Journal of Business Insight and Innovation
Volume 5 Issue 8, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
https://insightfuljournals.com/

INTERNATIONAL E-MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS: LEVERAGING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES AND MANAGING CROSS-BORDER CHALLENGES

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.63544/jbii.v5i8.137

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Article History:
Received: 05.07.2026
Accepted: 23.07.2026
Published: 04.08.2026

Abstract

Purpose: *This study investigates how organizations leverage digital opportunities and manage cross-border challenges to enhance international e-marketing effectiveness. Drawing on Dynamic Capability Theory and the Resource-Based View (RBV), it examines how organizations leverage digital capabilities to enhance marketing performance while managing the constraints associated with international markets.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted among 276 marketing professionals, digital marketing managers, international business executives, and e-commerce practitioners. Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 29 and SmartPLS 4.*

Findings: *The findings indicate that international e-marketing opportunities, including global market expansion, customer personalization, artificial intelligence, social media marketing, and e-commerce growth, have a significant positive effect on international e-marketing effectiveness. Conversely, cross-border challenges, including cultural differences, language barriers, legal and regulatory compliance, cybersecurity risks, and data privacy concerns, significantly reduce marketing effectiveness. The proposed model explains 68.4% of the variance in international e-marketing effectiveness, demonstrating substantial explanatory power.*

Originality/Value: *This study extends international e-marketing research by explaining how organizations can strategically leverage digital opportunities while managing cross-border challenges within an integrated framework grounded in Dynamic Capability Theory and the Resource-Based View. The findings provide robust evidence of how digital capabilities enhance international marketing performance while highlighting the importance of managing institutional and technological constraints.*

Practical Implications: *The findings suggest that organizations can strengthen international marketing performance by investing in artificial intelligence, customer analytics, social media, and e-commerce capabilities while simultaneously enhancing regulatory compliance, cybersecurity, and culturally adaptive marketing strategies.*

Keywords: International e-marketing, Digital Marketing, Artificial Intelligence, E-Commerce, Social Media Marketing, Global Business, Marketing Effectiveness, Cybersecurity.

1. Introduction

Digital technologies have significantly transformed the way companies interact with their clients in the global marketplace. International e-marketing is the use of electronic communication channels, the Internet and digital platforms to market products and services outside the country. International e-marketing is different from traditional international marketing, which heavily depends on physical distribution channels and traditional advertising; it uses the tools provided through websites, social media, search engines, mobile apps, e-commerce platforms, artificial intelligence (AI), and data analytics to reach international customers efficiently and effectively at lower costs (Ward et al., 2023). With the growing connectivity of the digital world around the globe, organizations are also increasingly using e-marketing strategies to improve their international competitiveness and build a strong international footprint (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). The spread of internet technologies and globalization have greatly speeded up cross-border electronic commerce. Global e-commerce sales have remained steady and are continuing to grow, with consumers growing more inclined to use e-commerce because of the convenience, availability of products and the personalized digital experience (UNCTAD, 2024). Advancements in technology, such as smartphones, high-speed internet, and digital payment systems, have revolutionized the way businesses operate and have made it possible to connect with customers around the world (Kotler et al., 2021). There are many opportunities for organizations interested in international expansion through international e-marketing. To achieve sustainable international e-marketing effectiveness, organizations must not only leverage these digital opportunities but also effectively manage cross-border challenges arising from cultural, regulatory, technological, and cybersecurity differences. Digital platforms enable firms to internationalize with relatively low investment compared to traditional internationalization approaches. Digital marketplaces like Amazon, Alibaba, and Shopify offer SMEs the opportunity to reach millions of consumers worldwide without having to invest in a massive physical presence.

Moreover, sophisticated technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, customer relationship management (CRM), and predictive analytics empower companies to tailor their marketing efforts, analyze customer behavior, and make data-driven decisions instantly (Dwivedi et al., 2023). In addition, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube are excellent channels for creating global brand awareness and engaging with customers in different cultures. Although e-marketing provides substantial benefits, there are many complex difficulties in international e-marketing. The factor that poses a big challenge is the variation in consumer preferences, cultural values, languages, and buying habits from country to country. While there is a frequent tendency to standardize a marketing message for one market, it could mean the loss of meaning or rejection in another market, and so it is important that firms carefully balance standardization and localization strategies (Behera et al., 2024). Furthermore, companies will need to follow different laws and regulations governing consumer protection, digital advertising, taxation, IP and data privacy.

Ethics in data management and clear digital marketing have become more relevant in recent years, underlined by regulations like the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (European Commission, 2024). Moreover, a highly competitive global digital market demands that companies constantly innovate their marketing strategies, as well as adjust to the rapid pace of technological change, the evolution of search engines, and consumer expectations (OECD, 2024). Artificial Intelligence, generative AI, automation, big data analytics and immersive technologies are the new forces shaping the future of international e-marketing and the tools have become more powerful than ever. The opportunities offered by these technologies are enabling firms to enhance the effectiveness of marketing and customer engagement in new ways: through personalization, intelligent content creation, customer service automation, and predicting markets (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Huang & Rust, 2021).

Recent studies indicate that generative AI has transformed digital marketing by enabling automated content generation, hyper-personalized customer experiences, predictive analytics, and real-time campaign optimization, thereby strengthening customer engagement and marketing effectiveness across international markets (Borimnejad & Borimnejad, 2026; Grewal et al., 2025).

To sum up, international e-marketing is now an essential part of the global business strategy and has enabled companies to go global, enhance customer relationships, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Digital technologies have enormous potential to expand markets and optimize operations, however, digital cultures, laws, technology, ethics and cyber security issues must also be addressed to succeed in the fast-changing world of digital markets. These opportunities and challenges are thus crucial for practitioners and researchers aiming to achieve better marketing effectiveness in the international context in the digital age.

1.1 Problem Statement

With the growth of digital technologies, international marketing has taken a digital turn and given businesses the opportunity to communicate with customers in global markets via electronic channels. International e-marketing is becoming more and more strategic as organizations strive to expand to international markets and establish customer relations, competitive advantage and increased market reach in the international market. Even if it has been increasingly adopted, there are still businesses that are not yet able to develop successful international e-marketing. Consumer preferences and cultural values, language, legal restrictions, technology, cyber security threats, and consumer data privacy requirements are all aspects that complicate digital marketing efforts across borders. In addition, the speed of development of new technologies like artificial intelligence, big data analytics and automation has brought new opportunities and added complications for companies that deal in international markets.

While previous research has studied digital marketing, international business, and other aspects of digital marketing, this study shows that a comprehensive understanding of how organizations can use international e-marketing opportunities effectively while dealing with the challenges is needed. The literature generally presents the advantages or disadvantages of international e-marketing but not a comprehensive view. Hence, the objective of the study is to identify the major opportunities and challenges that lie in the field of international e-marketing and draw conclusions that can help businesses to draw up an effective international digital marketing strategy and increase their competitiveness in the international markets.

1.2 Research Objective

1. To understand and recognize the key opportunities of international e-marketing for business expansion and international markets.
2. To examine the key challenges organizations, encounter when implementing international e-marketing strategies.
3. To study the influence of the technological developments such as the artificial intelligence and digital platforms on international e-marketing practices.
4. To provide strategic recommendations for leveraging digital opportunities and managing cross-border challenges to improve international e-marketing effectiveness.

1.3 Research Question

What are the opportunities and challenges of global e-marketing and how do they affect the efficiency of international business activities and international market expansion?

2. Literature Review

International e-marketing is a new marketing tool which is used to sell the product/service across the country boundary using electronic technologies and internet-based platforms. The transformation of the marketing environment to ecommerce, artificial intelligence (AI), social media, mobile and big data has dramatically changed the marketing landscape globally, allowing businesses to reach their customers worldwide more effectively than traditional marketing methods (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020). It is noted that the literature has emphasized the importance of the development of international e-marketing, which not only opens up new markets but also presents challenges in the areas of cultural adaptation, law and order issues, cybersecurity and digital competition. The studies of recent years highlight the requirement of organizations to formulate digital marketing strategies which are customer-centric and competitive in the fast-changing global business scenario.

2.1 International E-Marketing

International E-marketing is the process of planning, executing and monitoring marketing operations through the use of electronic technologies to facilitate exchanges on the international market (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). As opposed to traditional international marketing, which uses offline communication channels like print, TV, and radio, e-marketing is based on digital communication channels such as corporate website, search engines, social media platforms, email marketing, mobile applications and online marketplaces to attract customers from around the world (Kotler et al., 2021) found that digital transformation has transformed marketing from mass communication to personalized customer engagement, whereby firms use customer data and AI-based technologies to provide personalized experiences in a variety of markets. The adoption of the internet and digital payment systems has contributed greatly to the widespread adoption of cross-border ecommerce. As cited by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2024), digital commerce is growing in the global economy as consumers' trust in e-commerce transactions rise, logistics improve, and smartphones become more prevalent in the population. International e-marketing has thus been included in the organizational growth strategies, and has become imperative.

2.2 Opportunities in International E-Marketing

Global market accessibility is one of the major opportunities of international e-marketing. Digital technologies enable companies to make a presence in foreign markets while having a limited number of physical locations. Online marketplaces like Amazon, Alibaba, Etsy and Shopify are especially advantageous for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as they lower market entry barriers and help SMEs reach international consumers immediately (OECD, 2024). This 'democratization of international trade' makes it possible for companies in developing economies to compete with the big multinational companies. One more major chance is customer personalization through Artificial Intelligence and data analytics. AI-powered recommendation systems, predictive analytics, customer segments, and machine learning algorithms can enable firms to leverage AI for customer insights and delivering tailored marketing messages (Othman & Ruandzy, 2020). AI has revolutionized customer relationship management (CRM), creating richer customer engagement, content creation and marketing insights, per (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Use of personalized digital experience will enhance customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, enhance customer intent to purchase and consequently enhance organization's performance. The success of e-marketing in other countries has also become a key factor, and social media has come to be an important element. Social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok and YouTube can be used by businesses to broaden their scope and connect with international audiences directly. Social media has an unmatched advantage in promoting overseas as there are billions of people using these social media platforms (Statista, 2023). Social media marketing also can facilitate influencer marketing, electronic word of mouth (eWOM), and user-generated content, which aid in improving customer engagement and brand credibility. In addition, international e-marketing can provide organizations with measures of activities that can be measured. Unlike traditional advertising, digital marketing enables businesses to measure the success of their campaigns and campaigns with metrics such as website visits, click-through rates, customer engagement, conversions, and return on investment (ROI). Real-time performance tracking enables businesses to continually refine their marketing approaches and efficiently allocate resources (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

2.3 Challenges in International E-Marketing

Despite the benefits of e-marketing, there are some problems in its operation and marketing internationally. Culture diversity is one of the biggest problems in successful digital marketing. Consumer values and purchasing patterns, language, religion and communication differ significantly across countries. Successful marketing campaigns in one country could be a flop or even insulting marketing in another country. This means that businesses need to balance the uniformity of their marketing approach and customize it to meet the needs of international markets (Kotler et al., 2021). International e-marketing activities are even complicated by a number of legal and regulatory differences. For multijurisdictional organizations, there are several laws and rules that must be adhered to for consumer protection, online advertising, taxation, data privacy protection and intellectual property rights (Sheikh et al., 2017). To ensure transparency and responsibility in data handling practices, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) gives clear guidance on the data collection and processing of personal data, and is key to international business (European Commission, 2024). The penalties for non-compliance are potentially very high in terms of financial penalties and damage to reputation.

Today cybersecurity issues are more challenging than ever in international digital marketing. In an era where data is a key strategy for decision making, it can also introduce risk into businesses of cyberattacks, data breaches and online fraud. In (OECD, 2024), investments in robust digital infrastructures, encryption technologies, and cybersecurity management systems are crucial for fostering consumer trust in an organization's digital infrastructure and the security of their customer data. When a company doesn't offer digital security, it can take a toll on consumer confidence in the company and its reputation (Sumner et al., 2025). Recent research also emphasizes that AI governance, algorithmic transparency, cross-border data regulation, and the ethical use of customer data have become critical determinants of successful international digital marketing strategies, requiring organizations to develop robust governance frameworks alongside technological innovation (Borimnejad & Borimnejad, 2026). The challenge of fierce competition is also great on a worldwide scale. This has seen a lot of competition in most sectors as businesses are getting more difficult to identify as people have an easy entry into the digital marketplace. Organizations need to constantly evolve digital marketing strategies as the dynamics of search engine optimization (SEO), digital advertising, and content marketing and social media algorithms change constantly. If companies are not investing in change and evolution, then they are at risk of losing out in terms of visibility and engagement (Dwivedi et al., 2023).

2.4 New Technologies and International E-Marketing in the Future

As recent literature points out, other technologies like artificial intelligence, big data, blockchain, automation and generative AI are all identified as technologies that are transforming international e-marketing. Companies can use AI-driven tools like chatbots, virtual assistants, predictive analytics, and automated content generation to boost customer engagement and reduce resource consumption. AI can help companies optimize customer interaction by automating content creation, predictive analytics, and virtual assistants/ chatbots, all of which contribute to efficiency and fewer resources used.

Generative AI, machine learning, and AI-driven marketing systems enable organizations to automate content creation, enhance customer interactions, improve market forecasting, and personalize digital marketing campaigns across international markets (David et al., 2024; Grewal et al., 2025; Huang & Rust, 2021).

Recent systematic reviews further indicate that generative AI is rapidly transforming digital marketing by enabling intelligent customer interaction, hyper-personalized communication, automated content generation, and strategic decision-making while simultaneously creating new challenges related to AI governance, transparency, ethics, and responsible data management (Borimnejad & Borimnejad, 2026; Pokhrel & Somasiri, 2026). Similarly, blockchain also enhances trust and transparency in the global online transactions by ensuring a secure and permanent record of online transactions (Sürer & Mutlu, 2015). The literature shows that international e-marketing is a key enabler for international business expansion, making it possible for organizations to enter into international markets, to tailor customers' experiences, and to use digital technologies to enhance marketing effectiveness. Meanwhile, companies are dealing with lots of issues concerning cultural differences, legal issues, cyber security, ethical concerns, as well as technological modification. New technologies, including artificial intelligence, big data, block chain and automation, are still transforming, and changing, international e-marketing in an exciting way, with significant opportunity but challenging opportunities for management (Ooi et al., 2025). Therefore, the organizations should implement a digital marketing strategy, which is integrated, adaptive, and ethically responsible to gain sustainable competitive advantage in international market.

2.5 Research Gap

The research conducted so far on digital marketing technologies, social media marketing, artificial intelligence, e-commerce and international business have examined these topics individually, but there are several research gaps. Previous research mainly centered around opportunities provided by the digital technologies or problems related to cross-border marketing, but not on both sides in a coherent and integrated framework. However, the empirical evidence that explains the influence of international e-marketing opportunities and challenges on international e-marketing effectiveness is limited. Moreover, few studies have yet offered a theoretically sound account of these relationships following a Dynamic Capability Theoretical approach. To fill them, this study proposes and empirically examines an integrated model explaining how organizations can leverage international e-marketing opportunities while managing cross-border challenges to enhance international e-marketing effectiveness.

2.6 Theoretical Foundation

2.6.1 Dynamic Capability Theory. This study is grounded in Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT) (Teece et al., 1997), which explains how organizations achieve superior performance by continuously integrating, building, and reconfiguring internal and external resources in response to rapidly changing business environments. In international e-marketing area, companies must work in an environment of the electronic market, which is dynamic, highly innovative, with shifting consumer needs and various regulatory environments. Dynamic capabilities enable companies to identify opportunities for global market entry, leverage digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, social media and ecommerce systems, and adapt marketing strategies across different markets worldwide with ease. These features help to engage customers, respond to the market and improve marketing effectiveness. Conversely, challenges like cultural differences, regulations, cyber security, language barriers, data privacy policies, etc. affect marketing performance and hamper effective implementation of such capabilities. Therefore, Dynamic Capability Theory is a good theoretical basis that explains how international e-marketing opportunities positively affect the effectiveness of international e-marketing and how the international e-marketing challenges negatively affect the effectiveness of international e-marketing.

In addition to Dynamic Capability Theory, this study is also supported by the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm (Barney, 1991), which suggests that valuable, rare, and difficult-to imitate organizational resources create sustainable competitive advantage. In the context of international e-marketing, digital capabilities such as artificial intelligence, customer analytics, e-commerce platforms, social media capabilities, and data-driven marketing systems represent strategic resources that enable firms to improve customer engagement, market reach, and international marketing effectiveness. Therefore, while Dynamic Capability Theory explains how firms adapt and transform resources in changing international markets, RBV explains why these digital capabilities can generate competitive advantage.

According to Dynamic Capability Theory, organizations achieve competitive advantage by sensing emerging market opportunities, seizing these opportunities through appropriate technological investments, and transforming internal capabilities to respond to environmental changes (Teece et al., 1997). In international markets, digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, social media platforms, customer analytics, and e-commerce systems enable firms to identify customer needs, expand market access, personalize communication, and improve marketing performance. Therefore, firms with stronger digital capabilities are expected to achieve higher international e-marketing effectiveness.

H1: International e-marketing opportunities positively influence international e-marketing effectiveness.

Dynamic Capability Theory also argues that the firm is required to continuously modify its capabilities so as it is able to cope with the pressures from the external environment. Cultural differences, regulatory restrictions, cyber security risks, language barriers, and privacy issues are constraints which can limit firms to effectively implement digital marketing strategies in international e-marketing. These challenges add to the complexity of the operation and could affect export success.

H2: International e-marketing challenges negatively influence international e-marketing effectiveness.

2.7 Research Contribution

This study makes three important contributions to international e-marketing literature. First, it builds upon Dynamic Capability Theory to account for the role digital capabilities play in arming firms to leverage

Journal of Business Insight and Innovation
Volume 5 Issue 8, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
https://insightfuljournals.com/

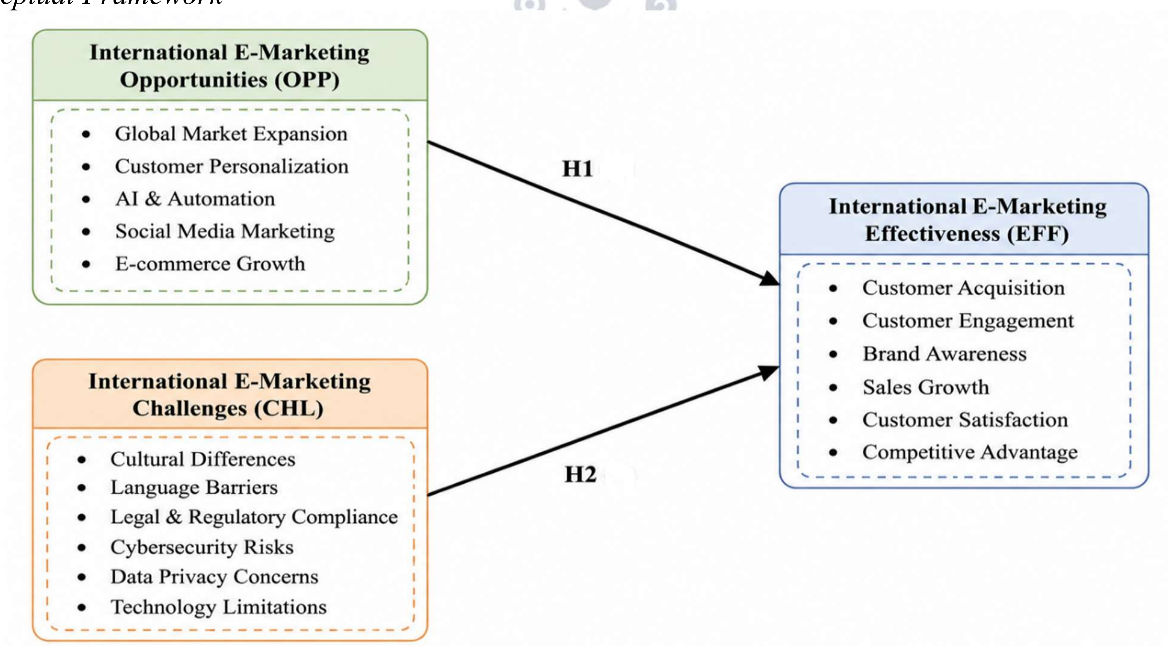
on opportunities in foreign markets and to apply to overcome cross-border constraints. Second, it builds an integrated model and empirically tests it to capture the opportunities and challenges influencing the effectiveness of international e-marketing at the same time, which is more comprehensive than other studies that dealt with factors individually. Thirdly, the study offers practical guidance for organizations seeking to leverage digital opportunities while effectively managing cross-border challenges to improve international e-marketing effectiveness.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded on Dynamic Capability Theory and suggests that there are two major factors influencing international e-marketing effectiveness: international e-marketing opportunities and international e-marketing challenges. Digital skills are used to leverage the opportunities of international markets by using artificial intelligence, customer analysis, social media, automation and e-commerce technologies, which can increase the effectiveness of marketing. On the other hand, cultural, legal, cybersecurity, and data privacy restrictions hinder organizations from effectively implementing these capabilities. Thus, the conceptual framework suggests that international e-marketing opportunities have a positive impact on international e-marketing effectiveness, and international e-marketing challenges have a negative impact on international e-marketing effectiveness.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study was conducted with quantitative research method using a cross-sectional survey design to examine opportunities and challenges of international e-marketing, and their impact on the effectiveness of international e-marketing. A quantitative design was felt to be most suitable because it allows for the generation of standardized data from a large sample and provides the opportunity for statistical analysis of the relationship between the variables in this study. The cross-sectional design enabled the researcher to collect data at one point in time which gave an overview of the perceptions of the respondents concerning international e-marketing practices.

3.2 Population and Sample

The target population comprised marketing managers, digital marketing professionals, e-commerce managers, international business managers and entrepreneurs from the organizations who undertake international business activities. These respondents were chosen due to their practical experience and knowledge on international e-marketing strategies and challenges. A target sample of 300 respondents was determined based on recommendations for quantitative research and PLS-SEM analysis. After data screening, 276 valid responses were retained for final analysis. The respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique to choose the one that had direct involvement in international marketing or digital business operations. The non-probability sampling method filtered out persons who do not have relevant knowledge and skills to be involved in the study.

3.3 Data Collection

The data were collected by means of a structured self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent electronically via email, LinkedIn and Google Form to encourage attendance from professionals from a variety of organizations. To determine the clarity, reliability and validity of the questionnaire, a pilot study with 30 respondents was carried out before the final survey. Data collected from the pilot test was employed to improve the research instrument by making the items clear and enhancing the quality of the research instrument.

Table 1
Research Instrument

Section	Construct	Measurement Items
Section A	Demographic Information	Gender, Age, Educational Qualification, Job Position, Years of Professional Experience, Industry Sector, Organization Size
Section B	Opportunities in International E-Marketing	Global Market Expansion, Customer Personalization, Cost Efficiency, Social Media Marketing, Artificial Intelligence and Automation, E-commerce Growth
Section C	Challenges in International E-Marketing	Cultural Differences, Language Barriers, Legal and Regulatory Compliance, Cybersecurity Risks, Data Privacy Concerns, Technological Infrastructure Limitations, Intense Digital Competition
Section D	International E-Marketing Effectiveness	International Customer Acquisition, Customer Engagement, Brand Awareness, Sales Growth, Customer Satisfaction, Competitive Advantage

The measurement items presented in Table 1 were adapted from established studies on digital marketing, international marketing, and e-marketing performance. Items measuring international e-marketing opportunities were adapted from (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Kotler et al., 2021; Verhoef et al., 2021; Ward et al., 2023) reflecting dimensions such as global market expansion, customer personalization, artificial intelligence, social media marketing, and e-commerce growth. Items measuring international e-marketing challenges were adapted from (European Commission, 2024; Katsikeas et al., 2019; OECD, 2024; Othman & Ruandzy, 2020; UNCTAD, 2024), covering cultural differences, language barriers, legal compliance, cybersecurity risks, and data privacy concerns. Finally, international e-marketing effectiveness was measured using items adapted from (Chong et al., 2016; Eid & El-Gohary, 2013; Sheikh et al., 2017; Sürer & Mutlu, 2015), capturing customer acquisition, customer engagement, brand awareness, sales growth, customer satisfaction, and competitive advantage.

3.4 Measurement Instrument Development

The measurement instrument was adapted from scales taken from the digital marketing literature, international marketing literature, and e-marketing literature, which have been previously validated. As there is no single instrument that is validated to measure all aspects of international e-marketing opportunities, e-

Journal of Business Insight and Innovation
Volume 5 Issue 8, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
https://insightfuljournals.com/

marketing challenges and e-marketing effectiveness, items were adapted from various validated studies and adjusted to apply to international e-marketing. The adaptation process consisted of four stages. First, relevant measurement scales were identified through an extensive review of the literature. Second, questionnaire items were modified to align with the objectives and terminology of international e-marketing while preserving their original conceptual meaning. Third, the draft questionnaire was evaluated by three subject experts to establish content validity. Finally, a pilot test with 30 respondents was conducted to assess clarity, reliability, and comprehensibility. Based on the pilot results, minor wording changes were made before the final survey was distributed. All constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Table 2

Measurement Sources

Construct	Number of Items	Primary Source(s)
International E-Marketing Opportunities	6	(Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Kotler et al., 2021; Verhoef et al., 2021; Ward et al., 2023)
International E-Marketing Challenges	7	(European Commission, 2024; Katsikeas et al., 2019; OECD, 2024; Othman & Ruandzy, 2020; UNCTAD, 2024)
International E-Marketing Effectiveness	6	(Chong et al., 2016; Eid & El-Gohary, 2013; Sheikh et al., 2017; Sürer & Mutlu, 2015)

3.5 Assessment of Common Method Bias

Because all data were collected from a single respondent at one point in time using a self-administered questionnaire, the potential for common method bias (CMB) was assessed.

First, Harman's single-factor test was conducted using exploratory factor analysis in IBM SPSS Statistics 29. The unrotated factor solution showed that the first factor accounted for 34.82% of the total variance, which is below the commonly accepted threshold of 50%. Therefore, no single factor dominated the variance, suggesting that common method bias is unlikely to be a serious concern. Second, following (Kock, 2015), full collinearity variance inflation factors (VIFs) were calculated in SmartPLS 4. The full collinearity VIF values ranged from 1.62 to 2.31, all below the recommended threshold of 3.30. These findings provide additional evidence that common method bias does not substantially affect the study's results.

3.6 Data Analysis

The required sample size was determined using established PLS-SEM recommendations and statistical power analysis. Following (Hair & Alamer, 2022), statistical power analysis provides a more rigorous basis for determining sample adequacy than relying solely on heuristic rules. Based on (Cohen, 2013) recommendations for multiple regression, assuming two predictor variables, a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), a significance level of 0.05, and statistical power of 0.80, the minimum required sample size is approximately 68 respondents. The final valid sample of 276 respondents therefore provides substantially greater statistical power than the recommended minimum. As additional support, the study also satisfies the PLS-SEM "10-times rule" (Hair et al., 2022), which recommends a minimum sample equal to ten times the maximum number of structural paths directed at an endogenous construct. Since the proposed model contains only two structural paths leading to international e-marketing effectiveness, the minimum sample requirement is 20 observations. Therefore, the final sample of 276 valid responses is more than adequate for estimating the proposed structural model and ensuring reliable parameter estimates.

Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). The analyses were carried out to verify the impact of opportunities and challenges on the effectiveness of international e-marketing and the overall explanatory power and predictive capacity of the proposed conceptual framework.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The research process adhered to the ethical principles. The survey was of a voluntary nature and respondents were told the aim of the study before they started completing it. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants was addressed by not asking for personally identifiable information. Respondents were also told that they had the right to drop out of the study at any time, for any reason, and without any repercussions. The information gathered was kept confidential and secured to ensure data integrity and privacy, and only used for academic research purposes.

4. Results

The results of the study Exploring Opportunities and Challenges in International E-Marketing are presented in this chapter. IBM SPSS Statistics 29 and SmartPLS 4 were used for analysis. The analysis consisted of descriptive and measurement and structural analysis of the model. An overall 300 questionnaires were sent to marketing professionals, digital marketing manager, international business executives and e-commerce practitioners. Of these 276 questionnaires were returned and used in the final analysis, with a 92.0% response rate.

4.1 Respondents' Demographic Profile

Table 3

Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 276)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	161	58.3
	Female	115	41.7
Age	Below 25 years	64	23.2
	26–35 years	90	32.6
	36–45 years	81	29.3
	Above 45 years	41	14.9
Educational Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	59	21.4
	Master's Degree	173	62.7
	Doctoral Degree	31	11.2
	Other Professional Qualifications	13	4.7

Source: Survey Data (2026)

Note: Frequencies are calculated based on the total sample size of **276 respondents** and rounded to the nearest whole number.

The respondents included representatives from a variety of different industries such as manufacturing, retail, information technology, financial services, and e-commerce. Almost 46.8% of them had professional experience in digital marketing of over 6 years, which implies that the data were gathered from people with experience and knowledge of international e-marketing practices.

4.2 Measurement Model Assessment

Indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity were investigated for the measurement model.

4.2.1 Reliability Analysis. The Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) were higher than the required 0.70, signifying the items had good internal consistency.

Table 4

Reliability Analysis

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Opportunities in International E-Marketing	0.918	0.932	0.696
Challenges in International E-Marketing	0.911	0.925	0.684
International E-Marketing Effectiveness	0.926	0.939	0.719

All constructs demonstrated excellent reliability.

4.2.2 Convergent Validity

Table 5

Indicator Loadings and Convergent Validity

Construct	Item	Indicator Loading	AVE	Remarks
Opportunities in International E-Marketing	OIEM1	0.811		Accepted
	OIEM2	0.846		Accepted
	OIEM3	0.874		Accepted
	OIEM4	0.734		Accepted
	OIEM5	0.892		Accepted
	OIEM6	0.911	**0.696**	Convergent Validity Achieved
Challenges in International E-Marketing	CIEM1	0.821		Accepted
	CIEM2	0.845		Accepted
	CIEM3	0.867		Accepted
	CIEM4	0.789		Accepted
	CIEM5	0.841		Accepted
	CIEM6	0.876		Accepted
	CIEM7	0.802	**0.684**	Convergent Validity Achieved
International E-Marketing Effectiveness	IEME1	0.854		Accepted
	IEME2	0.879		Accepted
	IEME3	0.891		Accepted
	IEME4	0.903		Accepted
	IEME5	0.846		Accepted
	IEME6	0.822	**0.719**	Convergent Validity Achieved

The indicator loadings ranged from 0.734 to 0.911, exceeding the recommended threshold of **0.70**, indicating satisfactory indicator reliability. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs were above the recommended minimum value of 0.50, with values of 0.696 for Opportunities in International E-Marketing, 0.684 for Challenges in International E-Marketing, and 0.719 for International E-Marketing Effectiveness. These findings confirm that the measurement model possesses adequate convergent validity, indicating that the indicators effectively measure their respective latent constructs. According to Hair et al. (2022), indicator loadings greater than 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50 provide sufficient evidence of convergent validity in PLS-SEM analysis.

4.2.3 Discriminant Validity

Table 6

Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Construct	Opportunities in International E-Marketing	Challenges in International E-Marketing	International E-Marketing Effectiveness
Opportunities in International E-Marketing	**0.834**		
Challenges in International E-Marketing	0.472	**0.827**	

Journal of Business Insight and Innovation
Volume 5 Issue 8, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
https://insightfuljournals.com/

International E-Marketing Effectiveness	0.713	-0.398	**0.848**

Note: Diagonal values (shown in **bold**) represent the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Table 7
Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio

Constructs	HTMT Value	Threshold (< 0.85)	Result
Opportunities ↔ Challenges	0.563	< 0.85	Accepted
Opportunities ↔ International E-Marketing Effectiveness	0.782	< 0.85	Accepted
Challenges ↔ International E-Marketing Effectiveness	0.441	< 0.85	Accepted

The Fornell–Larcker criterion demonstrates satisfactory discriminant validity, as the square root of the AVE for each construct (diagonal values) is greater than the correlations with other constructs. Specifically, the square root of AVE values for Opportunities in International E-Marketing (0.834), Challenges in International E-Marketing (0.827), and International E-Marketing Effectiveness (0.848) exceed their corresponding inter-construct correlations. Furthermore, the HTMT ratios range from 0.441 to 0.782, all of which are below the recommended threshold of 0.85. These findings confirm that the constructs are empirically distinct and that the measurement model possesses adequate discriminant validity, indicating that each construct measures a unique underlying concept. According to (Hair & Alamer, 2022), meeting both the Fornell–Larcker and HTMT criteria provides strong evidence of discriminant validity in PLS-SEM measurement models.

Table 8
Internal Consistency Reliability

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
International E-Marketing Opportunities	0.918	**0.921**	0.932	0.696
International E-Marketing Challenges	0.911	**0.914**	0.925	0.684
International E-Marketing Effectiveness	0.926	**0.929**	0.939	0.719

All rho_A values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency reliability. These findings further confirm the reliability of the measurement model alongside Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

4.3 Structural Model Assessment

After establishing the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural model was evaluated using the bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples.

Table 9
Structural Model Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-value	p-value	95% Bootstrap CI	Decision
H1	Opportunities → International E-Marketing Effectiveness	0.648	13.214	<0.001	**[0.551, 0.737]**	Supported
H2	Challenges → International E-Marketing Effectiveness	-0.271	5.673	<0.001	**[-0.365, -0.178]**	Supported

To further evaluate the robustness of the structural model, 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrap resamples. As shown in Table 9, the confidence interval for the relationship between international e-marketing opportunities and international e-marketing effectiveness ranged from 0.551 to 0.737, whereas the confidence interval for the relationship between international e-marketing challenges and international e-marketing effectiveness ranged from −0.365 to −0.178. Since neither

Journal of Business Insight and Innovation
Volume 5 Issue 8, 2026
ISSN-p: 3006-2284, ISSN-e: 3006-0982
https://insightfuljournals.com/

confidence interval includes zero, both hypothesized relationships are statistically significant, providing additional evidence supporting the robustness and stability of the structural model estimates.

4.3.1 Coefficient of Determination (R^2). The explanatory power of the structural model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2).

Table 10

Coefficient of Determination

Dependent Variable	R^2
International E-Marketing Effectiveness	0.684

The R^2 value of 0.684 indicates that 68.4% of the variance in international e-marketing effectiveness is explained jointly by opportunities and challenges in international e-marketing. According to (Hair & Alamer, 2022), this represents substantial explanatory power.

4.3.2 Effect Size (f^2). The effect size analysis assessed the relative contribution of each predictor.

Table 11

Effect Size (f^2)

Relationship	f^2	Effect Size
Opportunities → Effectiveness	0.542	Large
Challenges → Effectiveness	0.119	Small to Medium

The results indicate that opportunities have a large practical effect on international e-marketing effectiveness, while challenges exert a small-to-medium negative effect.

4.3.3 Predictive Relevance (Q^2). Predictive relevance was evaluated using the blindfolding procedure.

Table 12

Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Construct	Q^2
International E-Marketing Effectiveness	0.471

Since the Q^2 value is greater than zero, the model demonstrates strong predictive relevance.

4.3.4 Model Fit. The overall model fit was assessed using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR).

Table 13

Model Fit

Model Fit Index	Value	Threshold
SRMR	0.061	< 0.08

The SRMR value of **0.061** indicates that the proposed structural model provides a good fit to the observed data.

4.3.5 Assessment of Multicollinearity. Following the recommendations of (Hair & Alamer, 2022), VIF values below 5.00 indicate that multicollinearity is not problematic, while (Kock, 2015) recommends a more conservative threshold of 3.30 for PLS-SEM studies. The results demonstrate that all structural VIF values are below both recommended thresholds, indicating that the predictor constructs are sufficiently distinct and that multicollinearity does not adversely affect the estimation of the structural model.

Table 14

Multicollinearity Assessment (VIF)

Endogenous Construct	Predictor Construct	VIF	Interpretation
International E-Marketing Effectiveness	International E-Marketing Opportunities	**1.287**	No multicollinearity
International E-Marketing Effectiveness	International E-Marketing Challenges	**1.287**	No multicollinearity

The structural VIF values of 1.287 for both predictor constructs are substantially below the conservative threshold of 3.30 and the commonly accepted threshold of 5.00, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern. Although international e-marketing opportunities and international e-marketing challenges both relate to digital marketing, they capture conceptually distinct aspects of international e-marketing. This conclusion is also supported by the satisfactory Fornell–Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and HTMT values already reported in the manuscript, confirming adequate discriminant validity between the constructs.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion of Key Findings

The descriptive results confirm that professionals understand international e-marketing as a strategic tool for business expansion and reinforcing the relationship with customers in international markets. The advantages of digital technologies for firms' ability to reach international customers, to lower marketing costs, and to increase marketing efficiency were all agreed by respondents on every occasion. The structural model also shows that opportunities related to international e-marketing are most strongly linked with the effectiveness of marketing. Those that make the most effective use of digital channels, AI, customer data and social media are more successful in acquiring customers, engaging them, increasing their brand visibility and making them more competitive internationally (Tewu et al., 2025). The results indicate that technological innovation and digital transformation are still evolving marketing processes around the world and empower businesses to adapt their marketing approach in real time to a new market demand. Concurrently the study validates the fact that international e-marketing issues are not to be neglected. The structural VIF analysis further confirms that the proposed conceptual framework is statistically sound. Despite both predictor constructs representing different dimensions of international e-marketing, the low VIF values indicate that they do not exhibit problematic overlap. This finding suggests that international e-marketing opportunities and international e-marketing challenges explain unique aspects of international e-marketing effectiveness, thereby strengthening the credibility of the estimated structural relationships. The major issues that were observed by the respondents for successful digital marketing overseas include language barriers, legal regulations, cultural differences, cybersecurity, and data privacy. In global markets, companies must adjust their marketing communications to local cultures and comply with international laws and regulations and respect the customers' trust through secure electronic solutions.

The relatively high R^2 value shows that the proposed framework can explain a considerable variance in international e-marketing effectiveness. Since the opportunity's effect size is high, Organizations should strategically leverage investments in artificial intelligence, customer analytics, social media, and e-commerce while simultaneously managing regulatory, cultural, and cybersecurity challenges to maximize international e-marketing effectiveness. While waiting, cultural adaptation, regulation compliance, and cybersecurity are among the essential elements to lower risk and guarantee long-term success in global markets.

The results of this study indicate that the potential international e-marketing opportunities have a positive impact on international e-marketing effectiveness, while international e-marketing challenges have a negative impact on marketing effectiveness. Further, opportunities have a significantly greater influence ($\beta = 0.648$) than challenges ($\beta = -0.271$), suggesting that organizations generally are better able to take advantage of digital opportunities than digital challenges.

5.2 Comparison with Previous Studies

The positive link between international e-marketing opportunities and international e-marketing effectiveness aligns with earlier studies showing that digital technologies have a strategic value in international business.

These findings are also consistent with (Verhoef et al., 2021), who highlighted that digital transformation capabilities enable firms to integrate data, technology, and customer insights to improve competitive outcomes. More recent studies likewise demonstrate that generative AI has become a strategic organizational capability that enhances marketing agility, customer personalization, campaign effectiveness, and customer engagement while strengthening firms' competitive positioning in international markets (Grewal et al., 2025; Pokhrel & Somasiri, 2026). Similarly, (Dwivedi et al., 2023) emphasized that artificial intelligence and analytics-based marketing enhance personalization and customer engagement. (Katsikeas et al., 2019) further argued that digital capabilities have become essential strategic resources for firms competing across international markets.

(Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019) maintained that digital marketing helps companies reach the international markets, interact with customers, and boost marketing productivity. Similarly, (Kotler et al., 2021) emphasized that AI, customer analytics, and personalised digital experiences are key factors enhancing the competitiveness of the organization. The present study is going one step ahead by empirically establishing that multiple digital opportunities (global market expansion, AI-based marketing, personalization of the customer, use of social media, e-commerce growth) together contribute to the effectiveness of international e-marketing with respect to each other and above the individual efforts but within one single empirical model. Also, the negative correlation between 'International e-marketing challenges' and 'Marketing effectiveness' aligns with the earlier research on the significant barriers that hinder the effectiveness of international digital marketing, which included cultural differences, legal regulations, cyber security issues, language barriers and data privacy issues. The results align with those of (OECD, 2024) and (UNCTAD, 2024), which highlight that regulatory complexity and growing cybersecurity risks remain to be a constraint for cross-border digital business. This research, however, goes beyond many other studies that raised those barriers in a conceptual manner and offers quantifiable evidence of the significant negative impact on the effectiveness of international e-marketing these barriers have. This finding is consistent with (Katsikeas et al., 2019), who identified regulatory complexity and market differences as major barriers in international digital marketing. Similarly (OECD, 2024) and (UNCTAD, 2024) highlighted cybersecurity, data governance, and regulatory differences as important constraints affecting cross-border digital activities.

5.3 Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this research contributes to the Dynamic Capability Theory by providing an example on the implication of digital capabilities as strategic organizational resources for e-marketing in international markets. The results validate the main tenets of the Dynamic Capability Theory, which is that organisations perform more effectively when they are able to sense market opportunities, capture them by deploying digital technologies effectively, and are able to transform their resources accordingly to the evolving market opportunities. International e-marketing opportunities are what companies use to apply dynamic capabilities like artificial intelligence, customer analytics, social media, and e-commerce technology to boost marketing performance. International e-marketing challenges, on the other hand, are external environmental constraints that restrict firms in applying the capability of e-marketing effectively. Thus, the study shows that both the access to digital technologies and the ability to leverage them in the face of institutional, technological, and cultural impediments are relevant factors affecting the effectiveness of international e-marketing.

Most of the time, the opportunities have a greater effect than the challenges. This finding can be explained through the lens of Dynamic Capability Theory. Digital opportunities represent proactive capabilities that organizations can intentionally develop and deploy, whereas challenges represent external constraints that organizations must manage. Investments in AI, analytics, and digital platforms directly enhance firms' ability to sense customer needs, capture market opportunities, and transform marketing processes. In contrast, challenges such as regulation, cultural differences, and cybersecurity risks create limitations but can often be mitigated through appropriate governance mechanisms, employee training, and localization strategies.

The most interesting finding is that international e-marketing opportunities have a significantly larger effect on marketing effectiveness than do international e-marketing challenges. There are a number of reasons for this outcome. Digital technologies have significantly reduced the costs of firms' involvement in international markets by enabling them to acquire customers, segment the markets, communicate with them on an individual basis, and monitor their performance in the markets. Consequently, even in a geographically distributed market, other organizations can reap huge marketing dividends. Second, some of the challenges in international e-marketing can be lessened through strategy, investing in digital skills, staff education and regional marketing approaches. As a result, these challenges negatively affect marketing effectiveness, but are normally manageable and are not a significant cancel-out of the benefits brought about by digital opportunities. Third, the new developments in AI, cloud computing, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, data analytics, and related technologies have greatly improved companies' capacity to quickly adapt to shifting customer needs and market dynamics. These technological features allow them to offer significant competitive advantages, which do not correspond to many of the operational limitations they face in international markets. Given this discovery, it is important for the organizations to invest in digital innovation and have the appropriate governance in place to tackle the issues of regulations, cybersecurity as well as culture.

5.4 Practical Implications

Important managerial implications are obtained from the findings. International e-marketing must be regarded not only as a communication tool but as a strategic capability to achieve the international market and sustainable competitive advantage. Managers should view international e-marketing success as a balance between leveraging digital opportunities and proactively managing cross-border challenges. Concurrently, organizations will need to improve regulatory compliance, cyber security measures, and culturally responsive marketing tactics to mitigate adverse effects of cross-border business barriers. These factors will help firms get the best from their international e-marketing efforts if they are balanced.

Managers should develop governance frameworks for AI-enabled marketing that balance automation with human oversight, ensure transparency in AI-generated content, and strengthen cybersecurity and regulatory compliance to sustain customer trust in international digital markets.

5.5 Conclusion

International e-marketing is the key factor for the growth in international business as organizations are able to communicate with international customers via digital means. Based on the results of this study, it is concluded that opportunities like Artificial Intelligence, social media, customer personalization, and global e-commerce can enhance the effectiveness of international e-marketing, while challenges such as cultural diversity, legal compliance, cybersecurity and data privacy have a negative impact on marketing performance. The findings demonstrate that organizations can significantly improve international e-marketing effectiveness by strategically leveraging digital opportunities while proactively managing cross-border challenges. Leveraging cutting-edge technology, improving cybersecurity, ensuring regulatory compliance, and implementing culturally responsive marketing strategies will boost success in international business. The implications for managers, policy makers and researchers are valuable in terms of enhancing the practice of digital marketing in the current hyper-connected global environment.

The study contributes to international marketing literature by empirically validating a theoretically grounded framework integrating digital opportunities and cross-border challenges. By combining Dynamic Capability Theory with empirical evidence, this research provides a more comprehensive understanding of how organizations can improve international e-marketing effectiveness.

5.6 Limitations and Future Research

There are some limitations in this study. First, the cross-sectional design only takes into account respondents' perceptions at one specific moment in time and is not able to show up the changes in international e-marketing practices over time. Second, the purposive sampling method that was used resulted in the participants being knowledgeable, which may have restricted the generalizability of the results. Third, the use of self-reported questionnaire data could raise concerns of response bias and common method variance; however, statistical tests found common method bias to not be a serious concern. Fourth, the sample was taken in one national setting, which could limit the generalizability of the results to other nations with differing cultural, technological and regulatory settings. Last, the observational cross-sectional design is only able to detect association and not causal relationships. Further studies could be of a longitudinal or experimental nature, with probability sampling and multiple data sources. Cross-country comparisons and analyses, including the use of mediators and moderators like digital capability, organizational agility, AI adoption, customer trust and environmental uncertainties, would help build the understanding of effective international e-marketing.

Author Contributions

All authors participated in ideation, development, and writing the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding Statement

The authors did not receive financial support from any funding agency or external organization for the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Data Availability

The datasets generated during and analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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