyzing how consumers interact with social platforms for content consumption, communication, and product research.	DataReportal (2024), consumer insight reports, survey summaries
4. Demographic Mapping	Mapping gender and age-based user	Platform-specific demographic

	segmentation across different platforms to identify dominant user groups.	reports (TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram)
5. Strategic Implication Identification	Linking observed digital behaviors to potential marketing strategies, such as influencer use, short-form video, and targeted content.	Marketing trend reports, academic literature, digital marketing case studies
Stage	Description	Data Sources

Table 2. Transforming Stage in Digital Marketing Strategy Development

Aspect Observed	Insight Gained	Strategic Transformation (Action Plan)
Rapid growth of TikTok and YouTube users	High engagement, especially among Gen Z and mobile-first users	Focus marketing efforts on short-form videos and interactive content tailored for younger audiences
Predominantly female users on Instagram & Facebook	Strong female presence and visual content preference	Design aesthetic, lifestyle-oriented campaigns with micro-influencers targeting female demographics
Social media as top product research source	Consumers trust peer reviews and influencer content more than traditional ads	Prioritize user-generated content, reviews, and influencer endorsements in product campaigns
WhatsApp used for private, community-based messaging	Consumers prefer direct, informal communication for service and product inquiries	Implement WhatsApp-based customer service, promotions, and community engagement
Demographic segmentation varies per platform	Different age and gender profiles across platforms	Develop platform-specific targeting strategies based on audience segmentation

Table 3. Dynamic Capability Development Process for Digital Transformation

Capability Stage	Definition	Application in Digital Marketing Context (Indonesia 2024)
Sensing	Identifying and monitoring changes in digital trends, technologies, and user behavior.	Monitoring platform growth (e.g., TikTok, YouTube), tracking consumer engagement, identifying content preferences.
Seizing	Mobilizing internal resources and capabilities to exploit identified opportunities.	Developing platform-specific strategies, adopting influencer partnerships, and reallocating budget to high-engagement channels.
Transforming	Reconfiguring structures, processes, and culture to sustain long-term competitiveness.	Building agile marketing teams, integrating analytics tools, fostering content innovation, and embracing omnichannel strategies.

5 Discussions: Enfolding with literature

The findings of this study confirm and enrich existing literature on the role of social media in shaping digital marketing strategies, particularly in the context of emerging markets like Indonesia. As noted by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media platforms serve as key channels for interaction, content sharing, and brand communication. This study supports their argument by demonstrating how platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube have become dominant avenues for brand engagement in Indonesia, especially through short-form videos and influencer-driven content.

The observed shift in consumer behavior—where social networks (63%) have surpassed search engines (55.3%) as the primary source of product information—resonates with the findings of Tuten and Solomon (2017), who emphasize the increasing consumer reliance on peer-generated content. This reflects a broader behavioral transformation in which traditional one-way communication is replaced by interactive, user-centered models that prioritize trust, relatability, and community engagement.

Moreover, the gender-based segmentation across platforms reinforces the strategic value of targeted digital campaigns, echoing Mangold and Faulds' (2009) perspective on social media as a hybrid element that integrates paid, owned, and earned media. For instance, the strong presence of female users on Instagram (54.5%) and Facebook (58.1%) suggests that marketers can achieve higher engagement through lifestyle branding and visually appealing content, aligning with previous studies on demographic-specific marketing.

The identification of platform-specific strategies also supports Chaffey and Smith's (2017) view that successful digital transformation requires data-driven decision-making and a deep understanding of platform metrics. In this study, comparative analysis of user behavior, advertising reach, and engagement trends across platforms provided marketers with actionable insights for resource allocation, content development, and audience targeting.

From a dynamic capabilities perspective, the study illustrates how businesses in Indonesia must engage in the sensing, seizing, and transforming stages (Teece, 2007) to adapt to the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem. Sensing is evident in the tracking of platform growth and user trends; seizing appears through the strategic adoption of platform-specific content; and transforming is visible in the organizational shift toward agile, analytics-based marketing systems.

In conclusion, the integration of findings with literature reveals a strong theoretical and empirical alignment. However, this study contributes further by localizing global theories to the Indonesian context in 2024, highlighting the need for hyper-contextualized, platform-sensitive, and demographically informed digital strategies. These insights not only validate previous academic claims but also extend their applicability to one of the most digitally dynamic markets in Southeast Asia.

Conclusion

This study has explored the rapid growth of social media users in Indonesia and its strategic implications for digital marketing in 2024. Using a qualitative descriptive approach based on secondary data, the research identified distinct usage patterns, demographic characteristics, and consumer behaviors across major platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp.

The findings demonstrate that each platform offers unique opportunities and challenges for marketers, depending on its user base and content format. TikTok and YouTube have emerged as high-engagement platforms, especially among younger and mobile-first audiences, while Instagram and Facebook continue to attract strong female and community-based engagement. Moreover, the shift in product research behavior—from search engines to social media networks—highlights the increasing importance of peer influence, user-generated content, and platform trust in consumer decision-making.

From a strategic perspective, the study reinforces the need for platform-specific, demographically targeted, and content-driven marketing strategies. It also affirms the relevance of the dynamic capability framework, where businesses must continuously sense changes in user behavior, seize emerging digital opportunities, and transform their internal processes to remain competitive in a fast-evolving environment.

Ultimately, the study offers practical insights for marketers and business leaders seeking to optimize their digital presence in Indonesia. By aligning marketing efforts with platform dynamics and user preferences, companies can achieve greater audience engagement, brand visibility, and long-term strategic relevance in the digital era.

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