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**EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGIES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF
 SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMES) IN
 KADUNA METROPOLIS**

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of social media and email marketing strategies on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kaduna metropolis. The study adopts a quantitative research design using a survey method. This design is appropriate for assessing the relationship between marketing strategies (social media and email marketing) and SMEs' performance through statistical analysis. The target population comprises all registered Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kaduna Metropolis. According to the Kaduna Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (KADCCIMA. 2024), there are 471 registered SMEs in the metropolis. Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size, a population of 471 corresponds to a sample size of approximately 214 SMEs. The study utilized primary data collected through structured questionnaires administered to SME owners or managers. However, a total number of 214 questionnaires were administered to SMEs, out of the initial distribution 175 were satisfactory filled and retrieved. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to determine the effect of social media and email marketing strategies on SME performance. The results indicate that social media marketing significantly enhances SME performance, emphasizing the growing importance of social platforms as cost-effective tools for customer engagement, brand awareness, and revenue generation. Likewise, email marketing has a significant effect on SME performance, reinforcing its role as a direct and personalized communication channel that strengthens customer relationships and drives sales.

Keywords: Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Performance, Small and Medium Enterprises

1. Introduction

The development of e-marketing in Nigeria has transformed the way businesses relate with their customers, shifting from traditional means to online platforms. Financially, leveraging e-commerce platforms report higher revenue growth due to their ability to reach broader markets beyond traditional geographical limitations (Njelita, et al. 2023). Non-financially, firms benefit from enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty through personalized shopping experiences and efficient service delivery. For SMEs, e-commerce provides an affordable entry point to compete with larger corporations by leveraging digital marketing

strategies such as social media advertising, search engine optimization, and email campaigns (Sheikh, et al., 2025; Awad, & Aboalghanam, 2023). Additionally, e-commerce enables firms to gather valuable consumer data, which informs better decision-making and product development. Consequently, the booming e-commerce sector in Nigeria not only represents a significant economic opportunity but also serves as a catalyst for improving firm performance and competitiveness in a rapidly digitalizing marketplace (Fintech News Africa, 2023).

In today's digitally-driven global economy, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are increasingly leveraging online marketing strategies such as social

media and email marketing to reach wider audiences, improve customer relationships, and enhance business performance. As traditional marketing methods become less effective and more costly, the digital marketing space offers SMEs cost-effective and measurable tools to engage with customers and drive sales (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). In Nigeria, and particularly in urban centers, the proliferation of smartphones, internet accessibility, and social networking platforms has enabled SMEs to interact directly with consumers, promote their brands, and gain a competitive advantage (Akanbi & Baiyere, 2021).

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp have become central to business communication, advertising, and customer feedback systems. Simultaneously, email marketing has evolved into a strategic channel for customer retention and targeted promotional messaging (Kotler & Keller, 2016). These digital tools have revolutionized how SMEs operate by enabling data-driven marketing, enhancing brand visibility, and reducing marketing costs (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In the Nigerian context, where SMEs contribute significantly to employment and economic development, the effective use of social media and email marketing could potentially boost their performance metrics including sales growth, customer acquisition, and brand loyalty (Eze, Chinedu-Eze & Bello, 2021).

Despite the growing adoption of digital marketing tools among SMEs, there remains a substantial gap in understanding the extent to which social media and email marketing strategies contribute to business performance in the Nigerian context, particularly within Kaduna Metropolis. Many SMEs in the region lack structured marketing strategies, often adopting digital tools informally or inconsistently without clear metrics or objectives (Okeke, Ezenwoke & Oruh, 2020). Additionally, limited digital literacy, poor infrastructure, and inadequate funding often constrain SMEs' ability to effectively deploy and sustain digital marketing campaigns (Onyeaghala & Oti, 2018).

While some SMEs report growth and increased customer engagement through social media and email platforms, others struggle to measure the return on investment (ROI) from such efforts. This raises critical

questions about the actual impact of these marketing strategies on firm performance in terms of profitability, customer retention, and market expansion. Furthermore, the lack of empirical data specific to Kaduna Metropolis hinders policymakers and entrepreneurs from making informed decisions about digital marketing investments (Akanbi & Baiyere, 2021).

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining the effect of social media and email marketing strategies on the performance of SMEs in Kaduna Metropolis. The outcome of this research could provide insights into best practices, and offer policy recommendations for enhancing SME performance through effective digital marketing. In line with the objectives of the study, the study addressed the following research questions, and hypotheses.

- i. What is the effect of social media marketing on the performance of SMEs in Kaduna Metropolis?
- ii. To what extent does email marketing strategy influence the performance of SMEs in Kaduna Metropolis?

H0₁: Social media marketing strategies has no significant effect on the Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kaduna metropolis.

H0₂: Email marketing strategies has no significant effect on the Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kaduna metropolis

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Definitions

SMEs Performance

According to Adelekan and Ogunleye (2021), SME performance refers to the ability of small and medium-sized enterprises to achieve desired outcomes in terms of profitability, productivity, and overall business growth. This performance is often assessed using both financial indicators (e.g., return on investment, revenue growth) and non-financial indicators (e.g., customer satisfaction, market share, and innovation). The authors argue that in the modern competitive environment, SMEs must align

their internal capabilities, including marketing strategies and innovation, with external market demands to sustain growth. As such, performance is no longer just about profitability but about building adaptive capacity for long-term survival. Olawale and Garwe (2022) conceptualize SME performance as the extent to which enterprises can effectively utilize their limited resources to achieve strategic objectives such as market expansion, customer retention, and operational efficiency. Therefore, performance is not solely financial but also includes achieving milestones like entering new markets, developing new products, and leveraging digital technologies. Musa and Bello (2023) defined SMEs performance as the measurable achievements of enterprises in terms of innovation adoption, market responsiveness, and sustainability. This assert that performance in the current digital economy is largely influenced by entrepreneurial orientation proactiveness, risk-taking, and innovativeness—which enables SMEs to remain competitive.

Social Media Marketing

Tuten and Solomon (2021) define Social Media Marketing (SMM) as the use of social media platforms to connect with an audience to build brands, increase sales, and drive website traffic through content creation, engagement, and advertising. This emphasize that SMM focuses on developing relationships with consumers by developing interaction, feedback, and trust. Unlike traditional marketing, SMM enables two-way communication, allowing brands to listen, respond, and adapt to customer needs in real-time. According to Dwivedi et al. (2021), Social Media Marketing involves the strategic use of social networks to communicate brand values, increase awareness, and cultivate customer loyalty. Its note that SMM allows companies, especially SMEs, to deliver consistent and engaging brand narratives that resonate with target audiences. SMM is also an important channel for gathering consumer feedback and refining marketing messages to enhance brand loyalty and trust. Zollo, Rialti, Ciappei, and Pellegrini (2020) define SMM as a value co-creation platform where firms and consumers collaborate in brand development through content, feedback, and emotional connections. This emphasizes that social

media is not merely a broadcast channel but a space where brands co-create meaning with users, influencing brand image and business performance. This participatory nature of SMM leads to higher levels of consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

Appel et al. (2020) define Social Media Marketing as a strategic marketing function that enables SMEs to amplify their digital presence, scale customer acquisition efforts, and access new markets at a relatively low cost. This defines that the democratization of communication channels through social media empowers smaller businesses to compete with larger firms by creating tailored, authentic brand experiences.

Kumar et al. (2021) define Social Media Marketing as a data-driven marketing strategy that leverages real-time analytics and user-generated content to tailor messaging and optimize campaign outcomes. They emphasize the analytical potential of social media platforms in monitoring customer sentiment, segmenting audiences, and predicting consumer behavior.

Social media marketing (SMM) is the strategic use of social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), LinkedIn, and WhatsApp to connect with current and potential customers. It involves content creation, community engagement, paid advertising, and analytics monitoring, all aimed at building brand awareness, generating leads, and driving business growth. In this study, SMM is defined as the deliberate and structured deployment of social media platforms to attract, convert, and retain customers, thereby contributing to improved performance of SMEs.

Email Marketing

Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) define email marketing as a form of direct digital communication used by businesses to reach current and potential customers with personalized, timely, and relevant content. It serves as a cost-effective method for promoting products, nurturing leads, and building customer relationships. According to Meroño-Cerdán, (2021), email marketing is a strategic tool for cultivating long-term relationships between businesses and customers by delivering consistent value through informative, promotional, or transactional messages. This highlight its effectiveness in generating repeat sales, collecting feedback, and

enhancing customer loyalty especially when integrated with customer relationship management systems.

Zhang et al. (2020) define email marketing as a powerful personalization strategy that allows businesses to segment their audience and tailor messages based on customer behavior, demographics, and preferences. This approach enhances the relevance of communication, increases user engagement, and boosts conversion rates. Setiawan (2021) regard email marketing as a core component of integrated marketing communications, where it functions to reinforce brand messaging and support multichannel engagement.

Liu and Mattila (2022) define email marketing as a performance-oriented digital marketing strategy that allows firms to deliver content that drives customer actions such as visiting a website, redeeming offers, or making purchases.

Todor (2020) conceptualizes email marketing as a data-driven tool that enables marketers to send tailored content to segmented customer groups based on behavioral analytics, preferences, and lifecycle stages. This approach enhances user engagement, strengthens brand-consumer connections, and drives measurable outcomes. According to Doherty (2021), email marketing plays a vital role in enhancing customer relationship management (CRM) by maintaining continuous engagement with customers. Through newsletters, personalized offers, and event-driven campaigns, firms are able to nurture customer loyalty and influence repurchase behavior.

Ryan (2020) defines email marketing as a conversion-centric digital strategy enhanced by automation tools that allow for the timely delivery of tailored messages based on user actions such as abandoned carts, site visits, or purchases. He asserts that automation transforms email from a static communication tool into a dynamic system for lead nurturing, upselling, and customer retention.

Email marketing is a digital marketing strategy that involves sending personalized or mass emails to a targeted audience with the aim of promoting products, sharing company news, or building customer relationships. In the context of this study, email marketing is considered a targeted communication practice used by SMEs to inform, engage, and influence

customer decisions, ultimately enhancing business performance.

2.2 Empirical Review

Syaifullah et al. (2021) study investigates how micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) leveraged social media marketing during the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain customer engagement and operational sustainability. The research highlights the adaptability of MSMEs in utilizing platforms like Facebook and Instagram to connect with customers despite physical restrictions. The findings establish a strong positive relationship between social media usage and business performance, demonstrating that social media marketing plays a critical role in building resilience during crises.

Tajvidi and Karami (2021) examines the mechanisms through which social media marketing enhances firm performance, emphasizing its role in improving customer relationships and expanding market reach. The study underscores the importance of integrating social media marketing with broader business strategies to achieve competitive advantage and long-term growth. It identifies key benefits, such as fostering customer loyalty, generating leads, and enhancing brand visibility. The study provides valuable insights into the benefits of social media marketing but does not sufficiently address the challenges firms face in its implementation, such as digital literacy or resource constraints.

Obermayer et al. (2022) using a case study approach, this research investigates how family businesses in the wine industry use social media practices to improve performance. It identifies specific factors, including high-quality content, audience engagement, and storytelling that shape the effectiveness of social media strategies. The findings emphasize the importance of tailoring social media practices to the unique needs of specific industries and customer bases. While the study provides rich insights into industry-specific applications, its findings are not easily generalizable to other sectors or geographical contexts.

Subagja et al. (2022) study explores the combined role of social media utilization and innovativeness in enhancing SME performance. It

highlights the synergistic effects of creative content creation and the adoption of new technologies, demonstrating that innovation amplifies the effect of social media marketing. The study concludes that firms with higher levels of innovativeness achieve superior outcomes from social media efforts.

Bader et al. (2022) research examines the perceived effect of e-marketing on marketing performance from a customer perspective in Jordan. It identifies key benefits, including improved customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, and sales growth, while emphasizing the importance of digital tools in enhancing customer engagement. While the study provides valuable customer-centric insights, it does not explore firm-level factors, such as entrepreneurial strategies, that could influence the successful implementation of e-marketing. Furthermore, the findings are context-specific and may not fully translate to SMEs in other regions, such as Nigeria, where market dynamics and digital adoption levels differ. Mehralian and Khazaei (2022) analyzes the effect of digital marketing on the performance of MSMEs during the COVID-19 pandemic, with customer relationship management (CRM) as a mediating variable. The findings highlight that firms leveraging digital marketing and CRM capabilities achieved greater resilience and performance during the pandemic. While the study underscores the importance of CRM in enhancing digital marketing effectiveness, it does not examine how entrepreneurial behaviors might strengthen the CRM-digital marketing relationship. Moreover, the study focuses on a crisis context, leaving gaps in understanding the long-term role of digital marketing in firm performance under stable conditions.

Nuseir and Refae (2022) study explores how digital marketing capabilities improve business performance, with CRM serving as a mediating factor. It emphasizes that firms with strong digital marketing capabilities can build better customer relationships, resulting in higher customer retention, satisfaction, and sales. Chinelo and Alozie (2022) study examines the effect of electronic marketing on the financial performance of SMEs in Enugu State, Nigeria. It identifies a significant positive relationship between e-marketing tools, such as social media and email

marketing, and financial performance indicators like sales growth and profitability. The study underscores the importance of e-marketing in helping SMEs reach broader audiences and reduce marketing costs. While the study highlights the benefits of e-marketing, it is limited to financial performance and does not explore non-financial metrics, such as customer satisfaction or brand loyalty.

Ollor and Nwankwo (2022) examines the influence of e-marketing on the performance of travel agencies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The findings indicate that e-marketing significantly improves customer acquisition, brand visibility, and operational efficiency. The study highlights the potential of e-marketing in transforming service-oriented businesses. The study provides valuable insights into the service sector but is limited to a single industry, making it less generalizable to other sectors. It also does not explore how entrepreneurial orientation might enhance the strategic use of e-marketing tools in service-oriented businesses.

Ligaraba et al. (2023) study explores the influence of opt-in email marketing on consumer behavior through the lens of the Stimuli–Organism–Response (S–O–R) theory. It emphasizes that personalized email campaigns act as stimuli that evoke emotional responses (organisms) in consumers, leading to desired behavioral outcomes such as purchases and brand loyalty. The findings underscore the importance of crafting engaging and relevant email content to foster stronger customer relationships. While the study provides valuable insights into the psychological mechanisms underpinning email marketing effectiveness, it does not address contextual challenges, such as limited email penetration in certain regions or industries.

Ylinen and Ranta (2024) study investigates the relationship between employer ratings on social media and firm performance, using machine learning to uncover indirect effects such as employer branding, talent acquisition, and organizational reputation. It highlights how social media effects not only external marketing but also internal performance metrics. The study provides a unique perspective on social media's effect on internal processes, but it does not address how

social media marketing directly influences traditional performance metrics like sales or customer retention. Moreover, its focus on employer branding may not directly apply to SMEs in emerging markets, where external marketing is often a greater priority.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, developed by Barney (1991), posits that firms gain and sustain a competitive advantage by effectively acquiring, managing, and leveraging internal resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN). This theory emphasizes the strategic importance of a firm's internal capabilities such as technological tools, marketing skills, and customer relationships in driving superior performance. In the context of this study, social media and email marketing capabilities are treated as strategic intangible resources. These tools enable SMEs to reach wider audiences, build stronger customer relationships, and achieve measurable business growth, especially in a resource-constrained environment like Kaduna Metropolis.

Social media and email marketing strategies reflect a firm's marketing capability and a critical internal resource. SMEs that develop and utilize these digital tools effectively can create a unique market presence, improve customer engagement, and drive higher performance outcomes. Previous studies (e.g., Wang & Hsu, 2014; Tajeddini, 2016) have used the RBV theory to explain how digital marketing resources enhance firm performance. It has been shown that SMEs that utilize digital tools like email campaigns and social media management can outperform competitors who do not.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design using a survey method. This design is appropriate for assessing the relationship between marketing strategies (social media and email marketing) and SMEs' performance through statistical analysis. The target population comprises all registered Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kaduna Metropolis. According to the Kaduna

Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (KADCCIMA, 2024), there are 471 registered SMEs in the metropolis

Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size, a population of 471 corresponds to a sample size of approximately 214 SMEs. This sample size is considered adequate for generalizing the results to the entire population with acceptable confidence and margin of error.

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires administered to SME owners or managers. The questionnaire captured information on social media usage, email marketing practices, and performance indicator (customer retention).

3.1 Method of Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to determine the effect of social media and email marketing strategies on SME performance. Regression is appropriate for identifying the strength and nature of the relationship between independent variables and a dependent variable. However, a total number of 214 questionnaires were administered to SMEs, out of the initial distribution 175 were satisfactory filled and retrieved.

3.2 Model Specification

The regression model is specified as follows:

$$PER = \alpha + \beta_1 SMM + \beta_2 EMM + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Where:

PER= SMEs Performance

α = Intercept

β_1 - β_2 = Coefficient of the Independent Variables

SMM= Social Media Marketing

EMM= Email Marketing

ε = error term

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the data collected for the study is presented and discussed in this section. The summary of the descriptive statistics of the variables are presented in table 1

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PER	175	1.00	5.00	2.1135	.44648
SMM	175	1.00	5.00	2.1949	.49299
EMM	175	1.00	5.00	2.1360	.38999

Source: SPSS output, 2025

The mean values indicate the average responses for each variable. Performance (PER) has a mean of 2.1135 with a standard deviation of 0.44648, suggesting a moderate level of perceived performance among respondents with relatively low variability in responses. Social Media Marketing (SMM) has a slightly higher mean of 2.1949 and a standard deviation of 0.49299, indicating that respondents rated their use of SMM moderately, with

some variation in responses. Email Marketing (EMM) has a mean of 2.1360 and a standard deviation of 0.38999, reflecting a similar trend to SMM, with relatively less dispersion in responses.

4.2 Correlation Matrix

The result of the Pearson correlation Coefficients of the variables of the study is presented in Table 2 as follows;

Table 2: Correlations

		PER	SMM	EMM
PER	Pearson Correlation	1	.383**	.220**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	175	175	175
SMM	Pearson Correlation	.383**	1	.269**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	175	175	175
EMM	Pearson Correlation	.220**	.269**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	175	175	175

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

Source: SPSS output, 2025

The correlation analysis highlights that social media marketing (SMM) has a moderate positive impact on performance, suggesting its effectiveness in enhancing brand visibility and customer engagement. Email marketing (EMM) shows a weaker but still significant

positive correlation, indicating its role in targeted communication and customer retention.

4.3 Regression Results

Table 3: Regression

Variables	Coefficients	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	.992	5.597	.000
SMM	.331	6.072	.000
EMM	.165	2.230	.027
R-Square	0.194		
Adjusted R-Square	0.169		
F-value	7.988		
Sig.	0.000		

Source: SPSS output, 2025

Table 3 shows the results of the linear regression model. The cumulative R^2 (0.194), which is the multiple

coefficients of determination, gives the proportion of the total variation in the dependent variable; SMEs

performance explained by the independent variables jointly. Hence, it signifies that about 19% of the total variation in SMEs performance is caused by social media marketing, email marketing, affiliating marketing, search engine optimization, and moderation effect, while the remaining 81% are explained by other factors not captured in the model. The adjusted R^2 (which adjusted for the number of variables in the model that have correlation and number of observations) has a value of 0.169 (16.9%). The regression result reveals fitness of the model for having F-statistics of 7.988 and a sig value of 0.000. The implication of this result is that the overall impact of the explanatory variables on the dependent variable is significant at 5% level with 95% confidence interval.

4.4 Test of Hypotheses

The variables are tested using the linear regression with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The regression tries to examine the extent to which the variables have an impact on each other which are expected if the null hypothesis is to be rejected or accepted.

Social Media Marketing and SMEs Performance

As indicated in Table 3, the coefficient of Social Media Marketing (SMM) is 0.331, with a t-value of 6.072 and a p-value of 0.000. This demonstrates a positive and statistically significant relationship between social media marketing and performance. It implies that for every one-unit increase in social media marketing efforts, performance improves by 33.1%. The findings suggest that increased engagement through social media platforms enhances customer interaction, brand visibility, and sales conversions. Given that the significance level ($p < 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis (H_{01}) and conclude that social media marketing has a significant effect on SMEs performance.

Email Media Marketing and SMEs Performance

The coefficient of Email Marketing (EMM) is 0.165, with a t-value of 2.230 and a p-value of 0.027. This indicates a positive and statistically significant relationship between email marketing and performance,

though the effect size is smaller than that of social media marketing. It suggests that for every one-unit increase in email marketing efforts, performance improves by 16.5%. The results imply that email marketing contributes to business growth by developing customer retention and personalized communication. Since the significance level ($p < 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis (H_{02}) and conclude that email marketing has a significant effect on SMEs performance.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The study reveals that social media marketing (SMM) has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs in Kaduna Metropolis. This aligns with previous studies that highlight the role of social media in enhancing business growth, customer engagement, and brand awareness (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Social media platforms provide cost-effective marketing strategies that allow SMEs to reach a broader audience, engage with customers in real time, and improve brand visibility. The findings are consistent with the work of Felix, Rauschnabel, and Hinsch (2017), who argue that SMEs leveraging social media marketing experience better customer interaction, which translates to increased sales and profitability. The significant impact of SMM on performance underscores the necessity for SMEs to invest in strategic social media marketing to remain competitive in the digital era.

Similarly, email marketing (EMM) has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs in Kaduna Metropolis, indicating that targeted email campaigns contribute to customer retention and business growth. Prior research (Chaffey, 2019; Sahni, Wheeler, & Chintagunta, 2018) supports this finding, emphasizing that personalized email marketing improves customer engagement, enhances loyalty, and increases conversion rates. The positive relationship between EMM and SME performance aligns with the argument of Mohammadi (2017), who posits that well-structured email marketing strategies lead to higher customer retention and repeat business. However, while effective, email marketing requires proper execution, such as segmenting audiences and personalizing content, to maximize its impact.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The results indicate that social media marketing significantly enhances SME performance, emphasizing the growing importance of social platforms as cost-effective tools for customer engagement, brand awareness, and revenue generation. Likewise, email marketing has a significant effect on SME performance, reinforcing its role as a direct and personalized communication channel that strengthens customer relationships and drives sales.

The study recommends that;

- i. SMEs should invest in structured social media strategies by maintaining active profiles, regularly posting engaging content, and leveraging platform-specific tools (e.g., Facebook Ads, Instagram Stories) to boost visibility and customer engagement.
- ii. SMEs should implement targeted email marketing campaigns using customer segmentation and personalized messaging. Adopting email automation tools can help streamline communication, improve customer retention, and maximize return on marketing investment.

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