

MARKETING STRATEGIES AS PRIME MOVER ON MICRO ENTERPRISE SUSTAINABILITY

By:

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Abstract: *This study investigated the influence of marketing strategies on the sustainability of micro-enterprises among selected businesses in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. It specifically examined the roles of content marketing, social media marketing, and customer reviews and referrals in supporting business continuity, fostering customer loyalty, and enhancing long-term organizational performance. The research sought to determine the respondents' demographic profile, assess the extent of marketing strategy implementation, evaluate the level of micro-enterprise sustainability, and establish the significance of the relationship between marketing strategies and sustainability outcomes. A quantitative research design employing a descriptive-correlational approach was utilized. Data were collected from 100 respondents, consisting of business owners and employees from micro, small, and medium enterprises in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, through a structured survey questionnaire. Statistical tools, including frequency count, weighted mean, Pearson correlation, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and multiple regression analysis, were applied to ensure rigorous data interpretation. The findings revealed that respondents strongly agreed on the effectiveness of marketing strategies in promoting business sustainability, with customer reviews and referrals emerging as the most influential, followed by social media marketing and content marketing. Moreover, the overall level of micro-enterprise sustainability was assessed as high. Statistical analysis further confirmed a significant relationship between marketing strategies and sustainability, indicating that strategic marketing practices contribute substantially to market retention, customer engagement, and operational resilience. The study concludes that marketing strategies are critical determinants of micro-enterprise sustainability. It is therefore recommended that business owners and managers adopt innovative and digitally driven marketing approaches, with a strong emphasis on customer engagement and feedback mechanisms, to enhance competitiveness and ensure sustained growth within the local business environment.*

Keywords: *Marketing strategies, micro-enterprise sustainability, social media marketing, content marketing, customer reviews, business sustainability*

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INTRODUCTION

Sustainability has become a central concern in contemporary business strategy, driven by rapid shifts in consumer preferences, increasing regulatory demands, and heightened global awareness of environmental and social issues. Marketing, which has traditionally emphasized sales generation and market expansion, is now being reconceptualized as a strategic tool for advancing sustainable value propositions, communicating corporate responsibility, and strengthening long-term brand resilience. Recent studies suggest that when sustainability principles—such as green marketing, sustainable branding, and digital engagement—are effectively integrated into marketing strategies, they significantly enhance stakeholder trust, organizational performance, and long-term business viability (Boza, 2025).

Despite the recognized potential of sustainability-oriented marketing, many micro-enterprises continue to face difficulties in translating sustainability goals into measurable financial outcomes. Key challenges include limited financial and technological resources, inadequate stakeholder engagement, low consumer awareness of sustainable products, and difficulties in assessing sustainability impacts. These

constraints often reduce the effectiveness of marketing interventions and hinder the adoption of innovative practices. Consequently, sustainability initiatives may remain largely symbolic rather than operational, thereby weakening both environmental objectives and competitive positioning (Sudi, 2024).

Within the local context of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, micro and small business owners encounter similar constraints. Although Tagoloan is recognized as a rapidly developing municipality in Northern Mindanao with expanding commercial activity, many enterprises continue to rely on traditional marketing approaches, particularly word-of-mouth promotion. Limited access to digital platforms, insufficient marketing knowledge, and a lack of formal training in contemporary marketing practices restrict entrepreneurs' capacity to sustain operations and expand their market reach. As a result, some businesses experience declining customer engagement and inconsistent sales performance, which may lead to stagnation or closure. Understanding the role of marketing strategies in enhancing micro-enterprise sustainability is therefore essential for empowering local entrepreneurs and fostering community-level economic development.

In response to these challenges, this study aims to examine the influence of selected marketing strategies—namely content marketing, social media marketing, and customer reviews and referrals—on the sustainability of micro-enterprises. It seeks to evaluate how these strategies affect long-term business operations, customer retention, and overall performance. Additionally, the study explores the relationship between demographic characteristics—such as age, sex, type of business, and years of operation—and the extent of marketing strategy adoption, in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of how enterprise-specific factors shape marketing practices.

The primary objective of this research is to determine the extent to which marketing strategies serve as key drivers of micro-enterprise sustainability among small and medium enterprises in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. Specifically, it assesses the level of implementation of content marketing, social media marketing, and customer reviews and referrals, and evaluates their impact on customer retention, operational continuity, and sales performance. Furthermore, the study identifies the challenges faced by entrepreneurs in adopting modern and digital marketing approaches. Ultimately, it aims to propose evidence-based recommendations that can enhance long-term sustainability, strengthen competitive advantage, and support the growth of micro-enterprises within the local business environment.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically utilizing a descriptive-correlational approach. The quantitative method was deemed appropriate as the study aimed to collect numerical data and statistically examine the relationship between marketing strategies and micro-enterprise sustainability. The descriptive component was used to systematically present the demographic characteristics of the respondents and assess their level of perception regarding marketing strategies and sustainability practices. In contrast, the correlational component was applied to determine the existence and strength of the relationship between the identified variables without manipulating any conditions.

Data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire administered to selected business owners and employees in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. The gathered data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to measure the degree of association between marketing strategies and micro-enterprise sustainability, thereby ensuring objective and empirical interpretation of results.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, a municipality in Northern Mindanao recognized for its expanding industrial and commercial landscape. Tagoloan has emerged as a significant growth area within the province due to the presence of industrial establishments and increasing entrepreneurial activities. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2023), the municipality has

experienced continuous economic and population growth, creating a favorable environment for the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The locale was selected because many local enterprises continue to rely on traditional marketing practices, such as word-of-mouth and on-site promotions, while gradually transitioning to digital platforms (Department of Trade and Industry, 2023). Examining this setting provided valuable insights into how marketing strategies influence micro-enterprise sustainability within a developing local economy. The findings are expected to support local entrepreneurs in adopting innovative and sustainable marketing practices to achieve long-term growth.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study consisted of 100 individuals, including business owners and employees from retail stores, ready-to-wear (RTW), and service-oriented enterprises in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. These participants were purposively selected due to their direct involvement in business operations, marketing activities, and customer interactions.

Their experiences and insights were considered essential in evaluating how marketing strategies—particularly content marketing, social media marketing, and customer reviews and referrals—contribute to customer retention, market engagement, and long-term business sustainability.

Table of Respondents

Business Type	Business Owners	Employees	Total
Retail Stores	15	25	40
RTW	10	30	40
Service Stores	5	15	20
Total	30	70	100

Sampling Procedure

The study utilized purposive sampling to select respondents who possess relevant knowledge and experience in marketing and business operations. This technique ensured that participants were directly engaged in implementing marketing strategies and could provide reliable and meaningful data regarding their influence on micro-enterprise sustainability.

Selection criteria included active involvement in daily business activities and familiarity with marketing approaches such as social media marketing, content marketing, and customer referrals. This approach enhanced the credibility and relevance of the data collected.

Research Instrument

A structured and adapted survey questionnaire served as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed to measure the extent of implementation of marketing strategies—specifically content marketing, social media marketing, and customer reviews and referrals—as well as indicators of micro-enterprise sustainability, including customer retention and market stability.

The instrument was personally administered by the researchers to ensure a high response rate and to clarify any queries from respondents. This approach improved the accuracy and completeness of responses, thereby strengthening the reliability and validity of the collected data.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection followed a systematic and ethical process. Prior to data gathering, coordination with the Local Government Unit (LGU) and relevant business associations was conducted to secure approval. The questionnaire was pilot-tested among a small group of respondents outside the study area to assess clarity and reliability, and necessary revisions were made accordingly.

The finalized questionnaires were then distributed personally to respondents at their business establishments. Follow-ups and reminders were conducted to ensure timely retrieval. Upon collection, responses were carefully reviewed for completeness and consistency before data encoding and analysis. Confidentiality and ethical standards were strictly maintained throughout the process.

Scoring Procedure

A four-point Likert scale was used to quantify respondents' perceptions of marketing strategies and micro-enterprise sustainability:

Scale	Range	Description	Interpretation
4	3.26–4.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
3	2.51–3.25	Agree	Moderately Sustainable
2	1.76–2.50	Disagree	Sustainable
1	1.00–1.75	Strongly Disagree	Not Sustainable

Statistical Treatment

The study employed both descriptive and inferential statistical tools to analyze the data:

- Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution were used to describe the demographic profile of respondents.
- Weighted Arithmetic Mean was applied to determine the level of implementation of marketing strategies and the level of micro-enterprise sustainability.
- Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to identify significant differences in sustainability when respondents were grouped according to demographic variables such as age, sex, years in operation, and type of business.
- Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was utilized to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between marketing strategies and micro-enterprise sustainability.
- Multiple Regression Analysis was conducted to identify which marketing strategies significantly influence micro-enterprise sustainability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Age

Profile	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18 – 25	32	32.0
	26 – 30	52	52.0
	31 – 40	15	15.0
	40 above	1	1.0
	Total	100	100.0

The age distribution indicates that the majority of respondents are young adults, with 52% falling within the 26–30 age group and 32% within the 18–25 bracket, accounting for 84% of the total sample. This suggests that the study primarily reflects the perspectives of individuals in their early and active working years, who are often more adaptable, technologically inclined, and engaged in research participation (Nguyen, 2023; Alvarez, 2022).

Contrariwise, only 16% of respondents are aged 31 and above, indicating limited representation from older and more experienced individuals. This may constrain the diversity of insights, particularly in terms of long-term decision-making and professional experience (Singh, 2024).

Over-all, while the study captures perspectives across different age groups, the findings are largely influenced by younger respondents, and interpretations should consider the relatively lower participation of older cohorts.

The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Sex

Profile	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Female	68	68.0
	Male	32	32.0
	Total	100	100.0

The table presents the sex distribution of respondents, revealing that females comprise 68% of the sample, while males account for 32%. This indicates a clear predominance of female participants, suggesting that women were either more available or more inclined to participate in the study. Such a trend is consistent with prior research, which notes higher participation rates among females in survey-based studies (Martinez, 2022).

The higher proportion of female respondents may also reflect existing workforce patterns in certain sectors where women are more actively engaged. As emphasized by Lee (2023), gender composition can influence the interpretation of behavioral and organizational outcomes, as perceptions and experiences may vary by sex. Consequently, the findings of this study may be more reflective of female perspectives, particularly in areas related to decision-making, engagement, and business practices.

Despite the imbalance, the inclusion of male respondents (32%) provides a meaningful comparative perspective and ensures that the study does not exclude one group entirely. While a more balanced gender distribution is ideal, such disparities are common in empirical research and do not undermine the validity of the findings. Rather, as noted by Ochoa (2024), they call for careful contextual interpretation. Overall, the study reflects stronger female representation while still incorporating male viewpoints, allowing for a broader, though not fully balanced, understanding of the research problem.

The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Length of Years in the Industry

Profile	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Length of years in the industry	Less than 1 year	15	15.00
	1-3	30	30.00
	4-7	25	25.00
	8-10	20	20.00
	More than 10 years	10	10.00
	Total	100	100%

The table presents the distribution of respondents according to their length of experience in the industry (N = 100). The data indicate a concentration in the early to mid-career stages, with 30% having 1–3 years of experience, followed by 25% with 4–7 years, and 20% with 8–10 years. A smaller proportion

(15%) reported less than one year of experience, while only 10% had more than ten years, making them the least represented group.

This pattern reflects a skew toward shorter industry tenure, suggesting that the sample is largely composed of relatively new entrants rather than highly experienced professionals. The limited representation of respondents with over a decade of experience may affect the depth of long-term insights captured in the study. As noted by Kwon and Rupp (2023), contemporary workforce trends often show a shift toward younger and less tenured employees due to increased labor mobility and evolving employment structures. This is consistent with the finding that 75% of respondents have seven years or less of experience.

Furthermore, the predominance of early- to mid-career individuals suggests that many respondents are still developing their expertise and refining business strategies. While this may indicate greater adaptability and openness to innovation—particularly in adopting modern marketing approaches such as digital platforms—it may also imply limited access to extensive industry knowledge. As highlighted by Allen, Bryant, and Vardaman (2022), lower levels of long-term experience can pose challenges in knowledge retention and strategic continuity. Thus, the findings should be interpreted with consideration of the respondents’ relatively limited tenure in the industry.

The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in terms Type of Business

Profile	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Type of Business	Retail Stores	50	50.00
	RTW	30	30.00
	Service Stores	20	20.00
	Total	100	100%

The table presents the distribution of respondents by type of business, showing that 50% are engaged in retail stores, 30% in ready-to-wear (RTW), and 20% in service-oriented enterprises. This indicates a strong concentration among micro and small-scale businesses, which collectively comprise 80% of the sample. The distribution reflects the broader structure of the business sector, where smaller enterprises dominate due to lower capital requirements and ease of entry. This is consistent with reports from the World Bank (2023), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2022), and the Department of Trade and Industry (2023), all of which highlight the prevalence of micro and small enterprises, particularly in developing economies like the Philippines.

From an analytical perspective, the predominance of micro and small enterprises suggests that the findings largely represent businesses operating with limited resources, informal structures, and a strong emphasis on day-to-day operations. As noted by Beck and Demirgüç-Kunt (2023), smaller firms tend to be financially constrained yet highly adaptable, which may influence their approaches to planning, budgeting, and decision-making. In contrast, the relatively smaller proportion of service enterprises (20%) indicates that perspectives related to more structured operations and long-term strategic growth may be less emphasized. Storey (2022) similarly argues that firm size significantly shapes managerial priorities and strategic orientation.

Overall, the dominance of retail and RTW businesses implies that the study primarily captures the realities of resource-constrained enterprises that often rely on cost-effective marketing strategies such as social media and word-of-mouth promotion. While this enhances the relevance of the findings for micro and small businesses, it also highlights the need for targeted interventions—such as financial support, capacity-building programs, and policy initiatives—to strengthen their long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

The Level of the Respondent's Perception on Marketing Strategies in terms of Content marketing

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Helpful and informative content attracts me to a business, as it demonstrates expertise, adds value, and makes me more confident in their products or services.	3.53	0.59	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Educational posts increase my trust in a brand, as they demonstrate knowledge, expertise, and a genuine commitment to informing and supporting customers.	3.41	0.55	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Consistent content keeps the brand top of mind, as regular updates reinforce awareness and strengthen my connection with it.	3.44	0.56	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Video tutorials increase my interest in products, as they provide clear demonstrations, show practical use, and help me understand their benefits more effectively.	3.39	0.60	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I prefer brands that offer informative posts, as they provide valuable insights, help me make informed decisions, and demonstrate the brand's expertise and credibility	3.54	0.58	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I trust businesses that share customer success stories, as real-life experiences demonstrate reliability, quality, and the positive impact of their products or services.	3.34	0.64	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Relevant and valuable content influences my repeat purchases, as it keeps me engaged, informed, and confident in choosing the brand again	3.32	0.69	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I save or share business content that is helpful to me, as it provides useful information and allows me to share valuable resources with others.	3.36	0.69	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I believe content marketing strengthens a brand's identity, as consistent and valuable messaging builds recognition, trust, and a strong connection with customers.	3.39	0.62	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I am more loyal to brands that provide useful information, as their guidance, insights, and helpful content demonstrate care, reliability, and expertise.	3.38	0.60	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
AVERAGE MEAN	3.41	0.61	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable

This table presents the overall assessment of marketing strategies in terms of content marketing, yielding a mean score of 3.41 and a standard deviation of 0.61, which is interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and described as *Highly Sustainable*. This result indicates that respondents firmly recognize the role of content marketing in promoting business sustainability. The consistently high ratings across all indicators suggest that customers place significant value on informative posts, educational materials, video tutorials, and customer success stories. Such findings imply that content marketing is not merely a promotional tool but a strategic approach that fosters long-term customer engagement and brand development. As emphasized

by Kotler (2022), the delivery of valuable and consistent content enhances customer trust and contributes to a sustainable competitive advantage.

Among the indicators, the highest mean was observed in the statement “I prefer brands that offer informative posts” (M = 3.54, SD = 0.58), followed closely by “Helpful and informative content attracts me to a business” (M = 3.53, SD = 0.59), both interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and *Highly Sustainable*. These results underscore the importance of relevance and usefulness in content, as respondents demonstrate a strong inclination toward brands that provide meaningful information. Informative content not only captures attention but also strengthens perceptions of credibility, expertise, and reliability. In line with this, Pulizzi (2023) highlighted that value-driven and educational content plays a crucial role in building customer loyalty and sustaining long-term relationships.

However, while content marketing is highly regarded, its direct influence on repurchase decisions appears to be comparatively moderate. This suggests that although content enhances brand affinity and trust, other critical factors—such as product quality, pricing, and overall customer experience—continue to shape repeat purchasing behavior. Chaffey (2023) noted that the integration of personalized and targeted content strategies can further strengthen customer retention and repeat purchase intentions.

In general, the findings affirm that content marketing significantly contributes to business sustainability. Respondents strongly agree that strategies centered on informative and engaging content enhance customer trust, reinforce brand credibility, and support long-term relationships. Although its impact on repurchasing is influenced by additional variables, content marketing remains a vital and effective strategy for sustaining customer engagement and fostering the growth of micro-enterprises.

The Level of the Respondent's Perception on Marketing Strategies in terms of Social Media Marketing

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
I often discover new businesses through social media, as platforms provide exposure to trending products, promotions, and recommendations from peers.	3.44	0.70	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
It looks like your message is empty. Could you provide the statement or sentence you want me to enhance	3.35	0.63	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I actively engage with brands through comments, likes, and reactions, as it allows me to connect, share feedback, and stay updated on their products or services.	3.50	0.59	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
A fast response from a business on social media increases my trust, as it shows attentiveness, reliability, and commitment to customer satisfaction.	3.50	0.56	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I prefer brands that are active on platforms like Facebook and TikTok, as their presence and engagement demonstrate accessibility, responsiveness, and relevance.	3.43	0.56	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I frequently share posts from brands I like, as it allows me to support them and recommend their products or services to my network.	3.36	0.63	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I follow brands to access exclusive deals and promotions, as it helps me stay informed and take advantage of special offers.	3.36	0.59	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable

A business’s social media presence influences my perception of its sustainability, as consistent activity and engagement suggest stability, credibility, and long-term commitment.	3.36	0.63	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I engage more with brands that post regularly, as frequent updates keep me informed, interested, and connected to their products or services.	3.29	0.64	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I believe that consistent social media content builds customer loyalty, as regular updates foster engagement, trust, and a stronger connection with the brand.	3.37	0.72	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Average Mean	3.40	0.62	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable

This table presents the overall assessment of marketing strategies in terms of social media marketing, yielding a mean score of 3.40 with a standard deviation of 0.62, interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and described as *Highly Sustainable*. This finding indicates that respondents strongly recognize social media marketing as a vital driver of business sustainability. The consistently high ratings across indicators suggest that customer engagement, responsiveness, and sustained online presence play crucial roles in shaping consumer perceptions and strengthening brand equity. These results underscore the importance of social media platforms in enhancing brand awareness, fostering trust, and maintaining long-term customer relationships. As emphasized by Tuten (2022), interactive social media communication significantly improves customer engagement and contributes to sustainable brand development.

The highest mean scores were observed in the statements “I actively engage with brands through comments, likes, and reactions” (M = 3.50, SD = 0.59) and “A fast response from a business on social media increases my trust” (M = 3.50, SD = 0.56), both interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and *Highly Sustainable*. These findings highlight the importance of two-way communication and responsiveness in social media marketing. Customers demonstrate strong preference for brands that actively interact and respond promptly, as such behavior signals attentiveness, reliability, and customer-centric service. In this regard, Ryan (2023) emphasized that timely engagement on social media platforms significantly enhances consumer trust, satisfaction, and overall brand perception.

On the other hand, the lowest mean was recorded in “I engage more with brands that post regularly” (M = 3.29, SD = 0.64), also interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and *Highly Sustainable*. Although it obtained the lowest rating among indicators, the result still reflects a strong level of agreement. The slightly higher variability suggests that posting frequency alone is not sufficient to drive engagement. This implies that content quality, relevance, and creativity may be more influential than mere consistency in posting. Supporting this, Kingsnorth (2022) noted that meaningful and strategically designed content is more effective in sustaining audience interest and long-term engagement than frequency alone.

Overall, Table 8 indicates that respondents strongly agree that social media marketing significantly contributes to business sustainability. The findings emphasize that maintaining an active and responsive online presence is essential in building trust, enhancing brand reputation, and strengthening customer relationships. Social media platforms serve as critical tools for direct communication, enabling businesses to foster engagement, increase visibility, and support long-term sustainability.

The Level of the Respondent's Perception on Marketing Strategies in terms of Customer Reviews and Referral

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
I carefully read customer reviews before deciding to purchase from a business, as they help me assess product quality, service reliability, and overall customer satisfaction.	3.73	0.47	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Positive referrals strongly increase my level of trust in a business, as recommendations from others make the products or services seem more reliable and credible.	3.70	0.48	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Reviews that include photos help me make better purchasing decisions, as they provide clear and realistic evidence of the product's quality and actual appearance.	3.59	0.49	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I rely more on referrals from peers than on advertisements, as personal recommendations feel more trustworthy and credible.	3.38	0.55	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Negative reviews discourage me from purchasing, as they raise concerns about product quality, service reliability, and overall customer experience.	3.04	0.84	Strongly Agree	Moderately Sustainable
Verified reviews increase a business's credibility, as they assure me that the feedback comes from real and trustworthy customers.	3.58	0.50	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I actively refer businesses that provide positive and satisfying experiences, as I am confident recommending them to others.	3.55	0.52	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
The quantity of reviews affects my level of trust, as a larger number of reviews makes a business appear more established and reliable.	3.41	0.57	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
I trust word of mouth more than paid advertisements, as genuine experiences shared by others feel more authentic and reliable.	3.62	0.56	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
AVERAGE MEAN	3.51	0.56	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable

This table presents the overall assessment of marketing strategies in terms of customer reviews and referrals, yielding a mean score of 3.51 with a standard deviation of 0.56, interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and described as *Highly Sustainable*. This indicates that respondents strongly recognize customer reviews and referrals as critical determinants of business sustainability. The consistently high ratings across most indicators highlight the strong influence of social proof in consumer decision-making processes. Respondents demonstrate a clear tendency to rely on peer feedback, verified online reviews, and word-of-mouth recommendations when evaluating products and services. In this context, Chen (2023) emphasized that online reviews significantly shape purchase intentions and enhance perceived brand credibility.

The highest mean was recorded in the statement “I carefully read customer reviews before deciding to purchase” (M = 3.73, SD = 0.47), followed closely by “Positive referrals strongly increase my level of trust in a business” (M = 3.70, SD = 0.48), both interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and *Highly Sustainable*. These findings suggest that respondents place strong importance on authentic customer experiences as a foundation for purchasing decisions. Verified reviews, especially those supported by detailed feedback or visual evidence, enhance consumer confidence and reduce perceived risk. Such transparency strengthens

trust and contributes to long-term customer loyalty. Supporting this, Erkan (2022) noted that electronic word-of-mouth plays a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes and trust formation.

On the other hand, the lowest mean was observed in the statement “Negative reviews discourage me from purchasing” (M = 3.04, SD = 0.84), interpreted as *Agree* and *Moderately Sustainable*. Although it received the lowest rating among indicators, it still indicates that negative feedback has an influence on consumer behavior. The relatively higher standard deviation suggests variability in respondents’ perceptions, implying that the impact of negative reviews may depend on factors such as reviewer credibility, context, or the availability of counterbalancing positive feedback. In this regard, Lim (2024) highlighted that effective reputation management and prompt, transparent responses to complaints can mitigate the adverse effects of negative reviews and help maintain business credibility.

Overall, Table 9 demonstrates that customer reviews and referrals play a vital role in promoting business sustainability, with an overall mean of 3.51. The findings indicate that respondents strongly depend on social proof mechanisms such as peer evaluations and word-of-mouth recommendations in shaping their purchasing decisions. Positive customer feedback enhances trust, strengthens brand reputation, and encourages long-term loyalty, while negative reviews, although influential, vary in impact depending on context. These results underscore the importance of actively managing online reputation and engaging with customer feedback as essential strategies for sustaining micro-enterprise growth and competitiveness.

The Level of Micro Enterprise Sustainability

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
The business consistently adapts its strategies to evolving market trends and environmental conditions, demonstrating agility, resilience, and a commitment to long-term success.	3.43	0.61	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
The resources supporting our market position maintain their value even as the industry environment changes, highlighting their strategic strength and long-term sustainability.	3.35	0.54	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
We maintain a robust pipeline of innovations that enables us to consistently refresh and enhance our product or service offerings, ensuring ongoing relevance and competitiveness.	3.34	0.52	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
We actively use customer feedback to enhance our business sustainability practices, ensuring that our operations are more responsible, efficient, and aligned with stakeholder expectations.	3.36	0.59	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Our customers perceive our brand as markedly superior to our closest competitors, reflecting our strong reputation, quality offerings, and exceptional value in the market.	3.51	0.52	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
We have a highly efficient distribution network and channel access that is difficult for new entrants to replicate, giving us a strong competitive advantage and reliable market reach.	3.31	0.65	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable

Our pricing strategy is crafted to support long term market retention rather than pursuing short-term sales volume, ensuring sustainable growth and lasting customer loyalty.	3.43	0.54	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
The business continuously innovates its products and services to stay relevant, meet evolving customer needs, and maintain a competitive edge in the market.	3.40	0.51	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Proactively identifying and addressing shifting customer needs before they become market-wide trends strengthens our brand identity, demonstrating foresight, responsiveness, and a deep commitment to customer satisfaction.	3.33	0.62	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
Our social responsibility initiatives enhance our reputation and attract customers, as they demonstrate our commitment to ethical practices, community well-being, and positive social impact	3.46	0.52	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable
AVERAGE MEAN	3.39	0.56	Strongly Agree	Highly Sustainable

This table presents the overall assessment of micro-enterprise sustainability, yielding a mean score of 3.39 with a standard deviation of 0.56, interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and described as *Highly Sustainable*. This finding indicates that respondents strongly perceive their micro-enterprises as practicing sustainability across strategic, operational, and competitive dimensions. The consistently high ratings across all indicators suggest that core elements such as adaptability, innovation, customer responsiveness, and social responsibility are deeply embedded in business operations. This reflects a clear orientation toward long-term growth and resilience rather than short-term profitability. As emphasized by Elkington (2022), sustainable enterprises are characterized by the integration of economic performance, social responsibility, and strategic adaptability to ensure enduring success.

The highest mean was recorded in the statement “Our customers perceive our brand as markedly superior to our closest competitors” (M = 3.51, SD = 0.52), followed by “Our social responsibility initiatives enhance our reputation and attract customers” (M = 3.46, SD = 0.52), and “The business consistently adapts its strategies to evolving market trends” (M = 3.43, SD = 0.61), all interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and *Highly Sustainable*. These results highlight that competitive positioning, ethical engagement, and strategic adaptability are key drivers of sustainability. A strong brand image, combined with socially responsible initiatives and responsiveness to market changes, enhances customer trust and reinforces long-term viability. Supporting this, Bansal and Des Jardine (2022) noted that strategic adaptability and stakeholder-oriented practices significantly strengthen organizational resilience and competitive advantage.

On the other hand, the lowest mean was observed in the statement “We have a highly efficient distribution network and channel access that is difficult for new entrants to replicate” (M = 3.31, SD = 0.65), although still interpreted as *Strongly Agree* and *Highly Sustainable*. While this indicates general agreement, the relatively lower rating and higher standard deviation suggest variations in respondents’ perceptions of logistical efficiency and distribution strength. This implies that, compared to other sustainability dimensions, operational and supply chain capabilities may require further enhancement. In this regard, Sharma (2023) emphasized that improving supply chain efficiency and distribution systems is essential for strengthening micro-enterprise resilience and ensuring long-term sustainability.

Overall, Table 10 demonstrates that respondents perceive their micro-enterprises as highly sustainable, with strong agreement across all indicators. The findings reveal that sustainability is primarily

driven by a combination of brand strength, social responsibility, and strategic adaptability, which collectively support competitive advantage and long-term growth. While operational efficiency, particularly in distribution systems, shows some variability, it remains positively rated. These results affirm that micro-enterprises integrate ethical, strategic, and operational practices to sustain competitiveness and ensure long-term viability in a dynamic business environment.

The Significant Difference between the Marketing Strategies and Micro enterprise Sustainability when respondents are grouped together according to their age, sex, Length of years in the industry and Type of business?

Category	Mean	F-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Age	1.32	.001	.974	Reject Ho ₁	Not Significant
Sex	1.85	1.093	.356	Reject Ho ₁	Not Significant
Length of years in the industry	1.48	1.267	.287	Reject Ho ₁	Not Significant
Type of business	1.62	1.954	.146	Reject Ho ₁	Not Significant

This table presents the test of significant differences between marketing strategies and micro-enterprise sustainability when respondents are grouped according to age, sex, length of years in the industry, and type of business. The results consistently show that all computed p-values are greater than the 0.05 level of significance, indicating that the null hypothesis (Ho₁) is rejected across all variables and that no significant differences exist among the grouped respondents. This suggests that the effectiveness of marketing strategies in contributing to micro-enterprise sustainability is generally consistent regardless of demographic or business profile characteristics.

In terms of age, the mean value is 1.32 with an F-value of 0.001 and a p-value of 0.974, interpreted as not significant. This indicates that age does not significantly influence how marketing strategies relate to business sustainability. Similarly, sex obtained a mean of 1.85, an F-value of 1.093, and a p-value of 0.356, also interpreted as not significant. This implies that both male and female respondents perceive and apply marketing strategies in a comparable manner in relation to sustaining their enterprises.

For length of years in the industry, the mean is 1.48 with an F-value of 1.267 and a p-value of 0.287. The result remains not significant, suggesting that both newly established and long-operating businesses can effectively utilize marketing strategies to support sustainability. This supports the view of Stokes (2025), who emphasized that entrepreneurial success is driven more by innovation and marketing capability than by length of experience alone.

Regarding type of business, the mean value is 1.62 with an F-value of 1.954 and a p-value of 0.146, still above the threshold of significance. This indicates that business type does not significantly affect the relationship between marketing strategies and sustainability outcomes. In line with Porter (2025), sustainable competitive advantage is achieved through effective strategic positioning and execution of marketing practices rather than industry classification alone.

Although the results are statistically not significant, the observed variations may still reflect differences in perspectives, decision-making roles, and levels of involvement in marketing implementation. As noted by Kotler (2022), organizational roles and responsibilities can influence how marketing strategies are perceived and applied within a business context.

Overall, the findings indicate that demographic and business profile variables do not significantly affect the relationship between marketing strategies and micro-enterprise sustainability. This suggests that marketing strategies remain universally applicable and effective across different age groups, sexes, levels

of experience, and types of business. It further reinforces the idea that strategic marketing implementation plays a more decisive role in ensuring sustainability than individual or organizational characteristics.

Test of the Significant Relationship between Marketing Strategies and Micro-Enterprise Sustainability

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	P value	Decision	Interpretation
Marketing Strategies and Micro Enterprise Sustainability	.692*	0.000	Reject H02	Significant

***Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

The above table presents the test of the significant relationship between marketing strategies and micro-enterprise sustainability. The results reveal a correlation coefficient of 0.692 with a p-value of 0.000, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho2). This finding is interpreted as statistically significant, indicating a meaningful and robust relationship between the two variables. The correlation coefficient suggests a strong positive relationship, implying that improvements in marketing strategies are associated with higher levels of micro-enterprise sustainability.

The significance level of 0.000, which is lower than the 0.05 threshold, confirms that the relationship is not due to random variation but reflects a genuine association between the variables. This implies that marketing strategies play a crucial role in influencing sustainability outcomes among micro-enterprises. Specifically, strategies such as content marketing, social media engagement, and customer reviews and referrals contribute substantially to strengthening business performance and long-term viability. As emphasized by Kotler (2022), strategic marketing initiatives are essential in driving sustainable growth and maintaining competitive advantage in dynamic markets.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that marketing strategies function not merely as promotional activities but as strategic tools that shape long-term business resilience. The strong correlation of 0.692 indicates that a considerable portion of sustainability outcomes can be linked to the effectiveness of marketing practices. Micro-enterprises that consistently apply customer-centered and value-driven marketing approaches are more likely to build stronger customer relationships, enhance brand equity, and achieve sustained operational success. Supporting this, Tuten (2022) noted that integrated marketing communications significantly improve customer loyalty, brand trust, and organizational stability over time. Overall, the results confirm a strong and significant positive relationship between marketing strategies and micro-enterprise sustainability. This means that as micro-enterprises strengthen and effectively implement their marketing strategies, their level of sustainability also improves. The findings emphasize that marketing strategies contribute not only to product or service promotion but also to long-term business growth and resilience. Consequently, businesses that prioritize strategic and customer-focused marketing practices are better positioned to achieve sustained performance and competitive advantage. Therefore, investing in effective marketing strategies is essential for micro-enterprises aiming for long-term sustainability and success.

The Test of Regression among the Marketing Strategies Highly Influence Micro Enterprise Sustainability

Unstandardized	Standardized		t-value	P-value	Interpretation
	(B)	(β)			
(Constant)	.671	.301	2.231	.028	----
Content Significant Marketing	.222	.104	2.123	.036	Significant
Social Media Marketing Customer	.485	.096	5.059	.000	Significant Not
Reviews	and.087	0.87	.996	.322	Significant

References

Model Summary: SR² = 0.557; Adjusted R² = 0.543; F-value = 40.224 p-value = 0.000 (Reject H04): Interpretation = Significant

The table presents the results of the regression analysis examining the influence of marketing strategies on micro-enterprise sustainability. The model summary reveals an R² value of 0.557 and an Adjusted R² of 0.543, with an F-value of 40.224 and a p-value of 0.000. These results lead to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H04) and indicate that the regression model is statistically significant. This implies that approximately 55.7% of the variation in micro-enterprise sustainability is explained by the combined influence of content marketing, social media marketing, and customer reviews and referrals. The significant F-value further confirms that the model provides a strong fit for predicting sustainability outcomes, highlighting the overall importance of marketing strategies in shaping micro-enterprise performance.

In terms of individual predictors, Content Marketing yielded a regression coefficient (B) of 0.222, a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.104, a t-value of 2.123, and a p-value of 0.036, indicating statistical significance. This suggests that improvements in content marketing practices—such as informative posts, educational materials, and storytelling—positively contribute to micro-enterprise sustainability. Likewise, Social Media Marketing emerged as the strongest predictor, with B = 0.485, β = 0.096, t = 5.059, and p = 0.000, also statistically significant. This finding highlights that active engagement, responsiveness, and consistent online presence significantly enhance sustainability outcomes. It underscores the critical role of social media platforms as dynamic tools for communication, engagement, and long-term business development. Supporting this, Kotler (2022) emphasized that integrated digital marketing strategies significantly improve organizational resilience, visibility, and market competitiveness.

In contrast, Customer Reviews and References obtained a coefficient (B) of 0.087, β = 0.087, t = 0.996, and p = 0.322, indicating that it is not statistically significant. This suggests that while customer feedback, reviews, and referrals are important for building trust and credibility, they do not independently predict micro-enterprise sustainability when compared to more proactive marketing strategies. The results imply that passive forms of marketing influence are less impactful than direct and strategic engagement initiatives such as content creation and social media interaction. In line with this, Tuten (2022) noted that active, interactive, and value-driven marketing approaches have a stronger and more sustained effect on long-term business performance than reliance on user-generated feedback alone.

Overall, the regression analysis demonstrates that marketing strategies collectively play a significant role in explaining micro-enterprise sustainability, accounting for 55.7% of its variation. Among the predictors, social media marketing has the most substantial influence, followed by content marketing, while customer reviews and referrals show no significant predictive effect. These findings highlight that

proactive, customer-engaging, and digitally driven strategies are more effective in ensuring sustainability than passive feedback mechanisms. Therefore, micro-enterprises should prioritize strengthening content creation and social media engagement to enhance long-term growth, competitiveness, and sustainability.

FINDINGS

The study shows that most respondents are young adults, mainly aged 26–30, followed by 18–25. Most are female, making up more than two-thirds of the sample. This suggests that micro-enterprises in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental are largely owned by young women. Most respondents are also new in business, with 1–7 years of experience, meaning many are still developing their skills and knowledge. Experience helps improve planning and decision-making over time. The type of business also affects marketing strategies—service businesses focus more on customer interaction, while product-based businesses focus more on promotions and content. Overall, both experience and business type influence how marketing is done and how businesses grow.

Respondents strongly agree that marketing strategies are important. Content marketing, such as informative posts and customer stories, is seen as helpful in building trust and supporting business success. Social media marketing is also highly valued because it helps businesses connect with customers, respond quickly, and maintain communication. Customer reviews and referrals are also important, but they have a slightly smaller impact compared to content and social media marketing. Overall, marketing strategies are seen as key tools for increasing visibility, trust, and business growth.

The study also shows that micro-enterprises are generally viewed as sustainable. They are seen as flexible, innovative, and responsive to customer needs and market changes. Important factors like social responsibility, competitiveness, and pricing strategies received high ratings. Although distribution efficiency scored slightly lower, it is still considered strong. This shows that businesses are working toward long-term sustainability.

The results also show no significant differences in how marketing strategies affect sustainability when grouped by age, sex, experience, or type of business. This means these factors do not strongly affect outcomes. Marketing works in similar ways regardless of who owns the business or what type it is. Both new and experienced owners benefit equally, showing that success depends more on how strategies are applied rather than experience or demographics.

Overall, the study finds a strong and significant relationship between marketing strategies and business sustainability. Better marketing leads to better sustainability. Social media marketing and content marketing are the most important factors, while customer reviews have less influence. This shows that active and planned marketing efforts are more effective than passive feedback.

Lastly, micro-enterprises use marketing strategies effectively to improve trust, loyalty, and brand identity. They also show adaptability and responsibility in their operations. The study confirms that strong marketing practices, combined with good business management, are essential for long-term success and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that marketing strategies play a vital role in ensuring the sustainability of micro-enterprises. The findings highlight that well-implemented marketing practices, particularly content marketing and social media engagement, significantly enhance long-term business viability and strengthen customer trust. Micro-enterprises that consistently provide informative, relevant, and engaging content are more likely to build a strong brand identity and develop lasting customer loyalty. In this sense, marketing strategies go beyond promotion; they function as essential tools for building resilience, competitiveness, and sustained growth.

Content marketing emerged as a key factor in supporting micro-enterprise sustainability. By delivering educational, informative, and value-driven content, businesses are able to increase customer confidence and demonstrate credibility in their field. This continuous provision of useful information helps

differentiate businesses from competitors and reinforces their expertise in the market. As a result, customers are more informed, more engaged, and more likely to return for repeat purchases. The study therefore affirms that content marketing is a major driver of sustained business performance.

Social media marketing also plays a central role in micro-enterprise sustainability. Active engagement, prompt responses, and consistent posting on platforms such as Facebook and TikTok positively influence customer perception and strengthen business credibility. Social media provides micro-enterprises with the opportunity to reach wider audiences, interact directly with customers, and receive immediate feedback. This real-time interaction enhances relationships and improves visibility, making social media integration essential for long-term sustainability.

In contrast, customer reviews and references, while still important for establishing trust, were found to be less predictive of sustainability compared to content and social media marketing. This suggests that passive forms of feedback are valuable but not as powerful as proactive and strategic marketing efforts in achieving long-term business outcomes. Therefore, micro-enterprises should place greater emphasis on producing engaging content and maintaining active social media presence to maximize sustainability.

Overall, the study concludes that marketing strategies are a key driver of micro-enterprise sustainability. The effective use of content marketing and social media engagement contributes to stronger customer loyalty, improved brand equity, and sustained competitive advantage. Micro-enterprises that integrate innovative, customer-focused, and socially responsible marketing practices are better positioned to succeed in a dynamic and competitive market environment. Ultimately, strategic marketing implementation is essential in ensuring the long-term resilience and continued success of micro-enterprises.

RECOMMENDATION

- Business owners and entrepreneurs are encouraged to prioritize strategic marketing as a key driver of micro-enterprise sustainability. Investment in content marketing should be strengthened through the creation of informative, relevant, and value-driven materials that educate and engage customers effectively.
- Maintaining active engagement on social media platforms is essential for increasing brand visibility, building customer trust, and strengthening loyalty. In addition, business owners are encouraged to integrate sustainability practices such as ethical sourcing, social responsibility initiatives, and innovation in product or service development alongside their marketing strategies.
- Regular monitoring of customer feedback and market trends is important for guiding timely adjustments in business strategies. This enables micro-enterprises to remain competitive, responsive, and resilient in a dynamic market environment.
- Marketing managers and practitioners should focus on designing integrated marketing strategies that align with the sustainability goals of micro-enterprises. Utilizing tools such as social media platforms, content marketing, and customer engagement strategies can significantly enhance brand awareness and credibility.
- Establishing clear, measurable objectives, consistently tracking campaign performance, and optimizing strategies through data analytics are essential practices to maximize marketing effectiveness and long-term impact.
- Marketing professionals should work closely with business owners to ensure that all campaigns reflect the enterprise's vision, values, and sustainability objectives. The use of innovative approaches, combined with consistency in communication, will help strengthen market positioning and long-term competitiveness.
- Students, particularly those in business, marketing, and entrepreneurship programs, should recognize the importance of marketing strategies in sustaining micro-enterprises and supporting business growth.
- They are encouraged to develop practical competencies in content creation, social media management, and customer engagement. Applying theoretical knowledge through internships,

business simulations, or real-life projects can enhance their understanding of how marketing contributes to sustainability.

- Students should also stay updated with emerging trends in digital marketing and sustainability practices. Developing skills in strategic thinking, adaptability, and innovation will better prepare them for future roles in business and entrepreneurship.
- Future researchers are encouraged to further explore the relationship between specific marketing strategies and different dimensions of micro-enterprise sustainability. Studies may focus on the long-term effects of digital marketing, customer engagement, and feedback systems on business performance.
- Expanding research to include various industries, geographical areas, and business sizes may provide more comprehensive and generalizable findings. Researchers are also encouraged to incorporate qualitative methods to gain deeper insights into the experiences and perspectives of business owners, employees, and customers.
- The community and local economy can greatly benefit when micro-enterprises adopt effective marketing strategies and sustainable business practices. Promoting digital marketing, content creation, and customer engagement can enhance the competitiveness of local businesses.
- Communities and institutions can further support entrepreneurship through training programs, mentorship opportunities, and improved access to digital tools and technology. Such support systems can help businesses grow, generate employment, and improve livelihoods.
- Coordinated efforts among entrepreneurs, consumers, and institutions can foster a continuous cycle of growth, sustainability, and economic development that strengthens both micro-enterprises and the wider community.

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