Asian Journal of Marketing

ISSN 1819-1924

Academic Journals Inc.

www.academicjournals.com

OPEN ACCESS

Asian Journal of Marketing

ISSN 1819-1924
DOI: 10.3923/ajm.2025.1.12

Review Article

Digital Marketing as a Mediator Between Branding and Sales Performance in the Australian Real Estate Sector

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Abstract

This study investigates how digital marketing mediates the relationship between brand power and sales success in the Australian real estate sector. With growing competition and evolving consumer behaviour, the research explores how established brands LJ Hooker, Ray White, Goodman, Mirvac and Century 21 leverage digital strategies to reinforce their market position and drive property sales. Using a qualitative case study methodology, this research examines five leading Australian real estate brands. The study draws on a comprehensive review of industry reports, corporate websites, campaign materials and secondary data to analyse how digital tools such as social media platforms, SEO, CRM systems and virtual property tours are integrated with branding efforts to influence sales outcomes. Each case provides insight into the strategic alignment of digital marketing and brand communication in practice. The analysis reveals that digital marketing acts as a powerful mediator, translating brand strength into measurable sales performance. High-performing brands such as Ray White and Mirvac demonstrate success through cohesive digital narratives and targeted engagement strategies. Meanwhile, LJ Hooker and Century 21 utilize hybrid approaches combining traditional and digital methods. Goodman, with a strong commercial focus, exemplifies the use of digital platforms for B2B branding and sales efficiency. This study contributes to branding and digital marketing literature by illustrating how real estate firms apply tailored digital strategies to maintain brand relevance and competitiveness. Real estate professionals can improve customer engagement and sales performance by aligning brand values with evolving digital platforms and consumer expectations.

Key words: Digital marketing, brand power, sales success, the Australian real estate industry

Citation: Kang J.W., and E. Beak, 2025. Digital marketing as a mediator between branding and sales performance in the Australian real estate sector. Asian J. Market., 19: 1-12.

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Competing Interest: The authors have declared that no competing interest exists.

Data Availability: All relevant data are within the paper and its supporting information files.

INTRODUCTION

The Australian real estate market is undergoing a profound transformation, increasingly shaped by the integration of digital marketing strategies. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the total value of the Australian residential housing market reached an unprecedented A$10.4 trillion by the end of 2023, significantly exceeding the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of A$2.6 trillion[1]. Furthermore, the commercial real estate sector is projected to grow from A$1.72 trillion in 2024 to A$1.94 trillion by 2028, underscoring the substantial investment potential and opportunities within this market both domestically and internationally[2].

The Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA, 2022) reports that the sector comprises approximately 133,360 workers operating within around 46,000 real estate businesses[3]. Notably, 99% of these are classified as small businesses, encompassing roles such as business brokers, property managers, presidents and sales agents. Sales agents, in particular, perform multifaceted functions that include negotiating offers and managing sales processes, often collaborating closely with other professionals such as building inspectors, tradespeople, conveyancers and solicitors.

In recent years, the role of real estate sales agents has evolved significantly, largely due to the influence of disruptive digital technologies (DDT)[4]. These technologies include customer relationship management (CRM) systems, virtual property tours, data analytics and automated marketing platforms, all contributing to enhanced productivity and improved client engagement[5]. The integration of digital tools in real estate sales functions has the potential not only to streamline operational workflows but also to augment service quality, creating a more dynamic and responsive marketplace[6,7].

Among the many factors influencing sales success, brand power has emerged as a pivotal element in cultivating customer trust and loyalty. Strong brand recognition within the real estate market can influence buyer perceptions, facilitate premium pricing and generate repeat business[8]. However, brand power alone may be insufficient in a rapidly digitizing environment. The strategic deployment of digital marketing serves as a critical mediator by amplifying brand visibility and engaging broader buyer segments through targeted, data-driven campaigns[9]. Digital marketing channels, including social media, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), email campaigns and programmatic advertising, enable real estate firms to deliver personalized messaging, build community presence and accelerate lead conversion[10].

Despite these advantages, digital marketing proficiency varies widely across the Australian real estate industry. While some companies have effectively leveraged digital platforms to reinforce their brand power and drive sales, others have lagged behind due to limited technological capabilities or strategic vision[10]. This uneven adoption contributes to disparities in market performance and highlights the urgent need for research that elucidates how digital marketing can be optimally harnessed to mediate brand power and enhance sales outcomes.

This study addresses this gap by investigating the mediating role of digital marketing between brand power and sales success within the Australian property market. Building on prior research that has examined digital marketing's impact on consumer behaviour and brand equity in retail and service sectors[11], this research contextualizes these insights within real estate, a field where the interplay of trust, reputation and digital engagement is particularly complex. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating systematic literature review and in-depth case analyses of leading Australian real estate firms noted for their innovative digital marketing practices. These firms exemplify diverse strategies from leveraging immersive virtual reality property tours to employing AI-driven customer segmentation that have demonstrably enhanced brand strength and sales performance.

Through this inquiry, the research explores key questions: How does brand power influence sales success in Australian real estate? What is the relationship between brand power and various digital marketing strategies? How effective are different digital marketing approaches in boosting sales? And crucially, to what extent does digital marketing mediate the relationship between brand power and sales outcomes? By addressing these questions, the study advances new knowledge regarding the mechanisms by which digital marketing can be strategically deployed to optimize sales agent performance and market competitiveness.

The findings contribute to the existing literature by offering a comprehensive framework that links brand management, digital marketing tactics and sales success specifically within the real estate context, a nexus that has received limited empirical attention to date. Additionally, the practical insights derived from case studies provide valuable guidance for industry practitioners seeking to refine their digital marketing efforts and strengthen their brand presence in an increasingly digital marketplace.

In sum, this research underscores digital marketing as an indispensable mediator in the evolving Australian real estate landscape, facilitating the translation of brand power into tangible sales success. As consumer behaviors continue to shift toward online engagement and economic conditions prompt greater competition, the imperative for real estate professionals to embrace sophisticated digital marketing strategies becomes ever more pressing. This study not only delineates the current state of digital marketing adoption in the sector but also charts a pathway for future innovations poised to redefine sales effectiveness in Australian real estate.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design

Qualitative case study approach: This study employs a qualitative case study methodology to explore how digital marketing mediates the relationship between brand power and sales success in the Australian real estate sector. A qualitative approach is particularly appropriate given the complex and context-sensitive nature of branding and marketing strategies within a rapidly evolving, competitive property market. The case study design enables a comprehensive examination of firm-specific practices within real-world business environments, allowing for an in-depth understanding of how branding initiatives intersect with digital engagement to influence consumer behavior and market outcomes.

Five major Australian real estate firms-LJ Hooker, Ray White, Mirvac, Century 21 and Goodman-were selected through purposive sampling. These firms were chosen based on their significant market presence, demonstrable investment in digital marketing, diverse service portfolios across residential, commercial and industrial segments and the availability of publicly accessible data. The diversity and strategic maturity of these firms ensured rich, comparative insights that aligned with the study's core research questions and objectives.

Data were collected through extensive desk-based research, covering a range of secondary sources published over five years from 2020 to 2024. Company websites and annual reports were reviewed to understand brand positioning, strategic direction and market performance, offering foundational context for evaluating how firms articulate and operationalize their brand values. Digital marketing campaigns, such as targeted advertisements, email newsletters and virtual property tours, were examined to assess message design, audience targeting and campaign creativity. In addition, official social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter were systematically analyzed for content themes, posting frequency, user engagement and campaign responsiveness. These observations enabled a nuanced understanding of how digital channels contribute to brand visibility and customer interaction.

To complement organizational sources, industry reports, marketing white papers and market intelligence documents from entities such as the Real Estate Institute of Australia and Statista were examined. These sources helped situate company-level practices within broader industry trends, including technological innovation, shifts in consumer preferences and marketing adaptations during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The integration of multiple data types across five years ensured methodological rigor and enhanced the study's validity through triangulation.

Systematic literature review

PRISMA-based protocol: A systematic literature review was conducted to build theoretical depth and support the empirical case analysis. The review followed the PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, encompassing four key stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment and final inclusion[12]. The database search was conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCOhost and Google Scholar, targeting peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2015 and 2024. To ensure comprehensiveness and capture current industry relevance, an additional 45 documents comprising industry reports, marketing white papers, company profiles and grey literature were identified through citation chaining and manual searches.

Following the removal of duplicate records, 624 sources were initially screened by title and abstract. From this group, 398 sources were excluded due to their lack of relevance to the study's core themes of digital marketing, branding, or real estate. The remaining 226 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility based on alignment with the study's objectives. Ultimately, 73 sources were retained for inclusion in the final synthesis. Of these, 51 were peer-reviewed journal articles, while 22 comprised authoritative non-academic sources such as industry reports, governmental documents and company disclosures.

The literature search strategy employed a combination of Boolean operators, truncations and keyword clusters to identify relevant material. Search terms included variations and combinations of concepts such as brand power, brand awareness, brand equity, digital marketing, online marketing, social media marketing, real estate, property market, consumer behaviour and sales success in the Australian context. To narrow the scope to relevant and credible sources, filters were applied to limit results to English-language, full-text, peer-reviewed or credible grey literature. Manual scanning of reference lists further ensured the inclusion of seminal works and emerging studies of relevance to branding and digital marketing in the real estate industry.

The 73 sources included in the final analysis represented a diverse set of methodological approaches, including empirical studies, case analyses, conceptual articles and industry trend reports. Although the primary geographical focus was on the Australian market, comparative insights from international contexts - particularly from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom - were incorporated where theoretically or practically relevant. Approximately 70 percent of the included sources were published between 2018 and 2024, reflecting the growing academic and industry interest in digital transformation and branding strategies within real estate.

The literature revealed several key themes, including the influence of brand equity on buyer decision-making, the strategic use of personalized digital content to increase lead conversion, the adoption of innovative technologies such as AI and SEO in property marketing and the critical role of trust and online reputation in fostering brand loyalty and consumer confidence.

To ensure reliability and minimize subjectivity in the literature selection process, two independent reviewers screened all records based on pre-established inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cohen's Kappa, resulting in a coefficient of 0.81, which indicates a high level of agreement. Any discrepancies in article inclusion were resolved through discussion and, where necessary, the involvement of a third reviewer. This process safeguarded against selection bias and enhanced the consistency of the review.

Additionally, the inclusion of grey literature was strategically employed to mitigate potential publication bias and to provide contemporary, practice-based insights that might not be reflected in peer-reviewed academic work. Sources such as REIA white papers and CoreLogic market analyses were evaluated for credibility, data transparency and authoritativeness before inclusion.

All peer-reviewed studies were evaluated using a modified version of the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklist. Each source was assessed based on the clarity of its research objectives, methodological rigor, analytical coherence and relevance to the research questions. Out of the included articles, 38 were rated as high-quality, 25 as moderate-quality and 10 as low-quality. Only studies falling within the high and moderate-quality tiers were included in the final thematic synthesis. Grey literature was also subjected to a quality filter, assessing source authority, recency of publication and the transparency of the data presented.

Through this rigorous methodology - combining in-depth case study analysis with a systematic literature review - the study establishes a robust foundation for investigating how digital marketing mediates brand power and influences sales success in the Australian real estate sector. The insights drawn from this approach enable a comprehensive response to the research questions, offering both theoretical contributions and practical implications for marketing strategy in real estate.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Australian real estate market

Brand power and sales success: The Australian real estate sector has demonstrated significant adaptability and resilience, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, emerging as a crucial contributor to national economic stability and recovery[3]. This dynamic market is marked by its competitive diversity and the strategic integration of digital marketing, particularly through social media, which has become central to how real estate brands construct and communicate their value to the public. Within this evolving landscape, brand power plays a vital role in influencing consumer decisions and enhancing firm performance, particularly in terms of generating leads and converting those leads into sales[13].

Brand power, as evidenced in the strategies of leading Australian real estate firms, encompasses more than visual recognition or advertising frequency. It is embedded in a firm's capacity to project credibility, trust and expertise across multiple customer touchpoints. Research highlights that brands with a well-established reputation are more likely to attract attention, reduce consumer uncertainty and increase transaction confidence[14]. The competitive advantage of such brand power is particularly evident in a high-involvement purchase environment like real estate, where buyers and sellers seek assurance, guidance and a sense of security.

A review of five prominent Australian real estate firms - LJ Hooker, Ray White, Goodman, Mirvac and Century 21 - reveals that brand power is closely linked to long-term market presence, customer engagement and consistent value communication. These firms utilize distinctive branding strategies, often grounded in community integration, sustainability and innovation, to develop emotional connections with clients and strengthen customer loyalty[13]. For example, LJ Hooker's emphasis on community involvement and Ray White's legacy of family-owned values reinforce brand trust, which in turn enhances customer retention and repeat business. Similarly, Mirvac and Goodman differentiate themselves by emphasizing quality, creativity and sustainability, thereby attracting sophisticated clients and niche market segments willing to invest in premium or industrial spaces.

The alignment between brand values and consumer expectations contributes to increased sales performance. As demonstrated in each case study, firms that cultivate strong brand associations - such as trustworthiness, professionalism and innovation - report higher engagement levels, stronger lead generation and more stable conversion rates. In competitive sub-markets such as urban luxury developments (Mirvac) or industrial property (Goodman), brand power not only attracts clients but justifies premium pricing and ensures repeat transactions, thereby enhancing both market share and revenue growth.

Digital branding strategies serve as the operational vehicle through which brand power is translated into market outcomes. Across all five firms, brand strength is maintained and amplified through deliberate communication strategies, particularly those embedded in digital platforms. The storytelling and community-centric messaging used by LJ Hooker and Ray White promote relatability and emotional resonance, while the innovation and eco-conscious narratives of Goodman and Mirvac position their brands as forward-thinking and aligned with contemporary values.

Table 1 provides a comparative overview of these five firms, illustrating how brand identity, market positioning and customer engagement strategies contribute to their commercial performance. By aligning brand values with digital marketing techniques and broader consumer expectations, these firms are able to convert intangible brand attributes into measurable sales outcomes.

These findings support the conclusion that brand power is a key determinant of sales success in the Australian real estate market. A strong brand not only enhances visibility but also reduces purchase hesitation, builds trust and increases consumer willingness to engage with a particular agency or developer. This aligns with existing research emphasizing the pivotal role of branding in consumer decision-making and firm competitiveness[13,15].

Digital marketing platforms, especially social media, reinforce brand narratives and facilitate ongoing consumer engagement. Table 2 highlights the firms' use of these platforms to communicate brand values and cultivate trust. High engagement rates on platforms like Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn provide an accessible and scalable means of reinforcing brand messaging, increasing brand familiarity and ultimately driving leads.

These patterns demonstrate that brand power, supported by targeted digital engagement, significantly influences consumer confidence, lead quality and conversion success. Firms that successfully integrate their branding strategies into digital platforms are better positioned to maintain visibility, foster long-term relationships and outperform competitors in attracting and retaining customers.

In summary, the case analysis affirms that brand power is not merely a reputational asset but a tangible driver of sales performance in the Australian real estate market. Real estate firms that maintain strong, consistent and trust-based branding - amplified through digital platforms - are more likely to achieve sustainable success, especially in a market characterized by rapid change, informed consumers and digital transformation.

Real estate brand power and sales success: Brand power in the real estate sector reflects the degree of influence a brand has in shaping consumer perception, fostering trust and guiding purchase decisions. In high-stakes industries like real estate-where transactions are infrequent, financially significant and emotionally charged - the ability of a brand to convey reliability, credibility and expertise becomes a core determinant of market performance. There is a clear and empirically supported link between strong brand equity and enhanced profitability, as robust branding drives higher lead conversion rates, supports premium pricing and increases repeat transactions[16]. These insights affirm that brand power is not merely a symbolic asset but a strategic resource with measurable impact on sales outcomes.

Using a qualitative case study approach, this section examines the mechanisms through which brand power supports sales success, drawing on detailed analysis of branding and digital marketing strategies employed by two prominent Australian real estate firms: LJ Hooker and Meriton. The purposive selection of these cases ensures a comprehensive understanding of brand-driven market influence, allowing for the exploration of how distinct branding approaches contribute to commercial performance across different market segments.

Table 1: Brand strategy and market positioning in australian real estate

Brand	Brand focus	Market position	Brand strategy impact
LJ hooker	Community engagement, trust and sustainability	600 franchises, strong presence in residential & commercial sales	Builds trust through community integration, enhancing repeat business and loyalty
Ray White	Family values, service excellence	730 franchises, dominant in the residential market	Leverages familial brand identity to sustain long-term client relationships and market share
Goodman	Innovation, sustainability, design leadership	Leading industrial property developer	Appeals to eco-conscious B2B clients, enabling premium pricing and niche market strength
Mirvac	High-end urban development, design quality	Recognized leader in urban luxury developments	Strong brand equity attracts high-value clients and drives premium sales

Table 2: Digital platform engagement and brand power (June 2024)

Brand	Digital strategy	Key platforms and metrics	Sales impact insight
LJ Hooker	Digital storytelling, community content	Facebook (26k), Instagram (9.2k), LinkedIn (21.4k)	Reinforces local trust, encouraging high client retention and referrals
Ray White	Familial branding, direct engagement	Instagram (31.7k), LinkedIn (45.1k)	Builds strong emotional ties, supporting sustained sales across regions
Goodman	Sustainability-driven content	LinkedIn (101.8k), Instagram (12.2k)	Strengthens market differentiation, enabling growth in industrial sales
Mirvac	Premium visual branding, urban projects	LinkedIn (116.7k), Instagram (17.6k)	Attracts design-focused clientele, facilitating high-margin urban sales
Century 21	Global integration, PR-focused campaigns	Facebook (11.3k), LinkedIn (4.3k)	Enhances visibility and trust across broad audiences, supporting steady sales flow

LJ HOOKER-BUILDING TRUST THROUGH CONSISTENT BRANDING AND DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Established in 1928, LJ Hooker exemplifies how long-term brand development contributes to enduring sales success. The company has built a nationally recognized brand identity grounded in trust, community engagement and innovation - key attributes that resonate with Australian consumers navigating complex property decisions. LJ Hooker's brand power is deeply rooted in its consistent presentation across all marketing channels, from physical signage to digital platforms, reinforcing its credibility and market leadership.

The firm's digital marketing strategy enhances its brand presence and expands its customer base by using storytelling and targeted campaigns on social media. Through platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, LJ Hooker disseminates content that emphasizes local market knowledge, customer testimonials and community involvement, thereby humanizing the brand and strengthening emotional ties with potential clients. This branding consistency translates into consumer trust, which research has identified as a key factor influencing real estate decision-making[14,15].

Moreover, LJ Hooker's widespread franchise network, encompassing over 600 offices and 6,000 staff across Australia and New Zealand, amplifies the brand's visibility and accessibility. This broad market coverage, coupled with a unified brand message, contributes to a high degree of customer loyalty and repeat transactions. The company's success in leveraging brand power is evidenced by its ability to maintain a competitive advantage in a saturated market, particularly by appealing to both traditional buyers and emerging demographics through adaptive digital strategies.

Meriton-crafting a luxury brand identity to command market premiums: Meriton, while differing from LJ Hooker in scale and market focus, provides a compelling example of how strategic brand positioning within the luxury real estate segment directly influences sales performance. Specializing in high-end urban developments, Meriton has cultivated a brand image centered on sophistication, superior design and environmental consciousness. The brand's visual identity reflected in its architectural design, promotional materials and online presence communicates exclusivity and quality, aligning with the expectations of affluent buyers.

In a highly competitive luxury market, Meriton's challenge has been to differentiate itself while reinforcing its value proposition. To address this, the company strategically integrates sustainability narratives into its branding, highlighting energy-efficient construction, green building certifications and premium amenities designed for modern urban living. These brand elements not only enhance consumer perception but also justify price premiums and sustain customer loyalty.

Meriton's digital branding efforts-ranging from immersive virtual tours to curated social media content-extend its reach and provide prospective buyers with rich, interactive experiences that elevate the perceived value of its properties. By articulating a cohesive brand identity across online platforms, Meriton increases buyer confidence and strengthens brand recall, both of which are essential to high-stakes purchasing behavior in the luxury real estate sector.

The firm's focus on targeted branding has resulted in strong sales outcomes despite broader market volatility, confirming that brand power-when aligned with consumer values and supported by sophisticated digital marketing-plays a crucial role in sales success.

Synthesis and interpretation: Both LJ Hooker and Meriton exemplify how brand power influences sales by cultivating consumer trust, reinforcing differentiated value propositions and leveraging digital channels to communicate brand identity effectively. In the case of LJ Hooker, brand power is built through community integration, longevity and consistent digital storytelling, which support broad market engagement and sustained transactional volume. For Meriton, brand power derives from exclusivity, design excellence and sustainability, appealing to a narrower but higher-value market segment.

These case studies demonstrate that brand power serves as both a driver and a mediator of sales success in the Australian real estate market. Strong brands mitigate perceived buyer risk, attract qualified leads and facilitate long-term customer relationships - each of which contributes to superior sales performance. The qualitative evidence underscores that in an era of digital transformation and rising consumer expectations, brand power must be actively cultivated and strategically communicated through integrated marketing efforts to achieve sustained market success.

Brand power and digital marketing: The relationship between brand power and digital marketing in the Australian real estate sector is increasingly significant, particularly as firms seek to enhance visibility, customer engagement and competitive positioning. Brand power, understood as the perceived strength and credibility of a brand in the minds of consumers, is both reinforced and expanded through well-executed digital marketing strategies. The integration of digital tools-such as targeted social media campaigns, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), content marketing and influencer partnerships-serves as a mechanism through which real estate companies can amplify brand identity, foster trust and generate leads, thereby increasing overall sales performance[17].

This section draws on multiple qualitative case examples to explore how brand power is both shaped by and operationalized through digital marketing. Firms such as Mirvac and LJ Hooker illustrate how branding strategies are embedded within digital platforms to enhance engagement and maintain relevance in a digitally driven marketplace.

MIRVAC-STRENGTHENING BRAND IDENTITY THROUGH DIGITAL PERSONALIZATION

Mirvac, one of Australia's leading property development firms, has effectively used digital marketing to reinforce its brand identity as a provider of sustainable and innovative urban living solutions. Through visually rich campaigns, immersive virtual tours and targeted content on platforms such as Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube, Mirvac communicates its core brand values - quality, innovation and sustainability-while offering interactive experiences that appeal to its target demographic. This strategic use of digital marketing not only increases visibility but also deepens consumer engagement by providing valuable and personalized interactions with potential buyers[18]. The brand's consistent messaging and emphasis on contemporary urban living has enabled it to retain market leadership in high-end property development, demonstrating that brand power is significantly enhanced when supported by adaptive and targeted digital strategies.

LJ HOOKER-REBRANDING FOR DIGITAL RELEVANCE

In response to evolving market dynamics and technological change, LJ Hooker has undertaken a series of rebranding efforts aimed at aligning its traditional brand values with the demands of a digitally savvy consumer base. These efforts have included revitalizing visual brand elements, streamlining the customer journey on digital platforms and investing in social media campaigns that highlight local expertise and customer success stories. By adopting a multi-platform approach-encompassing Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn-LJ Hooker has expanded its market reach and successfully attracted younger demographics seeking authenticity and transparency in property transactions. The company's ability to maintain brand continuity while evolving through digital transformation illustrates the symbiotic relationship between brand power and digital engagement.

BURWOOD CHINATOWN-DIGITALLY REVITALIZING A CULTURAL BRAND

Although distinct from traditional real estate firms, the revitalization of Burwood Chinatown offers valuable insights into how digital marketing can strengthen brand power in a competitive and culturally rich environment. Known for its diverse Asian cuisine and cultural offerings, Burwood Chinatown sought to overcome challenges related to limited online visibility and slow digital adaptation among traditional business owners. The area's strategic implementation of digital marketing - supported by the local council - focused on increasing its profile through social media campaigns, influencer collaborations and search-optimized content that emphasized its role as a social and cultural destination.

This targeted digital approach yielded measurable outcomes: Increased foot traffic, stronger brand recognition and greater patronage across local businesses. Social media platforms served as key tools in building emotional connections with visitors, reinforcing brand associations with authenticity and cultural richness. By extending its brand presence online, Burwood Chinatown successfully repositioned itself as a modern, vibrant community space while maintaining its traditional appeal.

Synthesis and interpretation: Across these case studies, a clear pattern emerges: Brand power is both a foundation for and an outcome of strategic digital marketing. In each example, digital platforms serve as conduits for brand messaging, allowing firms to build credibility, personalize customer interactions and enhance perceived value. Strong brands are more likely to see success in digital campaigns because of the trust and recognition they already command. Simultaneously, effective digital strategies-when aligned with core brand values - reinforce brand visibility and attract new audiences, creating a virtuous cycle of brand and sales growth.

These findings affirm that in the contemporary Australian real estate and cultural landscape, brand power and digital marketing are mutually reinforcing forces. Firms that successfully align their branding with evolving digital practices are better positioned to sustain market relevance, generate customer loyalty and achieve long-term commercial success.

Digital marketing and sales success: Digital marketing plays an indispensable role in driving sales success within the Australian real estate sector. Effective digital marketing campaigns emphasize the creation of compelling content, strategic placement of advertisements and measurable outcomes that ultimately translate into increased sales conversions[19]. Optimizing online presence through an integrated approach that combines Search Engine Optimization (SEO), social media engagement, content marketing and influencer collaborations enhances the visibility of property listings and company websites. This multifaceted digital strategy not only attracts greater traffic but also generates quality leads, fostering higher conversion rates and reinforcing overall sales performance.

The impact of digital marketing efforts can be evaluated through various key performance indicators such as website traffic, lead generation, engagement metrics and conversion ratios. Social media marketing, in particular, has emerged as a potent channel for real estate firms to engage with prospective buyers and sellers. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook enable firms to showcase properties via high-quality imagery, engaging videos, virtual tours and interactive live streams. For example, Ray White's Facebook live video tours achieved a 40% increase in audience engagement and a 25% rise in property inquiries, underscoring the effectiveness of social media in attracting and nurturing buyer interest[20].

Search Engine Optimization remains a cornerstone of digital marketing strategies, enhancing firms' online visibility and directing prospective clients to listings and corporate websites. By optimizing website content with relevant keywords and maintaining fresh, informative updates, real estate companies significantly improve their search rankings and capture a larger share of the digital marketplace. Firms that implement robust SEO practices experience a measurable increase in reach and sales opportunities, which is vital in a highly competitive market[14].

Email marketing complements these efforts by maintaining ongoing communication with potential buyers, delivering tailored content such as new property listings, open house announcements and market insights. Personalized and well-crafted email campaigns foster stronger relationships with prospects and enhance conversion probabilities through sustained engagement[15].

Targeted online advertising, particularly pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns, enables firms to focus on specific demographics and geographic segments with precision. Goodman Properties' Google Ads campaign exemplifies the power of targeted advertising, producing a significant return on investment by increasing qualified traffic and improving sales conversions beyond the reach of traditional marketing methods[21].

Content marketing strategies allow firms to position themselves as trusted industry authorities by providing valuable and relevant information that addresses buyer concerns and questions. Mirvac's blog content on topics such as home financing and interior design has attracted substantial site traffic and strengthened brand reputation, indirectly boosting sales by increasing consumer confidence and brand loyalty[22].

Additionally, virtual property tours have become an essential digital tool, offering immersive and convenient viewing experiences that deepen buyer engagement. Virtual tours enable potential buyers to visualise living spaces more effectively, increasing the likelihood of a sale by removing barriers associated with physical property visits[23].

A strategic focus on local online listings and SEO optimization is critical to enhancing visibility and attracting relevant customers[24]. Establishing and maintaining comprehensive Google Business Profiles with accurate and up-to-date business information, supported by listings on major directories such as Yellow Pages and Zillow, reinforces credibility and improves local SEO performance[14,15]. Engaging with community platforms like Nextdoor and Yelp further builds social proof through client reviews, strengthening trust and encouraging customer engagement[23].

The SEO practices such as keyword optimization, regular content updates and proactive client engagement through review solicitation directly improve search rankings and user interaction, enabling real estate firms to adapt dynamically to market trends[14,19]. Analytical tools like Google Analytics provide actionable insights into campaign performance, allowing continuous refinement of digital strategies for maximum effectiveness[18].

Social media channels play a pivotal role in active community engagement by disseminating engaging content, responding to customer feedback and participating in local discussions. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest help build brand loyalty and establish real estate firms as local authorities in their markets[20]. Complementary content creation efforts, including blogging and guest posting on reputable industry websites, expand reach and enhance thought leadership, attracting new clients and consolidating brand credibility[14,15].

Email marketing campaigns, facilitated by platforms like Mailchimp, sustain long-term engagement by delivering diverse, relevant content that nurtures leads throughout the customer journey. Consistent communication through emails maintains brand presence in potential buyers' consideration sets and supports conversion efforts[20,23].

Collectively, these digital marketing strategies demonstrate clear effectiveness in increasing visibility, engagement and ultimately sales within the Australian real estate market. When integrated strategically and supported by rigorous performance monitoring, digital marketing enhances brand power, fosters customer loyalty and drives sustainable sales growth. This comprehensive digital approach enables real estate firms to thrive amidst evolving consumer behaviors and technological advancements, solidifying their competitive advantage in a dynamic marketplace.

Mediating effect of digital marketing on the relationship between brand power and sales success: The relationship between brand power and sales success within the Australian real estate market is increasingly influenced by the strategic application of digital marketing. Brand power, defined as the strength of a brand's recognition, reputation and emotional resonance with consumers, serves as a foundational asset for real estate companies aiming to secure a competitive edge. However, this brand strength alone is insufficient in today's digitally interconnected environment. Digital marketing emerges as a vital mediator that enhances, channels and activates brand power, enabling it to convert into quantifiable sales outcomes.

Digital marketing mediates this relationship by increasing the reach, relevance and resonance of brand messaging. Unlike traditional marketing approaches, digital channels offer precision targeting, real-time engagement and interactive experiences that foster deeper consumer relationships and stimulate buying behaviors. This mediation is particularly significant in real estate, where purchase decisions are high-value and involve extensive consumer consideration.

Empirical evidence in marketing research supports this mediating role. Firms that combine strong brand equity with targeted digital marketing campaigns achieve higher sales volumes, increased conversion rates and sustained customer loyalty[24]. Digital marketing tools such as social media advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing and influencer collaborations enable brands to engage diverse audience segments effectively, overcoming barriers related to awareness, trust and market education[7,25].

Case study

Modscape-driving sales through digital-enhanced brand education

Context and challenges: Modscape operates in the innovative modular housing sector, offering architecturally designed, sustainable prefabricated homes. Despite clear advantages in design, cost and environmental impact, Modscape initially faced a significant hurdle: limited consumer awareness and widespread misconceptions about modular construction. Many potential buyers lacked familiarity with the concept, leading to hesitation and reduced willingness to purchase despite Modscape's strong brand values and product differentiation.

Digital marketing as a mediator: To bridge this educational gap, Modscape strategically deployed digital marketing as a powerful mediator that leveraged and amplified its brand power. The company implemented a multi-channel digital campaign spanning Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn and its website, featuring rich multimedia content such as detailed project walkthroughs, time-lapse videos of modular assembly, virtual tours and customer testimonials. This content was crafted to demystify modular housing, highlight the brand's craftsmanship and emphasize sustainability credentials.

Targeted social media advertising and interactive webinars directly addressed common consumer concerns, such as cost comparisons with traditional builds, construction timelines and customization options. Consistency in messaging reinforced Modscape's brand identity as an innovator committed to superior design and environmental responsibility.

- **Outcomes:** Quantitative analytics demonstrated substantial gains: increased website traffic, higher social media engagement rates and greater volumes of qualified inquiries. More importantly, this digital engagement translated into higher conversion rates, as the educational and interactive approach reduced buyer uncertainty and fostered trust. Modscape successfully converted brand awareness into sales, positioning itself as a thought leader and preferred provider in the modular housing industry
- **Implications:** Modscape's case exemplifies how digital marketing mediates the brand power-sales relationship by facilitating consumer education and trust-building. Digital platforms served as an effective conduit to translate brand messaging into actionable knowledge, thereby bridging the gap between awareness and purchase intent in a niche market

Case study

Big mama auction-enhancing sales through social media interaction and targeting

Context and challenges: Big Mama Auction, a specialist auction house in rare collectibles, faced the challenge of replicating the immersive, high-energy environment of physical auctions in an online setting. While the brand was well-regarded within collector communities, its sales success depended on activating this brand power digitally to drive broader participation and bidding activity.

Digital marketing as a mediator: The auction house adopted a dynamic digital marketing strategy leveraging Facebook Live streams, Instagram Stories and Twitter promotions to create interactive, real-time auction experiences. These efforts engaged audiences through behind-the-scenes content, sneak peeks of auction items and storytelling that emphasized rarity and provenance.

Advanced audience targeting enabled the company to tailor advertisements based on demographics, interests and geographic locations, ensuring promotional efforts reached highly qualified prospective bidders. Real-time engagement tools-such as live Q&A, instant bidding updates and direct communication via comments and messages-fostered a sense of community and urgency akin to physical auctions.

Partnerships with influencers and industry experts further extended the auction's reach, lending credibility and attracting new participants. High-quality visual storytelling and detailed narratives about each item created emotional resonance, strengthening bidder connection and perceived value.

- **Outcomes:** Data indicated significant improvements: Increased registered bidders, higher bid volumes and elevated average sale prices compared to previous offline auctions. Social media metrics reflected enhanced follower engagement, shares and event participation
- **Implications:** Big Mama Auction's success highlights digital marketing's role in mediating brand power by transforming static brand recognition into vibrant consumer interaction and transactional behavior. The strategic use of live engagement, targeted advertising and influencer collaboration maximized brand activation and sales conversion in a competitive digital landscape

Synthesis and research implications: The experiences of Modscape and Big Mama Auction illustrate the critical mediating function of digital marketing between brand power and sales success in the Australian real estate sector and related markets. Digital marketing acts as a catalyst that enhances the visibility, relevance and persuasive power of brand messaging. By enabling precise targeting, rich content delivery, real-time consumer engagement and educational outreach, digital marketing converts brand equity into tangible sales outcomes.

For real estate practitioners and marketers, these findings emphasize the necessity of embedding digital marketing within branding strategies to maximize sales success. Investing in digital content development, audience segmentation, interactive platforms and influencer partnerships unlocks the full potential of brand power, driving sustainable growth and competitive advantage in an increasingly digital marketplace[26].

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that digital marketing is a vital mediator between brand power and sales success in the Australian real estate market. Case studies of LJ Hooker, Meriton and Modscape show that tailored, data-driven strategies enhance brand visibility, engagement and consumer trust, directly boosting sales conversions. By moving beyond promotion to serve as a strategic function, digital marketing strengthens brand equity, supports informed decision-making and enables real-time responsiveness to market shifts. Sustained investment and innovation in this domain are essential for firms seeking competitive advantage in an increasingly digitalized property market.

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

This study discovered the pivotal role of digital marketing as a mediator that can be beneficial for transforming brand power into measurable sales success in the Australian real estate market. By examining case studies of LJ Hooker, Meriton and Modscape, the research highlights how tailored, data-driven strategies such as social media engagement, content marketing, influencer collaborations and SEO enhance brand visibility, consumer trust and sales conversion rates. The findings reveal that digital marketing operates as a strategic function, not merely a promotional tool, enabling real-time responsiveness and sustained competitive advantage. This study will help researchers uncover the critical areas of digital marketing's strategic integration that many have not explored. Thus, a new theory on its intermediary role in brand-to-sales conversion may be arrived at.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors acknowledge the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies, specifically ChatGPT (OpenAI) and Consensus, in the development of this manuscript. These tools were employed to assist with generating summaries of relevant literature and datasets, refining the articulation of practical applications and recommendations derived from the results and enhancing the clarity and readability of the manuscript through improvements to grammar, structure and overall language quality. AI was also used beyond standard proofreading functions to support substantive revisions to the content and organization of the text. Despite the use of AI tools in these capacities, the authors assert that all intellectual contributions, analytical reasoning and interpretations presented in this article are their own. The authors remain solely responsible for the originality, accuracy and integrity of the content, in full accordance with the ethical standards outlined by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

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