

The evolution of marketing research in the context of digital transformation of society

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Abstract: Marketing research's relevance in digital transformation is paramount for ensuring business process efficiency. The article aims to analyse the impact of new digital tools on marketing research, identify the main advantages of these methods, and develop recommendations for their optimisation. The methodology involves a comprehensive approach, which includes analysing the experience of international companies, assessing the market, and the practice of applying the latest technologies in marketing research. The results revealed that using big data and social media analytics increases the accuracy and efficiency of marketing campaigns. The article highlights the need to adapt digital approaches to market specifics and consumer needs. The study results indicate that the revenues of the marketing research industry significantly influenced global GDP from 2009 to 2022, with the most substantial impact observed in North America and the weakest in Latin America. The practical significance lies in integrating modern technologies into the marketing research process, which requires marketers to have high technological proficiency. The article outlines the role of data privacy, which demands a responsible approach to information from companies. Several recommended measures are provided to improve marketing research, implement personalised strategies, and enhance staff qualifications. The prospects for further research include developing comprehensive programs that enable the effective use of digital technologies in marketing research.

Keywords: *Big data, Digital marketing, Digital transformation, Innovative technologies, Market research, Market trends. Personalisation, Social media analytics.*

1. Introduction

Marketing research is a critical factor in strategic planning and business management. It involves systematically collecting, analysing, and interpreting data about markets, consumers, competition, and other factors affecting a company's activities. According to [1], marketing research aims to obtain valuable insights for making informed decisions that contribute to meeting consumer needs, enhancing competitiveness, and developing the business. In modern conditions of increasing information volume, marketing research is essential for identifying new opportunities and preventing potential threats. It helps to identify market segments, understand consumer behaviour, evaluate the effectiveness of marketing campaigns, and optimise marketing strategies.

The development of digital technologies has significantly impacted all aspects of social life, including marketing research. According to [2], using big data, machine learning, and social media analytics allows companies to collect and analyse vast amounts of information with unprecedented accuracy and speed. Existing technologies provide the ability to identify hidden patterns and trends in consumer behaviour, which was previously impossible. They allow for real-time market analysis, ensuring quick and accurate responses to changes in the market environment. In the context of society's digital transformation, the effectiveness of marketing research increases due to the integration of the latest technologies, enabling companies to obtain more accurate and relevant data for strategic decision-making.

The infrastructure of digital technologies and global competition create new challenges and opportunities for marketing research. Access to modern analytical platforms and tools is essential for successfully conducting marketing research. [3] argues this includes technical aspects and human capital development. The conditions of globalisation force companies to quickly adapt to changes in market conditions and implement the latest technologies to maintain competitiveness. Increasing competition in global markets requires companies to adopt innovative approaches to marketing research and continuously improve the supporting infrastructure for these processes. Success in global competition depends on the ability to quickly and effectively adapt to new technological opportunities, ensuring high quality and accuracy of marketing data, which becomes the basis for strategic decision-making.

2. Literature Review

Marketing research problems among scientists focus on analysing the latest technologies and approaches that contribute to the practical study of consumer behaviour and market trends. The importance of this topic in the modern business space is emphasised in the work of [4], which notes the need to integrate digital tools into the research process to improve the accuracy and timeliness of the data obtained. [5] examines the use of big data to uncover insights that allow companies to understand their customers and their needs better. [6] pays attention to the role of social media in marketing research, which allows for real-time tracking of consumer sentiments and preferences. According to [7], online user behaviour analytics is critically important for developing personalised marketing campaigns. [8] highlights the significance of machine learning in automating data analysis and forecasting market trends. [9] analyses the trends in the further development of marketing research, considering the role of an omnichannel approach to data collection and analysis. [10] believes that developing personal data protection policies increases consumer loyalty and ensures safety. According to [11], rapid adaptation to changes is necessary for successful marketing research in digital transformation. [12] points out the importance of using Agile methodology for quickly implementing changes in marketing strategies based on current data. [13] researches the use of digital platforms for data collection and analysis, which allows companies to use their marketing approaches effectively. [14] indicates that a more complete picture of consumer behaviour and market trends can be obtained by integrating data from various sources. The scientist [15] believes they combine traditional marketing research methods with modern digital tools. [16] highlights the effectiveness of using online surveys, web analytics, and social networks for collecting consumer data. According to the study by [17], an important aspect is the analysis of big data, which helps to identify hidden patterns and trends in consumer behaviour. Potwora's [18] analysis shows that the flexibility of marketing strategies and an individual approach to each market segment contribute to effectively achieving marketing goals. [19] believes that the role of investment in analytical platforms and tools cannot be overestimated due to increasing competition. Cao's [20] article forms an understanding of the modern software used for analysing consumer data and the importance of its integration into companies' business processes. [21] highlights the successful experience of using automated systems for marketing research, which provide convenient access to current data and analytics. Thomas's [22] work emphasises the need to integrate digital tools into all aspects of marketing research, from data collection and analysis to developing and implementing

marketing strategies. Thus, implementing innovative approaches in marketing research contributes to increasing their effectiveness and accuracy, which is critical to successfully conducting business in modern conditions.

3. Research Aims

The article's research aims to analyse the impact of digital tools on marketing research processes in the context of society's digital transformation, identify the main challenges, and determine effective implementation strategies. The problematics involve revealing the consequences of applying the latest technologies to marketing research and the adaptation of companies to modern market conditions. A comprehensive approach is used to achieve this aim, encompassing the analysis of scientific publications, business research, and assessments of actual company practices. One of the promising areas of research is the study of the impact of big data and social media analytics on the accuracy and effectiveness of marketing strategies. The main tasks are to identify and determine the key features of digital approaches, analyse the effectiveness of various data collection and analysis methods, and develop recommendations for enhancing their efficiency and adaptability to market changes.

4. Materials and Methods

The methodology includes several stages to analyse digital technologies' impact on marketing research. The research sample covers the marketing research markets of Europe, North America, Asia, and Africa, allowing for a wide range of data for analysis. In the first stage, the marketing research methods are characterised, including an overview of traditional and modern approaches. This stage involves a detailed disclosure of the tools and technologies used for data collection and analysis. In the second stage, the global marketing research market is assessed, which involves analysing market shares, key players, technological innovations, and regional characteristics. An assessment is made of how different markets adapt to digital transformation and which technological solutions are used most frequently. The third stage of the research includes an analysis of trends and prospects for developing digital marketing. At this stage, predictive models and extensive data analysis are revealed to determine trends and possible scenarios for developing the marketing research industry. The methodology allows identifying potential challenges and opportunities for companies striving to remain competitive in rapid technological evolution. The analysis methods include quantitative and qualitative approaches, allowing for a comprehensive picture of the current state and prospects of the marketing research market. Thus, the proposed methodology implies a systematic approach to studying the impact of digital technologies on marketing research, including the characterisation of methods, assessment of the global market, and analysis of trends.

5. Results

Marketing research methods in the context of digital transformation encompass a wide range of tools and approaches that significantly enhance the efficiency of data collection and analysis. One of the essential methods is using big data, which allows companies to collect vast amounts of information from various sources such as social media, websites, transaction systems, and other digital platforms. Extensive data analysis using machine learning algorithms helps to identify hidden patterns and trends, predict consumer behaviour, and make informed marketing decisions. This approach ensures high accuracy and speed of data processing, which is critically important in a rapidly changing market environment. The use of big data technology allows companies to conduct personalised marketing campaigns, increasing customer engagement and loyalty.

Another critical marketing research method in digital transformation is social media analytics, which involves collecting and analysing data from platforms such as Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, and others. Social media has become a vital source of consumer information, as it allows for real-time data on their preferences, interests, behaviours, and sentiments.

Marketing research methods include automated systems and data collection and analysis platforms. Systems such as Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics allow companies to analyse user behaviour on websites and mobile applications comprehensively. They allow tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) such as traffic, conversions, time spent on the site, and more, helping to optimise marketing campaigns and increase their effectiveness. Automated systems enable audience segmentation and A/B testing, allowing for the identification of the most effective strategies for customer engagement and retention. Automating marketing research significantly reduces costs and shortens the time required for analysis. In a rapidly changing market environment and high competition, the leading marketing research methods are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Marketing research methods in digital transformation.

Methods	Features	Application
Use of big data (Big Data)	Collecting and analysing large amounts of data to gain insights into consumer behaviour.	Analysing user behaviour on the website to personalise advertising and offers.
Social media and their analysis	Use of social media data to research consumer preferences and sentiment.	Monitoring product reviews on social media to improve service and product quality.
Analysis of user behaviour on the Internet	Tracking and analysing user actions on websites and mobile applications.	Using web analytics tools (Google Analytics) to identify popular pages and optimise content.
Personalisation of marketing campaigns	The development of individual marketing offers is based on the analysis of consumer data.	Recommending products based on the user's previous purchases in the online store.
Use of machine learning	Automation of data analysis and trend forecasting using AI and ML.	Chatbots are used for personalised communication with customers and automated service.
An omnichannel approach to data collection	Collecting data from various customer interaction channels for comprehensive analysis.	Data from online stores, social networks, and physical outlets can be integrated to create a single customer base.
Project method	Ability to respond quickly to changes in consumer behaviour and market conditions.	Use Agile methodologies to implement changes to marketing strategies based on up-to-date data quickly.

Strengthening investments in marketing research is an essential factor in increasing the competitiveness of companies in the modern market environment. The digital transformation of society requires businesses to adapt to new realities, where data plays a crucial role in making strategic decisions. Investing in the latest technologies allows companies to obtain accurate and up-to-date insights about the market and consumers. Social analytics tools use natural language processing (NLP) algorithms to analyse text messages, comments, and reviews, allowing them to identify current trends and sentiments among the target audience. This enables companies to quickly respond to changes in consumer behaviour and adjust their marketing strategies according to current market needs. Social media analysis helps identify influencers who can aid in brand promotion and attracting new customers. It should be noted that the technology market is evolving globally, as observed in the dynamics shown in Figure 1.

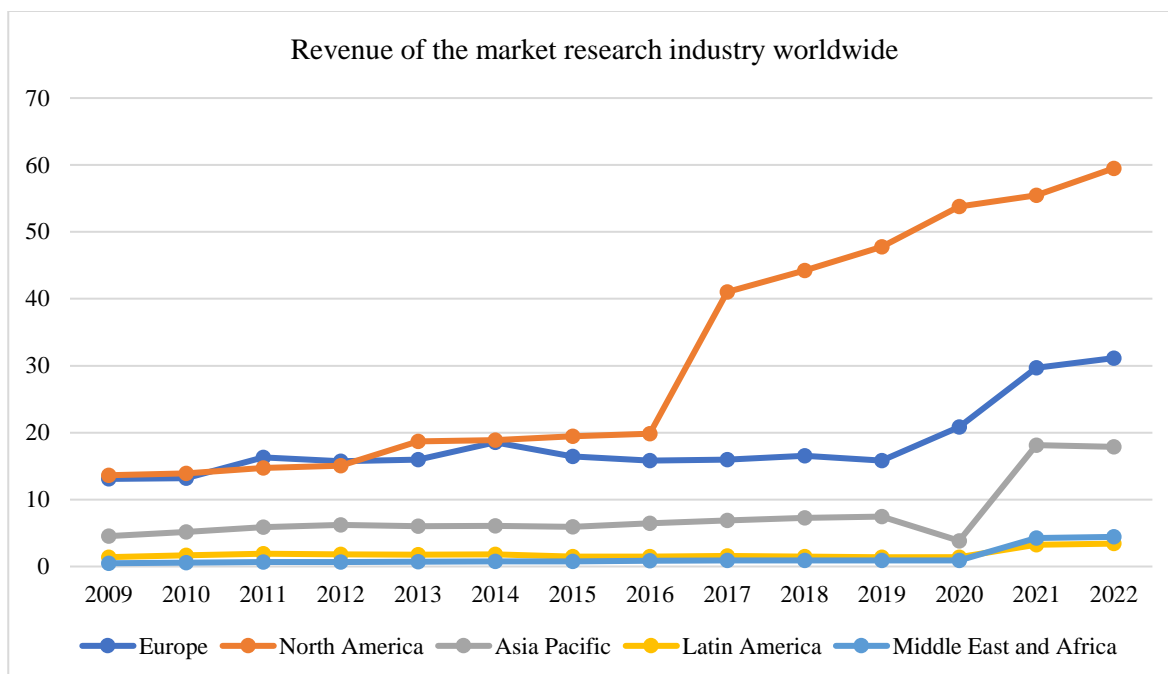


Figure 1.
Revenue of the Market Research Industry Worldwide from 2009 to 2022, by country or region (in billion U.S. dollars).
Source: Compiled from [23] and [24].

The dynamics show a significant revenue increase from the marketing research industry in various regions. North America showed the highest level of revenues, with a particularly noticeable jump from 2017, when revenues grew from \$19.83 billion in 2016 to \$41.02 billion in 2017, reaching \$59.5 billion in 2022. Although lagging behind North America, Europe showed steady growth, especially in 2020, where revenues grew from \$20.87 billion to \$31.14 billion in 2022. The Asia-Pacific region demonstrates significant growth, particularly in 2021, when revenues increased to \$18.14 billion, indicating growing interest and investment in marketing research in this region.

Other regions, such as Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa, show moderate growth, but their revenues remain significantly lower than those of North America and Europe. We will conduct a statistical assessment of the regional impact of the revenue dynamics of the marketing research industry on the dynamics of global GDP. For this purpose, we will build a graph where the dependent variable will be the volume of global GDP at current prices, and the independent variable will be the corresponding volume of revenues of the marketing research industry across the regions of the world (Figure 2).

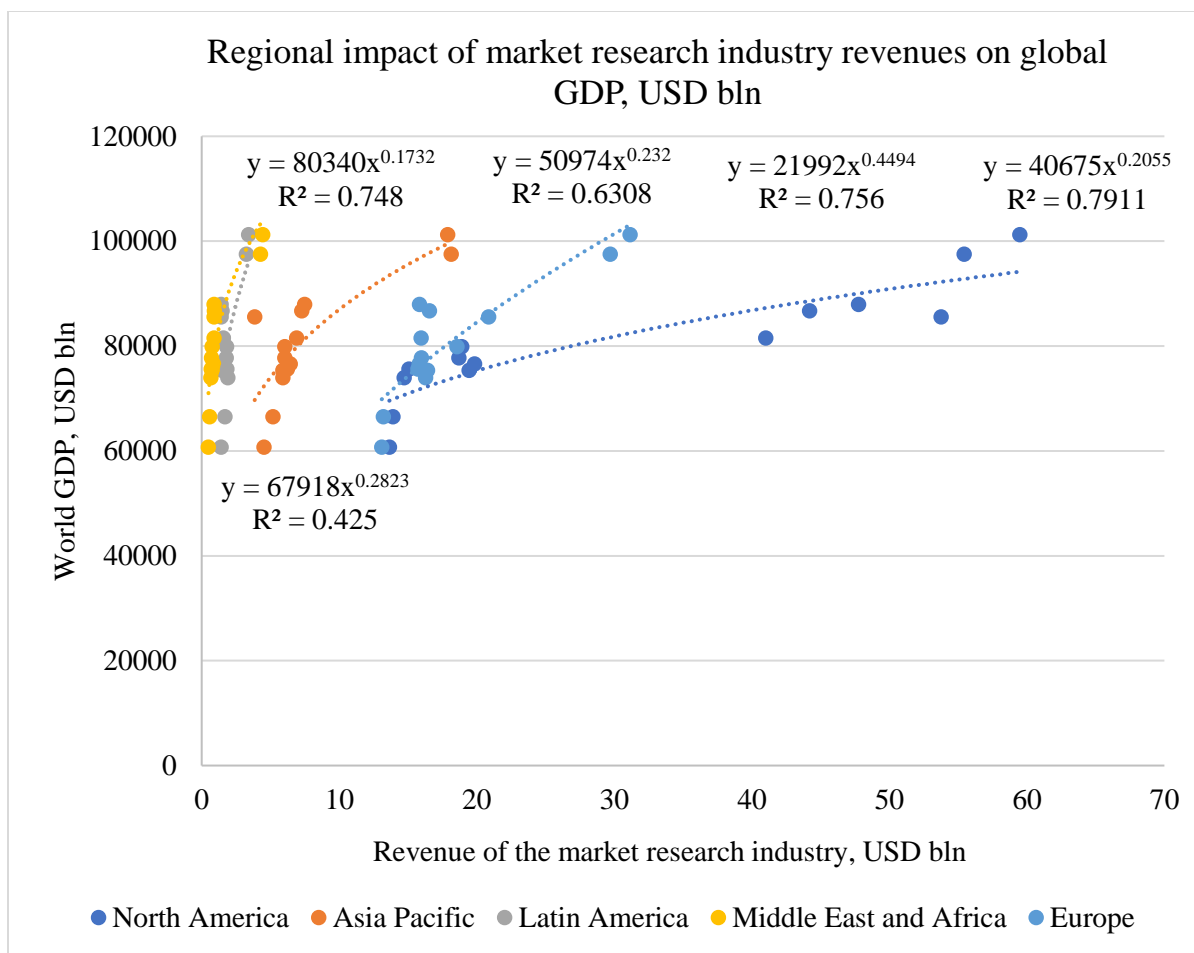


Figure 2.
Regional impact of market research industry revenues on Global GDP.
Source: Compiled from [23] and [24].

The data in Figure 3 shows that the impact of the marketing research industry revenues from all regions of the world on global GDP during 2009–2022 was high, with the lowest impact strength being 42.5 % in Latin America, 63.8 % in the Asia-Pacific region, 74.8 % in the Middle East and Africa, and 75.6 % in Europe. At the same time, the marketing research industry of North America had the most substantial impact on global GDP (impact strength 79.1 %). When analysing the regional elasticity of global GDP to the revenues of the marketing research industry, it is worth noting that a 1 % increase in industry revenues in the Middle East and Africa corresponds to a 0.17 % increase in global GDP, in North America – 0.21 %, in the Asia-Pacific region – 0.23 %, in Latin America – 0.28 %, and in Europe – 0.45 %.

The identified trends highlight the importance of investing in marketing research to maintain competitiveness and adapt to rapidly changing market conditions. According to forecasted estimates, the digital marketing market will increase severalfold in the next ten years, as shown in Figure 3.

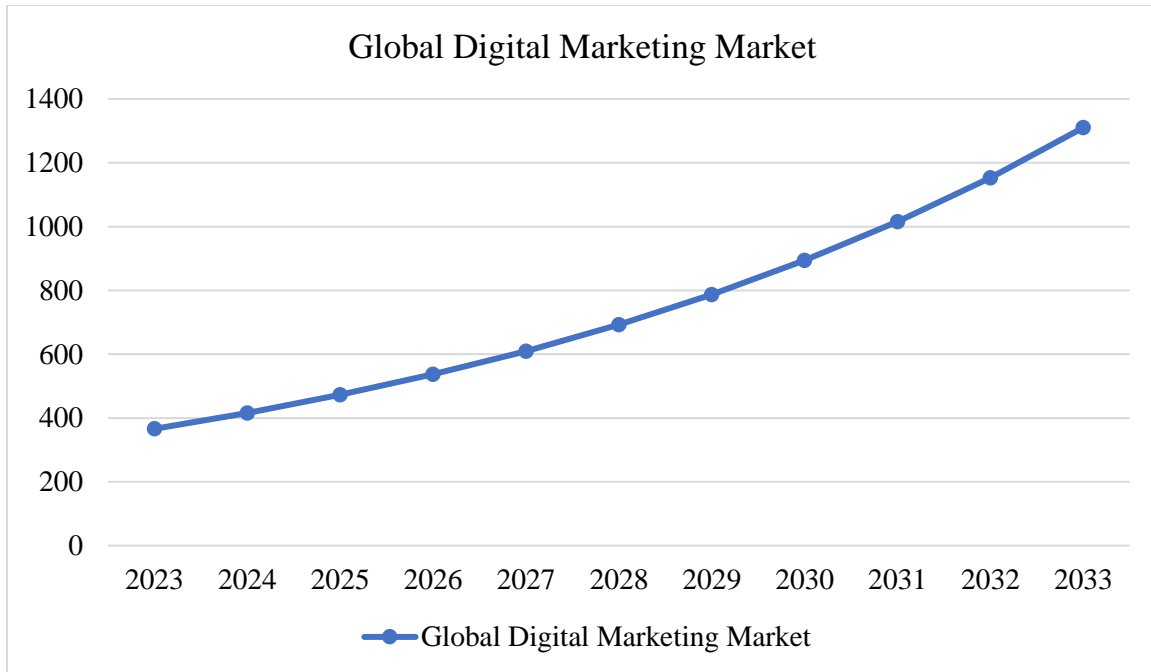


Figure 3.
Global digital marketing market (USD Billion).
Source: Compiled based on marketus data.

The digital marketing market volume was \$366.1 billion in 2023; by 2033, it is forecasted to grow to \$1310.3 billion. This corresponds to an overall increase of 257.8 % over the ten years. The highest annual growth rate is observed from 2031 to 2032 when the market grows from \$1015.4 billion to \$1153.5 billion. Such significant growth rates indicate the ongoing implementation of innovations in digital marketing and the increasing reliance of businesses on digital channels to achieve their marketing goals.

The significant growth in digital marketing in recent years indicates substantial changes in approaches to promoting goods and services in the global market. Implementing the latest technologies has allowed companies to expand their marketing capabilities and increase the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Digital marketing is becoming more integrated into overall business strategies, allowing for more precise targeting, personalised offers, and real-time performance analysis. The development of social media, mobile applications, and e-commerce contributes to the growing demand for digital marketing solutions, prompting companies to conduct detailed marketing research to understand consumer needs and behaviour better.

The increase in marketing research studies directly results from the heightened focus on digital marketing and the need for a more accurate market understanding. Comprehensive data analysis from digital marketing campaigns enables companies to assess the effectiveness of their strategies and identify new development opportunities. Increasing investments in marketing research contributes to improving data collection and analysis methods, which, in turn, enhances the quality of decision-making.

The continuous growth of the digital marketing market stimulates the development of new technologies and research tools. The most popular future technologies will be big data analytics and machine learning as they become integral to modern marketing strategies. Thus, the increase in marketing research studies reflects the global trend towards a scientific approach to marketing activities. This approach allows companies to respond more effectively to changes in the market environment and maintain their competitiveness.

6. Discussion

The study of the features of marketing research in the context of society's digital transformation has shown significant analytical tools, as confirmed by other scientists' research. The use of Big Data in the article by [25] demonstrates improved accuracy in predicting consumer trends, which correlates with our results. Our research supports Balvočiūtė's [26] idea about the importance of social media for monitoring consumer sentiments, allowing for quick responses to market changes. Compared to Prdic's [27] conclusions, which emphasise the flexibility of marketing strategies, the research confirms the need for an individual approach to each market segment. [28] points to the importance of digital infrastructure for automating data analysis, which is confirmed by the results on improving the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. According to [29], investments in analytical platforms are critically important for successful marketing research. Iqbal's [30] analysis highlights the importance of modern software for data analysis, supported by our results on the need for its integration into business processes. At the same time, Gülmez's [31] work emphasises the use of automated systems, prompting the consideration of the latest technologies for marketing research. Hery's [32] hypothesis regarding integrating digital tools into all aspects of marketing research is confirmed by the results. Simion's [33] idea about the effectiveness of online surveys and web analytics for collecting consumer data is based on the use of automated systems. Despite the high assessment of the effectiveness of digital tools, as noted in [34] research, ensuring consumer data privacy and ethical use remains critically important. Therefore, marketing research in the context of society's digital transformation is critically important, but the achievement methods require further research [35].

7. Conclusion

Thus, the study of the features of marketing research showed that implementing the latest technologies significantly increases the effectiveness and accuracy of marketing campaigns. It was found that big data allows companies to understand consumer behaviour better and predict market trends. Social media analytics allows real-time monitoring of consumer sentiments and preferences, allowing for quick responses to market changes. Using big data and automated analysis systems increases the efficiency of marketing campaigns, saving resources and time. The implementation of modern software and analytical platforms is critically important for the successful conduct of marketing research. From the analysis, it can be concluded that regional factors affect global GDP through the marketing research industry, but this influence is not decisive. The main factor influencing global GDP has become this industry's volume and trends of revenues.

Despite the significant advantages of digital tools in marketing research, numerous problems and global challenges require further consideration. One of the main problems is ensuring consumer data's confidentiality and ethical use, which is becoming increasingly relevant in the context of the constant growth of collected information volumes. This issue is critical in light of the latest regulatory acts and growing consumer concerns about protecting their data. Rapid adaptation to new technologies and data collection and analysis methods can be challenging for many companies, especially those that do not have sufficient technical and financial resources to implement these innovations. It is essential to consider the problem of digital inequality, where not all companies and regions have equal access to modern technologies and tools for marketing research, which can create significant barriers to effective business conduct.

Several managerial decisions need to be implemented to overcome existing challenges and ensure the maximum effectiveness of marketing research. First, companies should train and upgrade their employees' skills to use the latest technologies and tools effectively. Second, it is essential to develop and implement policies to ensure consumer data's confidentiality and ethical use, adhering to international standards and regulatory acts. Governments and international organisations should contribute to reducing digital inequality by investing in infrastructure and supporting small and medium-sized businesses in implementing the latest technologies. Companies should apply a comprehensive approach to marketing research, integrating traditional methodologies with modern digital tools to obtain the

most accurate and complete market and consumer data. This approach will ensure competitiveness and sustainable business development in the digital economy.

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