

Adoption of Social Media for Products Marketing in Algerian Traditional and Handicraft Firms: Evidence from Setif Province

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Abstract

Social media provides opportunities for traditional and handicraft industries to promote products and stimulate sales. Therefore, this study investigates the extent of social media adoption for product marketing among a sample of Algerian traditional and handicraft industries. For that, a questionnaire was administered to 123 randomly selected industries in Setif province. The results revealed moderate social media use for product marketing, along with low awareness of its benefits. The level of usage is strongly associated with awareness but was negligibly affected by age. Experience with social media did not predict usage for marketing. The findings suggest that this sector can further capitalise on social media by increasing managers' awareness of its advantages and developing strategies to enhance its adoption. Further research should identify specific actions that traditional and handicraft firms can take to fully leverage social media for product promotion and sales growth.

Introduction

The emergence of social media and digital marketing platforms represents a seismic shift for businesses across all sectors (Dwivedi et al., 2021, p. 2), providing new opportunities to reach customers and promote their products and services (Appel, 2020, p. 85). However, prior studies indicate that traditional handicraft companies have often lagged in adopting and leveraging these technologies (e.g., Jalil et al., 2022, p. 55; Vaculčíková et al., 2020, p. 8). This paper examines the integration of social media marketing among handicraft businesses in Algeria, with a focus on Setif province.

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Algeria's handicraft sector holds rich cultural and economic significance. However, these artisanal companies now face rising competition and pressure to establish an online presence (Guettafi & Chaa, 2018; Abdeldjebar & Hadji, 2016). Academic literature highlights that small businesses frequently struggle with digital transformation (Yuen & Baskaran, 2023, p. 438). Therefore, assessing social media adoption can provide meaningful insights into the marketing capabilities and digital readiness of Setif's handicraft industry.

This study is based on a survey questionnaire to collect data from handicraft business managers in Setif about the current usage of social media marketing among these companies, along with factors driving or inhibiting the adoption. The findings intend to provide insight for public and private stakeholders on strategies and interventions that could help handicraft businesses in Setif optimise the usage of social media marketing techniques. With appropriate support, it is hoped that traditional artisanal industries can bolster their digital proficiency to ensure continuity and expansion by leveraging online promotional opportunities.

This paper is structured as follows. The second section provides an overview of marketing in Algerian traditional and handicraft industries, while the third section reviews the relevant literature. Then, the fourth section outlines the methodology, and the fifth section presents and discusses the key findings, interprets these findings, and explores the practical implications. Finally, the conclusion summarises the overall goals and contributions of this study.

The Marketing Landscape in Algerian Traditional and Handicraft Industries

The Algerian legislator defines traditional handicraft industries and companies in Order No. 96-01 of 10/06/1996 as any activity of production, creativity, transformation, artistic restoration, maintenance, repair, or service delivery distinguished by a manual nature, practised as a main and permanent vocation in either a fixed, mobile, or occasional manner, individually or under a cooperative or company engaged in traditional industries and crafts (Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement, 1996, p. 4).

The legislator delineates three realms of traditional industries in the same order:

- Practical traditional craft industry that produces regular consumer materials without specific

artistic values, aimed at households, industry and agriculture.

- Manual-intensive crafts that produce practical and decorative goods and acquire an artistic dimension by enabling the transfer of age-old skills, distinguished by originality, uniqueness, and innovation.
- Providing services of maintenance, repair, restoration and technical conservation.

Guettafi & Chaa (2018) argue that due to factors like intensifying foreign competition, Algeria's traditional handicraft industries suffer from a lack of structured marketing policies, which is a fundamental challenge facing artisans. The unavailability of dedicated spaces to sell products poses the biggest obstacle, diminishing artisans' motivation to manufacture quality goods and diversify offerings that could develop the craft. Participation in trade fairs and festivals alone is insufficient for product marketing, especially given the new crafts emerging amid the influx of artisans.

Furthermore, craftspeople face raw material scarcity issues, making their wares costlier compared to lower-quality imported alternatives. Guettafi & Chaa (2018) add that the state's limited encouragement has not deterred artisanal production across domains like pottery, wool, copper, leather, confectionery and traditional foods through "home-based marketing". Ultimately, the researchers suggest eschewing such conventional marketing approaches to circumvent the aforementioned problems. They propose leveraging internet marketing, enabling remote promotion of products without incurring significant marketing and sales costs.

According to Abdeldjebar & Hadji (2016), the traditional industries in Algeria face a lack of foresight in formulating appropriate marketing mix policies as follows:

- The lack of a defined marketing approach, with artisans emphasising sales over strategic marketing, leads Algerian consumers to favour imported substitutes that may be more attractive in price, quality, or other factors.
- Pricing of goods is dictated by several factors, like expensive raw material costs that inflate production costs. For consumers, artisanal prices appear high, while crafters view them as low, barely covering manufacturing outlays given raw material price inflation. This short-sightedness in setting suitable domestic pricing

has dampened demand, as competitors' prices are perceived as more affordable.

- There is a lack of specialised distribution channels for local traditional products, unlike foreign companies pursuing predatory pricing strategies to flood domestic markets. Artisans also lack retail outlets to showcase their offerings.
- Effective promotional policies are absent in the traditional industry sector. Artisans typically produce first before attempting sales without dedicated marketing efforts. This stems from ignorance about marketing concepts or an inability to afford advertising costs, resulting in consumer unawareness about local products and fuelling a preference for imported alternatives over authenticity.

Upon surveying numerous newspaper articles dedicated to discussing the marketing challenges faced by artisans in Algeria, we found that these articles generally converged on the notion that traditional and handicraft industries suffer from product oversaturation due to the lack of exhibition spaces, leading to low sales. Additionally, artisans bear the costs associated with participating in these exhibitions, further exacerbating the burdens on these professionals who already struggle with limited financial and material resources.

Faced with the aforementioned issues, the researchers believe that social media platforms could serve as a suitable alternative to overcome these challenges, considering the advantages and positive impacts that these platforms can have on the marketing strategies of traditional and handicraft industries.

Literature Review

Social Media Marketing

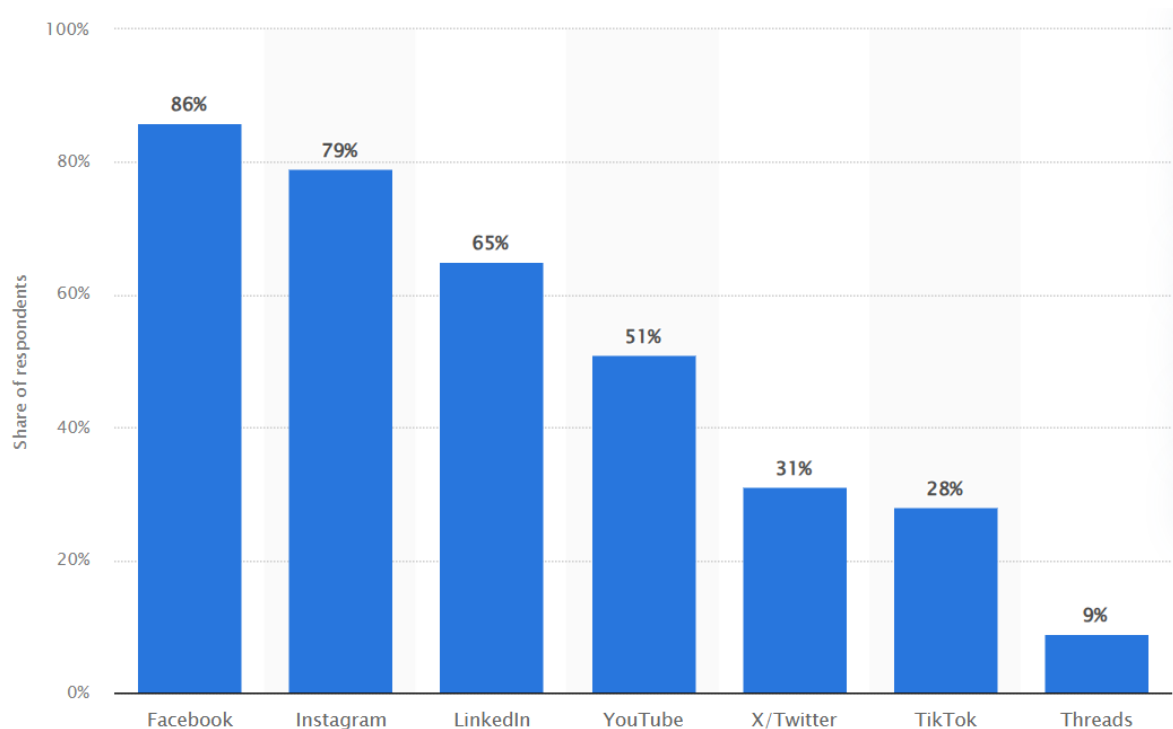
Social media marketing can be defined in various ways. Barefoot & Szabo (2010, p. 13) conceptualise it as utilising social platforms to promote an organisation and its offerings, representing a new digital marketing approach complementing existing online strategies. Meanwhile, Weinberg (2009) argues that it is

fundamentally based on engaging target audiences through relevant content and interactions. Additionally, Chi (2011) states that it constitutes connecting brands with consumers via personalised networking and social interactivity.

Synthesising these perspectives, this study considers social media marketing as the strategic use of interactive, conversational platforms to develop company-customer relationships, thereby promoting brands, products and services. The core goal is to leverage the interconnected nature of social networks for superior marketing outcomes.

The internet presents opportunities for crafters, such as developing online catalogues, accessing design inspiration, gathering market information, and showcasing products through online videos (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011, p. 279). Moreover, crafters can reap numerous advantages by adopting internet marketing more broadly through facilitating entry into e-commerce and online selling channels, reducing costs and time requirements through digitised processes, expanding market reach from local geographical areas to national and global consumer bases, providing greater opportunities to increase sales given the expanded market access, and enabling more targeted product positioning to specific consumer segments based on detailed audience data available through online analytics (Kumar & Pv, 2013, p. 541).

Owing to its ability to effectively and efficiently engage with a broad and diverse audience, social media now plays a central role in contemporary marketing strategies. A Statista survey on social media platforms utilised by marketers worldwide in 2024 suggests that Facebook is the most employed platform, with 86% of marketers, followed by Instagram with 79%, then LinkedIn with 65%. Other platforms like YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, and Pinterest are also part of marketers' strategies, with lower percentages of usage. This fact emphasises the predominance of Meta platforms as advertising channels and the growing role of social media platforms and video-centric ones in global marketing strategies.

Figure 1*Leading social media platforms used by marketers worldwide as of Jan 2024**Source: Statista (2025).*

The Use of Social Media in Traditional and Handicraft Industries

Previous research highlights the potential of social media for handicraft marketing across diverse contexts. Studies indicate that platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are leveraged, particularly by small enterprises and women entrepreneurs, due to low costs, ease of use, extensive reach, and the ability to overcome traditional market barriers (Rahadi & Abdillah, 2013; Alghamdi & Reilly, 2013). Social media adoption has been shown to enhance performance by reaching more customers, building brand recognition, increasing sales, and generating profits (Kazungu et al., 2017).

However, challenges persist, especially in developing economies, including limited awareness, resource constraints, digital illiteracy, security risks, and infrastructure gaps (Kazungu et al., 2017; Abhijitkaziblog, 2016; Makhitha, 2016). Specific studies confirm social media marketing's positive impact on handicraft brand awareness, image, and purchase intention (Guha et al., 2021), and its role in business survival, although often requiring external support (Jalil et al., 2022).

In the Algerian context, Charchafa & Bouchareb (2020) examined social media use among 106 handicraft enterprises in Setif and found an average adoption level for product marketing, low managerial awareness of its importance, a strong influence from awareness on usage, a minor effect from age, and no effect from social media experience, based on early 2020 data. This present study builds upon and extends their work in several important ways. First, we employ a larger sample size (123 versus 106 respondents), potentially improving statistical power and representativeness.

Second, building on the factors identified in the prior study regarding managerial awareness, age, and social media experience, our study utilises regression analysis to specifically quantify the individual impacts of these variables on adoption levels. Third, our research design allows for a more detailed analysis of specific social media marketing practices employed (e.g., promotion vs. feedback gathering) rather than focusing solely on general adoption levels reported previously. Finally, our study captures more recent data (from 2024), reflecting the rapid evolution of social media platforms and potentially changed user behaviours in the post-

pandemic context. These differences allow for a more updated and nuanced understanding of the current state of social media marketing within this sector.

Research Methodology

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The analysis of prior literature on social media adoption among traditional handicraft companies reveals gaps in understanding the specific drivers of social media usage in the artisanal domain, especially in the Algerian context. Given the potential for digital marketing to increase the commercial viability and competitiveness of Algeria's culturally vital handicraft sector, an evaluation focused on the province of Setif could illuminate these adoption gaps. Assessing current social media usage levels and associated drivers, specifically among Setif's handicraft businesses, can provide targeted knowledge to guide strategic policies aimed at promoting social media adoption in this region. Therefore, the present study seeks to address the following research questions related to Setif's handicraft sector:

- To what extent do traditional and handicraft industry managers practise social media marketing?
- Do traditional and handicraft industry managers perceive the importance of social media marketing?
- Does the perceived degree of importance (use, age, and experience) influence crafters' use of social media for marketing their products?

To address the above questions, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- *Hypothesis 1:* The level of social media use by traditional and handicraft companies for marketing their products is low.
- *Hypothesis 2:* Traditional and handicraft managers' perceived degree of the importance of social media marketing is low.
- *Hypothesis 3:* The level of social media use by crafters for marketing their products is influenced by the perceived degree of importance (use, age, and experience).

Methodology

The study population consisted of managers of traditional and handicraft industry companies in the province of Setif in Algeria. A questionnaire was designed

to assess the extent to which these companies utilise social media platforms for marketing their products. The study employed a random sampling technique, distributing the questionnaire to 123 individuals (managers of traditional and handicraft industry companies) who constituted the study sample.

Data collection was conducted over two months (December 2023 to January 2024) through direct communication or telephone contact with the study sample members. It's noteworthy that the telephone information was obtained from a database belonging to a governmental entity responsible for small companies.

A total of 134 questionnaires were distributed, resulting in 123 valid responses, yielding a response rate of 91.79%. The sampling frame was based on a database of registered traditional and handicraft businesses in Setif province, obtained from a governmental entity responsible for small companies.

Regarding data analysis, the SPSS software was utilised. The questionnaire items employed a 5-point Likert scale, and an ordinal scale was used to assign meaning to the mean scores to interpret the results during the analysis phase. Table 1 illustrates the ordinal scale of importance used.

Table 1

Scale for assessing the relative importance of questionnaire items

Mean	Importance Level	Importance Level	Relative Importance
1.00 – 1.79	Never	Strongly Disagree	Negligible Importance
1.80 – 2.59	Rarely	Disagree	Slight Importance
2.60 – 3.39	Sometimes	Undecided	Moderate Importance
3.40 – 4.19	Often	Agree	Important
4.20 – 5.00	Always	Strongly Agree	Very Important

Source: Authors

Descriptive statistical techniques were utilised, including percentages to describe the characteristics of the study sample, and means and standard deviations to describe the study items.

One-sample t-test was applied to check the first and second hypotheses by comparing sample means against the neutral midpoint (3.00) of the 5-point Likert scale.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to test the third hypothesis. Simple regression analysis was employed to isolate and examine the direct and separate influence of each specified independent variable, including 'perceived importance' of 'use', 'age', and 'experience' with social media on the dependent variable (level of social media utilisation), and directly addressing the individual components of the third hypothesis. On the contrary, multiple regression could analyse combined effects and interactions between variables, so simple regression is the suitable. It is noteworthy that the 'perceived importance of experience' with social media was measured as the 'Years of Usage'. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the degree of credibility and consistency in the responses of the study sample to the items in the questionnaire.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, an initial version was presented to two experts in the field for review. They were asked to provide their opinion on the extent to which each item belonged to the domain it was categorised under, the soundness of the linguistic phrasing, and the clarity of meaning. Based on the suggestions received, necessary modifications were made to the questionnaire items until the final version was achieved. The researchers considered this process and the accompanying revisions as sufficient evidence of validity for the study.

To verify the reliability of the questionnaire, the internal consistency method was used by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The reliability coefficient (alpha value) for all items in the questionnaire was 77.60%, which means that the questionnaire is suitable and that we can proceed with conducting the study.

The study sample (Table 2) exhibits notable diversity, encompassing individuals of both genders, spanning various age groups, educational levels, professional qualifications, and varying degrees of experience. Additionally, the participants engage with various popular social media platforms, predominantly Facebook, with a staggering 95.22% usage rate, aligning with the findings of previous studies.

Furthermore, the respondents possess considerable experience in using social media, whether in terms of the number of years or weekly browsing frequencies. This extensive familiarity enhances the credibility and

reliability of their perspectives, consequently lending greater validity to the obtained results.

Table 2
Sample characteristics

Characteristics	Data (%)
Gender	Male: 80.48; Female: 19.52
Age	Less than 30 years: 53.23; 30 to 40 years: 29.03; Over 40 years: 17.74.
Educational Level	Illiterate: 2.43; Primary: 12.19; Intermediate: 43.90; Secondary: 37.39; University: 4.09.
Professional Training	Government Training: 41.46; Private Training: 26.01; No Training: 19.51; Mixed Training: 13.02.
Years of Experience in the Industry	Less than 5 years: 15.44; 5 to 10 years: 53.66; More than 10: years 30.9.
Social Media Platform Used	Facebook: 95.22; YouTube: 81.60; Instagram: 75.13; Twitter: 09.05; LinkedIn: 17.25; WhatsApp: 62.20.
Years of Usage	Less than a year: 0; One to two years: 1.62; Three to five years: 27.64; More than 5 years: 70.74.
Weekly Browsing Average	Less than 2 hours: 0; 2 to 4 hours: 09.75; 5 to 7 hours: 30.89; More than 7 hours: 59.36.

Source: Authors' calculation

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Statistics

An examination of data presented in Table 3 reveals that personal communication with friends remains the primary use of social media for the sample (mean = 4.38, 'Always'), reflecting its broader societal role. Moreover, the mean score of 4.02 for Item 1 suggests that the respondents frequently engage with these platforms for recreational purposes. The presence of dedicated channels and groups that provide subscribers with entertaining programmes and advertisements contributes to the amusement and leisure aspects of these media.

However, the results demonstrate that the use of social media extends beyond mere communication with friends and entertainment. It encompasses professional and marketing dimensions, as reflected in the mean score of 2.74 for Item 4. This implies that, while not a consistent practice, there is occasional use ('Sometimes') of social media for marketing objectives among the respondents.

Some respondents refrain from utilising these platforms

for marketing due to customers' limited adoption of e-commerce. In contrast, the remaining respondents leverage social media for this purpose, particularly benefiting from promotional tools such as online marketplaces and free commercial pages. These features enable businesses to reach a broader audience of potential customers. Social media platforms significantly facilitate business-to-consumer (B2C) marketing processes within the traditional industries sector, in addition to offering paid promotional opportunities.

The mean score of 2.12 for Item 3 suggests that the respondents rarely employ these platforms to search for raw materials. This can be attributed to the existence of established suppliers upon whom traditional industry entrepreneurs have historically relied in their respective fields. It is noteworthy that the Algerian market does not heavily rely on social media for business-to-business (B2B) operations. Consequently, traditional industry companies that are the subject of this study may not find offers for their required raw materials with the desired specifications on these platforms.

Table 3

Uses of social media

	Paragraph	Weighted Average	Standard Deviation	Importance
1	Entertainment and leisure	4.02	0.096	Often
2	Connecting with friends	4.38	0.052	Always
3	Searching for raw materials	2.12	0.096	Rarely
4	Marketing the company's products	2.74	0.069	Often

Source: Authors' calculation

Table 4 shows a strong focus on using social media for promotion (mean = 4.59, 'Always') by the respondents who have engaged in marketing through social media. A prominent promotional strategy involves placing advertisements within social media groups, particularly via platforms like Facebook, to reach large local audiences within Setif province alone, thereby amplifying the reach of their promotional efforts.

Despite this, the concept of customer feedback appears less prominent among the respondents. Their interest in subscribers' opinions regarding their products is somewhat inconsistent, as reflected by the mean score of 2.93 for Item 6. The primary motivation behind considering these comments is to track orders or enquire about product availability and pricing, rather than seek

insights for product improvement, as corroborated by the low mean score (mean = 2.07, 'Rarely') for Item 7.

Furthermore, the results reveal that the study sample's mean responses suggest that social media platforms are often employed to increase subscriber awareness of the company's products (mean = 4.09), either to reach potential new customers or to remind existing clients about their offerings. Additionally, these platforms are consistently utilised ('Always') to attract new customers (mean = 4.44). These findings align with the results about the use of social media for promoting the company's products, as the primary objective of these companies is to acquire new customers.

Moreover, the results indicate that social media platforms are frequently used ('Often') to provide faster service to the company's customers and respond to their requirements (mean = 3.77). These platforms facilitate rapid communication between the company and its customers, enabling immediate responses to their requests and providing contact information for seamless interactions.

Table 4

Social media marketing practices

	Paragraph	Weighted average	Standard deviation	Importance
5	Promoting the company's products	4.59	0.065	Always
6	Getting subscribers' opinions about the company's products	2.93	0.070	Sometimes
7	Getting subscribers' opinions to improve the company's products	2.07	0.086	Rarely
8	Increasing subscribers' awareness of the company's products	4.09	0.059	Often
9	To retain the company's customers	3.40	0.071	Often
10	Attracting new customers	4.44	0.085	Always
11	To provide faster service to the company's customers and respond to their needs	3.77	0.085	Often

Source: Authors' calculation

Table 5 illustrates that the study sample generally lacks an adequate understanding ('Disagree') of the importance of using social media platforms for marketing their

products. This is evidenced by the weighted mean score of 2.41 for the overall set of items. The results reveal that some companies fail to fully recognise the importance ('Undecided') of social media in obtaining sales opportunities (mean = 3.26), improving sales (mean = 2.96), and enabling entry into new markets (mean = 3.03). These companies do not seem to conduct comprehensive market studies to assess the extent of their market share expansion or contraction.

Furthermore, the study sample appears to underestimate the importance of social media platforms in reducing the cost of promotion and effectively introducing their products or accelerating the sales of their various offerings. The mean scores for other items indicate a tendency towards disagreement. These companies rely heavily on word-of-mouth for product promotion, in addition to using wholesale traders and specialised retail outlets, which hold a significant influence over the local market and the success or failure of new product launches, all independent of social media platforms.

Table 5

Sample perception of the importance of using social media in marketing products

Paragraph	Weighted average	Standard deviation	Importance
12 Using social media helps the company to:			
13 Obtain sales opportunities	3.26	0.564	Undecided
14 Improve its sales	2.96	0.865	Undecided
15 Enter new markets.	3.03	0.925	Undecided
16 Reduce the cost of introducing the company's products.	2.00	0.556	Disagree
17 Market high-profit products.	2.13	0.954	Disagree
18 Accelerate the marketing of the company's new products.	2.47	0.920	Disagree
19 Promote the company's products properly.	2.58	0.786	Disagree
20 Reduce the time needed to sell the product.	2.49	0.915	Disagree
21 Reinforce the company's brand more in the market.	1.78	0.790	Strongly Disagree
Total	2.41	0.543	Disagree

Source: Authors' calculation

This disconnection from social media can be attributed to several factors. Some respondents do not use social media platforms at all due to a lack of technological proficiency or a lack of interest in marketing functions. Certain companies still adhere to a sales-oriented approach rather than a marketing-oriented one, as evidenced by the results about the recognition of the importance of social media in establishing a stronger brand presence in the market (mean = 1.78, 'Strongly Disagree'). These companies do not invest in developing and solidifying their brand identity in the markets they operate in, instead relying heavily on traditional methods to increase profitability. The homogeneous nature of their products, which in some cases may not even bear any branding, particularly in the case of food products sold conventionally, has contributed to this traditional and narrow approach to company management.

Testing Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2

The first and second hypotheses are tested using a one-sample t-test of Student. Based on the results in Table 6, a one-sample t-test compares the mean usage level for marketing (mean = 2.74) against the scale midpoint of 3. The difference was statistically significant at 1%, indicating a moderate level of usage. Therefore, Hypothesis 1, stating that the level of social media use by traditional and handicraft companies for marketing their products is low, is not valid.

Table 6

One-sample t-test results for Hypothesis 1

Statement	Weighted Average	Standard Deviation	t	Sig.
The use of social media by traditional and handicraft companies for marketing their products	2.74	0.813	31.748	0.000

Source: Authors' calculation

Based on Table 7, where a one-sample t-test compares the mean perception of importance (mean = 2.41) against the scale midpoint of 3. The difference was statistically significant at 1%, indicating a lower perception than neutral, tending towards disagreement. Therefore, Hypothesis 2, stating that the perceived importance of social media marketing by traditional and handicraft managers is low, is valid.

Table 7*One-sample t-test results for Hypothesis 2*

Statement	Weighted Average	Standard Deviation	t	Sig.
Study sample's perception of the importance of using social media for marketing products	2.41	0.822	34.115	0.000

*Source: Authors' calculation***Testing Hypothesis 3**

The third hypothesis is tested by verifying the following sub-hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 3.1: The level of social media use by traditional and handicraft companies for marketing their products is influenced by the perceived degree of importance of use.
- Hypothesis 3.2: The level of social media use by

traditional and handicraft companies for marketing their products is influenced by the age variable.

- Hypothesis 3.3: The level of social media use by traditional and handicraft companies for marketing their products is influenced by the experience with social media.

For Hypothesis 3.1, the regression coefficient shown in Table 8 demonstrates a statistically significant (at 1%) positive influence of the degree of awareness concerning the importance of social media utilisation on the level of adoption of these platforms for marketing purposes. Additionally, the awareness of utilisation importance explains 59.5% of the variance in social media platforms use for product marketing among the traditional and handicraft companies surveyed. Consequently, it can be concluded that the degree of awareness regarding the importance of utilisation exerts a strong influence on the level of adoption of social media platforms for product marketing purposes by traditional and handicraft companies.

Table 8*Regression results for Hypothesis 3.1*

R	Adjusted R ²	ANOVA		Constant			Regression Coefficient		
		F	Sig.	Value	t	Sig.	Value	t	Sig.
0.635	0.595	160.110	0.000	1.458	5.384	0.000	0.518	15.632	0.000

Source: Authors' calculation

For Hypothesis 3.2, Table 9 reveals a statistically significant (at 1%) negative influence of age on social media platform adoption for marketing among the surveyed traditional and handicraft enterprises. Furthermore, age alone explains 29.5% of the variability

in social media usage across the sample. While significant, this suggests that age weakly influences the level of adoption of social media platforms for product marketing purposes among traditional and handicraft companies.

Table 9*Regression results for Hypothesis 3.2*

R	Adjusted R ²	ANOVA		Constant			Regression Coefficient		
		F	Sig.	Value	t	Sig.	Value	t	Sig.
0.525	0.295	35.640	0.000	3.245	7.115	0.000	-0.362	-12.542	0.000

Source: Authors' calculation

Finally, for Hypothesis 3.3, the regression coefficient in Table 10 suggests an insignificant (Sig. > 5%) influence of years of social media experience on social media adoption for marketing purposes among the surveyed

handicraft and traditional companies. Therefore, no predictive relationship can be established between crafters' social media experience and their integration of social media for promotion.

Table 10

Regression results for Hypothesis 3.3

R	Adjusted R ²	ANOVA		Constant			Regression Coefficient		
		F	Sig.	Value	t	Sig.	Value	t	Sig.
0.152	0.084	3.256	0.140	2.998	6.683	0.000	-0.123	-4.284	0.180

Source: Authors' calculation

Based on the results of the sub-hypotheses, Hypothesis 3 is partially supported. Specifically, the level of social media utilisation for marketing by traditional and handicraft companies is strongly influenced by the perceived degree of importance of use, weakly impacted by age, and not influenced by years of social media experience.

Discussion

This study provides valuable insights into adopting social media for marketing within Algeria's traditional and handicraft sector in Setif province. The results indicate a moderate utilisation of social media, primarily focused on promotion and customer acquisition rather than deeper engagement like leveraging feedback for product improvement. This suggests that while firms recognise social media's reach, its strategic marketing potential remains underutilised, which aligns partially with Charchafa and Bouchareb (2020), who found an average adoption in the same region, but our findings suggest a slightly lower usage level, perhaps reflecting ongoing challenges.

A key finding is the lower level of perceived importance managers attribute to social media marketing, which appears to be a critical barrier, as perceived importance strongly predicts adoption levels. This is consistent with research in other developing contexts highlighting limited awareness as a major challenge (Kazungu et al., 2017; Makhitha, 2016). It suggests that managers may not fully grasp how social media can address specific marketing challenges faced by the sector, such as limited distribution channels and reliance on traditional sales methods (Guettafi & Chaa, 2018; Abdeldjebar & Hadji, 2016).

The influence of demographic factors was less pronounced. The age showed a weak negative relationship with adoption, while experience with social media platforms did not predict marketing usage. This contrasts with studies suggesting digital literacy challenges (Makhitha, 2016) but implies that even experienced social media users in this context may not translate their usage into strategic marketing

applications, potentially due to the overriding factor of low perceived business value or a prevailing traditional sales-orientated mindset.

Regarding practical implications, these findings underscore the need for targeted interventions. Efforts should focus on increasing managerial awareness regarding the tangible benefits of strategic social media marketing – beyond basic promotion – such as market intelligence gathering, brand building, and customer relationship management. Workshops, training programmes focused on practical application, and showcasing success stories could be beneficial. Supporting partnerships with digital marketing service providers or e-commerce platforms could also bridge the knowledge and resource gap.

Among the limitations of this study is its reliance on a sample from one province, and its results may not be generalisable to all of Algeria's diverse handicraft sector. The data relied on self-reported measures, which may be subject to social desirability bias. The cross-sectional design limits the ability to infer causality; longitudinal studies could track changes in adoption over time. Furthermore, specific platform functionalities and the impact of specific marketing campaigns were not deeply explored. Future research could address these limitations and investigate the specific types of content and strategies that are most effective for this sector.

Conclusion

Social media presents valuable marketing opportunities for companies through enhanced product showcasing and customer engagement. This study investigated its adoption among traditional and handicraft firms in Setif, Algeria.

The findings revealed moderate adoption levels, primarily focused on basic promotional activities rather than strategic marketing integration. This echoes findings from other Algerian small businesses, suggesting a common pattern of underutilisation. Crucially, managers demonstrated low awareness of social media's strategic importance for marketing, and

this lack of awareness was the strongest predictor of limited adoption. Age had only a minor negative influence, while prior experience using social media did not translate into greater marketing application, highlighting a disconnect between personal use and business strategy.

The primary barrier identified is the gap in understanding the strategic value and potential return on investment from social media marketing. While acknowledging digital exposure's value, firms seem constrained by traditional practices and potentially limited resources or digital marketing skills.

To help this culturally important sector capitalise on digital opportunities, targeted interventions are recommended. These should focus on:

- Educational campaigns and workshops demonstrating tangible benefits (cost savings, market access, brand building) tailored to the handicraft context.
- Practical training on using social media tools effectively for marketing, customer service, and feedback collection.
- Highlighting successful examples within the local context.

This study provides preliminary evidence that Algerian handicraft firms in Setif have not yet optimised social media marketing. Future research should explore specific platform strategies, content effectiveness, and the impact of training interventions and extend the analysis to other provinces to develop more tailored recommendations for enhancing digital competitiveness and sales growth in this vital sector.

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Uporaba družabnih omrežij za trženje izdelkov v alžirski tradicionalni in obrtni industriji: primer province Setif

Izvleček

Družabna omrežja ponujajo priložnosti za tradicionalno in obrtno industrijo pri promociji izdelkov in spodbujanju prodaje. Zato ta študija preučuje obseg uporabe družabnih omrežij za trženje izdelkov med vzorcem alžirske tradicionalne in obrtne industrije. V ta namen je bil opravljen vprašalnik s 123 naključno izbranimi podjetji v provinci Setif. Rezultati so pokazali zmerno uporabo družabnih omrežij za trženje izdelkov ter nizko ozaveščenost o njihovih koristih. Raven uporabe je močno povezana z ozaveščenostjo, medtem ko starost skorajda ni imela vpliva. Izkušnje z družbenimi omrežji niso napovedovale njihove uporabe za trženje. Ugotovitve kažejo, da lahko ta sektor še dodatno izkoristi potencial družabnih omrežij z večjo ozaveščenostjo vodij o njihovih prednostih in z razvojem strategij za povečanje uporabe. Nadaljnje raziskave naj opredelijo konkretne ukrepe, ki jih lahko tradicionalna in obrtna podjetja sprejmejo za čim boljše izrabo družabnih omrežij pri promociji izdelkov in rasti prodaje.

Ključne besede: trženje preko družbenih omrežij, alžirska tradicionalna in obrtna industrija, trženje izdelkov