



Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management.

L Vos

 orcid.org/0009-0009-97009-8965

Dissertation accepted for the degree *Master of Arts* in
Communication at the North-West University

Supervisor: Prof L. Holtzhausen

Co-supervisor: Ms R. Isaacs

Graduation: May 2026

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To all the people who, through their support and encouragement, helped to ensure the completion of this study, thank you. In particular, I would like to mention the following people who proved to be invaluable to me throughout the study:

My supervisor, Prof. Lida Holtzhausen, for the time, insight and guidance offered throughout the research process. Your support and understanding were instrumental in helping me reach this point.

My co-supervisor, Ms Rethabile Isaacs, for your assistance, dedication and valuable input that strengthened this study.

My parents and my sister, who have been by my side from the very beginning. Thank you for believing in me, supporting me and constantly reminding me that I could complete this journey.

My husband, thank you for the late-night encouragements, the refreshments brought with love and for keeping things running at home so that I could focus on my dream. Your patience and support sustained me in ways words can hardly express.

Dr Erika Fourie from Statistical Consultation, for your professional guidance and assistance in analysing the data with clarity and precision.

Mrs Petra Gainsford, for the diligent numbering of the dissertation documents.

Prof. Santisa Viljoen, for your careful and insightful language editing, which contributed greatly to the quality of this dissertation.

Above all, I want to thank YHVH, my source of strength and courage, for sustaining me throughout this journey.

“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.”

Isaiah 40:31

ABSTRACT

The dynamic and competitive nature of the Rooibos industry has created increasing marketing and communication challenges for organisations such as Rooibos Limited (Rooibos Ltd). Operating alongside various members of the South African Rooibos Council (SARC), Rooibos Ltd should continuously revise their way of communication and marketing efforts to differentiate itself to sustain its position in both local and international markets. The organisation's focus is on enhancing the production, processing and global marketing of its unique rooibos products, while ensuring value for its stakeholders. Customers are a central stakeholder group, as their buying behaviour directly influences organisational sustainability. The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic's social-distancing regulations, implemented in 2020 and parts of 2021, significantly affected how Rooibos Ltd traditionally communicated with customers and encouraged the organisation to adapt to new digital marketing practices.

Although previous research has explored themes related to digital marketing, communication management and branding (Cant *et al.*, 2025; Chaffey Ellis-Chadwick, 2022; Iglesias *et al.*, 2022; Pollák & Markovič, 2022), this study is unique its focus on Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management efforts within the specialised contexts of the South African rooibos sector. While similarities exist between this study and earlier literature on digital marketing and branding. The distinction lies in examining how Rooibos Ltd managed its digital marketing and corporate brand management during a period of rapid environmental and technological change. The study specifically considers how external influences, especially the Covid-19 pandemic-related restrictions, shaped the organisation's digital communication with customers.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine what Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management approach should entail to attract, inform and engage customers in a changing communication environment. This purpose was established within a literature-based framework, supported by theories related to digital marketing and corporate brand management principles. The study considered how digital marketing elements (websites, search engine optimisation, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media and online advertising) assist organisations in reaching, interacting with and converting customers; digital marketing management; and the value of digital marketing for organisations, such as Rooibos Ltd. The study also considered corporate brand elements – vision, mission and corporate brand promise, corporate visual identities, corporate cultures, corporate images, stakeholders and corporate communication – corporate brand management and strategic values of corporate brand management.

The findings indicated that Rooibos Ltd employs a digital marketing strategy and plan. The strategy consists of segmentation, target market, positioning and stakeholders, while the plan consisting of situation analysis, objectives, tactics, actions and controls. While digital communication is present within the organisation, the shift to the digital sphere exposed opportunities in the full utilisation of digital marketing tools across Rooibos Ltd's marketing activities. Rooibos Ltd was required to adopt a more integrated digital marketing approach to maintain corporate brand consistency and customer interaction. The organisation also needed to align its mission, culture and corporate visual identity to maintain a coherent and competitive corporate brand.

It is increasingly noticeable that technological advancements, especially in digital marketing platforms, will contribute to play a crucial role in any future digital marketing strategy. This study further illustrates that customers prefer communication channels that allow for quick access to information, personalised interactions and strong corporate brand identification. Therefore, it would be to Rooibos Ltd's advantage to expand and refine its digital marketing strategy and plan, together with their corporate brand management processes to remain competitive and relevant in an evolving digital environment.

KEY TERMS

corporate brand elements; corporate brand management; digital marketing; digital marketing elements; digital marketing management; Rooibos Ltd; Rooibos industry

OPSOMMING

Die dinamiese en mededingende aard van die rooibosbedryf het toenemende bemarkings- en kommunikasie-uitdagings vir organisasies soos Rooibos Beperk (Rooibos Bpk) geskep. Deur saam met verskeie lede van die Suid-Afrikaanse Rooibosraad (SARR) te funksioneer, behoort Rooibos Bpk hul wyse van kommunikasie en bemarking pogings voortdurend te herevalueer om hulself te onderskei en hul posisie in plaaslike en internasionale markte te handhaaf. Die organisasie se hoofdoelwitte fokus op die verbetering van die produksie, asook die verwerking en wêreldwye bemarking van hul unieke rooibosprodukte, terwyl waarde vir belanghebbendes verseker word. Kliënte is 'n sentrale belanghebbende groep, aangesien hul aankoopgedrag die organisasie se volhoubaarheid direk beïnvloed. Die effek van die Covid-19-pandemie se sosiale afstandsregulasies wat in 2020 en dele van 2021 ingestel is, het Rooibos Bpk se tradisionele kommunikasie met kliënte aansienlik beïnvloed en die organisasie aangemoedig om nuwe digitale bemarkingspraktyke te aanvaar.

Alhoewel vorige navorsing temaswat verband hou met digitale bemarking, kommunikasie bestuur en handelsmerk bestuur ondersoek het (Cant *et al.*, 2025; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022; Iglesias *et al.*, 2022; Pollák & Markovič, 2022), is hierdie studie uniek in sy fokus op Rooibos Bpk se digitale bemarking en korporatiewe handelsmerk bestuurspraktyke binne die gespesialiseerde konteks van die Suid-Afrikaanse rooibos sektor. Hoewel daar ooreenkomste bestaan tussen hierdie studie en vroeëre literatuur oor digitale bemarking en handelsmerk bestuur, lê die onderskeid in die ondersoek van hoe Rooibos Bpk digitale bemarking en korporatiewe handelsmerk tydens 'n periode van vinnige omgewings- en tegnologiese verandering, bestuur. Die studie ondersoek spesifiek hoe eksterne invloede, veral die Covid-19-pandemieverwante beperkings, die organisasie se digitale kommunikasie met kliënte beïnvloed het.

Die primêre doel van hierdie studie was om ondersoek in te stel na wat Rooibos Bpk se digitale bemarking en korporatiewe handelsmerk bestuur-benadering behoort te behels ten einde kliënte in 'n veranderende kommunikasie-omgewing te lok, in te lig en te betrek. Die doelwit is nagestreef binne 'n literatuur-gebaseerde raamwerk wat deur teorieë rakende digitale bemarking en korporatiewe handelsmerk bestuursbeginsels ondersteun is. Die studie oorweeg hoe digitale bemarking elemente – webwerwe, soekenjinopimalisering, e-pos bemarking, blogs en potgooi, sosiale media en aanlyn advertensies – organisasies ondersteun om kliënte te bereik, met hulle te kommunikeer en te oorreed, asook digitale bemarkingsbestuur en die waarde van digitale bemarking vir organisasies soos Rooibos Bpk. Die studie ondersoek ook korporatiewe handelsmerk elemente – visie, missie en korporatiewe handelsmerkbelofte, korporatiewe visuele

identiteit, korporatiewe kultuur, korporatiewe beeld, belanghebbendes en korporatiewe kommunikasie – korporatiewe handelsmerk bestuur en die strategiese waarde van handelsmerk bestuur.

Die bevindinge dui aan dat 'n digitale bemarkingstrategie en digitale bemarkingsplan deur Rooibos Bpk benut word, wat 'n strategie insluit wat segmentering, teiken markte, posisionering en belanghebbendes behels en 'n plan wat situasie-analises, doelwitte, taktieke, aksies en beheermaatreëls omvat. Hoewel digitale kommunikasie reeds in die organisasie teenwoordig is, het die skuif na die digitale sfeer geleenthede vir die volledige benutting van digitale bemarking instrumente binne Rooibos Bpk se bemarkingsaktiwiteite blootgelê. Rooibos Bpk behoort 'n meer geïntegreerde digitale bemarkingsbenadering te oorweeg om korporatiewe handelsmerk-konsekwente en kliënte-interaksie te handhaaf. Die organisasie behoort ook sy missie, kultuur en korporatiewe visuele identiteit te belyn om 'n samehangende en mededingende handelsmerk te behou.

Dit word toenemend duidelik dat tegnologiese vooruitgang, veral in digitale bemarkingsplatforms, 'n belangrike rol in enige toekomstige digitale bemarkingstrategie sal speel. Die studie toon verder dat kliënte kommunikasiëkanale verkies wat vinnige toegang tot inligting, persoonlike interaksies en sterk korporatiewe handelsmerkidentifikasie moontlik maak. Dit sal dus tot die voordeel van Rooibos Bpk wees om hul digitale bemarkingstrategie en digitale bemarkingsplan, asook hul korporatiewe handelsmerk bestuursprosesse, uit te brei en te verfyn ten einde mededingend en relevant te bly in 'n ontwikkelende digitale omgewing.

SLEUTELTERME

digitale bemarking; digitale bemarkingselemente; digitale bemarkingsbestuur; korporatiewe handelsmerk elemente; korporatiewe handelsmerkbestuur; Rooibos Bpk; Rooibos industrie

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	I
ABSTRACT	II
OPSOMMING	IV
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT AND PROBLEM STATEMENT	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	3
1.3 GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTION.....	4
1.3.1 Specific research questions	4
1.4 GENERAL RESEARCH OBJECTIVE	4
1.4.1 Specific research objectives	5
1.5 GENERAL GUIDING ARGUMENTS	5
1.6 RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS	6
1.7 RESEARCH METHODS.....	7
1.7.1 Qualitative research methods	7
1.7.2 Quantitative research methods	11
1.8 ETHICAL CLEARANCE.....	12
1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY	13
1.10 CHAPTER LAYOUT.....	13
CHAPTER 2 DIGITAL MARKETING INFORMING CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT	15

2.1	INTRODUCTION	15
2.2	DEFINING DIGITAL MARKETING.....	15
2.2.1	Concept of digital marketing: contextualisation and a general definition	15
2.3	DIGITAL MARKETING ELEMENTS	23
2.3.1	Website	24
2.3.2	Search engine marketing.....	27
2.3.3	Mobile marketing	29
2.3.4	Email marketing.....	30
2.3.5	Blogs and podcasts	32
2.3.6	Social media marketing	33
2.3.7	Online advertising.....	36
2.4	DIGITAL MARKETING MANAGEMENT	38
2.4.1	Digital marketing strategy	39
2.4.2	PR Smith's SOSTAC planning model: Guide to digital marketing plan.....	48
2.5	VALUE OF DIGITAL MARKETING FOR ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS ROOIBOS LTD.....	56
2.5.1	Sell (grow sales)	56
2.5.2	Serve (add value)	56
2.5.3	Speak (get closer to customers)	57
2.5.4	Save costs.....	57
2.5.5	Sizzle (extend the brand online)	57

2.6	CONCLUSION	57
CHAPTER 3 CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT INFORMED BY DIGITAL		
	MARKETING.....	60
3.1	INTRODUCTION	60
3.2	DEFINING CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT	60
3.2.1	Concept of brands: A general definition	60
3.2.2	Defining the corporate brand	63
3.3	CORPORATE BRAND ELEMENTS.....	66
3.3.1	Corporate brand elements as applied in Rooibos Ltd.....	67
3.4	CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT	79
3.4.1	Role of senior management.....	79
3.4.2	Management of employees.....	80
3.4.3	Long-term relationships with stakeholders	80
3.4.4	Consistent corporate communication management	81
3.4.5	Alignment of strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image	82
3.5	STRATEGIC VALUE OF CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT	83
3.5.1	Differentiation	83
3.5.2	Symbolism value	84
3.5.3	Memorising value	84
3.5.4	Corporate brand development	85
3.5.5	Corporate reputation.....	85

3.6	CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT CONCLUSION	86
	CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	89
4.1	INTRODUCTION	89
4.2	THE MULTI-METHOD RESEARCH APPROACH	89
4.2.1	Qualitative approach	90
4.2.2	Quantitative approach	91
4.3	OVERALL RESEARCH DESIGN	92
4.4	RESEARCH METHODS	106
4.4.1	Qualitative research approach	106
4.4.2	Quantitative research approach	113
4.4.3	Validity and reliability	118
4.5	CONCLUSION	118
	CHAPTER 5 ANALYSING ROOIBOS LTD'S MANAGEMENT'S APPROACH TO DIGITAL MARKETING AND CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT	119
5.1	INTRODUCTION	119
5.2	DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF ROOIBOS LTD'S MARKETING DEPARTMENT	120
5.3	ROOIBOS LTD'S DIGITAL MARKETING APPROACH	121
5.3.1	Digital marketing elements	121
5.3.2	Digital marketing strategy and plan	126
5.4	ROOIBOS LTD'S CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH	134
5.4.1	Corporate brand elements	134

5.4.2	Corporate brand management.....	137
5.4.3	Strategic value of corporate brand management for Rooibos Ltd	142
5.5	CONCLUSION	144
CHAPTER 6 CUSTOMER PERCEPTION OF ROOIBOS LTD'S DIGITAL MARKETING AND CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT.....		150
6.1	INTRODUCTION	150
6.2	RESULTS FROM ONLINE SURVEYS	151
6.2.1	Demographic information of the respondents	151
6.2.2	Digital marketing	153
6.2.3	Opinions about Rooibos Ltd's corporate branding	162
6.3	RELIABILITY	166
6.3.1	Factors used.....	167
6.4	INDEPENDENT T-TESTS	168
6.5	ANOVAs	169
6.6	CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE FACTORS	169
6.7	CONCLUSION	171
CHAPTER 7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ROOIBOS LTD'S DIGITAL MARKETING AND CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT.....		173
7.1	INTRODUCTION	173
7.2	CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY.....	174
7.2.1	Conclusion to specific research question 1	174
7.2.2	Conclusion to specific research question 2	177

7.2.3	Conclusion to specific research question 3	178
7.2.4	Conclusion to specific research question 4	182
7.3	ANSWERING THE GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTION.....	185
7.4	ASSESSING ROOIBOS LTD'S DIGITAL MARKETING AND CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PLAN: FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS	190
7.4.1	Recommendations for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing strategy and plan.....	191
7.5	LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	196
	REFERENCES.....	197
	ADDENDUM A: IMAGES OF AUTOMATED MARKETING DATA AND REPORTING PLATFORM	207
	ADDENDUM B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS	208
	ADDENDUM C: ONLINE SURVEY DESIGN	212
	ADDENDUM D: RECRUITMENT LETTER	216
	ADDENDUM E: ROOIBOS LTD'S CUSTOMER RECRUITMENT LETTER.....	219
	ADDENDUM F: ETHICAL APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.....	220
	ADDENDUM G: LETTER FROM THE COPY-EDITOR.....	222

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-1:	Representation of management members interviewed in semi-structured interviews.....	10
Table 2-1:	Traditional vs Digital Marketing	18
Table 4-1:	Research design for literature review	93
Table 4-2:	Research design for semi-structured interviews	98
Table 4-3:	Research design for the online survey	102
Table 4-4:	Representation of management members interviewed in semi-structured interviews.....	107
Table 4-5:	Operational definitions for constructs of digital marketing.....	109
Table 4-6:	Operational definitions of corporate brand management	111
Table 6-1:	Demographic information regarding customers' age, province and device in procession.....	152
Table 6-2:	Customer objectives describing Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing.....	153
Table 6-3:	Digital channels customers are exposed to receiving communication	154
Table 6-4:	Social media platform features that attract customers	155
Table 6-5:	Features that attracted customers to follow social media platforms.....	156
Table 6-6:	Customers' satisfaction with Rooibos Ltd's interactive engagement on digital platforms.....	156
Table 6-7:	Customers' preference regarding information consumption from Rooibos Ltd.....	157
Table 6-8:	Customers' information preference on what they want to see more on social media	158

Table 6-9:	Customers' feedback on how often they prefer to receive emails	159
Table 6-10:	Customers' information preference regarding emails	159
Table 6-11:	Customer digital channel preference for Rooibos Ltd information.....	160
Table 6-12:	Customers' opinion about space for Rooibos Ltd' digital marketing to improve	160
Table 6-13:	Customers' opinion about Rooibos Ltd's corporate branding.....	162
Table 6-14:	Customer opinions about Rooibos Ltd's communication	164
Table 6-15:	Features of Rooibos Ltd that customers value that form a positive corporate image and favourable reputation	165
Table 6-16:	Customers' opinion about Rooibos Ltd's reputation and their satisfaction with corporate brand	165
Table 6-17:	Factors identified as attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation.....	167
Table 6-18:	Effect sizes in a <i>t</i> -test.....	168
Table 6-19:	Effect sizes in a <i>t</i> -test.....	168
Table 6-20:	ANOVA results for age.....	169
Table 6-21:	Correlations between attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation constructs	170
Table 7-1	Key management principles Rooibos Ltd could consider when formulating digital marketing management and corporate brand management (in order of importance)	187
Table 7-2:	Recommendations for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.....	192
Table 7-3:	Digital marketing strategy analysis example.....	192
Table 7-4:	Digital marketing plan informing corporate brand management.....	194

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1	Rooibos Ltd's context: Layout and design	25
Figure 2-2	Rooibos Ltd's content: text, photos and videos.....	25
Figure 2-3	Rooibos Ltd's Communication: Two-way communication information.....	26
Figure 2-4	Rooibos Ltd's community: User-to-user communication through frequently asked questions.....	26
Figure 2-5	Rooibos Ltd's Connection: other site links at the top area	27
Figure 2-6	Rooibos Ltd's SEO appears first in the search of rooibos company.....	28
Figure 2-7	Rooibos Ltd's PPC is active through appearing on top when name is searched	28
Figure 2-8	Rooibos Ltd's Geo location	30
Figure 2-9	Rooibos Ltd's newsletter via email marketing	31
Figure 2-10	Rooibos Ltd's newsletter with email marketing characteristic presentation ...	32
Figure 2-11	Rooibos Ltd's blogs in the news section	33
Figure 2-12	Rooibos Ltd's Instagram page	35
Figure 2-13	Rooibos Ltd's Facebook page	35
Figure 2-14	Rooibos Ltd's YouTube advertising	36
Figure 2-15	Rooibos Ltd's online advertisement via Facebook.....	37
Figure 2-16	Rooibos Ltd's online advertising via Instagram.....	37
Figure 2-17	Rooibos Ltd's online advertisement available on their website	38
Figure 2-18	Rooibos Ltd's context: Segmentation	43
Figure 2-19	Rooibos Ltd's Context: Target marketing.....	45

Figure 2-20	Rooibos Ltd's Context: Positioning	46
Figure 2-21	Rooibos Ltd's strategic connections (adapted from Steyn, 2000)	47
Figure 2-22	Rooibos Ltd's Context: Stakeholders.....	48
Figure 2-23	SOSTAC: The guide to the perfect digital marketing plan.....	50
Figure 3-1	Elements of corporate brand (Author's own interpretation).....	68
Figure 3-2	Rooibos Ltd's vision and mission	70
Figure 3-3	Rooibos Ltd's Corporate brand promise	70
Figure 3-4	Rooibos Ltd's name and what they stand for.....	72
Figure 3-5	Rooibos Ltd's Logo	72
Figure 3-6	Rooibos Ltd packaging logos	73
Figure 3-7	Rooibos Ltd's corporate culture.....	74
Figure 3-8	Rooibos Ltd's corporate image.....	76
Figure 3-9	Rooibos Ltd's Stakeholders.....	77
Figure 3-10	Rooibos Ltd's Corporate Communication	78
Figure 3-11	Corporate reputation	86
Figure 5-1	Rooibos Ltd's website	122
Figure 5-2	Rooibos Ltd's SEOs	123
Figure 5-3	Rooibos Ltd's Mobile marketing Geo-locations.....	124
Figure 5-4	Rooibos Ltd's email marketing	125
Figure 5-5	Rooibos Ltd's social media.....	125

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Rooibos Limited (Rooibos Ltd) operates in a changing environment where it competes with many other representatives of the South African Rooibos Council (SARC) and rooibos tea organisations (South African Rooibos Council, 2025; Rooibos Limited, 2025). Rooibos Ltd's mission is to be goal-directed in the enhancement of production, processing and international marketing on their unique Rooibos products and services. Rooibos Ltd aims to support this mission to benefit all stakeholders with specific reference to satisfying all customers' expectations; facilitating realistic returns on investments from stakeholders; honouring commitments made with producers, suppliers and buyers; creating a productive environment for employees to work in; and lastly, to contribute to the development of the South African economy and its people (Rooibos Ltd, 2025). For the purpose of this study, the stakeholder group is aimed at customers. The reason is that they determine the sustainability of the business with their buying behaviour. The government's implementation of social distancing measurements in 2020 and parts of 2021, influenced Rooibos Ltd and compelled them to adapt their way of conducting marketing, which brought new technological applications to the table. Therefore, the organisation experienced the challenge of overcoming these external influences that played a direct part in adapting their marketing strategies.

The following should enable Rooibos Ltd to engage in managing their communication efforts digitally to build and maintain relationships with customers, thereby achieving the above-mentioned mission. The reason for using digital channels, e.g. social media marketing, is that customers can be reached and interacted with easily (Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:337; Ryan, 2014: 150). As well as using email marketing, this should enable Rooibos Ltd to interact with customers on a personal level by means of electronic letters (Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:334).

It seems that, over the years, that stakeholders have been functioning in a changing communication environment that is moving forward in terms of the digital environment (Lamb *et al.*, 2019:526; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:320). External influences also affected the way communication is formulated to address stakeholder needs regarding these influences. The Covid-19 pandemic, for example, affected all organisations in South Africa (especially Rooibos Ltd), forcing them to change their communication strategies to a more digital approach. Taking the Covid-19 pandemic regulations into consideration, the President of the Republic of South Africa (2020) declared that social distancing was to be implemented in March 2020, where during which total lockdown prevented any organisation to proceed in doing face-to-face

marketing. Therefore, Rooibos Ltd faced the challenge of adapting their marketing management within the changing context. This pandemic affected the whole world in terms of various aspects of the external environment. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:93–94) claim that the effect of the pandemic could be felt:

- Politically – strict regulations implemented by the government that limited physical interactions.
- Economically – organisations faced declining sales that lead to the urgent need to find cost-effective digital methods of reaching markets.
- Technologically – the concern accelerated the adoption of digital tools, with business required to migrate over night to online platforms, remote communication systems and digital marketing solutions.
- Legally – compliance with the lockdown regulations and health protocols became mandatory, influencing how companies such as Rooibos Ltd, conducted operations and communicated with stakeholders.
- Environmentally – lockdown restrictions temporarily reduced industrial activity further drawing customer and organisational attention toward sustainability and responsible business practice.

In light of these widespread changes, communication practices across industries had to evolve considerably. Traditional face-to-face marketing and engagement became impossible, and organisations were compelled to adopt transparent, timely, cost-effective and digitally driven communication strategies (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:17). Customers expected quick updates, remote accessibility and trustworthy online interactions. Consequently, the role of digital communication shifted from being an optional marketing enforcement to becoming an operational necessity (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:17). For organisations such as Rooibos Ltd, this transformation emphasised the importance of strengthening both digital marketing and the corporate brand. Digital marketing offered the tools to maintain visibility, reach customers directly and communicate product offerings despite physical restrictions.

Rooibos Ltd's customers function in a changing market environment that is moving forward in terms of the digital environment. The reason is that customers in this era prefer digital platforms that not only give them a sense of differentiation but also attract them towards the organisation (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:6; Rana *et al.*, 2020:37; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:330; Foster, 2017). Digital marketing is defined as using digital instruments to communicate with customers via promotional messages and by using digital platforms to support integrated multichannel marketing (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:6; Zahay,

2021:126; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:327). The goal of digital marketing is to reach, act, convert and engage (Pashiera and Sardjono, 2024:1399; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:10).

These four communication principles in digital marketing are all relevant to various digital marketing platforms (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:10). These principles are important in using digital marketing instruments, as they guide organisations to use it optimally. It ensures that customers grant the necessary permission to receive communication that gives them a memorable experience, entice them to engage in communication channels – such as emails – and to engage on social media (Facebook and Instagram) via likes, follow and shares, thereby receiving informative information easily, rather than just creating and sending irrelevant content (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:10; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:328). Digital marketing instruments are used to manage corporate brands by means of identifying specific messages and images that represent the brand, which is then presented to the stakeholders.

Corporate brand management is known as the corporate brand that is managed to attract relevant stakeholders (in this case customers) with values and symbols that distinguish the organisation and provide them with a feeling of belonging (Iglesias *et al.*, 2022:7; Lamb *et al.*, 2019:295; Shilubana, 2018:18). Cant *et al.*, (2025:271) argue that the value of the corporate brand aligns vision, image and culture contribute to gaining maximum competitive advantage by communicating a consistent brand to stakeholders and in this case customers. Consequently, corporate brand management is responsible for identifying an organisation that uses important elements, such as vision and mission, organisational culture, visual elements, image, stakeholders and corporate communication (Iglesias *et al.*, 2022:9; Cornelissen, 2017:97; Raj & Choudary, 2008:24; Hatch & Schultz, 2003; Hiltunen, 2019).

To apply the principles of digital marketing and corporate brand management principles in this unique context, the problem statement offers a brief focus as explanation of the study and as to why this specific study was undertaken.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The context of this study is based on Rooibos Ltd approach to their digital marketing and corporate brand management that leans towards attracting and informing their customers by way of differentiation. Although Rooibos Ltd relies on customer purchases for its success, adapting marketing initiatives has become essential for attracting, engaging and interacting with customers. With the changing era of communication moving forward towards the digital environment, the Covid-19 pandemic (2020 to 2021), indirectly contributed to the never-ending changes in digital marketing and corporate brand management. As a result of the lockdown

and social distancing regulations (from 2020 to 2021), Rooibos Ltd encountered several challenges with how they managed their digital marketing and corporate brand.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, it became noticeable that Rooibos Ltd did not only have to reconsider their marketing strategies in terms of the new digital sphere, but also their corporate brand management and digital marketing management. The reason is that face-to-face marketing was not viable anymore. This compelled Rooibos Ltd to reconsider their approach to managing their marketing and corporate brand by adapting their marketing strategies to a digital approach. Rooibos Ltd, as well as organisations over the world, was challenged to use their existing digital instruments, such as social media platforms and email marketing, to its full capacity as it became the easiest way to reach, engage and entice a large audience without using a face-to-face traditional marketing approach.

Therefore, the problem with which this study was concerned is that various external influences, such as government mandate health and safety measures during the Covid-19 pandemic (2020 to 2021); rapid technological changes; and the need to adopt new marketing approaches disrupted Rooibos Ltd's usual ways of communicating with customers. As a result, the organisation faced significant challenges when it came to managing its digital marketing and corporate brand.

1.3 GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTION

What should Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management entail?

1.3.1 Specific research questions

1.3.1.1 How does digital marketing inform corporate brand management?

1.3.1.2 What does corporate brand management entail?

1.3.1.3 What is Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management?

1.3.1.4 What is the customers' perception of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management?

1.4 GENERAL RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management should entail digital marketing and the corporate brand elements, management and values thereof.

1.4.1 Specific research objectives

The specific research objectives for this study were to:

- 1.4.1.1 determine by means of a literature study, how digital marketing informs corporate brand management.
- 1.4.1.2 determine by means of a literature study, what corporate brand management entails.
- 1.4.1.3 determine by means of semi-structured interviews what Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management entail.
- 1.4.1.4 determine by means of an online survey what are the customers' perception of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.

1.5 GENERAL GUIDING ARGUMENTS

Digital marketing is based on the term marketing that is applied in the digital context and is known as product, price, place and promotion messages sent via mediums that utilise digital technology, such as mobile phones, laptops and tablets. It is also seen as an organisation's efforts to market products, services and brands to build customer relationships over the internet and cellular networks (Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:327; Armstrong *et al.*, 2018:411). Digital marketing consists of multiple communication platforms, which include – amongst others – social media (e.g. Facebook and Instagram) and email marketing. Digital marketing informs the corporate brand and marketing integration is encouraged by the process of developing a digital marketing plan that manages platforms. Therefore, to engage with customers and manage customer relationships, an organisation should sufficiently manage a customer driven strategy and plans (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:15; Visconti, 2020:334; Rowles, 2018; Kingsnorth, 2016).

A corporate brand requires a multi-disciplinary approach and is seen as stakeholders being influenced by expectation, memories, stories and relationships with the organisation. For the purpose of this study, a corporate brand should be regarded as consisting of elements that function interdependently, including the

- strategy of corporate brand – vision, mission and corporate brand promise.
- corporate visual identity – behaviour, symbols and communication of the brand promise.
- corporate culture – heritage and culture.

- corporate image and corporate communication that satisfy needs of stakeholders.

With this statement, it seems that these elements should be sufficiently managed in a process called corporate brand management to have strategic value in creating a favourable image and good reputation for the organisation (Balmer *et al.*, 2017; Cornelissen, 2017; Urde, 2016; Keller, 2013; Berthon *et al.*, 2008).

As external influences reshaped Rooibos Ltd's communication practices, the organisation was compelled to adapt, not only by shifting more fully into digital communication, but also by managing its corporate brand elements more across digital marketing platforms. Digital marketing can inform corporate brand management through planning, executing, reviewing and adapting digital marketing strategies and plans. For Rooibos Ltd to sufficiently manage their digital marketing and to inform the corporate brand, it is necessary for the organisation to have strategic aspects aligned and implemented through plans. By formulating the digital marketing strategies and by planning according to theory, the theoretical elements, focused on change in Rooibos Ltd's marketing strategies aimed at stakeholders, can be assessed with possible recommendations at the end of the study. Corporate brand management enables organisations to have a well-established corporate brand portrayed by means of digital marketing strategies and plans.

1.6 RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

For the purpose of this study, both a qualitative and quantitative research approach were used to obtain an overview of the literature associated with digital marketing and corporate brand management, as well as Rooibos Ltd's management approach and customer perceptions thereof. Therefore, the multi method research approach was used. The multi method research approach is a method defined as an approach that allows the researcher to mix or combine qualitative and quantitative research techniques, methods, class or language in a single study (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:17).

Advantages of using multi method research approach is as follows: it compares a qualitative findings and quantitative approach; reflects participants' point of view; provides methodological flexibility; and collects rich, comprehensive information and data. Thus, the reason for using the multi methods research approach for this study was because it enabled the researcher to collect qualitative information and quantitative data that were most likely to lead to outcomes that would answer the general research question. A qualitative research method was applied for the literature review, while the empirical study used qualitative semi-structured interviews, and the online survey employed a quantitative approach. The following

section not only outlines the research methods used but also explains why each method was chosen, highlighting how these choices ensure the study produces reliable and relevant insights.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODS

1.7.1 Qualitative research methods

This subsection outlines the qualitative research methods used in this study and explains how they were applied to address the research objectives. It describes the research design, data-collection approach, sampling strategy and analytical procedures that guided the qualitative components of the investigation. By detailing these methodological choices, this subsection also provides clear rationale for why qualitative methods were appropriate for exploring participants' perceptions and experiences. It also ensures transparency and credibility in how the data were gathered and interpreted.

1.7.1.1 Literature study

The literature study's aim is to review main trends in the field of study. The literature framework in which the problem was investigated focused on digital marketing and corporate brand management in the unique South African Rooibos sector context. It is an extended summary of previous research on a specific subject. Therefore, the reason for using this method was to investigate scientific articles, books and other relevant sources such as articles and Masters (MA) and Doctoral (PhD) studies for the specific research area (Du Plooy, 2017:61). Before embarking on conducting a literature review on the topic of digital marketing and corporate brand management, a NEXUS and National ETD (National Electronic Thesis and Dissertation) portal search was done to identify the singularity of this specific study. The outcomes of this unique search indicated that this study has not yet been done in this specific context and can possibly contribute to the gap in the field of study.

This study provides an overview of various studies using similar literature that enables the researcher to base the study on existing literature. Although these studies do not provide the exact literature review as this study, it is possible to get matching research on the unique topic of digital marketing and corporate brand management of Rooibos Ltd. The following search engines were consulted to ensure that no other comparable studies have been done before: the North-West University's catalogue for online journals, EBSCOhost, Boloka: NWU Institutional Repository (NWU-IR), JSTOR, Google Scholar and Sabinet Online.

This research identified the following related MA and PhD studies: *An exploration of the strategic implementation of marketing communication within social networking communication context* (Cloete, 2012); *The development of a new instrument to measure client-based corporate reputation in the service industry* (Wepener, 2014); *Personeel se persepsies van onderskeidelik die Noordwes-Universiteit en Potchefstroom kampus se korporatiewe handelsmerk en -bestuur* (Grundling, 2015); *Exploring the organisational structuring of professional social media within a modern communication context* (Cloete, 2016); *The development of a recommended digital marketing strategy for Pan Macmillan, South Africa* (Conradie, 2016); *Personeel se persepsies rakende die aard van Senwes Hoofkantoor se korporatiewe handelsmerk en werknemerverhoudings* (Le Grange, 2016); *Assessing the marketing communication plan for student recruitment at the North-West University* (Degenaar, 2018); *Usage of Twitter by state-owned enterprises to communicate with customers: a case of Transnet South Africa* (Mello, 2020); *Effective digital marketing strategies for increased engagement in real estate* (McCain, 2023);

Articles that were considered, included: *Advancing research in digital and social media marketing* (Zahay, 2021). *The role of digital marketing as a company strategy to gain a competitive advantage in dealing with consumer behaviour in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0* (Pashiera & Sardjono, 2024); *Digital marketing strategies: A comprehensive literature review* (Mocanu & Szakal, 2023); *A study on digital marketing and its typer: A deep review of pros and cons* (Rosario et al., 2022); *A strategic and digital marketing in cultural institutions and the impact of the covid-19 pandemic – a comparative analysis of two case studies* (Krajnovic et al., 2021); *The influence of employer branding and employees' personal branding on corporate branding and corporate reputation* (Potgieter, 2020); *What is digital branding and how to do it right: the ultimate guide* (Robertson, 2019); *Corporate communication through social media: Strategies for managing reputation*. (Kaul & Chaudhri, 2018); *The Routledge companion to contemporary brand management* (Blankson, 2016); *SOSTAC the guide to your perfect Digital Marketing plan* (Smith, 2018); *The brand core and its management over time* (Urde, 2016).

Books and online books were also used to state theory: *Principles of marketing* (Armstrong et al., 2018); *Brand management: Co-creating meaningful brands* (Beverland, 2018); *Identity-based brand management* (Burmman et al., 2017); *Digital marketing: strategy, implementation and practice* (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwicks 2019); *Corporate Communication: A guide to theory & practice* (Cornelissen, 2017); *Digital marketing strategy* (Foster, 2017); *Digital and social media marketing* (Rana et al., 2020); *Understanding digital marketing* (Ryan, 2014).

The above-mentioned sources provided significant definitions and practices of theory to inform the topic of this study. Although previous research in the field of digital marketing and corporate brand management gives an understanding of the foundation of how practices and literature came together, this study is singular in its kind.

1.7.1.2 Empirical study: Qualitative semi-structured interviews

A qualitative, semi-structured interview is defined as aiming to provide a high degree of understanding. It is based on words, perceptions and feelings and can involve experiments, interviews, focus groups and semi-structured questionnaires with open-ended questions (Du Plooy, 2017). Semi-structured interviews were used in this study to gain a better and in-depth understanding of how Rooibos Ltd applies digital marketing to inform its corporate brand management.

Purposive sampling was used that included members with management characteristics from Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department who participated in the research study voluntarily. The method of sampling for this study was purposive sampling, as specific sampling was needed to ask relevant questions management members working with corporate brand management elements such as the vision and mission, corporate culture, visual elements, image, stakeholders (such as customers in this study) and corporate communication (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Furthermore, participants involved in managing the digital marketing elements (including websites, SEO's, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media and online advertising) were considered.

Regarding the research process, the researcher started by completing a form for the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC). This committee is a research ethics review board, primarily associated with the Faculty of Humanities at the North-West University in South Africa. BaSSREC is responsible for the management of ethics applications for non-health, low- and no-risk research that involves human participation. The form is referred to as the *Participant informed leaflet and consent form* (see ADDENDUM D) and the researcher sent these forms to each of the four participants (see Table 1-1) that work closely with the digital marketing and corporate brand of Rooibos Ltd. Prior to setting up online Zoom-interview meetings (because of cost effectivity and respecting participant's time), the researcher sent each participant a set of questions to allow them to review the topics in advance, which ensured that they felt prepared and facilitated a more focused and productive interview discussion.

Table 1-1: Representation of management members interviewed in semi-structured interviews

Rooibos Ltd	
Participant	Occupation
A	Client liaison
B	Communication manager
C	Director of external marketing agency
D	Marketing and sales director

1.7.1.3 Analysis of information from the semi-structured interviews: qualitative content analysis

The information from the interviews was analysed by means of a qualitative content analysis. A semi-structured interview was structured (see ADDENDUM B) according to the concepts and constructs identified in the literature study. Qualitative content analysis requires gathering information about participants' experiences, perceptions and interpretations of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management approach (Du Plooy, 2009:98). The answers to the questions were recorded using a mobile phone and Zoom recording function to keep a record of what was said in the semi-structured interviews. Prior to the recordings, participants were asked for their consent to record the session, solely for the reason of record keeping.

A qualitative content analysis was an appropriate methodological choice to collect relevant information and identify best practices for this research, as it enabled a systematic examination of management's approach to the issues under investigation. As this study focussed on management's perspectives regarding digital marketing and corporate brand management, this method enabled a deeper understanding of how these practices are implemented within the organisation.

The findings were transcribed and kept as a record and assessed against the background of the literature concepts; digital marketing and corporate brand management; and the relevant constructs identified during the literature review. Semi-structured interview findings were evaluated in relation to the literature-based constructs and the online survey findings, enabling the researcher to draw an integrated conclusion from the outcomes of all three research methods.

1.7.2 Quantitative research methods

This subsection outlines the quantitative research methods employed in this study and explains how they were used to address the research objectives. The survey design, sampling procedure, data-collection process and statistical techniques used to analyse the numerical objectives are described. By detailing these methodological steps, this subsection establishes the reliability of the components and demonstrates how the data contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the research.

1.7.2.1 Empirical study: Quantitative online survey

For the purpose of this study, a quantitative online survey was used. Online quantitative surveys provide reliable and systematic fast, cost-effective and efficient ways to obtain information from a large group of people. Quantitative online surveys were sent to all customers of Rooibos Ltd to ensure as significant a possible response rate without limiting the reach of population over the whole of South Africa. Online surveys were sent via email from Rooibos Ltd to customers in all nine provinces to get a representative statistical conclusion on client perceptions related to Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management. This survey was compiled on Google forms in consultation with the NWU Statistical Consultation Services and sent as a link together with an email message to describe the purpose and what customers could expect by voluntarily answering the survey (see ADDENDUM E).

The online survey questions (see ADDENDUM C) were designed based on digital marketing and corporate brand management constructs that reflected their perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management. The customers were invited to voluntarily participate in the study. The researcher ensured their anonymous status while using their answers in the study. No participant will be held accountable for not answering the online survey. This instrument will enable the researcher to determine customer experience from Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.

Each question was based on constructs derived from the literature review on digital marketing (see § Two) and corporate brand management (see § Three) and can be analysed by viewing responses in the response section on Google Forms. The responses are subjected to statistical analysis to enable a comprehensive and descriptive analysis of 100 customer perceptions concerning Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management (see § Six). An extra 25 responses are also considered as discussed in Chapter six.

1.7.2.1.1 Analyses of the results from the quantitative online survey

In this study, the analysis of the qualitative online survey results provides a structured examination of customer perceptions regarding Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management. Chapter six begins with the presentation of descriptive statistics, including demographic information of the respondents and their opinions on the digital marketing and corporate branding approach Rooibos Ltd follow, summarised in tables. This is followed by the factor analysis to identify underlying dimensions within the survey constructs. Then the t-test follows to examine difference between specific groups. Additionally, correlation analysis is conducted to explore relationships between factors, complemented by the ANOVA values to assess the statistical significance of group differences. Collectively, these analyses offer a comprehensive understanding of customer perceptions and provide empirical evidence to support the study's findings.

1.8 ETHICAL CLEARANCE

The online semi-structured interviews research process of this study is conducted according to the BaSSREC guidelines. Participants received a participant informed leaflet and consent form (see ADDENDUM D), inviting them to participate voluntarily and explaining the research process. It described what the research study was all about, why participants are invited to participate, participant responsibilities, benefits from taking part, possible risks involved in taking part and how they will be managed. It was important to keep in mind how participants can access the data, understand that R2 000 compensation was involved and how information regarding the findings will be disseminated. This letter thus provided information on what the participant should know and required a declaration by participants while asking them to participate. The consent form was available to participants upon accessing the survey link, ensuring ethical compliance by obtaining voluntary consent and guaranteeing participant anonymity.

BaSSREC provided an approval letter for this study to ensure that the study upheld accepted ethical principles and protected the rights and well-being of all participants. This study was a low-risk study with the ethics number of NWU-01028-24-A7 (see ADDENDUM F).

Both the supervisors for this study and the researcher completed ethical training (TRREE) and also attended an Integrated Research Integrity Management System (IRSMS) workshop to ensure ethical practices throughout the research process, especially when working with people.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

The significance of this study lies in its exploration of how Rooibos Ltd has adapted its digital marketing and corporate brand management practices in the context shaped by various external influences; influences that reshaped organisational communication and customer engagement. As organisations are compelled to accelerate their digital transformation, understanding how a prominent South African rooibos organisation navigated these shifts, provides valuable insight into sufficient digital marketing strategies and digital marketing plans. This study contributes to the limited body of research on digital marketing within the rooibos industry and offers practical implications for organisations aiming to strengthen brand visibility, enhance customer relationships and maintain competitiveness in an increasingly digital market. By examining Rooibos Ltd's response to these changes, the research offers guidance for similar organisations seeking to refine their digital marketing and corporate brand management in a rapidly evolving marketing landscape.

1.10 CHAPTER LAYOUT

Chapter One: Introduction, context and problem statement

This chapter introduced the Rooibos tea sector in South Africa to the extent that these organisations are competing in a changing environment. The context of Rooibos Ltd was discussed, which serves as the background information to the contextualisation and problem statement of the study.

Chapter Two: Digital marketing informing corporate brand management.

The first research question is answered by a literature review that explains how corporate brand management can be informed by digital marketing.

Chapter 3: The concept of corporate brand management informed by digital marketing.

The second research question is addressed by providing a literature review on corporate branding and digital marketing.

Chapter Four: Research methodology.

The research methods that were used are illustrated by discussing the multi method research approach. Thereafter the research design on literature constructs, quantitative semi-structured interviews and quantitative online survey is discussed more extensively.

Chapter Five: Rooibos Ltd's management approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management.

Results of the findings of the semi-structured interviews conducted with the management members at Rooibos Ltd are discussed, which answers the third research question.

Chapter Six: Customer perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.

This chapter addresses the fourth research question to describe the results of the online survey that was distributed to customers. The goal was to get their perceptions on digital marketing and corporate brand management.

Chapter 7: Recommendations for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.

This chapter presents conclusions from the literature and research findings and proposes practical guidelines and recommendations for improving Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management to strengthen customer relationships.

CHAPTER 2 DIGITAL MARKETING INFORMING CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter One, the nature of the study provided an overview of the study. A background to the concept of digital marketing and corporate brand management within the business world was provided. The research problem, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, guiding theoretical arguments of key search terms and research approach were explained. An ethical section was provided to illustrate the protection of and ethical behaviour towards participants. The importance and significance of the study were highlighted, as was its contribution to the body of knowledge on defining digital marketing. The chapter first discussed marketing, followed by digital marketing elements, digital marketing management and the value of digital marketing management for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd.

With this in mind, the following specific research question emerged from the literature. This chapter addresses the first specific research question:

How does digital marketing inform corporate brand management?

A literature review is essential in the attempt to address this question. The chapter begins with a definition of digital marketing and how it developed over the years. It then proceeds with a discussion of the various digital marketing elements. Thereafter, the chapter continues to explore digital marketing strategy and planning process, analysing and discussing each step in detail. Next, the chapter elaborates on the values of digital marketing management for organisation such as Rooibos Ltd. The chapter concludes by answering the first specific research question.

2.2 DEFINING DIGITAL MARKETING

To gain a comprehensive understanding of digital marketing, it is crucial to examine how its definition and role in shaping brand have evolved over time, beginning with an exploration of the fundamental concept of marketing.

2.2.1 Concept of digital marketing: contextualisation and a general definition

Seth Godin, an expert in the field of marketing was inducted in the American Marketing Association (AMA) Marketing Hall of fame for his excellence in collaborating, research, teaching, leading, engaging, seeking, writing bestseller books and inventing the altMBA

(Alternative MBA), which is a month-long workshop to help leaders level up on managing marketing activities. He suggested in his book that a marketing problem is noticeable if there is a way to make things better. To make things better, Godin (2018:11) asserted that marketing can be done in five steps:

1. Invent something worth marketing, telling a story and talking about.
2. Design it in a way that people benefit from and care about it.
3. Tell a story matching the narrative and dreams from the market.
4. Spread the word.
5. Lastly and most importantly, 'show up' regularly, consistently and generously to build the change you seek.

Earning permission is important and has to be followed up and engaged to achieve the change you seek. Godin (2018) argued that marketing has more to it than "just a lake or a forest, but it is the landscape of our modern lives".

Armstrong et al. (2018:5) add that marketing can be defined as the process through which organisations engage with customers, build strong customer relationships and create customer value to capture value from customers in return (the change that the organisation seeks). Scholars such as Armstrong *et al.* (2018), Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:137–160), Lalaounis (2021), Lamb *et al.* (2019:28) and Visconti (2020:334) assert that the marketing process consists of activities such as:

- Understanding the business mission and role marketing plays to realise the mission.
- Understanding the marketplace and customers (needs, wants and demands).
- Setting marketing objectives.
- Situation analysis (SWOT-analysis).
- Designing marketing strategy (target-market strategy to satisfy their needs and marketing mix that defines the 4P's).
- Implementing the marketing strategy.
- Designing marketing performance measures (metrics).
- Evaluate marketing efforts and make changes if necessary.

As marketing shifted to the digital sphere, so did marketing processes with the intent to adapt to the new way of marketing. Van Heerden *et al.* (2019:327) and Zahay (2021:126) argue that the term *digital* can now be used in the marketing context, which is known as a promotional message sent by means of mediums that use digital technology. Pashiera and Sardjono (2024:1397) also add that by communicating using digital technology, organisations are

enabled to increase relevance, efficiency and create a competitive advantage. These mediums are desktops, laptops, tablets or mobile phones. New information-based infrastructure unfolded over the years as new telecommunications, media and technology (TMT) emerged in the form of computer systems, information services and customer/professional electronics (Armstrong *et al.*, 2018:21). Van Heerden *et al.* (2019:327-328) adds that digital marketing compares with e-marketing, which is distinguished from traditional marketing by being:

- Addressable: customers can provide and identify themselves with what they want so that marketers can identify them before they make purchase.
- Interactive: customers can share their needs and wants directly with the organisation via digital media technology (engage).
- Accessibility: customers can find detailed information on product/service on the internet (availability).
- Connectivity: customers can connect with people and organisations sharing the same interests.
- Control: customers can control the information they receive and expose for everyone to see.

The digital marketing concept revolutionised into more than just selling or giving information. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:5) and Krajnovic *et al.* (2021:262) support this notion by stating that the term digital marketing shifted its focus from marketing product and service using digital channels to an umbrella term that uses digital technologies in the process. This process aims to build customer preferences, promote brands, increase sales and retain customers.

As external influences (such as the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2021) compelled corporations to take on new forms of communication, it became noticeable that digital marketing is the most sufficient way to reach all stakeholders in the 21st century (Krajnovic *et al.*, 2021:258; Robertson, 2019).

The table below presents the difference between the traditional marketing and new marketing to indicate the change from traditional marketing to digital marketing in terms of the marketing mix:

Table 2-1: Traditional vs Digital Marketing

Traditional marketing	Digital marketing
Product The physical product or service promotion that you want customers to purchase (Kotler <i>et al.</i>, 2023:74; Lamb <i>et al.</i>, 2019; Kingsnorth, 2016:9). Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019:68) argued that the value proposition of traditional marketing lies in the benefit or value a brand offers to their customers in its products and services.	Product An important consideration is whether your product will or could be sold online. Digital channels, flexibility, customer values, differentiating competitor offerings and service are important as the digital product of marketing (Kingsnorth, 2016:9). Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:68) reiterated that there lies great opportunity in digital marketing. The advertising mediums itself display ads on various sites and social networks that can be utilised to create awareness of a brand and its products and services. To summarise, Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:68) established that digital marketing is an extended product or in simpler words an online value proposition that a brand portrays. It enables brands to advertise according to customer needs extracted from digital channel statistics (showing customer behaviour) and gives them access to information and create a sense of identifying with the brand. Rana <i>et al.</i> (2020:147) zoomed in on the key challenges of utilising traditional and digital marketing. It is noticeable through research that digital marketing has the opportunity to connect with customers on a personal level via various digital channels such as social media, email marketing and on websites. Furthermore, the fact that human beings are difficult to monitor and observe, digital marketing makes it possible to track behaviours and needs to adapt all digital channels and advertisements to satisfy their needs (Cant <i>et al.</i>, 2025:243).

Traditional marketing	Digital marketing
Price The price of the product is what customers are willing to pay, for example the values, reviews and product quality (Armstrong <i>et al.</i>, 2018:201; Kingsnorth, 2016:9; Kotler <i>et al.</i>, 2023:74).	Price For the new age of marketing, it pertains as a concept of fast price comparison, cashback and voucher sites that influence customer behaviour. Although the prices of a product can have an impact on sales, digital marketing enables brands to achieve a wider distribution to customers one cannot readily service offline or through wider product range than in-store. Furthermore, digital marketing ensure brands can affordably collect more data and information about customer buying behaviour and needs that will maximize their success through sales. It is also stated that the tools of digital marketing increase in efficiency and decrease in price compared to traditional marketing ways (Cant <i>et al.</i>, 2025:243; Kingsnorth, 2016:10; Rana <i>et al.</i>, 2020:302;).
Place The place is seen as the location where products and services are advertised and sold. Kotler <i>et al.</i> (2023:74) stated that a place or location customers buy their products should be a desirable place in the minds of the target customer relative to competing products or services.	Place An online shop should be easy to find and relates to search engine optimisation that enables customers to find a brand and information faster than traditional advertising. Digital marketing creates space for online two-way dialogue through web interactions that enables brands to learn more about customers to create and design an online environment that is easy to access and navigate. Digital marketing in the new age, also seem to provide marketers and customers to access brand sites and social networks at any place with their technological devices (Cant <i>et al.</i>, 2025:243; Rana <i>et al.</i>, 020:109; Armstrong <i>et al.</i>, 2018:342; Kingsnorth, 2016:11).

Traditional marketing	Digital marketing
Promotion Promotion is seen as the first-time people see or have a relationship with a brand and can be seen as the short-term customer incentives that lead to faster inventory turns or large amounts of sales of a product (Kotler <i>et al.</i>, 2023:243; Kingsnorth, 2016:11; Steenkamp, 2017:93). Armstrong <i>et al.</i> (2018:342) added that although promotion is a specific blend of advertising, public relations, personal selling, sales promotion and direct marketing, these tools are used to persuasively communicate with customers to build relationships through customer value. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019:170) explained traditional marketing as promotional messages communicated to customer via paid advertisements through traditional marketing mediums that encourage sale of product or service.	Promotion Promotion in the digital environment tends to have limited space and time for promotion than traditional marketing. In effect, an evolving test cycle is important for the continuous improvement of impactful messages via advertisements (Cant <i>et al.</i>, 2025:243; Armstrong <i>et al.</i>, 2018:342; Kingsnorth, 2016:12). Digital marketing enabled marketing to change in many ways. Advertising change from informative to interactive display ads, marketing communication, personal promotion, sales promotion, PR, branding and direct marketing (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick., 2022:190).

Error! Reference source not found. indicates that traditional marketing emphasises the value and benefits of a brand's products or services through offline channels, aiming for broad visibility and brand recognition. Digital marketing, on the other hand, focuses on a brand's online presence, allowing for more personalised and direct engagement with customers through digital platforms like social media and email. Traditional marketing can be expensive (price), such as placing ads in a newspaper like *Die Burger*, where – even the ads may reach many people – brands struggle to gather relevant customer insights and track sufficiency for future campaigns. In contrast, digital marketing offers cost-effective, targeted advertising, which allows brands to easily monitor and identify specific customers, enabling fast price comparisons and more efficient, tailored campaigns. Traditional marketing relies on the physical location (place) of a brand, where customers experience the product or service in-store or through phone orders, thereby creating a direct, tangible experience. In contrast, digital marketing emphasises the importance of an easy-to-navigate online presence, allowing customers to interact with the brand, choose products and communicate their needs through accessible digital platforms. Traditional marketing focuses on delivering promotional messages to encourage sales and build customer relationships through the value offered by the brand. Digital marketing, however, leverages online platforms to not only inform customers but also to allow them to navigate and choose the information or products with which they want to engage, offering a more interactive experience.

To understand the changes that marketing experienced in the digital environment, the above-mentioned table distinguishes traditional marketing with new marketing based on the product, price, place and promotion. By investigating literature pertaining to the marketing mix in the digital and traditional environment, one can observe a shift from the way marketing used to be seen to how it is perceived to be in the digital sphere. Previously, marketing was defined by Kotler (2012) as:

The science and art of exploring, creating and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit. Marketing identifies unfulfilled needs and desires. It defines, measures and quantifies the size of the identified market and the profit potential.

Kingsnorth (2016:6) defines marketing as an integral aspect that forms part of all activities in marketing. He concurs that it includes public relations (PR), creative direction, brand, customer relationship management (CRM), retention, product development, pricing, proposition, communications and the marketing mix.

Furthermore, Van Heerden *et al.* (2019:3) define marketing at a later stage as having two facets. Firstly, it is a philosophy, perspective, attitude and a management orientation that focusses on customer satisfaction. The second facet is that marketing is a set of activities used to implement the philosophy mentioned previously. When investigating the concept of digital marketing is investigated, one notices that, over the years, there has been a different focus on how to market a brand. Although the way of marketing has changed, the process of marketing also adapted to the modern world.

Having considered many authors' findings in the marketing field (Krajnovic *et al.*, 2021:262; Zahay, 2021:126; Rana *et al.*, 2020:229; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019:60), it became more noticeable that marketing faced a new challenge in the digital sphere, as discussed below.

Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019:9) define digital marketing as the application and achievement of marketing objectives by using digital media, data and technology. In other words, Rana *et al.* (2020:229) argue that digital marketing only really emerged in the last final decades of the 21st century. It enabled practitioners to grow and be innovative when carrying out new marketing activities. Krajnovic *et al.* (2021:262) add that digital marketing includes an adaptable, technology-enabled process in which corporations operate and in which they engage with stakeholders by communicating, collaboratively create, deliver and maintain value for all stakeholders. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:5) indicate that digital marketing transformed marketing towards being defined as achieving marketing objectives through applied digital media or digital elements, data and technology. They also continue by stating that multichannel marketing that provides a customer experience emerged. Lastly, Kotler *et al.* (2023:75) insist that digital marketing is defined as utilising digital marketing, data and technology, which is integrated with traditional communication, to get the desired marketing outcomes that are inspired by marketing objectives.

For the purpose of this study, digital marketing is defined as follows:

Digital marketing refers to the use of digital marketing elements, to promote products and services, communicate and interact with customers, build relationships, deliver value and achieve marketing objectives through integrated and measurable activities which address customer needs and wants. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:130; Kotler *et al.*, 2023:75; Krajnovic *et al.*, 2021:262; Rana *et al.*, 2020:262).

In light of the definition provided above, one needs to discuss digital marketing elements to understand the importance of why digital marketing is the best way to communicate and why it should be managed in the 21st century.

2.3 DIGITAL MARKETING ELEMENTS

It is important for companies to approach digital marketing as a multichannel strategy that enables stakeholder accessibility to online content from various digital communication mediums or devices. The challenge in doing this is that the brand should be consistent in their digital and offline marketing activities and that stakeholders see the brand as a holistic experience in all aligned and integrated activities to gain maximum competitive advantage (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019:538; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:329).

Digital marketing includes key elements to facilitate the interactive communication between the organisation and its customers by using electronic channels such as mobile applications. Various authors indicate ways of marketing in their research and findings on digital marketing that have been developed over the years. Rosario *et al.* (2022:142) identify the website as one of the important platforms that forms part of digital marketing, providing information to the reader, whereas Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:26) indicate that a website is also part of the digital sphere used to bring the personal factor to the customers, to engage with the reader and also to provide relevant information. Pashiera and Sardjono (2024:1399) refer to digital marketing that makes it easy for people to find websites by utilising and managing SEOs (search engine optimisations). SEOs promote a website with keywords that increase its visible online presence when customers search for something specific. Digital marketing includes the use of mobile devices or mobile marketing that can reach any reader who owns a mobile phone through the form of SMS, applications, QR codes, Geo location or Google maps and many more (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:53; Kingsnorth *et al.*, 2016:294). In other words, this research source places the emphasis on reaching readers or possible clients or readers through these platforms as we live in the modern era in which most people own a mobile device on which they can receive digital communication. Another digital marketing element is seen as email marketing, which enables interactive communication between companies and their audiences. Email marketing can also have greater value when companies segment their email list into different personas (Rosario *et al.*, 2022:143, Rana *et al.*, 2020:24). Blogs and podcasts are also an important digital marketing element that enable organisations to create rich content to share or have products and services that can be promoted to highly relevant blog sites with the goal of customer-generated marketing. This includes websites and blogs that provide information, statistics and future events (Kotler *et al.*, 2023:40; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:335; Visconti, 2020). Social media marketing is also seen as an important digital marketing element that increases the online visibility of a brand (Rosario *et al.*, 2022:143, Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:337). The last important element of digital marketing is identified as online advertising. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:6) identify this element as a way to reach customers via

paid, earned and owned communication that enables the communication to reach the correct audience.

The digital marketing elements identified in the discussion above thus include websites, SEO's, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing and online advertising. Each of these elements is examined in detail below, based on the relevant literature. Additionally, a separate section is devoted to analysing the specific selection of these elements in relation to their relevance to Rooibos Ltd.

2.3.1 Website

A website can be described as a door into a corporation that invites, organises and provides relevant information (Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:330). Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019:563) and Visconti (2020) acknowledge that a website is a registered domain that should focus on the following to get more traffic on, engagement with and sales through the website. It should be a website that

- simply offers information (providing information).
- allows contribution towards content (post questions and discussions).
- offers real-time sales assistance (customers ask questions to sales representative on an automated chat bot that sends pre-set responses).

Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2020:539) engaged in researching the digital experience and websites and concluded that websites should be

- easily accessible via any technological device.
- updated or refreshed regularly with regards to information.
- updated and adapted to give an easy navigation experience to customers or that is user friendly.

In his review on digital marketing, Zahay (2021:129) highlights that the functionality of a website has a direct impact on how customers behave. As customer needs change, it is of utmost importance for a website to give a user experience and engender a digital transformation by staying relevant (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:52). More recently, Gowpall (2024:6), added that digital marketing should be easy to access and locate engines that are relevant in an integrated way that can positively influences buying

To understand how websites are used in practice, the section below indicates how Rooibos Ltd apply it on their website.

2.3.1.1 Website: Rooibos Ltd's application

According to the literature review above, it is advantageous to use websites as they are relatively affordable, content can be changed and renewed and they can be integrated with databases that allow websites to be updated automatically. The following is a visual representation of how Rooibos Ltd applied these important aspects on their website to stay relevant and attract new visitors.

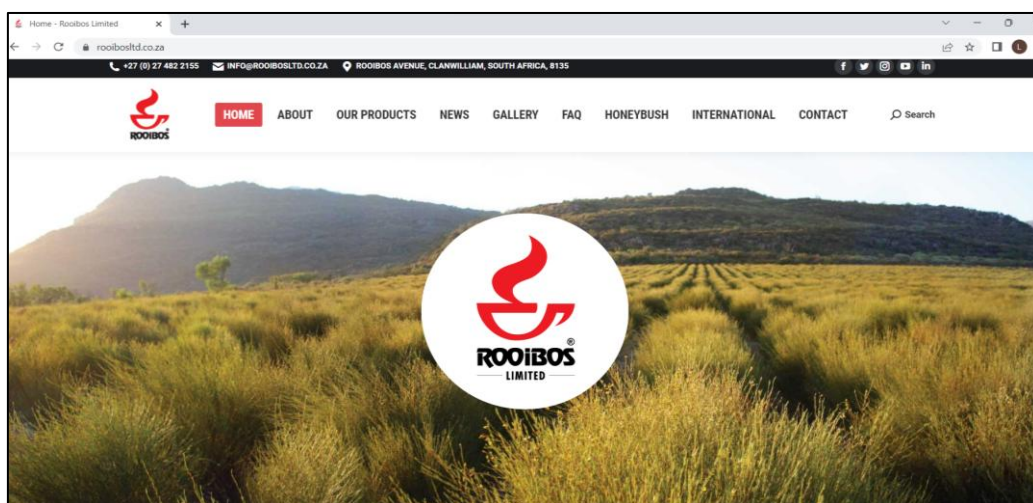


Figure 2-1 Rooibos Ltd's context: Layout and design

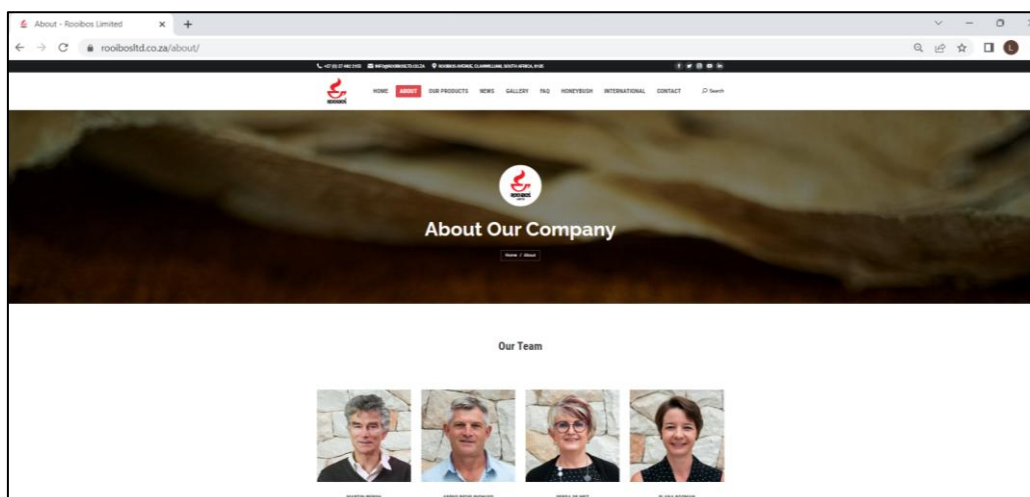


Figure 2-2 Rooibos Ltd's content: text, photos and videos

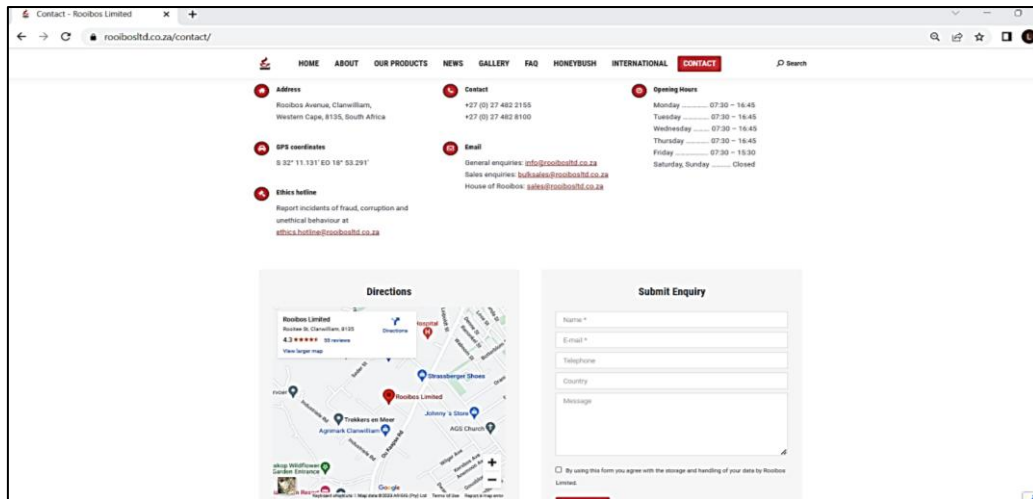


Figure 2-3 Rooibos Ltd's Communication: Two-way communication information

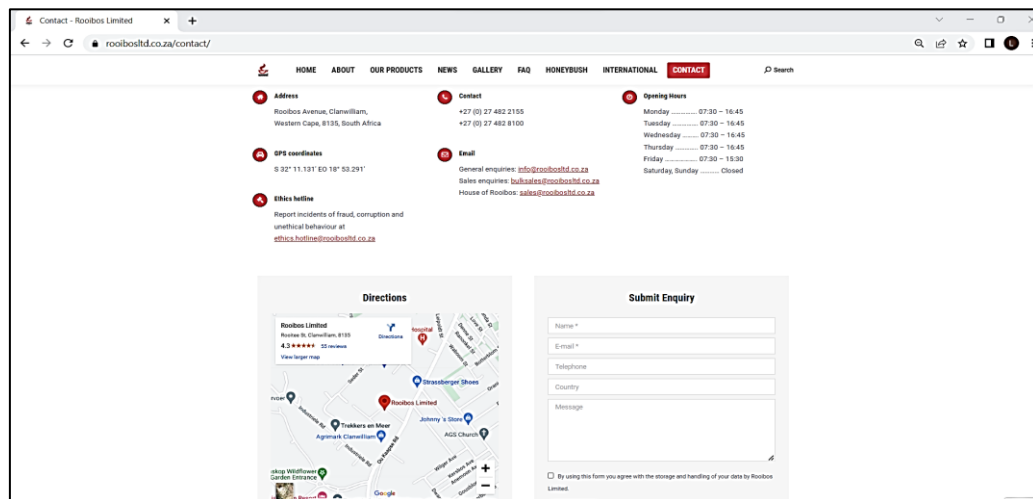


Figure 2-4 Rooibos Ltd's community: User-to-user communication through frequently asked questions

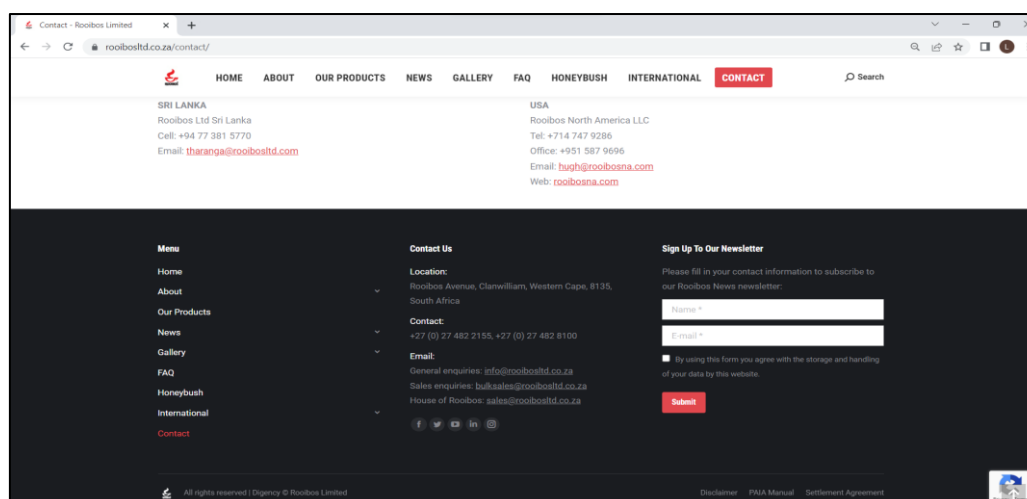


Figure 2-5 Rooibos Ltd's Connection: other site links at the top area

The representations of Rooibos Ltd's website in Figures 2-1 to 2-5 show that they provide customers with information regarding the organisation and what they have to offer in terms of the domain, layout and website connection to other sites, such as social media links.

2.3.2 Search engine marketing

Organisations need to ensure that websites can be found easily on the internet. Keywords, phrases or terms that identify the brand should be used. Therefore, search engine marketing is defined as promoting a website with keywords that increases its online visibility when customers search for something specifically (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:29; Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:18; Visconti, 2020:305).

- **Search engine optimisation (SEO):** It enables websites and its content to be designed in a way that search engines can find it without paying for it. Certain headings, such as keywords, are used to describe the brand, product or service (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:29; Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:29–31). The more relevant keywords an organisation uses on the internet via the website, social media and other digital marketing elements, the easier it would for people to find the organisation (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:29–31).
- **Pay-per-click (PPC):** When people bid on keywords, it determines how high it is ranked up on the search engine results page (see ADDENDUM A) (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:29; Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:33).
- **Cost Per Thousand (CPT):** Cost an advertiser pays for one thousand views (Visconti, 2020:306).

To understand how SEOs are used in practice, the following indicates how Rooibos Ltd apply it to their digital marketing.

2.3.2.1 SEO: Rooibos Ltd's applications

Organisations utilise SEOs for higher findability rate. They write, for example, specific key words such as *Rooibos products* or *Rooibos tea* in blogs on their website, which enhance the visibility of the brand. Thus, the more specific the keywords are that are mentioned on a website or social media, the more likely the brand is going to be ranked higher on Google search. The following representation indicates what Rooibos Ltd does in terms of SEO.

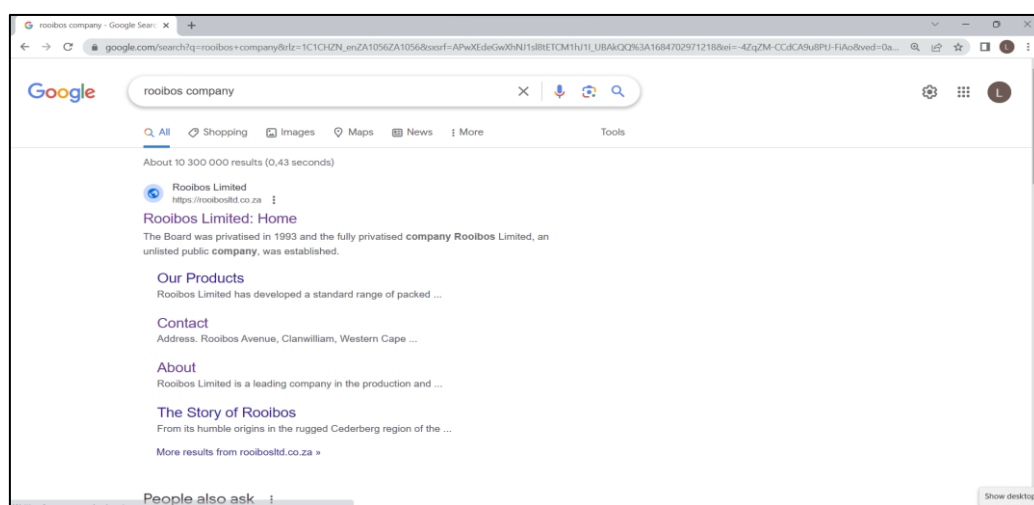


Figure 2-6 Rooibos Ltd's SEO appears first in the search of rooibos company

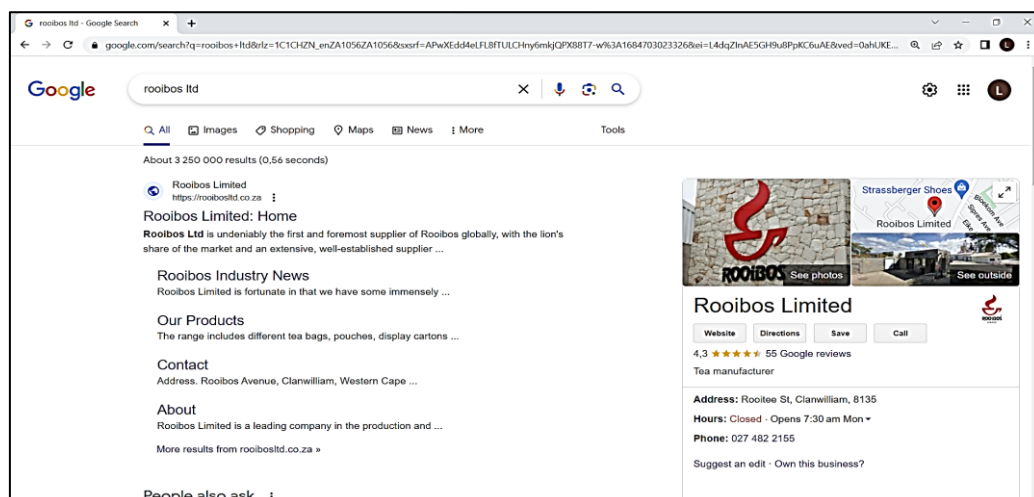


Figure 2-7 Rooibos Ltd's PPC is active through appearing on top when name is searched

The visual SEO presentation in Figure 2-7 indicates the key search terms applicable to Rooibos Ltd and on what phrases the organisation's sites are findable (such as the name Rooibos Ltd and rooibos company, as indicated in visual representation above).

2.3.3 Mobile marketing

Mobile marketing has become the most utilised platform to receive information regarding any brand (Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:333). Mobile marketing enables organisations to reach target audiences, segments, deliver media and easily integrate with online and offline marketing efforts (Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:333). Rosario *et al.* (2022:143) concur that mobile marketing encourages engagement with customers when they use mobile phones, specifically smartphones and tablet devices. Therefore, the following channels are used to reach audiences with mobile marketing:

- **Short message service (SMS) and multimedia messaging service (MMS):** With permission, short messages should be sent portraying the brand in payments received or promotional messages. SMS is also seen as permission marketing that requires an opt-in or opt-out options (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:242; Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:53).
- **Mobile websites:** These websites enable customers to access websites whenever they are connected to the internet (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:143).
- **Mobile applications (app):** A branded app could reinforce the brand through engagement and can increase visibility and accessibility (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:22).
- **Geo-location:** Obtaining GPS coordinates through maps when customers search nearby places (Kumar & Mittal, 2020:526).

As the new age of marketing enabled all South Africans to receive information on the internet, especially on their mobile devices, marketing not only applies to sites but also to other applications. The following subsection indicates how Rooibos Ltd applies their mobile marketing.

2.3.3.1 Mobile marketing: Rooibos Ltd's application

Rooibos Ltd apply the Geo-location.

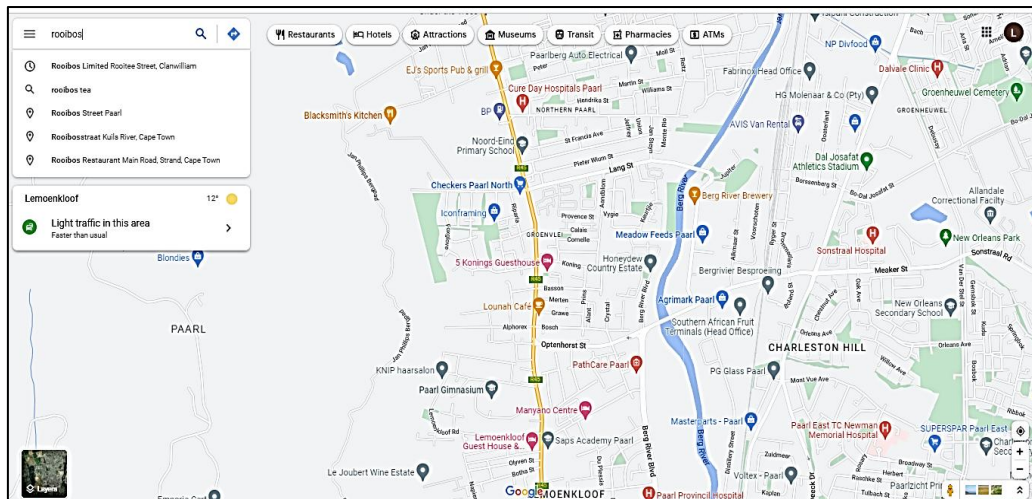


Figure 2-8 Rooibos Ltd's Geo location

In Figure 2-8, it seems that Rooibos Ltd uses their Geo location via Google maps. The main reason for using this element in digital marketing, as Visconti (2020:331) explained, is to increase the quality of GPS services.

2.3.4 Email marketing

Email is seen as an electronic version of a written letter that offers the brand an interactive platform for personal interaction with customers (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:30, Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:334).

Diamond (2019:443) states that, for email marketing to be able to effortlessly move customers to buying a product, companies should have a list of email addresses of customers who have opted in to receive communication from organisations. Rana *et al.* (2020:24) agree but adds that, although email marketing enables interactive communication between companies and their list of clients, email marketing can also have greater value when they segment their email list into different personas.

The format (templates) of the email should reflect the brand as well as up to date and clear branding should be communicated. The subject line should grab customers' attention and persuade them to open and read the email. Digital marketing informs a corporate brand and its image by considering the following (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:29, Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:335).

- Colours, fonts and images should reflect the brand image (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:52).

- An *unsubscribe* option should be available in the form of *opt in* or *opt out* (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:438).
- A *Send to a friend* option should be available.
- It should be easy to interact and also provide contact details in email signature (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:53, Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:438),
- Focus on relevance (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:441).
- Focus on the user (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:53).
- A link to a website and social media platforms should be provided (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:53).
- An email signature should be included. It clearly communicates the brand identity and the image. This is a cost-effective way of communicating the image of a brand to both internal and external markets.

Disadvantages include: 1) most emails end up in spam as they are irrelevant; 2) they sent to a large number of people; 3) no permission has been granted. Therefore, permission for brand communication should be asked before electronic communication is sent (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:440).

The following subsection indicates how Rooibos Ltd apply the above-mentioned requirements to their email marketing.

2.3.4.1 Email marketing: Rooibos Ltd's application

Rooibos Ltd apply the characteristics such as format, continual design, “opt-out” option, user focus, link to other sites such as their website and social media platforms.

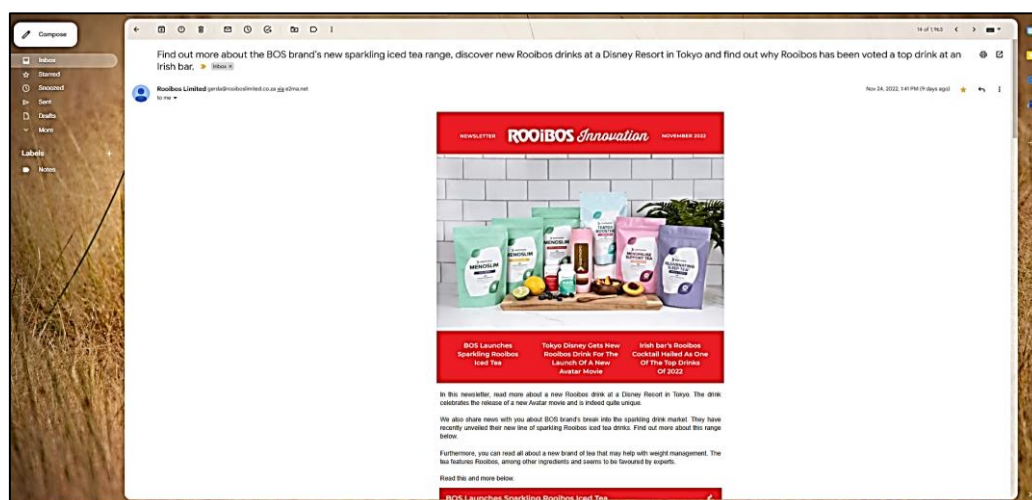


Figure 2-9 Rooibos Ltd's newsletter via email marketing

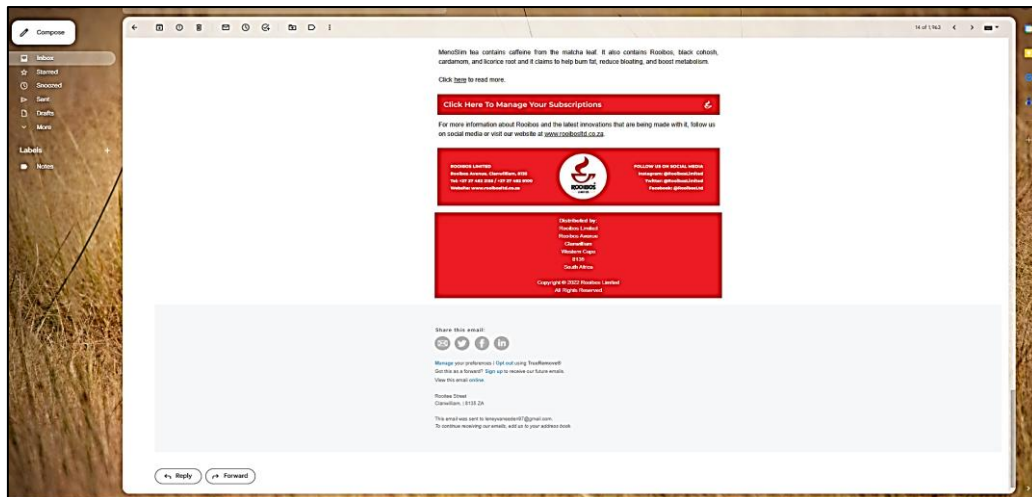


Figure 2-10 Rooibos Ltd's newsletter with email marketing characteristic presentation

Rooibos Ltd applies features (see Figures 2-9 and 2-10) such as giving readers the choice to opt-out, using brand colours, connecting social media sites to their email newsletters and by focusing strongly on the customer in their written communication.

2.3.5 Blogs and podcasts

Wildali (2025:44) describes the purpose of blogs a platform that provides organisations opportunities to share rich content or promote products and services moted to highly relevant blog sites. Many brands use web blogs that provide information, statistics and future events (Mouton, 2025:258; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:29; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:335). Business blogs and podcasts serve as tools for online public relations (PR) and can be used to increase exposure. By employing a storytelling approach, organisations such as Rooibos Ltd can attract traffic and engage with customers, highlighting important aspects of a product, such as its health benefits. Blogs and podcasts can, for example, contribute to the sufficient digital marketing strategy by using one-on-one interviews, individual commentary, panel discussions, story-telling and repurposed contents (Cant *et al.*, 2025:170; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:29).

2.3.5.1 Blogs and podcasts: Rooibos Ltd's application

Rooibos Ltd posted only posted two blogs on their website.

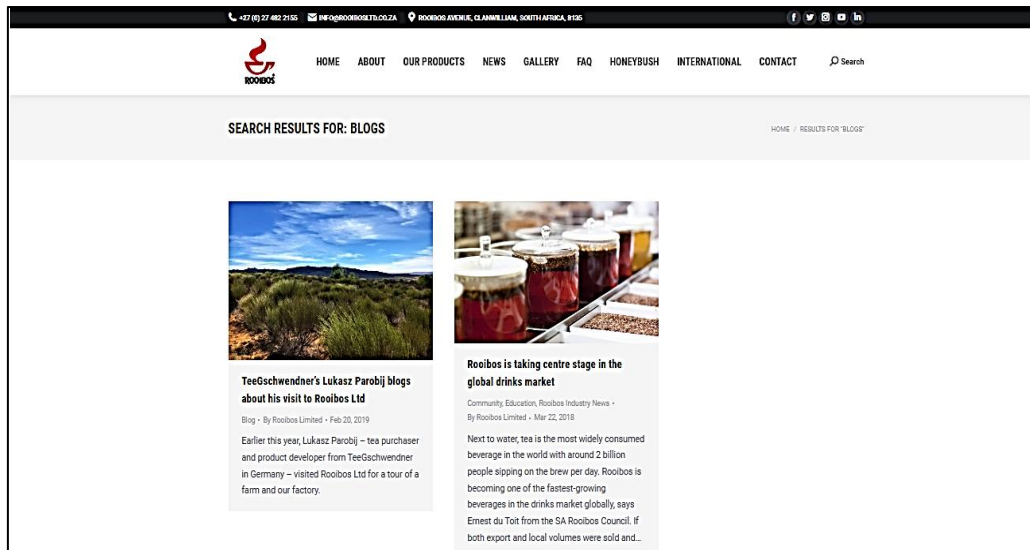


Figure 2-11 Rooibos Ltd's blogs in the news section

This representation (see Figure. 2-11) shows Rooibos Ltd using blogs to communicate with customers about the organisation and their products. In other words, the core of their communication is to tell newsworthy and relatable stories about what happens in and around the organisation.

2.3.6 Social media marketing

Over the years, social media marketing became the fastest growing marketing sector, using many social media techniques to communicate and increase a brand's online visibility that impacts customer behaviour by creating brand awareness, building brand loyalty and driving purchase decisions (Basu, 2023:102). The question is: Why is social media marketing important? The answer is simple: Social media marketing is an easy way to reach people; it has a diverse layout (for example LinkedIn is for professional people); it has become a preferred way of searching for information online; interactivity is key; and it is always evolving (Gray & Fox, 2018). Dwivedi *et al.* (2019:7) state that social media marketing involves encouraging customer communications on an organisation's own site or other social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Mocanu and Szakal (2023:41) reiterate that, to understand social media sites, one should consider the differences when packaging content in a unique way for each platform such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. It can be seen as techniques being used to formulate marketing messages. These social media marketing techniques are as following:

- **Social networking sites (SNS):** This platform enables interaction with others by sharing a connection, for example, Facebook (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:41–42).

- **Video-sharing site:** This is a platform for uploading and sharing videos, for example, Instagram (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:41–42)
- **A picture-sharing site:** This can be used to upload and share images, for example, Instagram (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:41–2)
- **Blog and micro-blogs:** It can be used to post content by using text or graphics, for example, Twitter/X (Mocanu and Szakal, 2023:42)
- **Mobile and local search engines:** Examples include Google. (Mocanu and Szakal, 2023:41)

Understanding these social media marketing techniques is crucial because it allows organisations to select the most effective platforms for engaging their target audiences, enhancing brand visibility, and achieving marketing objectives.

Furthermore, social media should reflect the following in their actions (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:48):

- Listen and manage reputation through interaction with customers.
- The brand should be transformed through social media interaction.
- Get new customers or influence them to buy products/services through the website.
- Increase sales to existing customers.
- Make sure customer service is delivered by means of answering queries through, for example, the link provided on Instagram that directs customers to the website. Questions can be asked on the website via the email address provided or an automatic email form could be sent to the organisation via the website.

To understand how digital marketing is done on social media, examples of how Rooibos Ltd apply it to their social media platforms are presented below.

2.3.6.1 Social media: Rooibos Ltd's application

Examples of Rooibos Ltd's social media application is required to understand how they interact, influence and manage their social media platforms.

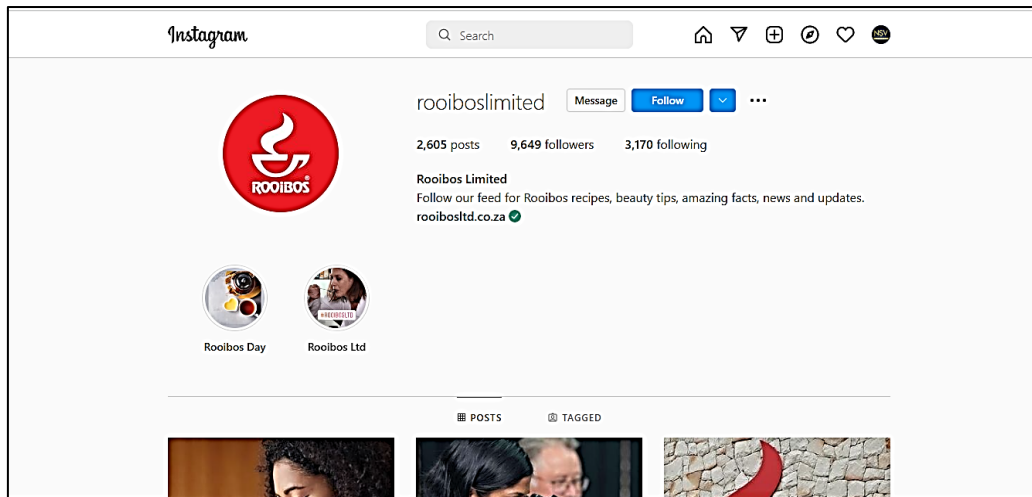


Figure 2-12 Rooibos Ltd's Instagram page

Rooibos Ltd shares their website link on social media platforms to lead customers to more information.

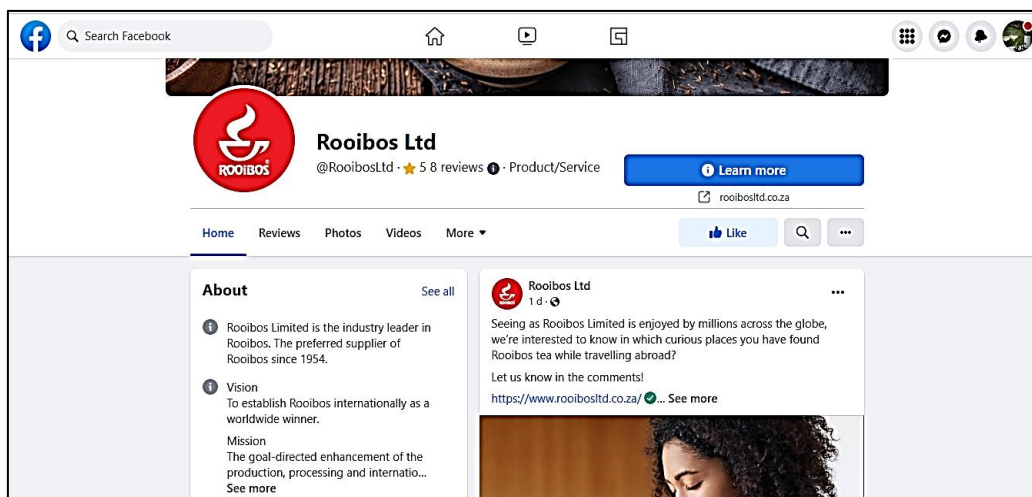


Figure 2-13 Rooibos Ltd's Facebook page

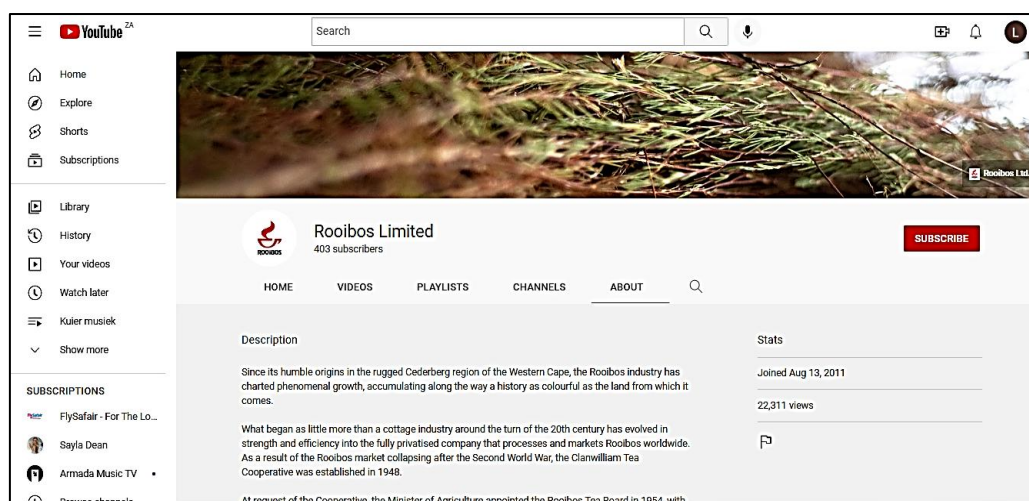


Figure 2-14 Rooibos Ltd's YouTube advertising

In the visual representations of Rooibos Ltd's social media pages (see Figures 2-12, 2-13 and 2-14) it seems as if their social networking sites are used to interact, influence and share content, such as photos and videos.

2.3.7 Online advertising

Scholars such as Cant *et al.* (2025:170), Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2022:29), McGruer (2019:307), Mocanu and Szakal (2023:39–40) and Van Heerden *et al.* (2019:338) assert that brand awareness can be improved online by:

- **Paid media:** This involves paying for advertisements on social media, mobile adverts and PPC. A brand, for example, can place an advert on Facebook or in search engines (advertising: paid search, display ads, affiliate marketing and digital signage). Paid media refers to the money companies are willing to spend on, for example, Instagram advertisement with the outcomes seen in statistics. In other words, more effort is put into paid media as companies want to see the traffic, engagement or likes they received through the advertisement.
- **Earned media:** This refers to instances when the organisation does not pay for audiences that are reached via online word-of-mouth or viral marketing, such as reviews (partner networks: word-of-mouth, social networks). Viewers, buyers or readers are persuaded when an organisation uses experts or influencers to reach the desired audience via online advertisements.
- **Owned media:** The organisation controls the messages by using website, emails, mobile phones, podcasts, blogs or social media accounts (digital properties: websites, blogs, mobile apps and social presence). Dwivedi *et al.* (2021:11) explains this technique by

stating that the organisation has full control over this way of managing online advertising. The organisation can review statistics to improve the content, design and formats that are used.

A visual presentation is provided next to see how Rooibos Ltd applies online advertising.

2.3.7.1 Online advertising: Rooibos Ltd's application

Below is a visual presentation of Rooibos Ltd's online advertising in the form of their website and social media advertisements.

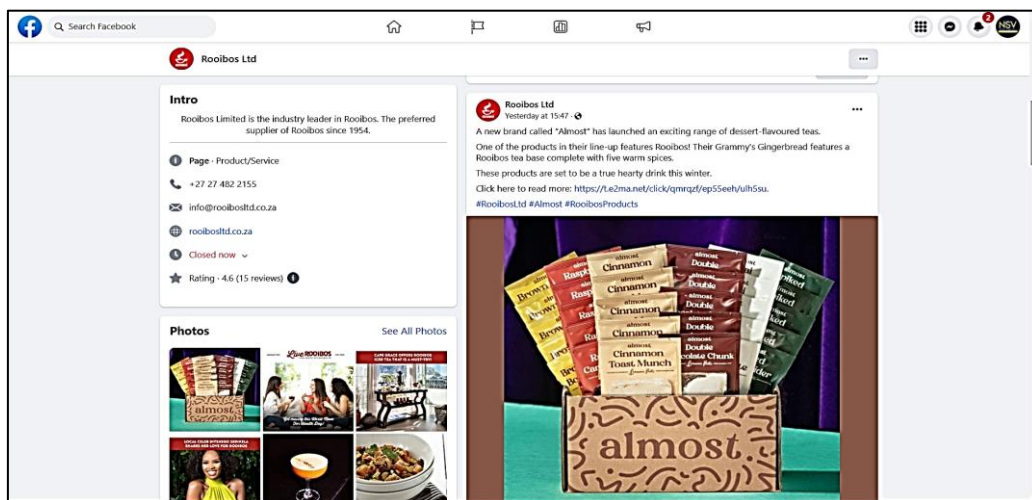


Figure 2-15 Rooibos Ltd's online advertisement via Facebook

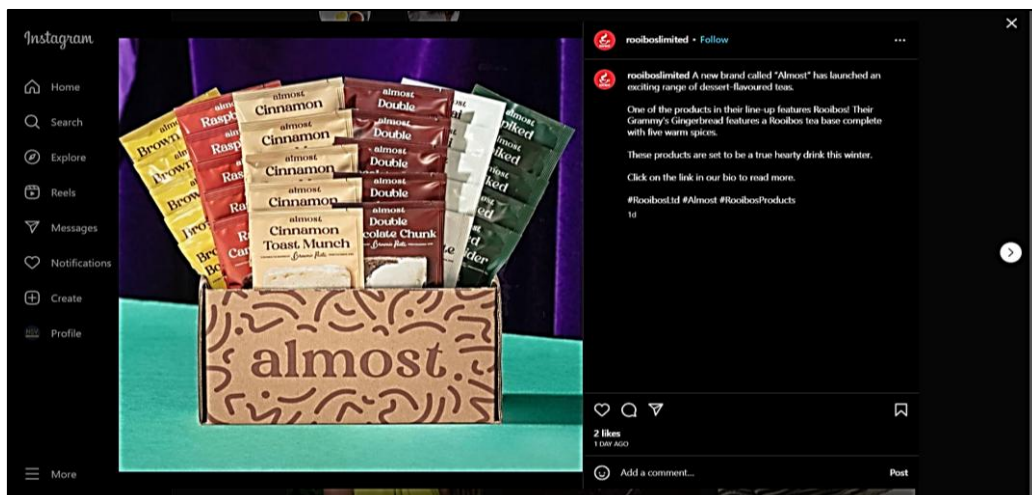


Figure 2-16 Rooibos Ltd's online advertising via Instagram

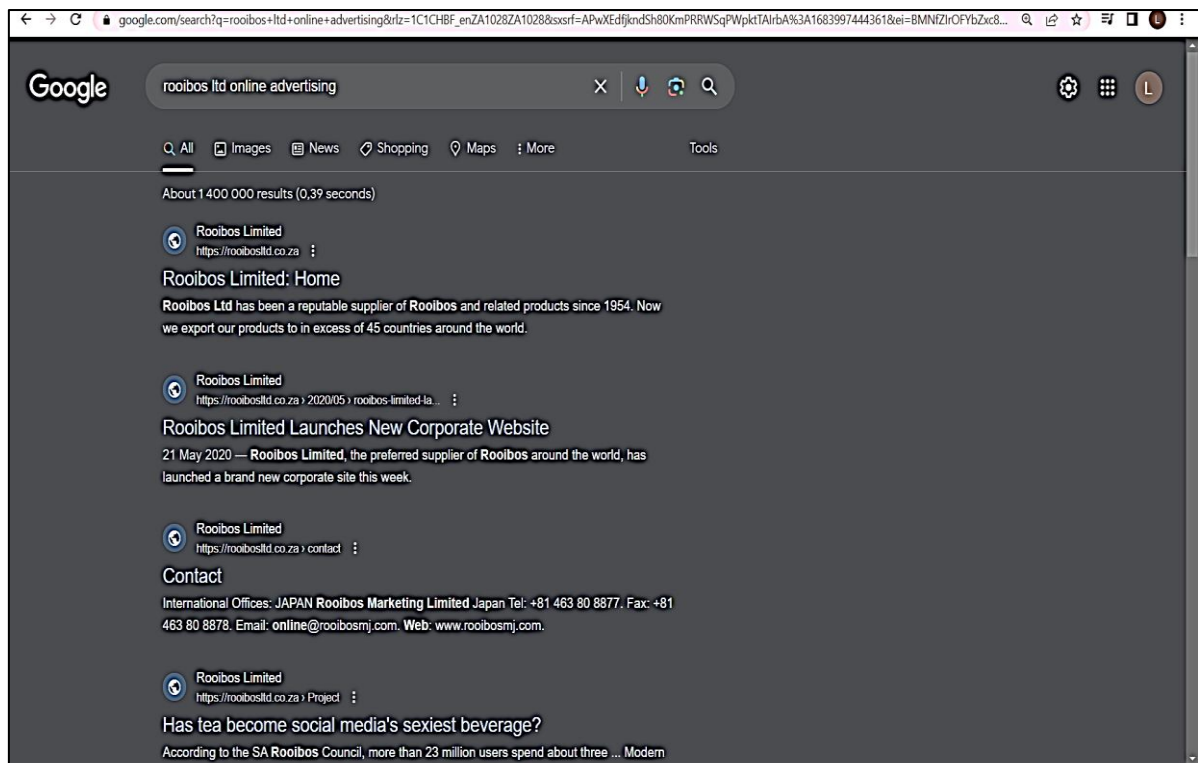


Figure 2-17 Rooibos Ltd's online advertisement available on their website

The presentations above (see Figure 2-17) of Rooibos Ltd's online advertising reflect that they use owned social media and website advertising.

Digital marketing, for the purpose of this study and with reference to Rooibos Ltd, consists of website, SEOs, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing and online advertising. By reviewing the literature on these elements, it seems that each element is essential for establishing a comprehensive and impactful digital presence. Therefore, when developing content for each platform, it is important to incorporate these elements and apply sound digital marketing management practices.

To utilise digital marketing platforms more efficiently, it is necessary to consider a marketing strategy and plan. Today's marketing strategies have the potential to change how digital marketing elements are managed through planning. The following section explores digital marketing strategies and plans that organisations such as Rooibos Ltd should consider and manage.

2.4 DIGITAL MARKETING MANAGEMENT

Digital marketing consists of various elements (see § 2.3) that need to be strategically managed to ensure they align with and achieve their intended goals and objectives. Therefore,

despite the digital world of marketing evolving and changing, Gowpall (2024:116) believes that digital marketing involves engaging with customers by adapting to the online world and reaching their target audience. By employing a digital marketing strategy, the plan to digital marketing can be carried out.

With a digital marketing strategy, it is possible to achieve targeted audience engagement, enhance brand visibility, drive conversions and optimise overall marketing performance across multiple online platforms.

A digital marketing plan serves as a basic management function in which plans are formulated, whereas a strategy is known as a framework that guides the marketer's choice in a specific direction (McGruer, 2019:328; Mocanu & Szakal, 2023:43; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2019:32; Visconti, 2020:163). Marketing process activities are important to consider before any digital marketing strategy and plan can be formulated and executed (see § 3.2). Because digital marketing refers to the full range of marketing activities in the modern world, based on the transfer of digital content from the producer to the user, it should be managed strategically.

Therefore, digital marketing management includes marketing activities to form relationships with customers by using digital methods to create impressions, sharing content and attracting customers to buy a product or service. These activities are aimed at achieving emotional responses from customers and intensifying targeted actions (Tataryntseva *et al.*, 2022:25).

To understand how this aim can be achieved, it is necessary to consider the components of the digital marketing strategy consisting of components discussed: segmentation, target marketing, positioning and stakeholders. Thereafter, the SOSTAC planning model, by which digital marketing is managed, will be discussed. This planning model was chosen for this study as it provides a comprehensive and structured framework that ensures a step-by-step guide that outlines and addresses all aspects of digital marketing.

2.4.1 Digital marketing strategy

Digital marketing strategy is known as an integrated approach to online marketing, focusing on various digital elements (Waldali, 2025:40). Various aspects of a digital marketing strategy, such as segmentation, target marketing, positioning and stakeholders, need to be discussed for an organisation to have an integrated online marketing approach. The reason for discussing these elements is that they are important to lay the foundation for a strategy that informs the corporate brand. By identifying these components, direction is given to what

message is communicated, how it is done and to whom it is conveyed. Therefore, each component plays a role in managing digital marketing.

2.4.1.1 Segmentation

Segmentation is a process where an organisation establishes the unique characteristics of the audience they want to reach. Digital marketing segmentation is defined as monitoring activities on digital platforms (as described in § 2.3) to create new ways in which the customer knows your industry (Hanlon, 2024). More recently, Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:368) indicated that segmentation and targeting are all about defining, selecting and reaching specific audiences online.

The importance of digital market segmentation is that it plays a role in the marketing strategy; it helps to define customer needs and wants; and it helps decision-makers to define marketing objectives (Kalam, 2020:427; Sandeep & Taneja, 2022:2; Tararyntseva *et al.*, 2022:24). There are a number of bases that may be used to identify a market segment: behavioural, geographical, psychographic, demographical and benefit segmentation. These bases are described in the literature and align with digital marketing strategy principles (Kingsnorth, 2016:23–25; Kotler *et al.*, 2023:32; Lamb *et al.*, 2019:212–224). Some characteristics of customer segmentation in the digital marketing sphere can be represented by creating personas for key audiences. The approach to segmenting the market, allows businesses to map key players in the marketplace, understand the importance and visibility of different customers and to track their journeys. It also helps identify customer segments by creating personas based on factors such as existing versus new customers, web-savvy versus on-web-savvy users, demographics, lifecycle stage and psychographics determine the relative importance and visibility of customers in the marketplace and understand their respective journeys (Cant *et al.*, 2025:108; Kotler *et al.*, 2023:32).

Pashiera and Sardjono (2024:1396) provide a holistic explanation with regards to segmentation in digital marketing. They state that organisations' online customers tend to have different needs, behaviours and demographic characteristics, which give the organisation the opportunity to adapt its strategic market segmentation through digital marketing elements (see § 2.3).

a) Behavioural

In a world that is rich in data, we are able to understand customers better. Behavioural segmentation is used to divide potential buyers into groups according to patterns in their

behaviour, together with their attitudes, product usage and responses to a product. Factors such as the user rate, brand-related occasions and brand familiarity have an influence on buying behaviour. Organisations should thus consider different marketing approaches, such as speaking to customers in a way that allows them to resonate with products or by capitalising on brand-related occasions (Cant *et al.*, 2025:108; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:151–165).

The behavioural segment aspect in the digital marketing environment is described as understanding the market segment to tailor the marketing message, as different segments have different needs, life stages, preferences and media consumption habits. An organisation can, for example, launch a segmentation campaign by sending an email to its entire database to identify the success rate of its industry. The segmentation of the subscribers can be based on their age, reactions to certain messages, preference feedback and media consumption habits.

It seems as if the application of behavioural segmentation allows Rooibos Ltd to understand customer preferences better and to tailor marketing messages for specific groups, based on factors like usage patterns and brand familiarity. By using data to segment audiences according to age, preferences and media consumption, Rooibos Ltd. can create more personalised, targeted campaigns that resonate with customers and drive engagement.

b) Geographical

This segmentation strategy involves analysing individuals' location. From a digital perspective, it may inform the geo-targeting or data selection for one's strategy. The disadvantage is that the geographical information reveals nothing about the individual themselves – only the location where they are based. With digital marketing, organisations can easily segment their audiences by, for example, using Facebook Ad manager, thereby reaching all South Africans. With digital marketing, geographical segmentation is not a tendency as all communication takes place online (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:151–165; Kotler *et al.*, 2023:224).

For Rooibos Ltd, utilising geographical segmentation aids in targeting specific locations, such as using geo-targeting in digital campaigns to reach customers across South Africa. However, while this approach is useful for location-based marketing, it does not provide insights into individual customer behaviours or preferences, which limits its efficiency in delivering personalised content.

c) Psychographic

The psychographic segmentation is simply to understand the customer's lifestyle – customer opinions (social issues, education, culture, politics), activities (work, hobbies, sport, shopping), interests (family, home, media), beliefs, personality and motives. When one understands these elements, the results may indicate that, similar to behavioural segmentation, products and digital communication can resonate with customers (Cant *et al.*, 2025:108).

For Rooibos Ltd, psychographic segmentation enables the organisation to understand customer lifestyle, interests and values, which allows them to tailor products and digital marketing communication that resonate better with their target audience.

d) Demographic

This strategy identifies factors such as age, gender, race, education, employment, income and economic status, which are seen as the characteristics of a group of people. Questions such as “Who can afford my product?” or “Is this group the right age for my product” can provide answer that may lead to a better understanding of the customer demographics. To understand this in more detail, one needs to understand behavioural segmentation. For example, 90% of working married women (gender), buy household products (buying behaviour) on a weekly basis (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:39).

For Rooibos Ltd, demographic segmentation assists with identifying key characteristics, such as age, gender and income, with which to target the right customer groups, ensuring that products and marketing efforts align with the specific needs and buying behaviours of these segments.

e) Benefit

This segmentation strategy is based on customers' perceived benefits. This segmentation strategy is important for organisations to give more benefits to customers. For example, customers have different needs when it comes to information and buying activities. Organisations can adjust by giving customers the benefit to get product and service information on various platforms and by making online shopping easier for the customer (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:151–165).

For Rooibos Ltd, the benefit segmentation allows the organisation to tailor its offerings by providing targeted product information and enhancing the online shopping experience to meet the diverse needs and preferences of its customers.

By viewing the marketing segmentation components of marketing strategy, the digital marketing segmentation description is now outlined through literature.

2.4.1.1.1 Segmentation: Rooibos Ltd's application

The following is a visual representation of how Rooibos Ltd applies these important aspects on their website to communicate with stakeholders by applying their digital marketing strategy segmentation.

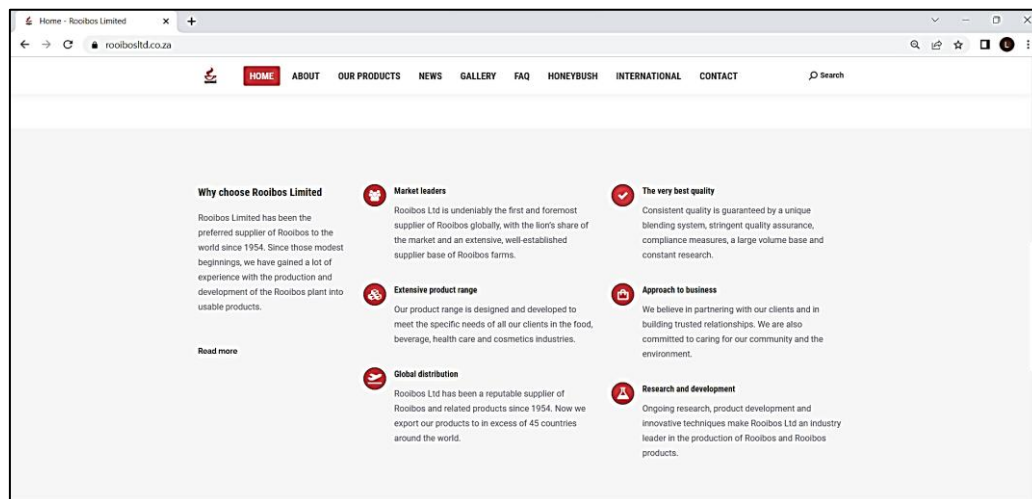


Figure 2-18 Rooibos Ltd's context: Segmentation

According to the representation above (see Figure 2-8), it seems as if Rooibos Ltd communicates with stakeholders via their website by identifying behavioural segmentation, describing the organisation with which certain stakeholders can relate. The tone and structure of the website will draw customers who prefer more descriptive content that explains processes, benefits or distribution processes. This, in turn, will determine customers' engagement and buying behaviour, depending on their experience of the website's tone and style.

By considering the segmentation strategies discussed above, the brand persona can be created by means of digital target marketing (Gowpall *et al.*, 2022:117).

2.4.1.2 Target market

A target market is defined as a group of individuals for whom an organisation designs, implements and maintain their marketing mix with the intent of meeting their needs to be mutually satisfied at the end (Kotler *et al.*, 2023:227). Strategies for selecting the target markets include:

a) Undifferentiated targeting: A mass-market philosophy

This target marketing strategy involves a big market with no individual segments. Customers have similar needs that can be met with one marketing mix. Water – used daily in South African homes and businesses – is a prime example of such a need. Cost savings can be an advantage as production and marketing cost can be low. Disadvantages of this strategy can be that product offerings can be imaginative and that competitors regard the organisation as being vulnerable (Kotler *et al.*, 2023:227; Lamb *et al.*, 2019:229).

b) Concentrated targeting: Selection of a market niche

The concentrated targeting refers to an organisation's selection of a market niche. In other words, selecting one segment of the market, for example, specialised field in finance.

Possible advantages of the concentration of resources are that it meets the needs of a narrowly defined market segment better; competes sufficiently with much larger firms; and offers stronger positioning. This strategy principle includes creating segments that are too small to be profitable, allowing large competitors to dominate the niche more effectively, and making smaller companies more vulnerable to changes in the environment (Lamb *et al.*, 2019: 230).

c) Multi-segment targeting

This strategy includes choosing two or more segments and developing separate strategies for each segment. Potential costs can be involved, such as product design costs, production costs, communication costs, inventory costs, marketing research costs, management costs and cannibalisation. Greater financial success and economies of scale in manufacturing and marketing can be potential advantages and potential disadvantages for an organisation can be high costs and market-overlap (Lamb *et al.*, 2019:233).

The sections above explained how strategy is based on target marketing with the aim to clarify the difference between traditional target marketing and digital target marketing. The following explains how customer-targeting strategies are applied in the digital environment.

The strategy for digital marketing is set on target marketing that refers to the mind of the customer. For example, customers prefer Tesla because they are attached to a category, which, in this case, is the electric car market. Therefore, the marketer has to think similar to this particular customer and place the focus on promoting small features to which customers can relate. The foundation of a differential positioning will enable the organisation to create

information and platforms that will persuade customers to invest in them. This is also where brand authenticity comes in. By confirming the previous description, decision-making is based on positioning a brand's authenticity or, in this case, the organisation's efforts on digital platforms (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:29; Rana *et al.*, 2020:288).

This study regards differentiated targeting (concentrated target) applicable in the context of Rooibos Ltd. The reason is that Rooibos Ltd has a unique market niche that wants to speak to their specific audience. For example, Rooibos Ltd wants to maximise exposure for their products and services to which customers can relate. The more customers relate to the brand, the more engaged they will be with their digital marketing, which can result in more purchasing of their products.

For organisations such as Rooibos Ltd, a digital differentiated target market is important as the organisation wants to reach as many customers as possible who resonate with whatever services, products and digital presence the organisation can provide.

2.3.1.2.1 Target market: Rooibos Ltd's application

The following is a visual representation of how Rooibos Ltd applies these important aspects on their website when communicating with stakeholders by applying their digital marketing strategy target market.

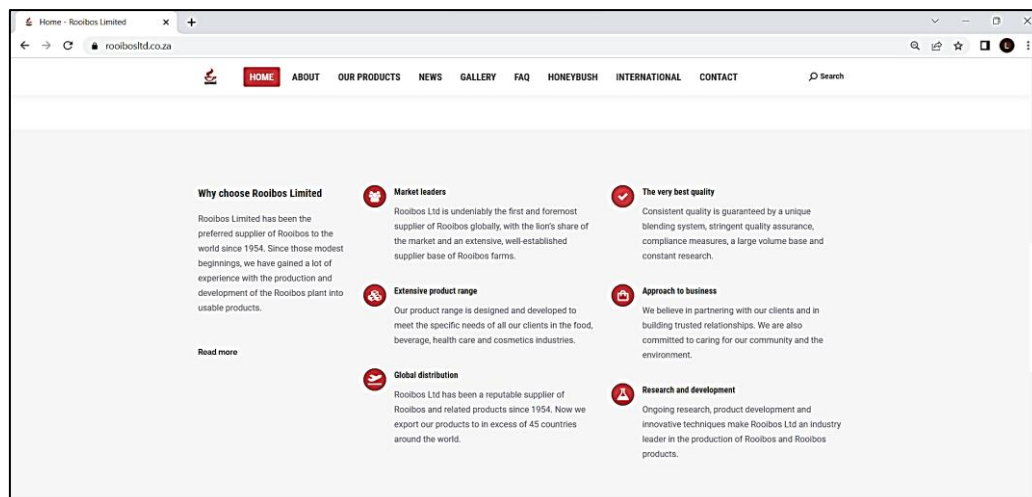


Figure 2-19 Rooibos Ltd's Context: Target marketing

Considering the representation above (see Figure 2-19), it seems that Rooibos Ltd communicates with stakeholders via their website in an undifferentiated manner. In other

words, to accommodate all stakeholders in their target marketing, Rooibos Ltd aims their digital marketing at all stakeholders in South Africa and across the globe.

Once an organisation has segmented its market and has decided on which market segments it will target, the next step will be to decide how each targeted market is positioned.

2.4.1.3 Positioning

Positioning is the development of an online specific marketing mix to influence potential customers' overall perception of a firm, product or its brand (Hanlon, 2025). Customers compare products and brands based on important features, such as assessing the positions occupied by competing products; identifying the important dimensions underlying the positions; and choosing a position where the organisation's marketing efforts will have the greatest impact (Lamb *et al.*, 2019:235).

The digital marketing strategy allows room for positioning an organisation in a certain light – one to which the customer has a connection – by employing a strategy that provides the customer an emotional connection by means of imagery or, alternatively, a more descriptive approach (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:169). In other words, customers can relate to and share the online experience with the brand and with other customers.

2.4.1.3.1 Positioning: Rooibos Ltd's application

Below is a visual representation of how Rooibos Ltd applies digital marketing strategy as positioning on their website when communicating with stakeholders.

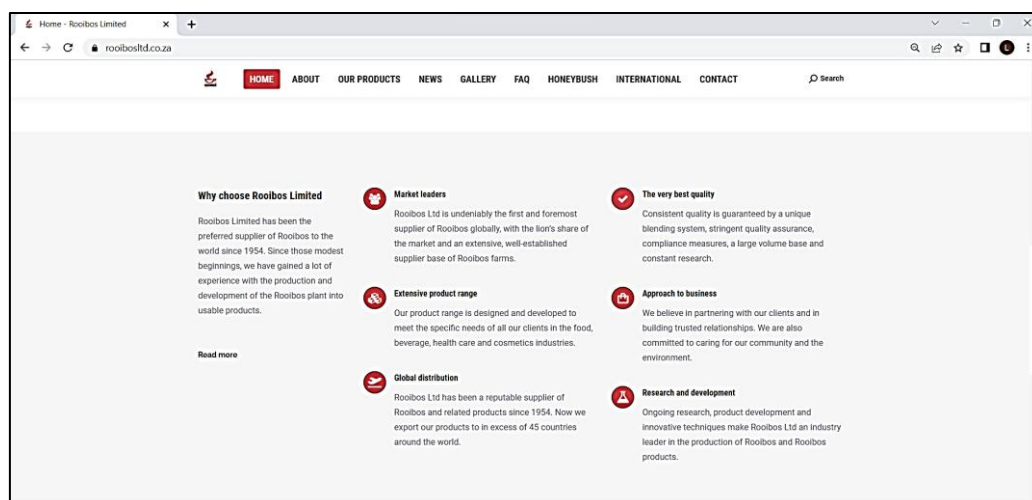


Figure 2-20 Rooibos Ltd's Context: Positioning

In the visual representation above, Rooibos Ltd positions themselves (see Figure 2-20) as being market leaders in global distribution of an extensive product range and services, as well as research and development. With this in mind, organisations such as Rooibos Ltd should carefully consider their target market and share relevant information to the specific group.

2.4.1.4 Stakeholders

For an organisation to identify stakeholders, the question that needs be answered is: *'Why is it important to identify stakeholder identification?'* The answer is simple. The organisation's vales and aims are for customers to *buy in*. Messages and dialogue are used to obtain buy-in and collaboration. Stakeholders' identification is used in specific messages that are targeted at specific stakeholders or key groups. Stakeholder identification is done by listening, informing, managing similarities and differences, learning, influencing and being influenced (Flew & Martin; 2022:8). Thus, it is important for an organisation to prioritise their stakeholders to ease the process of setting up a marketing mix for each group. The following image is derived from Steyn (2000:19) for the purpose of prioritising Rooibos Ltd's stakeholder in a map:

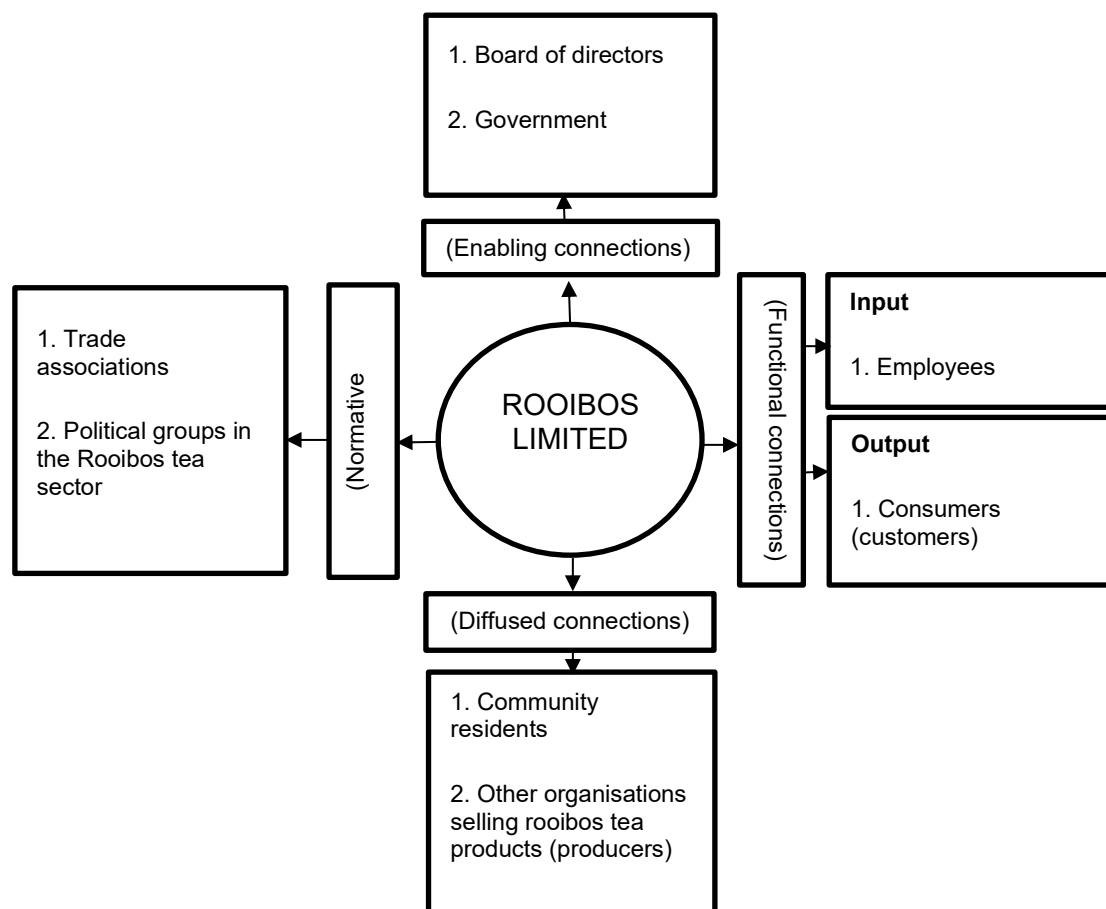


Figure 2-21 Rooibos Ltd's strategic connections (adapted from Steyn, 2000)

This study emphasises stakeholders in functional connections as Rooibos Ltd aims to communicate with their customers to satisfy its need for return on investments from their customers. Functional connections refer to Rooibos Ltd's management of input and output marketing from an internal (employees) and external (customers) organisational perspective. Whereas normative connections indicate the associations with which Rooibos Ltd work to reach their goal, the government, for example, sets rules in terms of how businesses such as Rooibos Ltd should operate.

This study identifies stakeholders in the context of digital platforms by reviewing statistics.

2.4.1.4.1 Stakeholders: Rooibos Ltd's application

Figure 2-22 shows how Rooibos Ltd uses digital marketing to identify and communicate with stakeholders on their website.

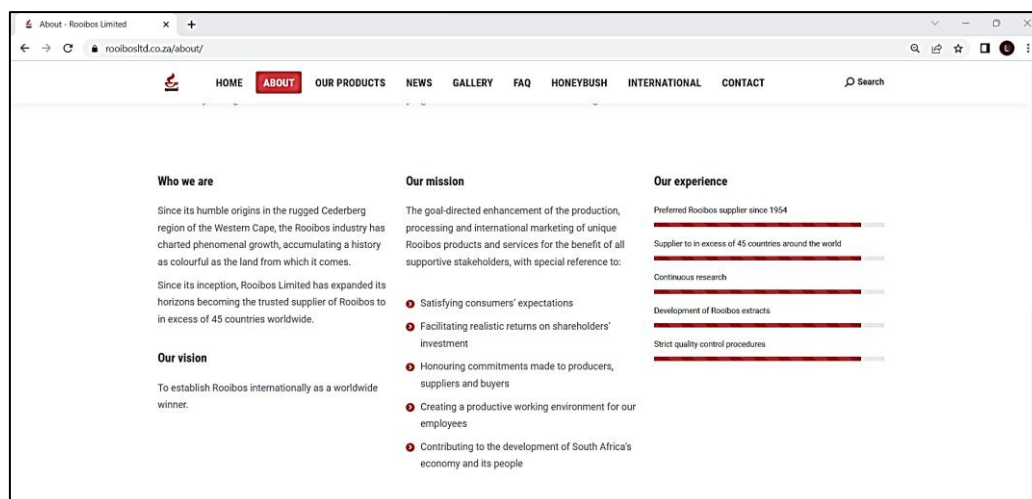


Figure 2-22 Rooibos Ltd's Context: Stakeholders

Rooibos Ltd identifies their stakeholders in the visual representation above (see Figure 2-22). Rooibos Ltd does not limit their stakeholders to one group but to a big variety of customers. In the context of this study, the next chapter will focus on customers and employees.

Having clarified the segmentation, target market, positioning and stakeholders in the context of digital marketing strategy, the operational plan of SOSTAC can be discussed.

2.4.2 PR Smith's SOSTAC planning model: Guide to digital marketing plan

Existing research indicates that there are a lot of marketing plans that may be considered regarding the employment of the digital marketing strategy.

The first approach to be considered is integrated marketing. This approach entails achieving communication goals by delivering consistent messaging, creativity and branding to audiences across different digital channels and placements. The focus is on interactivity that is designed to take advantage of specific channels to make it more sufficient. The starting point in selecting and implementing is to have clearly defined campaign objectives (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:385). Furthermore, Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:385) indicate that, to plan direct-response campaigns, the first objectives that should be considered are response volumes, quality and the cost thereof. The second consideration in the integrated marketing approach is to have brandings metrics in place for campaign awareness and branding outcomes. The six activities in this plan are described as: target audience selection, media objectives, media selection, media scheduling, media buying and media evaluation (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:385).

Hanlon (2025) considers the example of a marketing plan structure containing the following steps:

- Step 1: Create a customer analysis (Opportunity) by gaining an overview of who the stakeholders and customers are.
- Step 2: Marketing audit (Opportunity) by considering a SWOT analysis.
- Step 3: Creating sustainable objectives (Opportunity) by utilising the SMART objectives model.
- Step 4: Segmenting the customer base (Strategy) by including one or more of these in the key strategic initiatives: new markets, develop new products, business competitive position improvement, maintain competitive position, harvest part of the business and exit the business.
- Step 5: Target new customers and position your business (Strategy) by utilising strategies that penetrate the market, develop the market, develop the product or diversify. Kotler's (1988) nine marketing mix strategies could be considered in this regard.
- Step 6: Create the marketing action plan (Action) by assigning certain work instructions to different people.
- Step 7: Monitor, manage and improve (Action) by implementing the plan. Appoint one person to do the monitoring; have regular meetings; move onto the next part of planning when one item is difficult to do; review the instruction after it was carried out; and, lastly, stick to the plan and execute it.

SOSTAC is a framework for digital marketing planning developed by Smith (2018). It is widely used by professionals to create effective plans that improve results in areas such as business,

marketing, digital transformation, advertising, HR, health and safety, and especially digital marketing (Smith, 2018).

The digital marketing plan is based on and integrated with traditional marketing disciplines and planning techniques that are adapted for the digital media environment and then mixed with new digital marketing communications techniques. Therefore, this framework can be used as a process by which digital marketing is planned for the purpose of this study. The visual presentation below illustrates what SOSTAC stands for, followed by a discussion of each element.

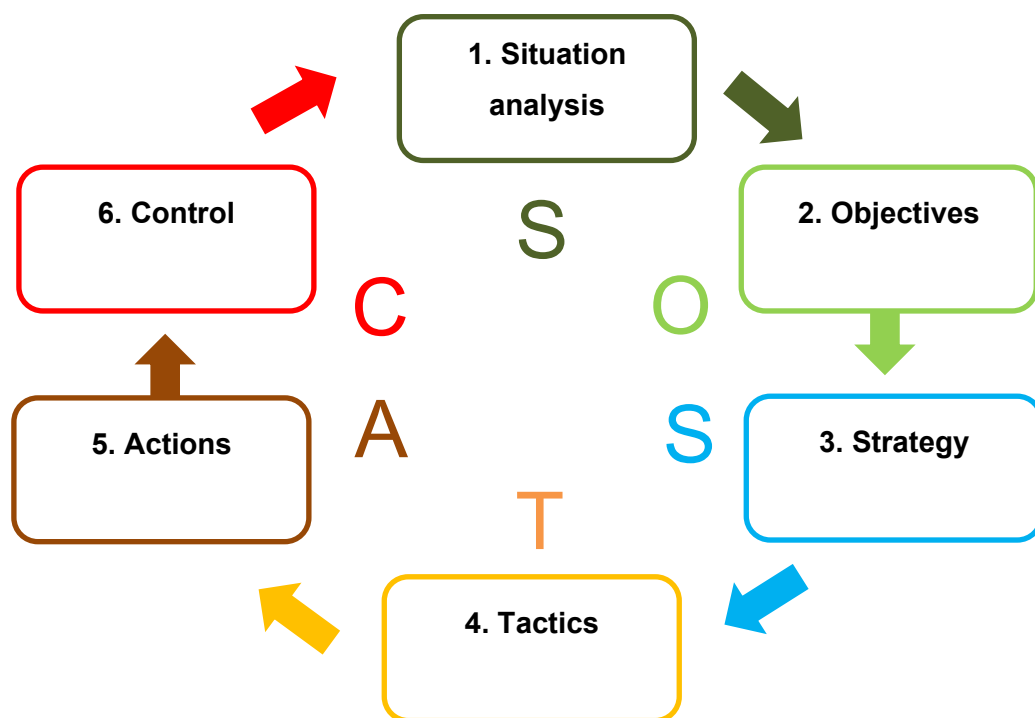


Figure 2-23 SOSTAC: The guide to the perfect digital marketing plan
(adapted from Smith, 2018)

2.4.2.1 Situation analysis

The situation analysis as introduction stage, provides an overview of the organisation, who the organisation is, how it interacts and also trades in the digital sphere. To achieve a holistic picture of this stage it is necessary to take into consideration the internal and external factors that affect the organisation (Smith, 2018).

The SWOT-analysis is commonly used to analyse an organisation internally. It includes customer analysis, a competitor analysis, an organisation analysis (strengths and weaknesses) and an external analysis (those uncontrollable PEST factors or PESTEL factors – Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental influences). For example, technological growth encourages organisations to adapt their marketing strategies and plans to the digital environment, as digital marketing became the new form of marketing) (Penalver, 2021; Smith, 2018).

The internal environment analysis is done to identify SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunity, threats) elements within the organisation in reference to the digital marketing context of this study. They can be seen in customer needs, wants, characteristics and behaviour; market needs and trends; key competitors, such as customer personas, in marketing mix; benchmark against competitors using digital tactics, such as social media; potential partners sharing one's content; own capabilities; and digital channel SWOT (Lamb *et al.*, 2019:329; Penalver, 2021; Sickler, 2020). McGruer (2019:333) explains that a marketing audit is important for reviewing internal communication in areas such as the environment, strategy, organisation, systems, productivity, and functions. This helps address SWOT elements. An external analysis is also needed, using PESTLE factors that may influence the organisation (Chaffey & Bosomworth, 2013:7–8). It extends to the technological sphere as digital marketing enables development of new technology features and capabilities for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd. It is important to consider the business objectives when moving to the next step in the digital marketing plan.

Penalver (2021) suggests that companies should engage in internal reviews to determine what the organisation's situation is in the digital age. He continued by asking questions about possible key focus points that should be investigated: Is the website customer oriented? Is the browsing experience usable? What is the social media presence? What is the website's positioning at the moment? To answer these answers, digital marketing goals and objectives should be re-evaluated and adjusted to findings and outcomes. Therefore, Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:160) also state that key activities for defining the online opportunity leads to setting digital marketing objectives.

Companies such as Rooibos Ltd, for example, should consider defining clear digital marketing objectives at the hand of achieving business objectives, which is formulated in the senior management vision. Employees contribute to experiencing and identifying possible opportunities in their communication and marketing field of expertise. They should also evaluate digital marketing performances and assess the online marketplace.

2.4.2.2 Objectives

Once strong points and place in the market have been identified, digital marketing objectives should be established to show what the organisation wants to achieve with their digital marketing (Suharyati, 2023:39). Smith (2018) points out that this stage includes the vision, mission and KPI (key performance indicators). KPI entail marketing objectives such as sales, profits/ROI (return on investment), market shares, enquiries, conversion rates, cost per conversion, cost per sale, cost per customer retained, cost per enquiry and cost per visitor. Smith also indicates that Marcomms objectives are based on the customer. These objectives can relate to goals such as building awareness, creating preference, and encouraging consideration, similar to the AIDA model consisting of attention, interest, desire, and action. He continues by stating that a different approach emerged that is known as the 5Ss (sell, serve, speak, save and sizzle) (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:12). Thus, it is necessary to meet the SMART criteria (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) when compiling objectives.

With this in mind, digital marketing objectives and goals are created to help turn the organisational vision into practical actions, using the five SMART criteria (Hanlon, 2025; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:157):

- **Specific:** Is the specific objective set out to measure real-world problems and opportunities?
- **Measurable:** Can metrics be drawn up against the quantity (qualitative/quantitative attributes)?
- **Actionable:** Use information to improve information. The objective should change the behaviour of the staff to help improve performance
- **Relevant:** Is the information relevant to the problem faced by manager?
- **Time-related:** Information can be compared and measured during different time periods.

Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:157) add that, for digital marketing objectives, SMART objectives are set for an online platform, such as a website or mobile application, and it is important to measure traffic, value and cost.

The digital marketing plan defines what you want to achieve when its objectives are clear, can be measured and are attainable. It includes numbers and timeframes to benchmark the progress (Sickler, 2020). Rooibos Ltd, for example, has to set digital marketing objectives, such as doubling its Facebook engagement (likes, comments and share posts) in the next 12 months. It is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound.

2.4.2.3 Strategy

Smith (2018) reiterates that, although this part is the shortest in the plan, it is the most important. He continues by stating that the TOPP SEED strategy acronym is important to be identified in this stage: Target market, objectives, positioning, partnerships, processes, stages, engagement, experience (customer experience) and data.

Digital marketing strategy ensures that companies select appropriate strategies to achieve objectives that were set during the previous stage. This step in the digital marketing plan is destined to reflect personalisation (Penalver, 2021). As personalisation becomes more and more important in digital marketing, it is crucial to keep certain factors in mind when defining the digital marketing strategy and when carrying out the plan.

Segmenting the target audience is to know exactly what the organisation wants to address; know the stakeholders' needs, wants and preferences; and know how to meet their expectations that create purchasing persona (Gopall *et al.*, 2024:28–30; McGruer, 2019:345; Penalver, 2021). Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022:160) explains that online tactical marketing segmenting enables targeting directed towards customers based on their search behaviour, accessed content and social media contributions.

Positioning is important to keep in mind as it should reach audiences in the same way and have a clear value proposition in place. This message should be shared through digital channels that highlight the brand's online value proposition (OVP) (Penalver, 2021; McGruer, 2019:345). Therefore, corporate brand management is informed by digital marketing by communicating a clear brand proposition that provides a brand commitment and positions the brand in the market. It is important to keep an online marketing mix in mind when the next part in the strategy, namely the marketing mix, is established (see 4Ps mentioned earlier).

Proposition and marketing mix are seen as adding value by means of the 4P's mentioned earlier (see § 3.2.1). Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022: 395–417) argue that a strategy should ensure that the marketing mix and brand values are reviewed, with the aim of evaluating how the organisation can improve online. This can be done by:

- **Awareness:** through PR (advertise across sites)
- **Consideration:** proposition, brand values (digital proposition)
- **Easy to find:** through marketing activities (SEO improvement)
- **Informative:** content on the corporate brand (content strategies)
- **Easy to use:** to create a user experience or customer service

Companies like Rooibos Ltd can choose a strategic approach and put it into action to improve the situation identified in the first step and achieve their digital marketing objectives.

2.4.2.4 Tactics

This stage includes the marketing mix and channel mix for the digital sphere that includes price setting to establish differentiation in product/service range to choose channels aiding in customers moving along their lifestyle journey. In other words, this stage enables tactics that communicate and change 24/7 by using feedback and data insights (such as customer preference) to draw from the marketplace. Ads are automatically adjusted to get customer attention, interest, desire and action (AIDA) (Smith, 2018).

In this stage, it is crucial to consider that plans that bring the goals, objectives and strategies together are formulated. Success depends on planning how the work will be done, working with key stakeholders, managing the budget planning and ensuring that regulators are in place (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:377).

Opinions about action plans indicated that it is clear that tactical planning is applicable in the context of this study, as it indicates how strategy was delivered through tactical delivery. For example, Rooibos Ltd can allocate a monthly budget of R500 for digital marketing activities, such as Facebook ads to reach more customers.

2.4.2.5 Actions

In this stage, the process continues to execute tactics internally with excellence and passion. It includes the motivation, communication and training to equip the organisation's staff with executing tactics needed to maximise the impact of their marketing tasks and efforts. Actions are created to plan for "Who does what". Each tool and tactic should be managed sufficiently (Smith, 2018). McGruer (2019:346) explains that detailed tactics for all marketing communication channels are crucial. He continues with an example of tactics for SEOs. First the tactic actions are stipulated in the form of internal and external sources, skills, processes and systems in place, all of which is often displayed in a Gantt chart. Secondly, actions for tactic one (SEO) are identified as key word analysis, on-page optimisation, together with content and link building.

Tools in the action phase of this study executed content strategies (in the form of digital marketing plan) in the form of a *content calendar* (date of publication, author, post topic, keyword, tags, etc. that needed consideration) and a *social posting* (a plan set out what and

when the person is going to publish). In this stage strategies based on objectives, including email marketing and social media posts and campaigns, are carried out (Penalver, 2021). For example, Rooibos Ltd's marketing creates and optimises dynamic social media platforms or develop insight-driven campaigns (Smith, 2018).

The sufficiency of the implementation should be monitored and controlled, which enables employees to provide mechanisms with which to evaluate the marketing results (with regards to plan objectives and correcting action within the budget). A marketing audit should evaluate the goals, strategies, structure and performance of the organisation's digital marketing (Hanlin, 2025). For example, clear illustrations of progress in each action plan can be seen in the Gantt Chart, where the strategies show points for how progress is made towards meeting the objectives and goals of the business. Implementing reporting and measurement is crucial to allow monthly, weekly or daily progress feedback on meeting the objectives.

2.4.2.6 Control

In this stage, controls are used to indicate how the organisation is bound to achieve their objectives. McGruer (2019:347) and Gowpall *et al.*, (2024:36) state that controls measure results and key point indicators (KPIs) to determine whether the organisation is moving forward in achieving their set objectives. KPIs are created for each tactic that links back to the objectives, which then are monitored to track the performance and progress.

Data analytics and specific skill sets are also an important part in controls. Therefore, it is necessary to have a plan and a budget for this. This phase also ensures feedback in the success rate of the business actions. These measured metrics can then be used and fed into the next situation analysis – the organisational analysis/performance/results that worked or did not work. This can result in setting better and more realistic objectives for the next plan (Gowpall *et al.*, 2024:140).

Control should be applied when reviewing the action plans against the progress towards meeting the objectives. If they do not match, new action plans should be set in place. Risk management and contingency planning should also be part of control in the marketing plan. People form part of the management system and play an important role in executing the plan with certain skill sets and recourses available (Kingsnorth, 2016:84). McGruer (2019:348) adds that return on investment (*ROI*) calculation adjustments can be made, depending on whether the sales growth reflects lower than the marketing cost. Rooibos Ltd can execute control in reviewing traffic on paid social media campaigns and adapt their strategy or budget according to the success of their set objectives.

To summarise the SOSTAC framework used to manage digital marketing, it is important to take the elements such as situation, objectives, strategy, tactics, actions and control into consideration when planning one's marketing activities. But using this planning framework, digital marketing could have possible value for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd.

2.5 VALUE OF DIGITAL MARKETING FOR ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS ROOIBOS LTD

The value of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd is highlighted in the description below. Firstly, digital marketing, according to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019:14), is the process that is responsible for identifying customer needs and wants, anticipating channels with which to access information and satisfying customer requirements by using digital channels.

Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019:14) and Hanlon (2025) state that organisations can thus use digital marketing to achieve four strategic directions such as:

- **Market penetration:** Involves selling more existing products in existing markets.
- **Market development:** Taking advantage of low-cost marketing.
- **Product development:** Digital products can be developed online.
- **Diversification:** The internet sells new products into new markets.

The 5Ss (sell, serve, speak, save costs and sizzle) of digital marketing form a clear direction for the values of managing digital marketing. The following are the values of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd.

2.5.1 Sell (grow sales)

Direct online and offline sales influence digital marketing. Digital marketing reaches a wider range of customers with a wider range of products than in a store. With this, the value that an organisation gets by using digital marketing is return on investment (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:12; Rana *et al.*, 2020; Storm, 2020; McGruer, 2019:44).

2.5.2 Serve (add value)

This strategic outlook provides customers with additional online benefits through communication, service, and feedback. This ensures that organisations, such as Rooibos Ltd, have the opportunity to use digital marketing to their advantage, with the added value of

competing with larger corporations (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:12; Storm, 2020; Diamond, 2019:624; McGruer, 2019:44).

2.5.3 Speak (get closer to customers)

Digital marketing creates the value of targeting the ideal audience. Two-way dialogue is key to get to know the audience first and to adjust according to their needs (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:12; Storm, 2020; Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019:15; McGruer, 2019:44).

2.5.4 Save costs

An organisation can save costs via online email communication, sales and service. Customers communicate their queries about the online content. With this, organisations such as Rooibos Ltd save costs by monitoring digital channels and adjusting to the customer needs and wants (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:12; Storm, 2020; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019:15; McGruer, 2019:44).

2.5.5 Sizzle (extend the brand online)

Sizzle is achieved by way of new propositions, new offers, new online experiences and by building communities. The value of digital marketing is to be different from competitors and to develop your brand to be the best (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022:12; Storm, 2020; McGruer, 2019:44).

Organisations such as Rooibos Ltd can utilise digital marketing values not only to its own advantage, but also to that of their customers. The following section discusses how digital marketing informs the corporate brand.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed to answer the research question by providing context and a general definition of digital marketing, as well as discussing its key elements, value, and strategies. These components are integrated with corporate brand management as digital marketing cannot exist on its own and should portray the essence of the organisation, which plays an important role in the success of the organisation. To understand this, this chapter constantly referred to how Rooibos Ltd informs the corporate brand by using digital marketing. Three specific guiding arguments emerged from the first literature discussion. The guiding arguments were developed to structure the discussion and highlight how digital marketing supports corporate brand management in practice.

Specific guiding argument 1

Digital marketing consists of elements such as websites, search engine marketing, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing and online advertising. These elements enable companies to engage with customers and to build customer relationships by means of an online presence. This is important as it is the way an organisation presents itself to their existing and potential customers. Therefore, digital marketing elements should be managed sufficiently as to have greater value than just providing information.

An organisation can use a vehicle such as the SOSTAC to manage its digital marketing and, subsequently, to utilise digital marketing elements sufficiently and to see the outcome of each online channel in terms of their success through engagement with and traffic from stakeholders on digital platforms.

Specific guiding argument 2

Digital marketing management is crucial for organisations to reach their goals and digital marketing objectives. The digital marketing strategy consists of segmentation, target marketing and positioning. The SOSTAC is a model utilised by numerous organisations across the world to strategically manage their digital marketing. It consists of the organisation's situation analysis, digital marketing objectives, strategy, tactics, actions and control. In order for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to have a strong, favourable corporate brand and have long-term relationships with customers, their digital marketing should be managed sufficiently and strategically.

Although the SOSTAC is a process by which a corporate brand can manage different targeted messages, doing it sufficiently will enable the organisation to gain exceptional value.

Specific guiding argument 3

Managing digital marketing sufficiently and strategically can have possible value for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd and their customers. Using more sales, preferred service, dialogue with customers engagement, saving costs and sizzling to extend the corporate brand can be of great value for the company's organisational success.

This chapter first contextualised digital marketing, followed by a general definition of digital marketing as perceived in this study. Secondly, the chapter offered ideas about digital marketing elements. The management of digital marketing was outlined by means of the digital

marketing strategy. Digital marketing values for companies, such as Rooibos Ltd was added as an indicator of why digital marketing should inform corporate brand management.

To get a holistic overview on how digital marketing functions optimally, a discussion of corporate brand management is necessary as digital marketing cannot exist on its own. The following chapter elaborates on the corporate brand, along with elements that inform the corporate brand, together with its strategic value for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd.

CHAPTER 3 CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT INFORMED BY DIGITAL MARKETING

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two focused on the first theoretical concept digital marketing informing corporate brand management by defining and contextualising digital marketing. Digital marketing elements were discussed followed by digital marketing strategy and management guidelines and importantly the strategic values of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd.

This chapter's aim is to elucidate the importance of corporate brand management and to emphasise the need to manage the corporate brand optimally.

This chapter will address the second specific research question:

What does corporate brand management entail?

A literature review was necessary to answer this question. The chapter commences with a definition and contextualisation of corporate brands formed over the years, followed by a discussion and description of corporate brand elements. Thirdly, corporate brand management is outlined, after which the strategic value of corporate brand management for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd will be discussed. Ultimately, the chapter concludes by answering the second specific research question.

Therefore, this chapter revises previous research on the concept of corporate brand to gain a clear understanding of how it is managed.

The following section elaborates on defining corporate brand management in the context of corporate organisations.

3.2 DEFINING CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT

One needs to define corporate brand management to understand how the meaning of brands have changed over decades.

3.2.1 Concept of brands: A general definition

When one investigates the concept of a brand, one can see that there have been different views on brands over the years. The discussion below speaks to the need to clarify that brands

are an essential part of the modern life. As customers' product, service and brand needs changed over the decades, the definition of a brand and branding also grew significantly. The discussion below, outlines the development of a brand to understand how it has grown over several years.

During the 1980's, a brand was known as logos or trademarks to portray a sense of authenticity and quality. Therefore, a brand was identified by a name, term, sign, a feature that identified a seller and distinguished them from other sellers. Brands also identify products, services, or individuals who have the legal right to use the brand or its identity (De Chernatony & Riley, 1998). Over almost 40 decades, the concept of brand has changed because of frequent uncertainty and studies showing a tendency of not only people, products and services but also companies starting to use its brand to communicate, grow, refresh their brand, manage issues regarding ethical and online branding, as well as brand consumption (De Chernatony & Riley, 1998; McCharthy & Perrealt, 1993:272).

After the reshaping of the concept during the 1990's, various authors defined a brand as an organisation's specific use of a name to do marketing and also to distinguish their products and services. Therefore, brands portray an image to stakeholders as a promise of what they can expect, thereby creating a certain perception regarding the brand. Khan (2009:22) explains that a brand includes physical attributes (tangible characteristics), such as features, logo, packaging, trademark and performance characteristics, that stakeholders recognise. A brand also includes customers' associations (intangible characteristics), perceptions of and experience with products. Research has shown that marketing a brand with these physical attributes helps position it in the marketplace by targeting a specific group of stakeholders (McCharthy & Perrealt, 1993:272; Chernatony and Riley, 1998). Although branding was used to position a brand with customers, the focus shifted to a more integrated way of communication. The brand as an image was communicated in an integral way, for instance, via communication messages and behaviour, especially as behaviour also communicates a message to customers. Therefore, the way a brand is integrally communicated to customers played an important role in the perceptions about the brand's performance.

By the late 2000's, the term brand was established as a relatively broadly defined concept that grew over the years. Rampedi (2008:17) studied the South African Rooibos tea industry and described established brands as those that consistently communicate with stakeholders using physical attributes (Kahn, 2009:22; McDonald, 2007:189). By strategically managing a personified brand and maintaining strong relationships with stakeholders, organisations can

achieve sustainable competitive advantages and build a successful brand (Aghazadeh, 2015:125; Aslam *et al.*, 2010:14; Hatch & Schultz, 2003:2041).

In later years, Urde's (2016) research on the brand core and management over time found that theory lacks an agreed-upon core and a framework for managing a dynamic brand.

A brand is regarded as more than just its physical presence. It pertains to benefits for the organisation. For example, a brand's benefit is seen in people's association with the brand, its perceived reliability and the trusted support obtained from the brand. These benefits could also be seen through the brand's logo, packaging, trademark and performance characteristics (Beverland, 2018; Rubio & Yague, 2019:32,95; Steenkamp, 2017:133).

The word *brand* was studied to understand the meaning of a brand. It derived from the German word *brandr* that literally means *to burn your mark into or to stigmatise*, which also refers to ownership (Beverland, 2018; Keller, 2013:3). Managing a brand can take several forms, such as identifying the brand itself, representing it through a person, associating a person's appearance or behaviour with the brand's culture, and protecting the brand, for example a logo, from being copied or stolen. A brand consists of characteristics that identify it as a good brand: identification, distinction, differentiation, meaning, value, experienced and authority (Beverland, 2018; Rowles, 2018:10; Steenkamp, 2017:30).

In the age where marketing shifting to the digital sphere (because of external influences, such as Covid-19, that affected organisations across the world, compelling organisations to reconsider their marketing activities), the meaning of a brand is shaped by stories being told, an organisation, influencers and the brand's role in popular culture. Therefore, brand managers' responsibility for creating meaning for a brand has changed significantly. Classic texts and definitions of a brand by authors such as Aaker's Managing brand equity and Keller's Brand management, emphasises the creation, control and brand management and practitioners' approach that shifted towards being applicable and relevant to certain crowds (Keller, 2013:460). Therefore, it is important for a corporate brand to be managed to get a favourable reaction from stakeholders, which is known as having a brand reputation (Potgieter, 2020:123-124). The role of a corporate brand is to assist an organisation by portraying a sustainable, substantial and credible corporate identity, which results in favourable reactions from their stakeholders to create stories to which stakeholders can relate and with which they can interact.

Keller and Swaminathan (2020:32) suggest that a brand can be identified by its brand elements such as name, logos, symbols and many more. Furthermore, Keller and

Swaminathan (2020:32) agree that a brand is identified and differentiated by its brand elements. Balmer (2021:2) insists on looking at brands based on their identities. In other words, product brands are underpinned by product identities and service brands are underpinned by service brand identities.

Wang *et al.* (2022:2) found that literature regarding a brand changed significantly to being more about how customers perceive the brand through their identities. Wang *et al.* (2022:3) also zooms in on destination brands that emerged after customer associations became important to brand in terms of buying behaviour. In other words, buying behaviour is determined by means of the associations that customers have with the brand.

As the meaning of a brand changed over many decades, many authors attempted to define and describe the meaning of a brand. By studying literature regarding a brand, it is defined for the purpose of this study as the following:

A brand is a concept that helps people identify an organisation, product or service (see Wang *et al.*, 2022:3; Balmer, 2021:2; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020; Potgieter, 2020; Beverland, 2018; Steenkamp, 2017).

By studying the meaning of a brand, a corporate brand can now be discussed in the next section in the light of how a brand is defined in the block above.

3.2.2 Defining the corporate brand

The definition and notion of a brand have changed significantly over the past number of years. Various authors agree that a brand and branding have changed from being product-orientated, to taking on a corporate (organisational) perspective (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:32; Potgieter, 2020; Rowles, 2018:25; Steenkamp, 2017).

A corporate brand has more meaning (values, intellect, culture) than that which is seen in brand elements (such as the logo, name and colours). Thus, the importance of a corporate brand became more noticeable in the corporate world.

Keller and Swaminathan (2020:26) and Rowles (2018) name a few developments that underlie the rising importance of corporate brand:

- The growing importance of a competitive market
- The need of interaction and network marketplace
- The growing demand for transparency

- Missing elements to branding a corporation

These developments are described by various authors. Organisations became aware of stakeholders' changing needs and demands from corporate brands. Because of the shift in corporate brand applications, various educational institutes, government bodies, schools, tourism attractions, airports and businesses had to adapt their overall corporate brand accordingly (Steenkamp, 2017). The reason was that organisations started to develop their corporate brand internationally in services and products integrally to provide a brand experience (Potgieter, 2020:108; Steenkamp, 2017).

The importance of employees to live up to the corporate brand is undeniable as they build relationships with all stakeholders by contributing meaning to the brand. It has been proven that the corporate brand only emerged in the 1990's as the mix of underlying factors influenced companies to change from only product branding to corporate branding in an organisationally integrated way (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:12; Beverland, 2018; Rowles, 2018:157). Over a period of time, corporate branding changed as it required internal and external communication, along with expressing the wish to create coherence on multiple channels and news media. A corporate brand is communicated by means of internal (employees, management, staff) and external (customers, local community) communication channels. Several authors (Balmer, 2017:6; Iglesias *et al.*, 2022; Steenkamp, 2017; Urde, 2016:34) emphasise that there is a significant move from traditional branding to modern branding.

Although the corporate brand developed at various levels in organisations, a tendency in corporations occurred regarding the nature of corporate brands. The corporate brand concept is analysed by means of various authors' definitions of the term.

A corporate brand is the illustration of characteristics that differentiate it from competing organisations (Beverland, 2018; Cant & Van Heerden, 2016:227; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:145). It also has a cultural nature with reference to the organisational heritage and actions (Balmer, 2017:6; De Chernatony & Riley, 1998:1086; Potgieter, 2020:112; Steenkamp, 2017:160). The corporate brand has an effect on all stakeholders, as formulating communication and activities is valuable for communicating transparent messages to them (Khan, 2009:25; Lalaounis, 2021; Steenkamp, 2017:133). Therefore, it is integrated with the association that the organisation chooses to use and the stakeholders' experience of the organisational service, product and communication (Aaker, 2004:5; Balmer *et al.*, 2017:13; De Chernatony & Riley, 1998:1086; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:149; Khan, 2009). Their perceptions and actions affect how they associate with the corporate brand. Therefore, it is very important that the organisation satisfies their stakeholder needs and wants in services,

products and communication. This will determine the emotional or positive experience that they will associate with the corporate brand (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:37; Iglesias *et al.*, 2022; Rubio & Yague, 2017; Steenkamp, 2017:133). For example, a customer at Rooibos Ltd gets exceptional service each time he visits the store and associates the emotional experience of belonging and feeling satisfied with the organisation's service. In effect, a corporate brand's added value (giving an emotional experience through innovation, perceived quality and concern for customers) indicates tangible and intangible character traits that differentiate it from competitors (Aaker, 2004; De Chernatony, 2006:18; Hatch & Shultz, 2003; Kapferer, 2008:12; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:147). Keller and Swaminathan (2020:32) and Pollak and Marcovic (2022:79) are of the opinion that loyalty towards customers develops as an added value, which benefits them and meets their expectations.

Furthermore, organisational added value should portray the brand's promise by being consistent and by creating tangible and intangible elements. In other words, the challenge for corporate brands is to present the brand in a coherent and consistent way (Van den Braber *et al.*, 2021:112). A consistent brand experience is crucial for an organisation to have an integrated brand. An organisation's corporate brand has a multidisciplinary approach, where management is coordinated. The senior manager has the responsibility to strategically manage the corporate brand and communicate brand promises, whereas personnel play a significant role in any organisation, as they act in the interest of the corporate brand (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:37–38). By following the multidisciplinary approach, senior managers and CEOs have to approach the corporate brand as a strategic management tool. This tool not only indicates the vision and mission but also all the processes and structures within the organisation. All stakeholders in the organisation are responsible for maintaining the corporate brand. Therefore, it is senior management's task to manage all communication within the organisation so that all internal stakeholders can be satisfied and informed of what the corporate brand expects from them. In other words, a multidisciplinary approach combines strategy, organisational culture and corporate communication (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:37-38; Iglesias *et al.*, 2022:3; Knox & Bickerton, 2003; Lalaounis, 2021:312; Van de Sand *et al.*, 2020:115;).

The contextualisation above indicates that multiple components are significant for an organisation's corporate brand.

This study defines the concept corporate brand is defined as follows:

A corporate brand describes an organisation as a whole through the interplay of corporate strategy, business activities and corporate brand elements (see Iglesias *et al.*, 2022:3; Lalaounis, 2021; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020; Beverland, 2018; Balmer *et al.*, 2017; Cant & Van Heerden, 2016; Khan, 2009; De Chernatony, 2006; Aaker, 2004; Balmer & Greyser, 2003;).

Based on the information in the section above, it seems as if a corporate brand consists of multiple elements. The definition above requires an explanation of corporate brand elements to understand what it entails and how digital marketing informs these elements.

The next section explains the important corporate brand elements of the corporate strategy.

3.3 CORPORATE BRAND ELEMENTS

Throughout the previous sections, there is evidence of how various authors and academic sources have engaged in stating the core elements of a corporate brand. This section elaborates on the corporate brand elements that various authors have considered.

The corporate brand consists of a vision that is expounded by Burmann *et al.* (2017:48) – an important source of motivation for employee working behaviour and customer purchasing behaviour. Furthermore, as senior management, the CEO inspires employees to work towards the corporate brand vision, which they previously presented to employees, with a clear vision and mission (objectives and promises). In the modern age of marketing, a corporate brand consists of more than just a name or symbol because it is developed and is influenced by a variety of factors such as the strategy of the organisation, the promise that is linked to the brand, the brand personality with which customers associate, the identity that is portrayed visually, communication, organisational structure and how the employees of the organisation position themselves. These elements enable distinction between companies. However, they are also interlinked and form a promise, personality and positioning (Burmann *et al.*, 2017:45; Cornelissen, 2017:92; Potgieter, 2020:124).

According to Martínez-López *et al.* (2018:105), a corporate brand consists of the way an organisation portrays itself through their products, services, online communication channels, stores and even online stores. Santiago (2020) adds that employees learn culture from other employees or managers, after which they become the source of portraying the organisation and form the corporate culture by their behaviour. Potgieter (2020:122) found that there is a significant positive correlation between an employer carrying out the brand and an organisation's corporate reputation. Keller and Swaminathan (2020:451) agree that corporate

credibility relies on corporate expertise, trustworthiness and likability, which form the internal corporate identity upon which employees perform their daily activities.

Rubio and Yague (2019) refer to the corporate brand as a visual experience that can be obtained by, for example, employee behaviour or the shopping process. They continue by discussing the corporate brand as the design elements that are crucial when making a purchase attractive for customers. It is important for the organisation to provide an experience that is aimed more in favour of the customer experience – one that can possibly influence their buying behaviour. Therefore, the brand can be managed by employees if management empower employees by offering training and skill development workshops (Potgieter, 2020:124; Rubio & Yague, 2019).

With employees portraying the corporate culture, it is also seen that customers form a certain image of the organisation based on their understanding of the corporate identity (Burmam *et al.*, 2017:241; Potgieter, 2020:122; Rowles, 2018:71). Therefore, a positive corporate image can lead to positive a corporate reputation amongst customers and employees (Potgieter, 2020:123). According to Burmann *et al.* (2017:56), a corporate brand consists of the brand image, which is portrayed to customers or other stakeholders. This corporate brand image should be goal directed and fulfil stakeholders' needs.

Consequently, Pollák and Markovič (2022:77) argue that employees who deliver the corporate brand promise to stakeholders have a direct influence on their view, trust and engagement with the organisation. Stakeholders' needs and wants can only be satisfied through the communication of the corporate brand promise and symbols as visual elements (Burmam *et al.*, 2017:59; Cant *et al.*, 2025:9).

Although it is clear from the discussion that various elements play a role in the composition of a corporate brand, the following elements were identified as the most important and the most relevant to the study regarding Rooibos Ltd: vision, mission and corporate brand promise; corporate visual identity; corporate culture; corporate image; stakeholders; and corporate communication. These elements were chosen specifically for the purpose of the study.

These elements are discussed and presented visually in the following section.

3.3.1 Corporate brand elements as applied in Rooibos Ltd

The discussion below presents corporate brand elements as the input perspectives of the brand interpretation. Therefore, the following elements relevant to the context of this specific

study are outlined to assess the approach to Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand. Each element contributes to the establishment of the organisation's corporate brand and is core to its management (see § 3.3). In addition to the discussion of these elements, Rooibos Ltd's application of these elements are provided.

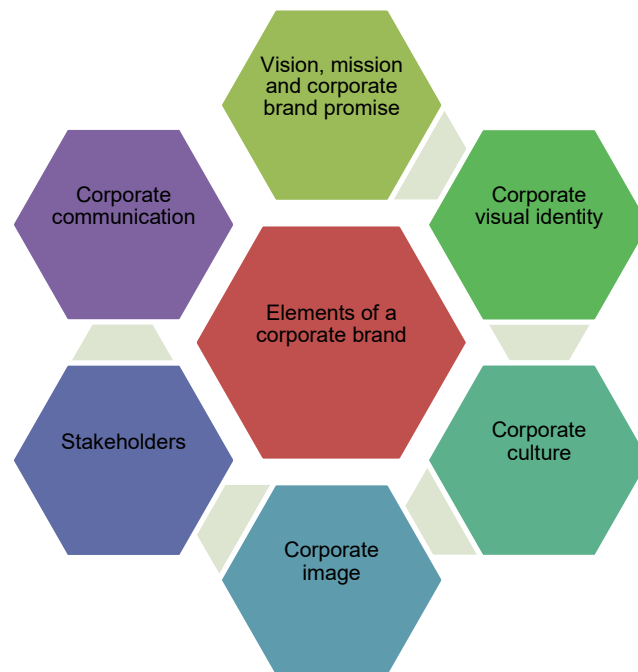


Figure 3-1 Elements of corporate brand (Author's own interpretation)

3.3.1.1 Vision and mission and corporate brand promise

The corporate brand can be seen as strategic orientation when it is interlinked with the business strategy (De Chernatony, 1998,1086). The purpose of a corporate brand strategy is a clear projection of what the organisation wants to achieve and serves as a guidance for the future.

An organisation's corporate brand and activities are based on its vision and mission. This means that the vision and mission of the organisation should be aligned with the culture in order for employees to communicate and align with the corporate strategy (Potgieter, 2020:123). Senior management is responsible for determining the vision as aspiration of the organisation, which consist of: the future environment, the purpose for the brand and the core proposition of an organisation (values that will characterise brand and satisfy the purpose) (Diamond, 2019:13; Iglesias *et al.*, 2022:11; Potgieter, 2020:123). The mission is what the organisation does to achieve the vision. It guides and inspires employees to work sufficiently and forms the basis of organisational activities (Diamond, 2019:16). The corporate brand

strategy enables the possible creation and motivation of value-driven behaviour from stakeholders (employees).

The corporate brand strategy composes value propositions and to teaches employees relevant norms of the corporate brand through various programmes (Cornelissen, 2017; Urde, 2016:35). The strategic focus is set for the corporate brand to be clear about its positioning, facilitate greater cohesion in communication programmes and also to enable employees to understand the organisation for which they work for better, which provides motivation and inspiration about the style of behaviour with which they should engage (Balmer, 2017:91; Potgieter, 2020:124). Product and service delivery (by employees) is business-oriented and is focused on core values chosen by the organisation such as: integrity, innovation, loyalty, accountability, self-motivated/engagement (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:41; Steenkamp, 2017:329; Keller, 2013:120;).

Therefore, core values of the organisation play an important role in terms of continuity, consistency and credibility when building a corporate brand and they also influence employee behaviour when delivering the corporate brand promise (Cant *et al.*, 2025:269; Lalaounis, 2021:214; Potgieter, 2020:123).

The delivery of the brand promise of an organisation relies on consistency in service performance/product performance, brand ethos and visual identification of the organisation (Rubio & Yague, 2019:31).The corporate brand promise in its simplest form is described as the declaration that specify that for which the brand of an organisation will or will not stand (Urde, 2016:29). Thus, the coordination of management aspects (vision, mission, culture and values as brand promise) and corporate communication (holistically) is done to ensure a consistent brand promise through the association and emotional connection with the brand (Balmer, 2017:38; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:41). Although management of corporate brand is complex, the brand promise on the positive side, secures a long-term competitive position in an organisation (Cant *et al.*, 2025:270; Martínez-López *et al.*, 2018:151; Potgieter, 2020:123).

3.3.1.1 Rooibos Ltd's application: vision, mission and corporate brand promise:

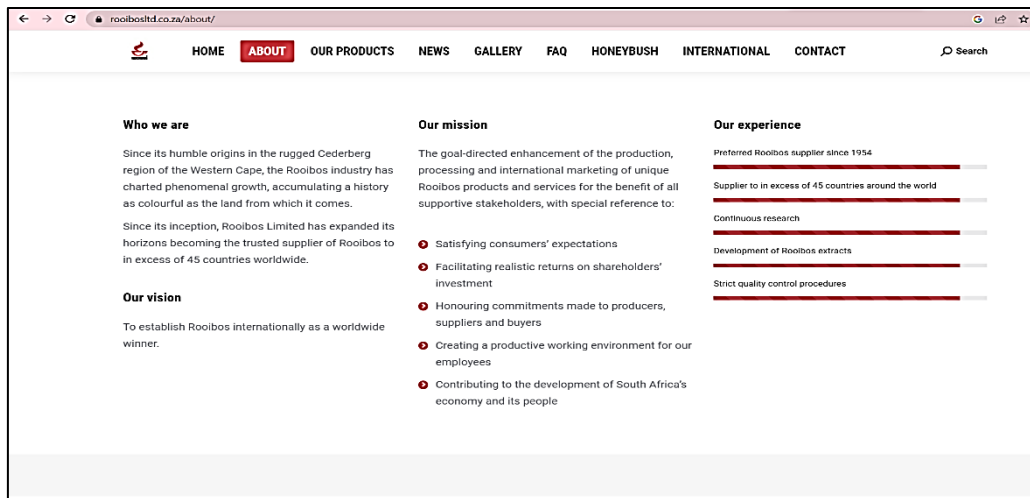


Figure 3-2 Rooibos Ltd's vision and mission

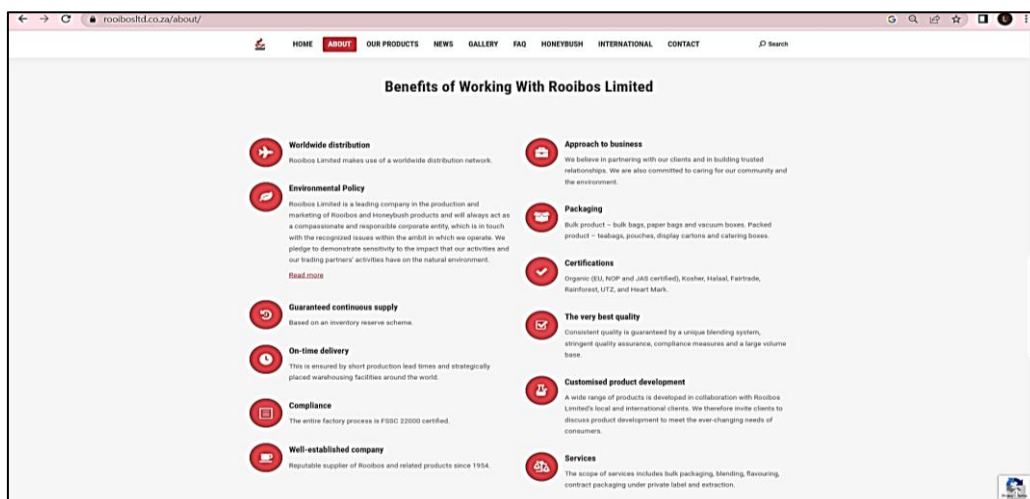


Figure 3-3 Rooibos Ltd's Corporate brand promise

Rooibos Ltd communicates the corporate brand promise (see Figures 3-2 and 3-3) via messages on their website by giving customers the benefit value of working with Rooibos Ltd. Rooibos Ltd did this to achieve their mission and vision set by senior management members.

3.3.1.2 Corporate visual identity

An organisation's corporate brand in its simplest form is known to have ownership and serves to differentiate an organisation from others (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:80; Beverland, 2018; Lamb *et al.*, 2019:292; Steenkamp, 2017:15). This supports Kahn's (2009:35) argument that corporate brands are built on the foundation of corporate identity, showing that a strong identity is

essential for creating and maintaining a recognisable and trusted brand. The question is: What is the corporate identity? The corporate identity refers to who the organisation is: the corporate design, corporate culture, values and internal and external communication (Kapferer, 2008:172).

According to the literature, the corporate identity consists of the following attributes: symbols (corporate design: logos, style, colour, slogan); corporate communication (corporate advertising, events, sponsorships, publicity and promotions, e.g. the style of communication); behaviour (corporate culture – employees' behaviour that leaves an impression on stakeholders); and a product (what the organisation produces) that differentiates it from other corporate identities (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:80; Cornelissen, 2017:86; Pollák & Markovič, 2022:4; Steenkamp, 2017:30; Van de Sand, 2020). Therefore, one can argue made that the visual corporate identity is seen as all visual representations of an organisation.

The criteria for choosing important visual elements that differentiate an organisation include: (1) memorability, (2) meaningfulness, (3) likability in association to the brand, (4) transferability, (5) adaptability and (6) protectability (Keller, 2013:142).

The visual elements, in the context of Rooibos Ltd, are the way in which the corporate brand is presented to the customers.

3.3.1.2.1 Rooibos Ltd's application: corporate visual identity

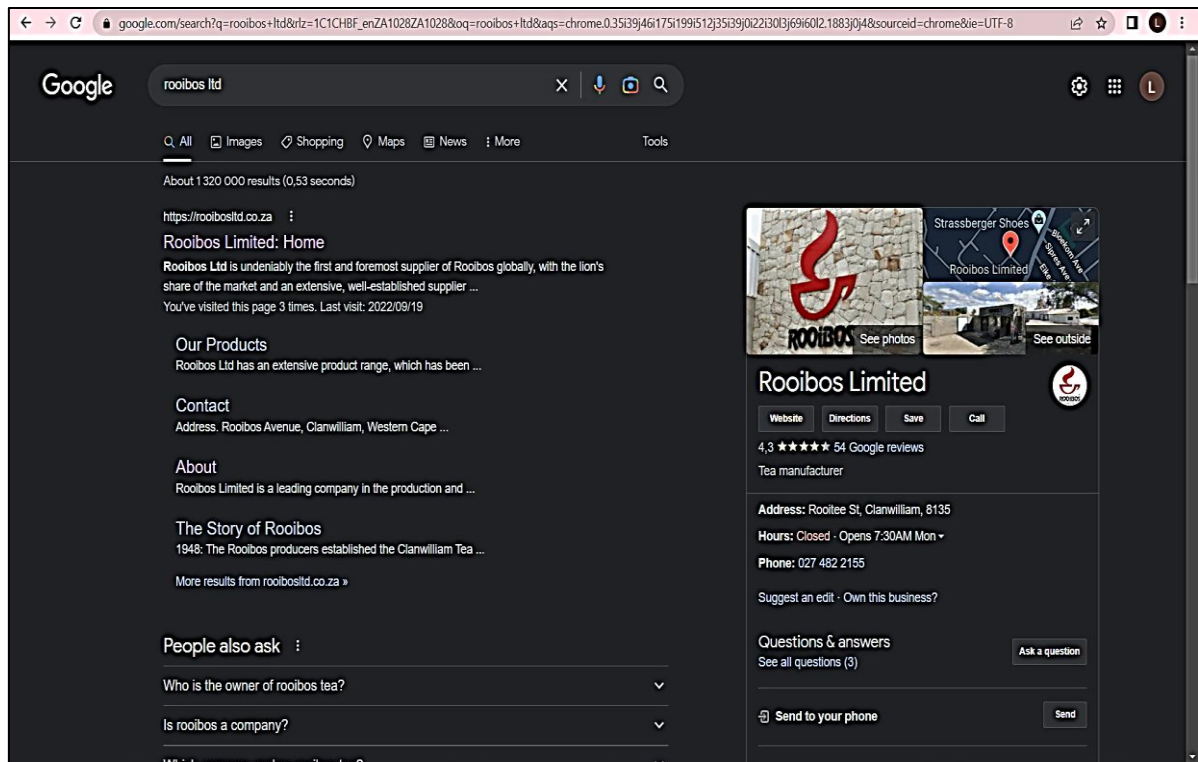


Figure 3-4 Rooibos Ltd's name and what they stand for



Figure 3-5 Rooibos Ltd's Logo



Figure 3-6 Rooibos Ltd packaging logos

Rooibos Ltd's application of their corporate visual identity can be seen in their logos, colours and unique name above (see Figures 3-4, 3-5 and 3-6). The unique red colour, together with their logo and circle signature is unique to the organisation and visually identifies Rooibos Ltd.

3.3.1.3 Corporate culture

Organisational culture refers to the internal values, beliefs and assumptions personifying the organisation's heritage of the organisation and communicates meaning to members. The culture is shown in how employees feel about the organisation (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:37).

The organisation's heritage is that on which the corporate brand is built – its roots – and determines why it is successful (Aaker, 2004:7; De Chernatony & Riley, 1998:1086; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:113). It serves as an explanation of how the organisation started and grew over the years and formed the brand personality and culture. Certain traditions and behavioural rituals in relationship-building also form part of the organisation (Keller, 2013:351).

Corporate culture shows the collaboration that is evident in the employees' behaviour, values and beliefs (Lalaounis, 2021:30; Hatch & Schultz, 2003). Balmer *et al.* (2017:37) suggest that employees form part of the corporate culture, which is managed by top management by motivating and attracting personnel to live up to the corporate brand. Sub-cultures with different values and organisational systems are also important to manage when building and sustaining a successful corporate brand (De Chernatony, 2006:144). Employees delivering the brand promise, play a direct part in how stakeholders view, trust and engage with the organisation (Potgieter, 2020:124). Therefore, senior management (internal stakeholders)

serve as the brand imperatives (CEOs). It is important to consider personnel to build and maintain a favourable corporate brand (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:76; Lalaounis, 2021:323). In other words, Rooibos Ltd's CEO should create and build an organisational culture with which employees associate themselves by, for example, having team-building sessions or meetings. Personnel or employees (internal stakeholders) represent the brand and, therefore, should be well informed of the vision, mission and assigned realistic objectives that guide them towards achieving the main goal and creating value (Cant *et al.*, 2025:272; Cornelissen, 2017:101; Lalaounis, 2021:37 & 45; Pollak & Marcovic, 2022:79). Thus, Rooibos Ltd's senior management should engage by having meetings with the employees or by updating them via written documents. From the above-mentioned arguments, it is clear that corporate identity is reflected in employee behaviour, communication and symbols.

3.3.1.3.1 Rooibos Ltd's application: Corporate culture

The visual representations below show how Rooibos Ltd portrays the corporate culture to stakeholders and mainly customers of the organisation by digital marketing (for example their website).

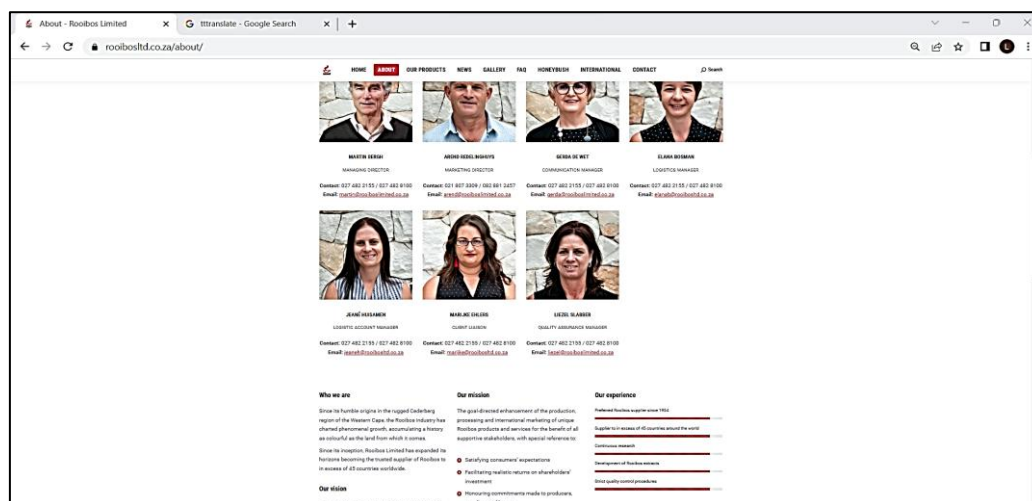


Figure 3-7 Rooibos Ltd's corporate culture

Rooibos Ltd portrays their corporate culture by communicating who they are (see Figure 3-7), their vision and mission. Although their digital representation of their corporate culture is different from their employee behaviour, it is important to have an online presence that shows who they are and what they stand for. Although an organisational culture implies the existence of the organisation, it also reflects the image employees create when communicating the brand promises to stakeholders.

3.3.1.4 Corporate image

Employee behaviour has an enormous impact on stakeholder perceptions and how they interpret the corporate brand and identity (Balmer, 2017:94). The corporate image is described as the stakeholders' collective perspectives about an organisation which forms the overall stakeholder impression of the organisation (Lalaounis, 2021:36; Potgieter, 2020:112). Corporate image is formed in stakeholder beliefs and experiences, which are based on the perceived corporate visual identity (see § 3.3.1.2). All components (symbols, communication and behaviour) should operate in a way that represents the corporate values. Over time, the brand core and management have shown that the interpretation of an organisation influences its image and reputation in the external marketplace because of its internal corporate communication (Urde, 2016:36). Therefore, an organisation's internal communication shapes how its brand is perceived externally, affecting its image and reputation.

Available evidence seems to suggest that customer image is formed by customer in the process of interpreting the way an organisation portrays itself to them. Keller and Swaminathan (2020:446) argue that the more favourable corporate image of an organisation is, the more favourably customers will respond to the corporate image. Along similar lines, Lalaounis (2021:36), argue that the corporate culture (behaviour and actions) and vision should be aligned in terms of communicating value, which will create credibility in the eyes of key stakeholders – in this case customers (e.g. trustworthy organisation, likable organisation).

3.3.1.4.1 Rooibos Ltd's application: Corporate image

The visual representation below shows how Rooibos Ltd portrays their corporate image to stakeholders and mainly customers of the organisation via digital marketing (for example their website).

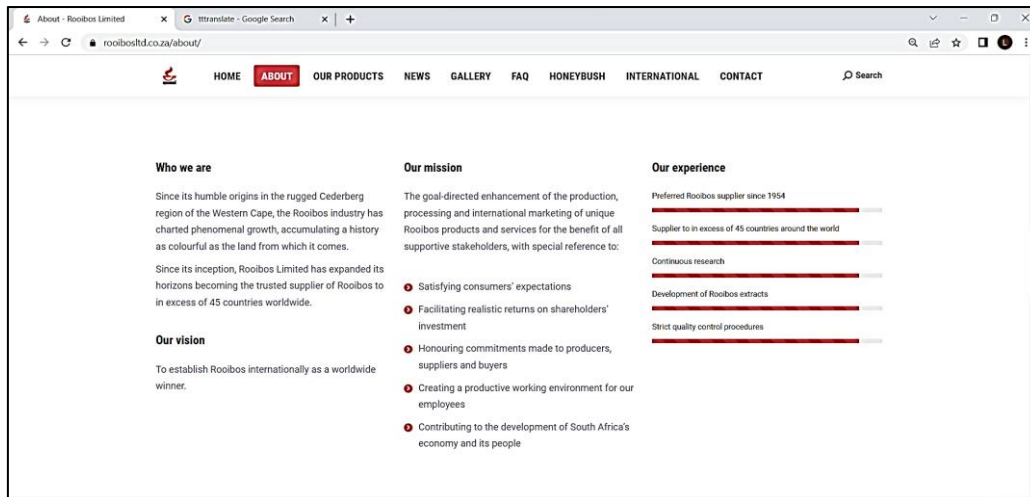


Figure 3-8 Rooibos Ltd's corporate image

The visual representation above (see Figure 3-8) represents the corporate image Rooibos Ltd portrays via their digital marketing (website). It communicates what they stand for, their vision, mission and experience, should stakeholders want to work with them.

The representation above suggests that sufficient management and alignment of the corporate vision, mission, culture and values are necessary to get a favourable corporate image from Rooibos Ltd's stakeholders (customers).

3.3.1.5 Stakeholders

Stakeholders are closely involved in living up to the corporate brand and, therefore, it is important for management to consider their concerns and needs (Rowles, 2018:40). Stakeholders are parties that have an internal interest in an organisation (senior management and employees) and/or externally (key stakeholders, in this case customers) (see § 2.4.1.4) (Pollák & Markovič, 2022:75).

When the image or reputation is consistent with that which is communicated, symbolised and depicted in behaviour activities, an organisation is bound to decode a message of how they would like external stakeholders (customers) to see the organisation (image) (Lalaounis, 2021:4). In the context of Rooibos Ltd, creating a favourable image and good reputation is focused on customers as they have an impact on the organisation's revenue and success.

3.3.1.5.1 Rooibos Ltd's application: Stakeholders

The visual representation below shows how Rooibos Ltd communicates and identifies with their stakeholders by using digital marketing (for example their website).

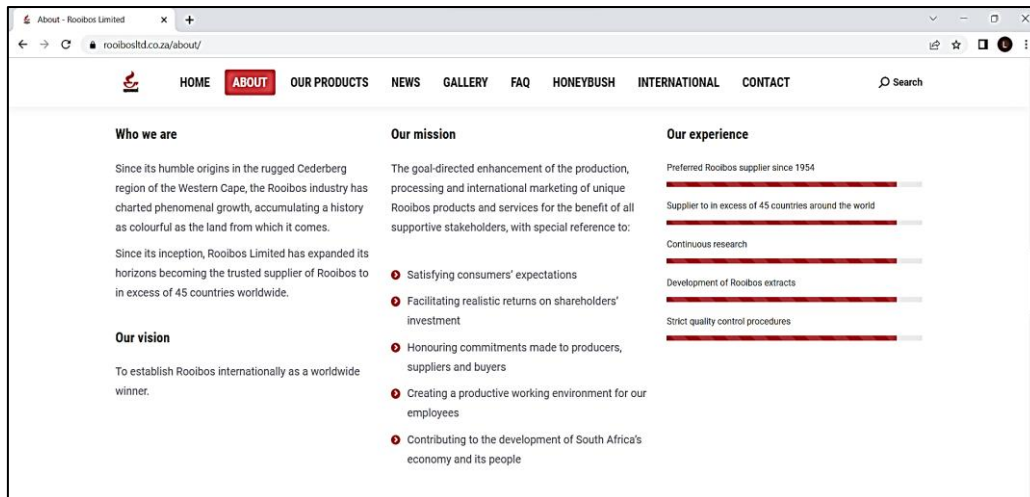


Figure 3-9 Rooibos Ltd's Stakeholders

The visual representation (see Figure 3-9) shows how Rooibos Ltd identifies their stakeholders – such as customers, stakeholders that invest, producers, suppliers, employees and South Africans – via their website.

To achieve having a favourable image and reputation that creates value, an organisation should utilise corporate communication sufficiently.

3.3.1.6 Corporate communication

Balmer and Greyser (2003:163) describe corporate communication as the use of all instruments – communication, symbols and behaviour of employees – in the identity field in an attractive way. They argue that this is done to create and maintain a positive corporate image and reputation, with stakeholders having a dependent relationship with the organisation.

The corporate brand consists not only of visuals, organisational culture, the strategic vision and mission, image formed and stakeholders, but also to communicate with internal and external stakeholders. Van de Sand (2020) describes corporate communication as exchanging information with stakeholders to make informed decisions and also to create a certain image for the organisation utilising symbolical features. Lalaounis (2021:4) also reiterates that the corporate communication forms part of the corporate design that employees and customers perceive.

According to Balmer and Greyser (2003:163), corporate communication is divided into three main forms of communication:

- **Management communication:** Managers communicate internally and externally.
- **Marketing communication:** This entails enhancing sales.
- **Organisational communication:** This entails enhancing reputation

3.3.1.6.1 Application of Rooibos Ltd: Corporate communication

The figure below visually represents how Rooibos Ltd communicates with their stakeholders through digital marketing (for example their website).

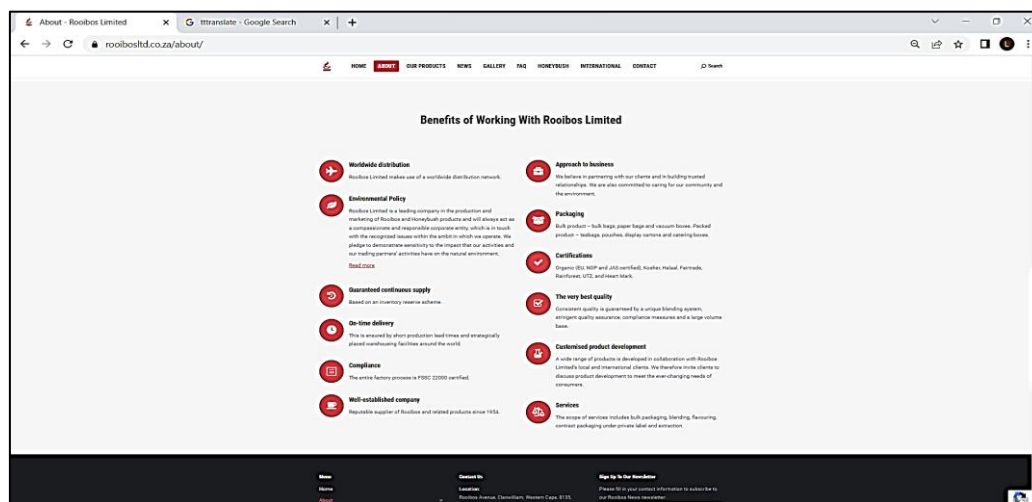


Figure 3-10 Rooibos Ltd's Corporate Communication

Rooibos Ltd communicates its corporate brand elements through their digital marketing (website) in the form of their vision, mission and corporate brand promises (Figure 3-3), corporate visual identity (Figures 3-4, 3-5 & 3-6), corporate culture (Figure 3-7), corporate image (Figure 3-8), stakeholders (Figure 3-9) and corporate communication (Fig 3-10).

Although corporate communication is identifiable in three forms of communication, it seems that corporate communication should be managed to obtain strategic value for the corporate brand.

The discussion of corporate brand elements indicates the focus point of this study in terms of Rooibos Ltd's context. This chapter discussed all brand elements as they apply to Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing platforms. Therefore, it is safe to say that Rooibos Ltd has an established brand with most of these elements already visually presented on multiple platforms. It is important to manage these elements for customers and stakeholders to get significant value from them.

3.4 CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT

The previous section (see § 3.3) explained the corporate brand elements. The next section (see § 3.4.1) elaborates on how these corporate brand elements should be managed. Firstly, the corporate brand is recognised by customers through various elements, including corporate visual identity, organisational culture, vision and mission, image, stakeholders and corporate communication. This study identified various success drivers associated with the scope of corporate brand management, highlighting the key factors that organisations can focus on to strengthen their brand and achieve competitive advantage. These factors are focus areas of corporate brand management that are all relevant to the context of Rooibos Ltd. They include the role of senior management, management of employees, long-term stakeholder relationships, consistent corporate communication and aligning the organisation's strategic vision, culture and image.

3.4.1 Role of senior management

Brand success depends on the type of leadership that is present in an organisation. According to Balmer (2017:31), corporate brand management forms part of senior management responsibilities. Senior management and the CEO of the organisation should be dedicated to developing and maintaining the corporate brand (Armstrong, 2018: 69; Rowles, 2018:19).

Senior management responsibilities, such as internal initiating, maintaining and developing the corporate brand, is vital for managing a corporate brand. Senior management should address corporate branding concerns associated with organisational structure, finance, marketing and human resources (Keller, 2013:310; Pollak & Markovic, 2022:79; Potgieter, 2020:124). Thus, corporate brand management is driven by senior management as it is their responsibility to manage consistent internal communication resources to reach the strategic vision, they formulated.

The strategic management, maintenance and development of a corporate brand should be seen as a critical, challenging and ongoing process. Senior management should monitor challenges and react as a support system for whoever may need it. This ensures positive association with stakeholders and, in this case, employees (Pollak & Markovic, 2022:79). In other words, the senior management is responsible for keeping employees satisfied and sure about how challenges are handled.

Senior management facilitates corporate brand management to set a strategic direction for employees on the vision, behavioural norms and values employees should portray in

completing their day-to-day activities. Therefore, senior management should establish consistent behaviour and communication regarding the organisation's corporate brand among employees (Armstrong *et al.*, 2018:220). With this in mind, managers should ensure they monitor the relevance and distinctiveness of customer values by communicating, constructing, and articulating the corporate brand, so that the brand remains meaningful, competitive, and aligned with customer expectations. (Armstrong *et al.*, 2018:220; Balmer *et al.*, 2017:94).

3.4.2 Management of employees

As stakeholders are involved in creating and portraying the organisation's corporate brand, it becomes vital to take their needs into consideration (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:76). Employees who embody the corporate brand, can have an enormous impact, such as the increased interaction they have with stakeholders. Stakeholders form perceptions about the organisation, and the corporate image can vary because of different impressions and perceptions of the corporate brand (Cant *et al.*, 2025:244; Cornelissen, 2017:98).

According to Potgieter (2020:124), employees deliver organisational promises to communicate a favourable image to customers. Thus, by aligning employee values with corporate values it is possible to create a competitive advantage that is difficult to imitate (Cornelissen, 2020:89). Balmer *et al.* (2017:94) indicates that employees act as agents of the corporate brand, delivering the organisational promise. Management should engage by creating highly motivated employees in order for them to live up to the corporate brand. The strategic focus in managing employees involves management being clear about positioning, facilitating greater cohesion in communication programmes and also enabling employees to understand the organisation for which they work better. This provides motivation and inspiration about the style of behaviour employees should demonstrate – the corporate identity (see § 2.2.3.2) (Burmam *et al.*, 2017:97; Pollak & Markovic, 2022:79; Steenkamp, 2017:186). The employees' responsibility in managing the corporate brand is that they should be informed well and get training on new programmes to stay relevant.

3.4.3 Long-term relationships with stakeholders

In order for a corporate brand to create and maintain long-term relationships with stakeholders, it is important to consider that different stakeholder groups are approached differently. Consistent messages should be communicated to internal stakeholders such as employees in order for them to communicate a consistent message to external stakeholders, in this case customers. Consistent communication between the organisation and stakeholder(s) should

take place by which the relationship can be managed, and interaction can take place (Potgieter, 2020:121).

Balmer *et al.* (2017:137) state that the corporate brand provides a message for customer relationship by leveraging the corporate brand elements. With the corporate identity (employees' use of symbols, communication and behaviour) the organisation constructs an image for customers (see § 2.2.3.2). Therefore, it is clear that visual corporate identity should be communicated by using the appropriate marketing mix that positions the corporate brand as credible and trusted in consistent and transparent communication. Synergy should gel different relationships together to have high corporate brand values, (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:141, Burmann *et al.*, 2017:129).

The above-mentioned points indicate that organisations should strive to build positive relationships and reduce any impact from negative relationships. One can now argue that long-term relationship with stakeholders require loyalty from employees and customers who buy into the corporate brand, together with the management of two-way communication feedback to adapt to their needs and wants. Thus, management should manage the corporate brand and ensure a consistently positive communication experience with each stakeholder group, so that the organisation can achieve better engagement, loyalty, and successful outcomes.

3.4.4 Consistent corporate communication management

Communication serves as the basis for managing a corporate brand holistically. It is the way an organisation portrays itself and is managed towards both internal and external stakeholders. Corporate communication is used to consistently communicate the brand promises of the organisation, including benefits, features, service and experiences that differentiate the organisation from competing brands (Armstrong *et al.*, 2018:220; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:515).

Organisational structure, systems and processes are necessary as a holistic strategic approach to communicate consistent messages to various stakeholder groups (Burmann, 2017:57). The goal of corporate communication is to build, maintain and develop relationships with stakeholders and to evaluate stakeholder tendencies and manage them by adapting to change (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:116; Burmann *et al.*, 2017:129).

Consistency is seen as a sufficient way of establishing the corporate brand. Consistent messages should be communicated to internal stakeholders (employees) to minimize

uncertainty. Consistency is maintained throughout by senior management co-ordinating different departments (Cornelissen, 2017:93; Steenkamp, 2017:148).

Transparency in communication is the feedback, openness and receptiveness – the willingness to consider or accept new idea or suggestion. Having transparent communication internally may reduce employee uncertainty and uplift stakeholder trust in organisational behaviour and communication (Cornelissen, 2017:93; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020:592; Steenkamp, 2017:135).

Feedback and two-way communication have a prominent value in the organisation. As senior management gives guidance in strategic core values, employees should give feedback as participation in managing the corporate brand. Communication channels such as e-mails enable sufficient feedback from individual employees and can possibly give suggestions and ideas to execute corporate brand values better. From this study's point of view, management characterised by consistent and transparent communication is vital to establish a favourable reputation and image with stakeholders (customers) on which the organisation is dependent (Cornelissen, 2017; Pollak & Markovic, 2022:79;). The final success factor and guideline for sufficient corporate brand management is the alignment of the strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image.

3.4.5 Alignment of strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image

Balmer *et al.* (2017:117) state that the corporate brand context is determined by the vision, culture and image, whereas Burmann *et al.* (2017:212) see corporate brand management as a multi-disciplinary approach where the strategic vision, culture and corporate communication are combined.

The strategic vision is the management of that which the organisation wants to achieve. The corporate culture is the internal shared values, behavioural norms and beliefs that the organisation forms based on its heritage. It shows what the organisation stands for. Corporate image is stakeholder perceptions of the organisation. It is the overall impression stakeholders (employees and customers) have of the corporate brand's communication, symbols and behaviour (Balmer *et al.*, 2017:80; Cornelissen, 2017:86; Steenkamp, 2017:30). Gowpall *et al.*, (2024:22) argue that, to understand marketing objectives, the organisational vision, mission and corporate image should be considered while aligning these principles.

These elements are chosen and form the holistic way in which an organisation operates. The strategic vision is senior management's view for the organisation, whereas corporate culture

involves employees' perceptions, values and values regarding the corporate brand. Thus, when consistency is enforced in the alignment of the strategic vision, corporate culture and image, along with management of the corporate brand become easier.

When corporate brand management is executed, strategic values are unlocked for the corporate brand (see § 3.5).

3.5 STRATEGIC VALUE OF CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT

Literature indicates various perceptions on values of corporate brands, but for the purpose of this study, the value of a corporate brand is developed by means of differentiation, symbolism, memorising, corporate brand development and corporate reputation.

Strategic values are created for the organisation when a corporate brand consists of the above-mentioned elements (see § 3.3) and are managed sufficiently (see § 3.4). De Chernatony (2006:48) argues that the strategic value of a corporate brand is based on its output perspective on the brand interpretation. Output perspectives on the brand is explained as the corporate image and reputation. The corporate image is formed by customers and employees based on how they perceive the corporate visual identity (see § 3.3.1.2). Communication management of the corporate identity should be based on developing a favourable corporate image and good corporate reputation among internal (employees) and external stakeholders (customers) of the organisation (Cornelissen, 2017). A strong corporate image and reputation is formed when an organisation carries out high levels of consistency, transparency, distinctiveness, authenticity and visibility (see § 3.3.1.4).

Both components grab value within the framework of the organisation's stakeholders by identifying their needs and ensuring the brand delivers meaningful benefits. A corporate image is focused on short term interactions and their perceptions of the organisation. Whereas the corporate reputation is established in the long term and does not get influenced easily. These components mentioned earlier, is explained next.

3.5.1 Differentiation

A corporate brand is seen as the symbols, words and design that are unique to the organisation and are employed to create an image that differentiates it from competitors. For example, Apple stands for modernity, individuality and being imaginative, whereas drinking Coca-Cola is associated with happiness (Van den Braber *et al.*, 2021:11). The differentiation value is obtained by stakeholders' perceptions of the organisational service, product or quality

thereof. Therefore, organisations should have a consistent promise to only quality service. The organisational culture determines how the brand promise is carried out. Corporate brand elements differentiate companies from their competitors with quality, culture and origin (Beverland, 2018). In effect, differentiation becomes a competitive advantage for the organisation (Lamb *et al.*, 2019:292). Thus, it leads to preference of brand over competing brands. Lalaounis (2021:282) added that providing feedback to brand and organisation enables an organisation to clarify brand meaning that differentiate the brand from other competing brands.

3.5.2 Symbolism value

Gives stakeholders a particular public image. For example, a person who decorates expensive houses will most likely purchase decorations from @Home rather than from Pep Stores to reflect their values to society, which gives them a sense of belonging (Cant & Van Heerden, 2016:227). This may lead to brand financial growth, as customers support the quality and image that they perceive of the brand (Beverland, 2018; Cant & Van Heerden., 2016:227; Steenkamp, 2017).

Symbolic features not only give the corporate brand a personality, making it difficult to copy, but also contribute to its economic capital (Van den Braber *et al.*, 2021:19). In other words, the corporate brand benefits from using its visual elements and corporate brand's promise to give customers what they want. It makes decision-making easier for customers. Risk reduction is ensured, as customers know what to expect and it is also possible that they get emotionally satisfied with the brand. Lalaounis (2021:282) also adds that managing the corporate brand enables the organisation to enhance their brand image and leave space for further extension.

3.5.3 Memorising value

Brands communicate messages to stakeholders, ensuring them that it has what they want, for example, letting customers of an insurance company know that there are rates suitable for their income. Therefore, the brand promise should communicate what the corporate brand has to offer to create positive customer perceptions (Rowles, 2017:159).

Gomez-Suarez engaged in a critical approach to empirical models of brand attachment, love and engagement and concluded that an emotional attachment to a brand generate captivity and, in effect, turn customers into the best brand promoters (Rubio & Yague, 2019:1). The corporate brand elements should be managed in terms of satisfying behaviour, symbols and communication, as these play an important role in giving customers a memorable experience

and association with the brand (see § 2.2.3.2 and 2.2.3.3). In effect, Lalaounis (2021:282) added that, by providing a memorable experience for viewers, new customers are drawn to the brand.

3.5.4 Corporate brand development

The strategic value of a corporate brand is very important, as it targets the market with the goal to show their significance and uniqueness that no other organisation can provide. The strategic value enables improvement and development of the corporate brand and the organisation's ability to stay relevant. Customer experience is facilitated by employees and can increase customer engagement. With this in mind, brands can be analysed and managed to improve the value added for customers (Cant & Van Heerden, 2016:227). Thus, the managerial implications require frequent change and development of the brand (Rubio & Yague, 2019:30). Lalaounis (2021:282) echoes the belief that there is space to develop the corporate brand when it is managed strategically.

3.5.5 Corporate reputation

According to Armstrong *et al.* (2018:220) and Potgieter (2020:123), a favourable corporate image is built and maintained by communicating consistent characteristics of the corporate brand. A corporate image is seen as a reflection of the corporate's visual identity (see § 3.3.1.2).

Cornelissen (2017) differentiates corporate brand as being internal and external to the organisation. The internal corporate image is based on stakeholders (employees) beliefs, assumptions and perceptions, along with how they feel about the organisation (Lalaounis, 2021:192; Steenkamp, 2017:8). Their behaviour is based on their beliefs and assumptions, which indirectly affect the stakeholders' external image.

External corporate image is formed by stakeholders, such as customers, based on how they feel about the internal corporate identity – the behaviour, symbols or communication of the corporate brand (see § 3.3.1.2). Management realises the importance of stakeholders participating in developing the corporate image. The image of the corporate brand should be built and maintained together with the corporate reputation. Thus, the corporate image is the current and changing perceptions of a corporate brand, whereas the reputation is the collection of perceptions in the long term, as they are many evaluations made by customers.

Corporate reputation is managing the sum of long-term relationships with individuals or stakeholders (Doorley & Fred, 2015:3). Therefore, reputation is regarded as the sum of images formed by stakeholders, based on corporate performance, behaviour and communication.

$$\text{Reputation} = \text{Sum of images} = \text{Performance} + \text{Behaviour} + \text{Communication}$$

Figure 3-11 Corporate reputation

Based on the literature, the author of this dissertation compiled information in Figure 3-11 above to illustrate an example of corporate reputation. A strong corporate reputation can both have tangible and intangible benefits (Doorley & Fred, 2015:5). For instance, a good reputation helps organisations such as Rooibos Ltd attract new customers and employees. Cornelissen (2017) concur that having a good reputation may lead to customers supporting the organisation financially by purchasing their products or services.

With measurement, acknowledgement and planning in place companies can possibly ensure behaviour that is proactive and communication to take advantage of reputational opportunities and minimize problems. Thus, all employees are responsible to build and maintain the corporate reputation. With this chapter, it seems that corporate brand management ensure a favourable corporate image and good reputation with stakeholders (internally: employees and externally: customers). Therefore, relationships are managed with stakeholders by building and maintaining a favourable image and good reputation (Cornelissen, 2017:84; Doorley & Fred, 2015:5).

3.6 CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT CONCLUSION

The attempt to answer the research question at the beginning of this chapter has indicated that a corporate brand consists of definitions, elements, management guidelines and strategic values. These components are interconnected and play an important role in the success of the organisation and formed the following specific guiding arguments:

Specific guiding argument 4

A corporate brand requires a multi-disciplinary approach and is seen as stakeholders being influenced by expectations, memories, stories and relationships associated with the organisation. For the purpose of this study, a corporate brand consists of elements that

function interdependently: vision, mission and brand promise; corporate visual identity – behaviour, symbols and communication of the brand promise; corporate culture – heritage and culture; corporate image and corporate communication that satisfy the stakeholders' needs.

A corporate brand exists because of multiple elements that identifies the brand that should be managed by stakeholders and, in this case, employees. Therefore, certain roles and the management of co-workers in the organisation play an important part in communicating that for which the brand stands.

Specific guiding argument 5

Success drivers serve as guidance for corporate brand management; Role of senior management, employee management, long-term relationships with stakeholders, consistent corporate communication and aligning strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image. Corporate brand elements should be sufficiently managed in a process called corporate brand management to have strategic value.

Managing success drivers of an organisation can lead to strategic value for the organisation and for external stakeholders, such as customers.

Specific guiding argument 6

The strategic value of a corporate brand is the loyal stakeholder support obtained from their preference of the corporate brand, based on their associations with the organisation. Organisations can gain competitive advantage in the market only if stakeholders see the organisation as being trustworthy. Rooibos Ltd can be distinguished from competing organisations and have long-term relationships with stakeholders only if the corporate brand has created a well-established, favourable image and a good reputation by giving customers a memorable experience, with symbolism and by adapting to their customers' needs and wants.

Digital marketing informed corporate brand management by means of digital marketing strategy. The corporate brand management changed over many years due to technological growth which enabled organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to adapt their marketing strategies to the digital world. Brand elements are managed in light of digital marketing with necessary management from communication and marketing practitioners through digital channels.

In conclusion, it has been established that digital marketing informs the corporate brand by means of managing the elements – vision, mission and corporate brand promise, corporate visual identity, corporate culture, corporate image, stakeholders, corporate communication – and by using digital channels – websites, blogs and podcasts, social media, search engine optimisation, mobile marketing, email marketing and online advertising. Brand management's use of strategy and planning digital marketing are also interlinked to fulfil the stakeholders' and, in this case, the customers' needs by means of an overall digital experience.

The overview of the literature in Chapters Two and Three indicated that marketing and branding has changed significantly over the decades. To understand how digital marketing inform corporate brand management, one can argue that: by strategically managing digital marketing and the corporate brand, organisations can possibly receive and provide strategic values. To receive or multiply strategic values for customers, corporate brand elements and digital marketing elements should simultaneously, integrally and strategically be managed by way of the digital marketing planning SOSTAC framework and corporate brand management.

The following chapter provides insight into the research methodology used for this study to explain how research was conducted and how the literature is applied in real life.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to outline the research design and methodology used for this study, which should result in answering the specific research questions, as stated in Chapter One, (see § 3.31.3.1.3 and 1.3.1.4).

A multi-method research approach was adopted. Firstly, a qualitative research approach was followed for the semi-structured interviews and secondly, a quantitative research approach was applied for the online survey. The planning and sampling methods and the sample frame and size will be outlined in this chapter, together with the qualitative analysis of the collected information and the processing of the quantitative data. The following section (see § 4.2) commences with the research approach.

4.2 THE MULTI-METHOD RESEARCH APPROACH

Creswell (2009:4) describes the multi-method research approach as an inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms and the mixing of both approaches in a study. Therefore, it is more than just the collection and analysis of both these approaches. It should be used together to strengthen the overall outcome of the study (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2017;). According to Schoonenboom and Johnson (2017:108), multi-methods research is the way in which research is done by combining elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, such as viewpoints, data collection, analysis and techniques. This is done for the purpose of in-depth and breadth understanding and corroboration. The reason for using this research method was to ultimately answer the general research question. As mentioned in section 1.7 in the first chapter, it was important for this study to consider both research methods: a qualitative research approach – literature review, semi-structured interviews and content analysis – and a quantitative research approach by conducting an online survey. This was considered to make relevant conclusions regarding the level of correspondence there is between both approaches' outcomes and findings in Chapter Seven.

Creswell (2009:207-206) suggests that the multi-method design is based on four aspects; timing, weighing, mixing and theorising.

Timing indicates how data is collected. The first phase of semi-structured interviews were conducted with Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication employees to identify what role

they play in managing a favourable image and good reputation for long-term relationships with their customers. The second phase consisted of the distribution of an online survey to customers to determine their perception of Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand management and digital marketing.

Weighing is the established priority of qualitative or quantitative research in a study. In this study, the focus on quantitative research was to gain customer opinions of the organisation's management of their corporate brand by means of digital marketing. The qualitative data obtained from online interviews, provided inside views on the current management of the corporate brand and digital marketing.

Mixing serves as integration of the semi-structured interviews and online surveys. It was done by identifying similar concepts and measuring the same constructs that may correspond in both the qualitative findings and quantitative responses, ensuring the research findings are more reliable. The integration was done during the final interpretation of the entire analytical process.

Theorising is the theoretical perspective that guided the entire design (see § Two and Three).

4.2.1 Qualitative approach

Qualitative research states the story of a particular group's experiences in their own words and, therefore, is focused on in-depth opinion as a narrative instead of as numbers (Du Plooy, 2017:35; Hayhoe *et al.*, 2021; Leavy, 2017:124). Leedy and Ormond (2010:95) describe qualitative research as a concept that combines a wide variety of non-numerical data collection and analysis techniques that involves considering characteristics or qualities that cannot be quantified easily. The main instrument in qualitative research is the researcher who closely engages with the respondents being studied and who has the knowledge, understanding and expertise to interpret the data (Tisdell *et al.*, 2025:130).

The qualitative approach can be used to explore, interpret and understand the participants (Du Plooy, 2017:35). Thus, the process of using this approach takes longer, since it is interpersonal research.

The reason for this approach is that it enables the researcher to obtain internal opinions from employees directly connected to the Marketing and Communication Department at Rooibos Ltd. Not only is the qualitative research approach used to target at a small group of respondents regarding their opinions but also to get a more in-depth perspective of their

approach to building long-term relationships with stakeholders. Therefore, the research approach was appropriate to receive and explore information based on the perceptions of a few management members.

4.2.2 Quantitative approach

In the quantitative approach, the objective is to obtain or collect numerical data of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or quantitative techniques to explain a certain occurrence (Du Plooy, 2017:28; Hayhoe *et al.*, 2021). Data collected from customers can be described and the level of occurrences can be measured on the basis of numbers and calculations. The information can be obtained within a brief period of time, which gives structure to the study to make certain assumptions and draw comparisons regarding variables such as attitudes and preferences, which will give an indication of their perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing strategy and plan (Scharrer & Ramasubramanian, 2021).

To understand the information gathered from Google Forms better, the data compilation was processed to reflect numerical outcomes. The compilation of the sample size is assessed in Chapter Six.

In the case of this study, the quantitative approach was adopted to distribute an online survey to all customers of Rooibos Ltd to determine their perceptions of the digital marketing strategy and plan. With the quantitative approach, the research question on how customers perceive the digital marketing plan and strategy before having obtained knowledge of the organisation, was answered through tables (showcasing the data), descriptive analysis (explaining the data) and also by viewing the tool used, the Cronbach alpha value and the calculated reliability scores (Richard, 2024; Scharrer & Ramasubramanian, 2021). Firstly, the reliability analysis was done and used to evaluate correlations between variables and scrutinised the entire set of interdependent relations among variables. P-values were reported for completeness sake but were not interpreted since a convenience sample instead of a random sample was used. A *t*-test was used to determine the statistical and practical significance of factors and effect sizes were used to determine the relevance. Thereafter, a correlation between factors was used to understand how the coefficient reflects the degree and direction of the association between variables, enabling the researcher to understand how variations in one variable are related to variations in another.

The discussion above gave an overview of the approach to this study. The study followed a multi-method research approach that consisted of qualitative and a quantitative approach. The

following section (see § 4.3) summarises the research design and how the qualitative and quantitative approaches were combined in the research.

Therefore, the questions are compiled for the use of specific research methods. For the purpose of this study, the research methods involved semi-structured interviews and an online survey. The interviews with the participants were used to determine the applicability of these constructs within the specific context of Rooibos Ltd and the survey reflected the approach of how Rooibos Ltd manages the corporate brand and digital marketing.

4.3 OVERALL RESEARCH DESIGN

This section offers a summary of the qualitative and quantitative research approaches in table format in the interest of clarification. The research design for the semi-structured interviews and the online survey consisted of the following concepts: digital marketing elements, digital marketing management and strategic values for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd, together with corporate brand elements, corporate brand management and strategic values of corporate brand management. The general guiding and specific guiding arguments were used to provide outcomes for the specific research questions (see § 1.4 & 1.5). Table 4-1 to Table 4.3 on the following pages demonstrate how the research design was compiled and provide a comprehensive overview of how the research was conducted. The study on digital marketing and corporate brand management in the context of Rooibos Ltd used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, which means that the study was exploratory, relational and descriptive in nature (Du Plooy, 2017:28, 35).

The next section of the chapter focuses on research methods and discusses the qualitative and quantitative research methods used in the study.

Table 4-1: Research design for literature review

Specific research question 1.3.1.1 and 1.3.1.2	Specific guiding arguments	Concepts	Constructs measured	Qualitative research approach: Literature chapters	Section
How does digital marketing inform corporate brand management?	Specific guiding argument 1 <i>Digital marketing consists of elements such as websites, search engine marketing, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing and online advertising. These elements enable companies to engage with customers and to build customer relationships by means of an online presence. This is important as it is the way an organisation presents itself to their existing and potential customers. Therefore, digital marketing elements should be managed sufficiently as to have greater value than just providing information.</i>	Digital marketing	Website Search engine marketing Mobile marketing Email marketing Blogs and podcasts Social media marketing Online advertising	Literature study. This question is already answered in Chapter Two.	2.3.1 2.3.2 2.3.3 2.3.4 2.3.5 2.3.6 2.3.7

Specific research question 1.3.1.1 and 1.3.1.2	Specific guiding arguments	Concepts	Constructs measured	Qualitative research approach: Literature chapters	Section
	Specific guiding argument 2 <i>Digital marketing management is crucial for organisations to reach their goals and digital marketing objectives. The digital marketing strategy consists of segmentation, target marketing and positioning. The SOSTAC is a model utilised by numerous organisations across the world to strategically manage their digital marketing. It consists of the organisation's situation analysis, digital marketing objectives, strategy, tactics, actions and control. In order for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to have a strong, favourable corporate brand and have long-term relationships with customers, their digital marketing should be managed sufficiently and strategically.</i>	Digital marketing management	Digital marketing strategy Digital marketing plan		2.4.1 2.4.2

Specific research question 1.3.1.1 and 1.3.1.2	Specific guiding arguments	Concepts	Constructs measured	Qualitative research approach: Literature chapters	Section
	Specific guiding argument 3 <i>Managing digital marketing sufficiently and strategically can have possible value for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd and their customers. Using more sales, preferred service, dialogue with customers engagement, saving costs and sizzling to extend the corporate brand can be of great value for the company's organisational success.</i>	Value of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Limited	Sell Serve Speak Save costs Sizzle (Develop online brand)		2.5 2.5 2.5 2.5 2.5
What does corporate brand management entail?	Specific guiding argument 4 <i>A corporate brand requires a multi-disciplinary approach and is seen as stakeholders being influenced by expectations, memories, stories and relationships associated with the organisation. For the purpose of this study, a corporate brand consists of elements that function interdependently: vision, mission and brand promise; corporate visual identity – behaviour, symbols and communication of the brand promise; corporate culture – heritage and culture; corporate</i>	Corporate brand elements	Strategy of the corporate brand: vision, mission and values Corporate visual identity Organisational culture Corporate image Stakeholders Corporate communication	Literature study. This question is already answered in Chapter Three.	3.3.1.1 3.3.1.2 3.3.1.3 3.3.1.4 3.3.1.5 s3.3.1.6

Specific research question 1.3.1.1 and 1.3.1.2	Specific guiding arguments	Concepts	Constructs measured	Qualitative research approach: Literature chapters	Section
	<i>image and corporate communication that satisfy the stakeholders' needs.</i>				
	Specific guiding argument 5 <i>Success drivers serve as guidance for corporate brand management; Role of senior management, employee management, long-term relationships with stakeholders, consistent corporate communication and aligning strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image. Corporate brand elements should be sufficiently managed in a process called corporate brand management to have strategic value.</i>	Corporate brand management	Role of senior management Management of employees Long-term relationships with stakeholders Consistent corporate communication Align vision, corporate culture and corporate image		3.4.1 3.4.2 3.4.3 3.4.4 3.4.5

Specific research question 1.3.1.1 and 1.3.1.2	Specific guiding arguments	Concepts	Constructs measured	Qualitative research approach: Literature chapters	Section
	Specific guiding argument 6 <i>The strategic value of a corporate brand is the loyal stakeholder support obtained from their preference of the corporate brand, based on their associations with the organisation. Organisations can gain competitive advantage in the market only if stakeholders see the organisation as being trustworthy. Rooibos Ltd can be distinguished from competing organisations and have long-term relationships with stakeholders only if the corporate brand has created a well-established, favourable image and a good reputation by giving customers a memorable experience, with symbolism and by adapting to their customers' needs and wants.</i>	Strategic value of the corporate brand	Differentiation Symbolism value Memorising value Corporate brand development Corporate reputation		3.5.1.1 3.5.1.2 3.5.1.3 3.5.1.4 3.5.1.5

Table 4-2: Research design for semi-structured interviews

Specific research question 1.3.1.3	Specific Guiding Arguments	Concepts	Constructs being measured	Qualitative research approach: Semi-structured interviews
What is Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management?	Specific guiding argument 1 <i>Digital marketing consists of elements such as websites, search engine marketing, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing and online advertising. These elements enable companies to engage with customers and to build customer relationships by means of an online presence. This is important as it is the way an organisation presents itself to their existing and potential customers. Therefore, digital marketing elements should be managed sufficiently as to have greater value than just providing information.</i>	Digital marketing elements	Website Search engine marketing Mobile marketing Email marketing Blogs and podcasts Social media marketing Online advertising	2(a), 2(o) 2(a), 2(o) 2(a), 2(o) 2(a), 2(o) 2(a), 2(o) 2(a), 2(o) 2(a), 2(o)
	Specific guiding argument 2 <i>Digital marketing management is crucial for organisations to reach their goals and digital marketing objectives. The digital marketing strategy consists of segmentation, target marketing and positioning. The SOSTAC is a model utilised by numerous organisations across the</i>	Digital marketing management	Digital marketing strategy Digital marketing plan	2(e) 2(g,) 2(h), 2(j), 2(k), 2(l)

Specific research question 1.3.1.3	Specific Guiding Arguments	Concepts	Constructs being measured	Qualitative research approach: Semi-structured interviews
	<i>world to strategically manage their digital marketing. It consists of the organisation's situation analysis, digital marketing objectives, strategy, tactics, actions and control. In order for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to have a strong, favourable corporate brand and have long-term relationships with customers, their digital marketing should be managed sufficiently and strategically.</i>			
	Specific guiding argument 3 <i>Managing digital marketing sufficiently and strategically can have possible value for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd and their customers. Using more sales, preferred service, dialogue with customers engagement, saving costs and sizzling to extend the corporate brand can be of great value for the organisation's organisational success.</i>	Value of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Limited (product, place, price, promotion)	Sell Serve Speak Save costs Sizzle (Develop online brand)	2(d), 2(n) 2(d), 2(n) 2(d), 2(n) 2(d), 2(n) 2(d), 2(n)
	Specific guiding argument 4 <i>A corporate brand requires a multi-disciplinary approach and is seen as</i>			3(a), 3(b)

Specific research question 1.3.1.3	Specific Guiding Arguments	Concepts	Constructs being measured	Qualitative research approach: Semi-structured interviews
	<i>stakeholders being influenced by expectations, memories, stories and relationships associated with the organisation. For the purpose of this study, a corporate brand consists of elements that function interdependently: vision, mission and brand promise; corporate visual identity – behaviour, symbols and communication of the brand promise; corporate culture – heritage and culture; corporate image and corporate communication that satisfy the stakeholders' needs.</i>	Corporate brand elements	Strategy of the corporate brand: vision, mission and values Corporate visual identity Organisational culture Organisational image Stakeholders Corporate communication	2(b), 2(c) 1(e), 3(c) 1(e), 3(d) 1(e), 3(e), 3(i) 3(b)
	Specific guiding argument 5 <i>Success drivers serve as guidance for corporate brand management; Role of senior management, employee management, long-term relationships with stakeholders, consistent corporate communication and aligning strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image. Corporate brand elements should be sufficiently managed in a process called corporate brand management to have strategic value .</i>	Corporate brand management	Role of senior management Management of employees Long-term relationships with stakeholders Consistent corporate communication Align vision, corporate culture and corporate image	1(c), 1(f) 1(b), 1(c) 1(d), 3(f), 3(i) 1(d), 3(i) 3(a), 1(d), 3(g)

Specific research question 1.3.1.3	Specific Guiding Arguments	Concepts	Constructs being measured	Qualitative research approach: Semi-structured interviews
	Specific guiding argument 6 <i>The strategic value of a corporate brand is the loyal stakeholder support obtained from their preference of the corporate brand, based on their associations with the organisation. Organisations can gain competitive advantage in the market only if stakeholders see the organisation as being trustworthy. Rooibos Ltd can be distinguished from competing organisations and have long-term relationships with stakeholders only if the corporate brand has created a well-established, favourable image and a good reputation by giving customers a memorable experience, with symbolism and by adapting to their customers' needs and wants.</i>	Strategic value of the corporate brand	Differentiation Symbolism value Memorising value Corporate brand development Corporate reputation	3(j) 3(k) 3(l) 3(m) 3(g), 3(h), 3(n)

Table 4-3: Research design for the online survey

Specific research question 1.3.1.4	Specific Guiding Arguments	Concepts	Constructs being measured	Quantitative research approach: Online survey (numbers of questions specifically measure constructs)
What is the customers' perception of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management?	Specific guiding argument 1 <i>Digital marketing consists of elements such as websites, search engine marketing, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing and online advertising. These elements enable companies to engage with customers and to build customer relationships by means of an online presence. This is important as it is the way an organisation presents itself to their existing and potential customers. Therefore, digital marketing elements should be managed sufficiently as to have greater value than just providing information.</i>	Digital marketing	Website Search engine marketing Mobile marketing Email marketing Blogs and podcasts Social media marketing Online advertising	B(2), B(3), B(4), B(5.4), B(10) B(2), B(3), B(4), B(5.5), B(10) B(2), B(3), B(4), B(5.46), B(10) B(2), B(3), B(4), B(5.4), B(10) B(2), B(3), B(4), B(5.7), B(10) B(2), B(3), B(4), B(5.1,2), B(10) B(2), B(3), B(4), B(5.8), B(10)
	Specific guiding argument 2 <i>Digital marketing management is crucial for organisations to reach their goals and digital marketing objectives. The digital marketing strategy consists of segmentation, target marketing and positioning. The SOSTAC is a model utilised by numerous organisations across the world to strategically manage their</i>	Digital marketing management	Digital marketing strategy and plan	B(1), B(3), B(5), B(7) B(1), B(4), B(5), B(8), B(9)

Specific research question 1.3.1.4	Specific Guiding Arguments	Concepts	Constructs being measured	Quantitative research approach: Online survey (numbers of questions specifically measure constructs)
	<i>digital marketing. It consists of the organisation's situation analysis, digital marketing objectives, strategy, tactics, actions and control. In order for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to have a strong, favourable corporate brand and have long-term relationships with customers, their digital marketing should be managed sufficiently and strategically.</i>			
	Specific guiding argument 3 <i>Managing digital marketing sufficiently and strategically can have possible value for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd and their customers. Using more sales, preferred service, dialogue with customers engagement, saving costs and sizzling to extend the corporate brand can be of great value for the organisation's organisational success.</i>	Value of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Limited (product, place, price, promotion)	Sell Serve Speak Save costs Sizzle (Develop online brand)	B(4) B(4) B(4) B(4) B(4)

Specific research question 1.3.1.4	Specific Guiding Arguments	Concepts	Constructs being measured	Quantitative research approach: Online survey (numbers of questions specifically measure constructs)
	Specific guiding argument 4 <i>A corporate brand requires a multi-disciplinary approach and is seen as stakeholders being influenced by expectations, memories, stories and relationships associated with the organisation. For the purpose of this study, a corporate brand consists of elements that function interdependently: vision, mission and brand promise; corporate visual identity – behaviour, symbols and communication of the brand promise; corporate culture – heritage and culture; corporate image and corporate communication that satisfy the stakeholders' needs.</i>	Corporate brand elements	Strategy of the corporate brand: vision, mission and values Corporate visual identity Organisational culture Organisational image Stakeholders Corporate communication	C(1), C(4), C(6), C(8) C(2), C(8) C(2) C(2), C(3) C(11) C(2), C(5), C(6), C(7)
	Specific guiding argument 5 <i>Success drivers serve as guidance for corporate brand management; Role of senior management, employee management, long-term relationships with stakeholders, consistent corporate communication and aligning strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image. Corporate brand elements should be sufficiently managed in a process</i>	Corporate brand management	Role of senior management Management of employees Long-term relationships with stakeholders Consistent corporate communication	C(2), C(6) C(6), C(11) C(3), C(4), C(5), C(11) C(6), C(7), C(8) C(6), C(7;V)

Specific research question 1.3.1.4	Specific Guiding Arguments	Concepts	Constructs being measured	Quantitative research approach: Online survey (numbers of questions specifically measure constructs)
	<i>called corporate brand management to have strategic value.</i>		Align vision, corporate culture and corporate image	
	Specific guiding argument 6 <i>The strategic value of a corporate brand is the loyal stakeholder support obtained from their preference of the corporate brand, based on their associations with the organisation. Organisations can gain competitive advantage in the market only if stakeholders see the organisation as being trustworthy. Rooibos Ltd can be distinguished from competing organisations and have long-term relationships with stakeholders only if the corporate brand has created a well-established, favourable image and a good reputation by giving customers a memorable experience, with symbolism and by adapting to their customers' needs and wants.</i>	Strategic value of the corporate brand	Differentiation Symbolism value Memorising value Corporate brand development Corporate reputation	C(5) C(2), C(9), C(10) C(3), C(4), C(5) C(7), C(10), C(11) C(3), C(6), C(8), C(9), C(10)

4.4 RESEARCH METHODS

4.4.1 Qualitative research approach

4.4.1.1 Literature study

The literature study has already been completed with the first and second research question answered in Chapter Two and Three. This knowledge made it possible to be able to understand what aspects of digital marketing and corporate brand management are deemed necessary for Rooibos Ltd.

The third specific research question will be answered according to the one in section 1.3.1.3. This indicates that semi-structured interviews are necessary to investigate how the management of the Marketing and Communication Department at Rooibos Ltd applies digital marketing and corporate brand management, providing in-depth insights that can improve strategy and decision-making.

The fourth specific research question will be answered according to section 1.3.1.4. An online survey was necessary to determine customer perceptions on Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.

4.4.1.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used for the purpose of this study. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative data collection method in which the researcher asks participants a series of predetermined but open-ended questions to provide reliable and comparable qualitative data. The semi-structured interview is done face-to-face to allow the interviewer to also observe the non-verbal behaviour of the interviewee (Du Plooy, 2017:196; Hayhoe *et al.*, 2021; Tisdell *et al.*, 2025).

The advantage of this method in this specific study is that the information gained is from a personal perspective of real-world events by management. It is clear that the semi-structured interviews can be set up in an interview schedule quite easily. Open-ended questions were necessary for this research study to determine management members' approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management. Although this method is a time-consuming process, it was deemed to be the most appropriate research method for this study. Information gathered during such interviews is reliable and comparable and can be summarised to answer the specific research question.

4.4.1.2.1 Sampling

The management of Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department has first-hand experience of managing the digital marketing and corporate brand management. These participants conduct the organisation's digital marketing and corporate brand management and were selected on the basis of their specialist knowledge in the various fields of communication. Therefore, they were deemed to be the best participants for this study with reference to purposive sampling.

The interviews were scheduled in October 2024, with an additional interview in October 2025 to ensure that information had remained relevant to the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four participants of the Marketing and Communication Department at Rooibos Ltd. The first interview was held with the Client Liaison specialist. The second interview was with the Communication Manager. Thirdly, an interview was conducted with the director of Rooibos Ltd's external digital agency and, lastly, with Rooibos Ltd's Marketing Director.

Table 4-4: Representation of management members interviewed in semi-structured interviews

Rooibos Limited		
Interview	Interviewee	Date
A	Client Liaison	October 2024
B	Communication Manager	October 2024
C	External digital agency Director	October 2024
D	Marketing Director	October 2025

The information received from the interviews was analysed by means of the qualitative content analysis to obtain the approach of the MCD at Rooibos Ltd regarding digital marketing and corporate brand management. The interviews did not take place one-on-one in person but was conducted online to respect their time and to save traveling fees. The interview process is explained 4.4.1.2.2.

4.4.1.2.2 The interview schedule

The interview schedule is a list used during the interview that contains prepared questions that are open and close-ended to help guide the interviewer. It was important to have a list of compiled questions for each person with whom the semi-structured interview was held to explore Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management. The theoretical information compiled in Chapter Two and Three was used to develop the interview schedule. Open-ended questions were compiled regarding Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital

marketing and corporate brand management. The semi-structured interview questions in Table 4-2 hold the constructs that were measured with the answers obtained during the interview.

For the purpose of this study, a basic interview schedule was compiled to be used as guideline to obtain the perceptions of managers.

The interview schedule consisted of the following categories (see ADDENDUM B):

- Demographic information
- Digital marketing (elements, management and value)
- Corporate brand management (elements, management and strategic value)

4.4.1.2.3 The interview process

Legitimacy was established before the interviews with the participants were conducted. The researcher followed the same procedure for all the participants. The researcher sent emails to the possible participants with a formal letter explaining that she is from the NWU, the scope of the study and to request whether they will participate in the study. Upon agreement, follow-up emails were sent to indicate the date, time and format for the interviews to be conducted at their convenience. Because of the long distances between interviewer and participants, the interviews were held via Zoom during October 2024 and October 2025. The interviews were recorded via Zoom's recording function.

4.4.1.2.4 Qualitative content analysis

Du Plooy (2017:88) stated that a qualitative content analysis is a way in which data such as verbal responses/audio-visual materials are collected. The process of qualitative content analysis for the purpose of this study commenced with the (1) voice recordings that served as data collection that were (2) transcribed in Word format for record keeping after semi-structured interviews had been done. (3) Responses were then placed against concepts and constructs (measuring instruments), as shown in Table 4-5, for the researcher to draw conclusions which are addressed in Chapter Five.

Guided by the questions, the researcher conducted a qualitative content analysis and interpreted the results obtained from written, spoken or visual communication. The semi-structured interviews' questions about certain themes allowed space for informed responses and answers from the participants (Du Plooy, 2017:196–198).

The content analysis provided valuable insight into Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management. A content analysis used these insights and allowed the researcher to draw a series of conclusions.

4.4.1.3 Measuring instruments

In this study, the constructs formed part of the study to support each theoretical statement and the questions in the interview schedule (see Table 4-5 & 4-6). This section will illustrate what be studied by defining each construct.

4.4.1.4 Operationalisation of constructs

4.4.1.4.1 Concept: Digital marketing

Managing digital marketing suggests communication solutions to the main problems in an organisation and helps to understand the issues that the organisation may face. For organisations such as Rooibos Ltd, the constructs of digital marketing include digital marketing elements, digital marketing management, and the value of digital marketing management, which help the organisation effectively engage customers and enhance its competitive advantage. (see specific guiding arguments 1, 2 & 3 in § 2.6).

Table 4-5: Operational definitions for constructs of digital marketing

Concept: Digital marketing	
Construct	Operational definition
Digital marketing elements	Website: A website is a vehicle for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to engage with stakeholders by providing informative corporate brand content and real-time assistance that forms a user experience (§ 2.3.1).
	Search engine marketing: Search engine marketing aids in the findability (paid or free) of an organisation's corporate brand information on the internet, such as Rooibos Ltd (§ 2.3.2).
	Mobile marketing: Companies use mobile marketing to reach targeted stakeholders with the corporate brand via SMSs, QR codes, websites, applications and maps (§ 2.3.3).
Concept: Digital marketing	
Construct	Operational definition
	Email marketing: Email marketing enables organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to inform the corporate brand and its image by considering visual elements, such as design, easy to interact, relevance, typography, links to website, contact information, email signature, colour and templates (§ 2.3.4).
	Blogs and podcasts: Organisations such as Rooibos Ltd can inform their corporate brand by writing business blogs and podcasts that promote their product and services (§ 2.3.5).

Concept: Digital marketing	
Construct	Operational definition
	Social media: Social media enables organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to inform their corporate brand by engaging with targeted stakeholders through Instagram and Facebook images, video and content (§ 2.3.6).
	Online marketing: Online marketing informs organisations' corporate brand, such as Rooibos Ltd, through paid, earned and owned media advertisements content, image and response (§ 2.3.7).
Digital marketing management	Digital marketing plan and strategy: The digital marketing strategy enables Rooibos Ltd to identify segments, target markets, positioning and stakeholders for their advertised content. This means that the corporate brand gets informed by digital marketing by selecting the correct segment, target market, position proposition and stakeholder focus (§ 2.4.1).
	Digital marketing plan (SOSTAC): The digital marketing planning process enables Rooibos Ltd to state the situation, formulating objectives, strategy, tactics, actions and control to inform the corporate brand with the plan (2.4.2).
Value of digital marketing management	Sell: For an organisation such as Rooibos Ltd, the value of digital marketing is that, by making online experience easy to use, they can influence buying behaviour (§ 2.5.1).
	Serve: Providing online benefits for stakeholders through dialogue, service and feedback, enables the corporate brand to compete with other organisations (§ 2.5.2).
	Speak: The value of targeting the correct audience, getting their feedback and adjusting communication, accordingly, can possibly lead to building and maintaining relationships with them (§ 2.5.3).
	Save costs: The value of communicating via online platforms enables Rooibos Ltd to get better results when campaigns are monitored and optimised (§ 2.5.4).
	Sizzle: New offerings, propositions and online experiences enable organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to develop the brand with the added value of differentiating the brand (§ 2.5.5).

4.4.1.4.2 Concept: Corporate brand management

The corporate brand management drives strategic communication intent of the organisation. The three constructs are defined with sub-constructs: corporate brand elements, corporate brand management and strategic value of the corporate brand (see Specific guiding arguments 4, 5 & 6 in § 3.6).

Table 4-6: Operational definitions of corporate brand management

Concept: Corporate brand management	
Construct	Operational definition
Corporate brand elements	Strategy of the corporate brand: vision, mission and values (§ 3.3.1.1)
	Vision: A vision indicates that the planning of Rooibos Ltd's future with wisdom is an excellent and goal-driven organisation. Rooibos Ltd's vision is shared in their Marketing and Communication Department's communication with customers.
	Mission: The mission of building and maintaining strong relationships with customers is the aim Rooibos Ltd wants to reach. This can be done by reflecting the mission of Rooibos Ltd in communication and making sure everyone in the Marketing and Communication Department understands the mission.
	Values: Rooibos Ltd has certain values they share with customers to attract them to the organisation. Influencing customer buying behaviour can be done by communicating clear organisational values and making sure that the Marketing and Communication Department understands these values.
	Corporate visual identity: Corporate visual identity include all the visual representations of Rooibos Ltd, which ensures bigger visibility and associations with customers (§ 3.3.1.2).
Concept: Corporate brand management	
Construct	Operational definition
	Organisational culture: Corporate culture shows Rooibos Ltd employees collaborating, building relationships and working together, which is evident in their behaviour, shared values and beliefs. To have a positive corporate culture, the senior management should consider employees' wellbeing and make sure they know how to behave and communicate a brand with which customers want to associate themselves (§ 3.3.1.3).
	Corporate image: The corporate image is the overall stakeholder impression of Rooibos Ltd. Rooibos Ltd wants employees and customers to see the organisation as having a favourable image based on their values satisfying their needs (§ 3.3.1.4).
	Stakeholders: Stakeholders are seen as people having an interest in Rooibos Ltd and representing the corporate brand. Having a favourable corporate brand can be achieved by communicating customer needs and wants and by making sure that employees know what to communicate to whom (§ 3.3.1.5).
	Corporate communication: Rooibos Ltd utilises corporate communication to manage all internal and external, marketing and organisational communication. Corporate communication combines the vision, mission, values, corporate visual identity, employees and image of Rooibos Ltd (§ 3.3.1.6).

Concept: Corporate brand management	
Construct	Operational definition
Corporate brand management	Role of senior management: Rooibos Ltd's senior management role includes initiating internal stakeholders to make sure they know what should be done in terms of their responsibilities and brand promise, maintaining and developing the corporate brand (§ 3.4.1).
	Management of employees: Rooibos Ltd's senior management manages employees by making sure they know what to do in terms of their responsibilities and how to communicate with customers in a relevant and distinctive way (§ 3.4.2).
	Long-term relationships with stakeholders: Consistent communication is vital for Rooibos Ltd to build and maintain employee and customer relationships. Credibility and a trusted notion are reflected in consistent and transparent communication intended to satisfy Rooibos Ltd's customer needs (§ 3.4.3).
	Consistent corporate communication: Consistent, transparent and reciprocal communication minimises uncertainty with employees and customers, as employees know how to respond and interactively communicate with customers with the right intent. This can possibly create a positive corporate image and a favourable reputation for Rooibos Ltd (§ 3.4.4).
	Strategy: Management of the corporate brand becomes easier when Rooibos Ltd strategically aligns the vision, corporate culture and image. With clear and consistent alignment of the vision, culture and image, strategic values, such as perceived image and reputation, will follow (§ 3.4.5).
Strategic value of corporate brand management	Differentiation: The value of differentiation is obtained by corporate brand management being depicted in content that is modern, imaginative, and unique, which shapes stakeholder perceptions and encourages them to prefer the brand over competitors, ultimately strengthening brand loyalty and market position (§ 3.5.1.1).
	Symbolism value: Corporate brand management enables a sense of belonging with stakeholders by using symbolical features that influence their buying (§ 3.5.1.2).
	Memorising value: The brand promise gives stakeholders a memorable experience with the corporate brand, which results in satisfied customer needs and wants that lead to the value of future support towards the brand (§ 3.5.1.3).
	Corporate brand development: Corporate brand management enables organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to regularly update and refine the corporate brand to stay relevant to current and future customer needs and wants (§ 3.5.1.4).

Concept: Corporate brand management	
Construct	Operational definition
	Corporate reputation: Rooibos Ltd's corporate reputation is the sum of all perceptions regarding the organisation's performance, behaviour and communication. A good reputation is gained through by way of consistency, transparency, distinctiveness, authenticity and visibility (§ 3.5.1.5).

The tables above represent the researcher's own compiled descriptions of constructs for the purpose of measuring management response against the existing literature. The following describes the quantitative research approach utilised for the purpose of this study.

4.4.1.5 Data collection method

Perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's management approach to their digital marketing and corporate brand management was the central point in the semi-structured interviews. Thus, ways of data collection and record keeping was a big concern for the researcher. As discussed in section 4.4.1.2.4, the qualitative content analysis method for semi-structured interviews involved recording Zoom-interviews with Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department participants and also, as back-up, audio recordings to record responses for her own record. To use semi-structured interview information on recordings, the researcher transcribed all the discussions in Word format. The relationship between the constructs and responses in the semi-structured interviews was qualitatively analysed to point out possible connections and correlations in Chapter Five.

4.4.2 Quantitative research approach

The quantitative research approach discusses the online survey, survey design and the implementation process.

4.4.2.1 Online survey

In this study, an online survey technique, was developed to collect data from the target population, namely customers of a large service organisation, Rooibos Ltd. In quantitative research, surveys are the most frequently used method of collecting primary data from a sample of people (Du Plooy, 2017:35). Surveys are mainly used in studies, such as the present study, which have individual people as the units of analysis and is regarded as one of the best methods available to collect original data for researching a population too large to observe directly. The survey technique was used to collect data about the dimensions (factors) that customers consider when they evaluate or judge digital marketing and corporate brand

management of Rooibos Ltd. The online survey was recorded on Google Forms, and the data was captured with statistics on Google Forms, with assistance from the NWU's statistical consultation statistician. A link to the online survey was distributed to potential respondents via email from Rooibos Ltd. Sampling of 100 respondents are applicable as advised and confirmed by statistical services. Therefore, perceptions of customers across all nine provinces within the South African context were targeted.

In this study, the utilisation of surveys with standardised questions was considered to be suitable to measure customer perceptions about Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management. These surveys enabled the researcher to quantify the responses, which were statistically analysable.

4.4.2.2 Survey design

The survey design constituted the questions based on customer perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management. Questions were formulated to be assessed against operational definitions that measure the level of sufficiently managed concepts by Rooibos Ltd (digital marketing and corporate brand management).

The theoretical information compiled in Chapter Two and Three was used to develop the survey. Close-ended questions were compiled to establish customer perceptions regarding Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management. The survey questions (see ADDENDUM C) hold the constructs that were measured (measured in Chapter Six against operational definitions, Tables 4-5 and 4-6) with the answers obtained from the online survey.

For the purpose of this study, an online survey was compiled to be used as guideline to obtain the perceptions of customers.

The online survey consisted of the following sections (see ADDENDUM C):

Section A – Demographic information: The first part of the survey consisted of a demographical profile of respondents. This information was gathered for the researcher to understand the background on customer age, province of origin, relationship with Rooibos Ltd and their image and perceptions of the organisation's digital marketing and corporate brand management reputation. This section had 3 questions that enabled the researcher to make a comparison between a variety of demographic information. Questions in this section had the option to choose the right option.

Section B – Digital marketing: The second section of the survey consisted of customer perceptions about Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing, which is measured through constructs identified in the existing literature. These constructs were derived from digital marketing elements and management of digital marketing based on Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing strategy and plan. The values of digital marketing were identified by answers to 11. Yes and No multichoice questions indicated the frequency (n) and the percentage (%) for which the respondents to the specific answers, A five-point Lickert scale was utilised for 2 questions to ensure transparency and consistency in the interpretation of descriptive statistics. The mean values were also evaluated according to established Lickert-scale interpretation. The following ranges were used to guide interpretation: (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neutral (4) Agree (5) Strongly disagree.

Section C – Corporate brand management: The third section of the survey focused on Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand management, as perceived by customers. It was aimed at constructs identified in the existing literature namely, corporate brand elements – vision, mission and values, corporate culture, corporate visual identity, corporate image, stakeholders and corporate communication; corporate brand, senior management role, employees management, long-term relationship, consistent corporate communication, strategy; and strategic value of the corporate brand – corporate image and reputation. This section's aim was to establish customer perceptions regarding Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand management. This section had multiple types of question, such as Lickert scale questions, asking customers the extent to which they agree with statements or to just selecting the best option (Lickert-scale and multiple choice). There was also an open-ended question in the questionnaire. This section had four questions (two were multiple-choice and two Lickert-scale) that tested various constructs. In addition, some questions measured more than one construct.

4.4.2.3 Implementation process

The survey was sent via email to all Rooibos Ltd's customers across South Africa who formed part of the target population. ADDENDUM D emphasises the goal of this study and shows that respondents stayed anonymous throughout the voluntary completion of the survey. A link was provided in the email and gave respondents the choice to answer voluntarily and in English.

Google Forms was used to make it easy for respondents to answer questions and submit it at the end of the survey, which enabled the researcher to retrieve data from there.

4.4.2.4 Quantitative data collection method

The study focused on the perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's customers regarding its digital marketing and corporate brand management through surveys. The data was collected in the form of statistics for this study. The survey was administered by using Google Forms, which allowed the researcher to retrieve statistical reports of customer opinions and perceptions. The data collection method applied was a survey-based quantitative approach. The key parameters of this method included:

- Sample size (N): The total of respondents participating in the survey.
- Survey platform: Google Form, which automatically generated statistical data, such as response counts, means, standard deviations and percentages.

Questions were close-ended and selected questions were open-ended (with the advice and assistance of statistical consultation). This means that they were designed to allow measurable responses, typically on the Lickert scale and interpretation on the open-ended questions. The concepts being measured included digital marketing and corporate brand management as outlined in Table 4-5 and Table 4-6. Statistical methods that were applied included frequency tables that presented percentages (%), mean and standard deviations (SD) for each question – parameters related to the concepts. Methods included:

Percentage: Represents the proportion of respondents who selected a particular answer. The percentage for each response option was calculated as:

$$Percentage = \left(\frac{Frequency\ of\ Response}{Total\ Sample\ Size\ (N)} \right) \times 100$$

This parameter provided insight into the distribution of responses across all questions.

Example: If 30 out of 100 respondents selected *Agree* on a specific question, the percentage for that response is 30%.

Average deviations: The mean score of each question was calculated using the Likert scale responses. For example, if the question responses are rated on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), the mean was calculated by summing the values of all responses and dividing it by the total number of respondents. This method provided a central measure of tendency, showing the average opinion of respondents.

Formula for mean:

$$Mean = \frac{\sum(Responses)}{N}$$

Standard deviations: The standard deviation (SD) measures the dispersion or spread of responses around the mean. It was calculated using the following formula:

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X_i - \mu)^2}{N}}$$

Where:

- X_i = individual response value,
- μ = mean of responses,
- N = number of respondents.

This statistic helped determine how consistent the answers are. A smaller SD indicates that most responses are close to the mean, while a larger SD indicates greater variation among responses.

4.4.2.4.1 Correlation and connection analysis

To understand the relationship between the Google Forms survey data and the semi-structured interviews, a correlational analysis was conducted. The following statistical method was applied:

- **Correlation analysis:** The responses from the survey and the semi-structured interviews were compared to identify any potential correlations. The analysis investigated whether certain digital marketing and corporate brand elements influenced customer perceptions by using statistical techniques like Pearson's correlation coefficient to measure the strength and direction of the relationship (Ellis & Steyn, 2003).
- **Parameters for correlation – Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r):** This measures the linear relationship between two sets of data, with values ranging from -1 (perfect negative correlation) to +1 (perfect positive correlation). A value of 0 indicates no linear correlation (Ellis & Steyn, 2003).

The findings from both the semi-structured interviews and the survey responses were compared to assess whether customer opinions and perceptions aligned or differed based on the digital marketing and corporate brand strategies of Rooibos Ltd. The analysis helped establish how Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management might influence customer perceptions.

4.4.3 Validity and reliability

Validity in a study is shown in the appropriate research method that specifically examines relevant principles, appropriate method of data collection and conclusions that are appropriately reflected in the research findings (Leavy, 2017:155). According to Leavy (2017:154), reliability of a study is addressed in the quality of the study, appropriate methodology and suggestions that the reader considers valuable. To summarise, both validity and reliability are reflected in the outcomes of the data measured against operational definitions, leading to possible suggestions to the organisation.

In support of these principles, the online semi-structured interview and online survey response process used in this study was implemented in accordance with the ethical requirements of BaSSREC, as outlined in Chapter 1 (§ 1.8).

Furthermore, it was also included in the comparison of data, results and literature that ultimately answered the specific research questions (§ 1.3.1). Results and theory were compared to ensure validity and reliability in the findings indicated in Chapter Five.

4.5 CONCLUSION

Chapter Four outlined the methodological context for the study and provided background on the research design used. The rationale behind each construct (from both theoretical foundations: digital marketing and corporate brand management) were conveyed. The constructs were tested by means of the computer-administered survey sent to respondents and a compiled interview schedule. The processes and how the data were collected was also discussed in detail. Chapter Five and Chapter Six reflect on the data that were collected and provide a detailed breakdown of the data after it were categorised.

CHAPTER 5 ANALYSING ROOIBOS LTD'S MANAGEMENT'S APPROACH TO DIGITAL MARKETING AND CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four deliberated on the empirical research methods of the study. In this chapter the approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management of Rooibos Ltd will be analysed according to their approach applied among the four Marketing and Communication Department candidates of Rooibos Ltd compared to how stakeholders (in this case, customers) perceive their approach (see § Six) to the above.

The main purpose of this chapter is to answer the following specific research questions (see § 1.3.1.3) and to answer it by discussing the results of the semi-structured interview findings:

What is Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management?

The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section provides a brief overview of the demographic information of the four participants interviewed from Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department (see § Four, Table 4-4). The second section deals with Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and management. The constructs investigated, with the focus on building customer relationships (see § 1.5), are the seven elements of digital marketing which include: website, SEO, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs, podcasts and social media marketing, online advertising. The chapter also discusses digital marketing management, which refers to the digital marketing strategy (DMS) and the digital marketing plan (DMS). Thereafter, it explains the value of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd, in more detail. The third section deals with the concept of corporate brand management (CBM) of Rooibos Ltd. The constructs measured are the corporate brand management elements, which include strategy of the corporate brand: vision, mission and values, corporate visual identity, organisational culture, corporate image, stakeholders and corporate communication. It further includes the corporate brand management consisting of the role of senior management, management of employees, long-term relationships with stakeholders, consistent corporate communication, align vision, corporate culture and corporate image. Consequently, the strategic value of corporate brand for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd will be described. Each of these constructs were supplemented with the

information obtained from the semi-structured interviews to point out what the approach to customer relationship building, as applied by the participants of the Marketing and Communication Department at Rooibos Ltd, entails.

The next section (see § 5.2) elaborates on the demographic information.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF ROOIBOS LTD'S MARKETING DEPARTMENT

As indicated in section 1.7.1, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two participants from Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department, an external marketer from Rooibos Ltd's marketing agency and the Marketing and Sales director of Rooibos Ltd. Figure 2-1 provides a summary of the demographic information obtained from the semi-structured interviews.

The communication manager (Participant 1) of Rooibos Ltd has 23 years' experience in the current position and is mainly responsible for overseeing marketing activities, such as implementing corporate social responsibility initiatives, developing marketing material, and managing client liaison activities. As the Marketing and Communication Department at Rooibos Ltd is quite small, it comprises the communication manager and the client liaison staff.

The client liaison candidate (Participant 2) of Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department has 13 years' experience in the field of marketing and client liaison. Her function is multi-dimensional, consisting of client liaison, sales support and marketing and communication. For digital execution of marketing ideas, an external digital agency works closely with the Marketing and Communication Department of Rooibos Ltd to execute marketing ideas.

The director of the external digital agency (Participant 3) has been in his position for years, with experience of aiding in developing Rooibos Ltd's digital world, for example, their websites, social media platforms, Google ads, email marketing, SEOs and content shoot and designing.

The marketing and sales director (Participant 4) plays an important role in recruiting customers in the rooibos industry, with more than 26 years' experience in his position. In this study, he spoke more to the business-to-business side of things and gave direction and insight into the digital marketing planning, which helped clarify practical strategies that Rooibos Ltd can apply to improve their marketing effectiveness.

From the information above one can infer that Rooibos Ltd aims to establish a well-established customer recruitment office to secure building relationships with their various stakeholders, as the participants involved in this study have a combined experience of 36 years. This is an indication of their strong commitment to fostering trust, maintaining stakeholder engagement and ensuring the sustainability and growth of the organisation through experienced and knowledgeable personnel.

5.3 ROOIBOS LTD'S DIGITAL MARKETING APPROACH

As mentioned in section 2.2.1, digital marketing is an organisational approach to engaging with promotional messages sent via digital marketing elements, addressing the target market needs. This is undertaken to establish and sustain relationships with existing and potential customers, ensuring mutual benefit for all parties involved.

This section aims to describe Rooibos Ltd's approach to customer recruitment with regards to the concept of digital marketing and was analysed in accordance with the constructs of digital marketing elements (website, SEO, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing), the digital marketing strategy and plan, along with the values thereof.

5.3.1 Digital marketing elements

Section 2.3 outlined the digital marketing and elements used to reach marketing objectives. The marketing communication elements are utilised to engage and interact with customers. Each element is integrated and plays a unique and distinctive part that is designed to fulfil a specific task during the engagement process. The elements are used to package the message that needs to be conveyed and to achieve the communication objectives, which are to build and maintain long-term relationships by engaging and interacting with customer.

The elements of digital marketing were outlined in section 2.3 where each element (construct) was examined by comparing practice with the literature. Rooibos Ltd utilises their website to communicate a wide variety of information to their stakeholders and, in this case specifically, their customers. Rooibos Ltd not only utilises their website to provide information. According to Participant A, they also “cross reference, which enables the reach to be bigger”. This enables Rooibos Ltd to connect various digital platforms, allowing them to obtain an overall reach and engagement from stakeholder across different platforms linked to their website (see Figure 5-1). Participant C also concurred about connecting and managing the platforms. Participant D elaborated from a marketing and sales director's point of view:

I don't use that a lot. We definitely don't use it enough. What I do, is to make an appointment with customers and visit them. That is still the most effective way to marketing, even though it is costly, it gives you the best chance of getting someone new on board.

From the director's point of view, one can see that management identifies potential in the digital communication platforms but still uses business-to-business marketing more efficiently than the new digital methods of communication with customers. On the far left of the image (Figure 5-1) below, one can identify the interconnectedness of all social media channels connected to the website, highlighting how Rooibos Ltd integrates its digital platforms to strengthen brand visibility and enhance stakeholder engagement.



Figure 5-1 Rooibos Ltd's website

Search engine optimisation (SEO) was discussed in section 2.3.2 and was described as organisational use of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) to ensure their websites are easily discoverable by using relevant keywords, headings and hashtags. This improves visibility without paid advertising. Rooibos Ltd applies these techniques to strengthen its digital presence, which is analysed with findings from the interviews. Rooibos Ltd utilises SEOs on social media platforms with key words such as *#Rooibos* *#Tea* *#Rooibos Ltd* to push their search ranking across social media platforms (see Figure 5-2). This highlights the importance of SEO and related tools in enabling Rooibos Ltd to enhance its online visibility, attract a wider audience and maintain a competitive digital presence.



Figure 5-2 Rooibos Ltd's SEOs

Mobile marketing was described in section 2.3.3 as the most dominant platform for brand communication, allowing organisations to connect with targeted audiences via accessible and interactive channels, such as SMS, QR codes, mobile websites, applications and geo-location tools – an approach Rooibos Ltd sufficiently applies to enhance engagement and visibility across digital platforms. No indication was given of this concept during the interview, as the question presented was: Which digital channels do you use to engage with customers, why and how frequently? Although this concept was not discussed, a visual presentation can indicate that Rooibos Ltd does utilise this digital marketing element via their Geo-location (see Figure 5-3 below). The significance of this lies in the organisation's ability to reach customers in real time, thereby enhancing customer experience and reinforcing Rooibos Ltd's presence in both local and online markets.

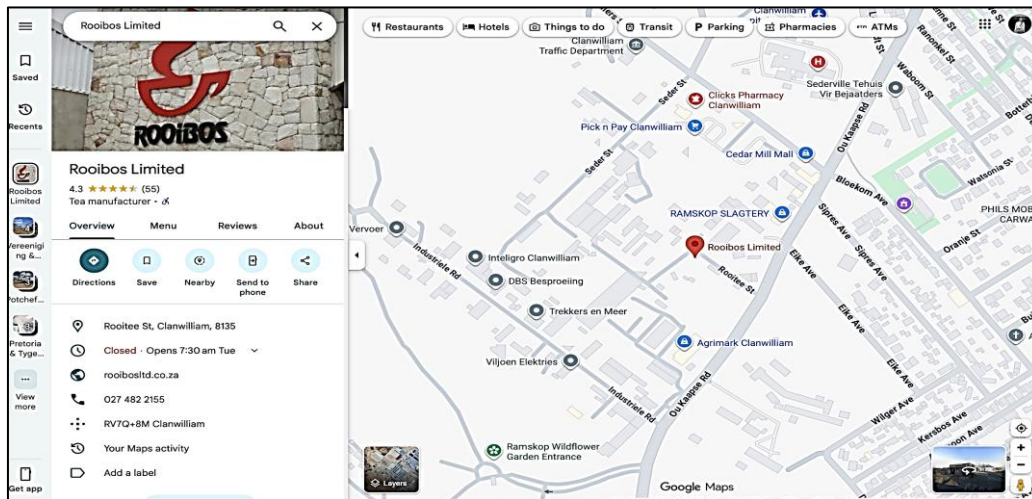


Figure 5-3 Rooibos Ltd's Mobile marketing Geo-locations

As for mobile marketing: having a digital device makes it easy to have access to the internet and, especially, to one's emails. In section 2.3.4, email marketing was described as a versatile digital marketing strategy, which is an important digital marketing medium for Rooibos Ltd. Participant A indicated that "marketing is done via email which we have a massive database for (3/4 newsletters in a month) – each one with a different angle," and Participant C added: "We send out regular emails for their email subscribers." This indicates that communication with the stakeholders and all customers who subscribe to Rooibos Ltd's email marketing is consistent. Figure 5-4 on the next page is a visual representation of Rooibos Ltd's frequent email marketing.

Interesting and engaging video material, such as podcasts and blogs, was discussed in section 2.3.5, along with how they function and what characterises them. Although Rooibos Ltd's interviews did not focus on blogs and podcasts, it is something they could consider in the future. Furthermore, social media marketing is a digital marketing element (see § 2.3.6) that also emerged in all the interviews. Participant A reiterated the way in which the digital marketing management handles social media marketing, highlighting how effective management of these channels can enhance customer engagement and strengthen the brand's online presence: "We look to the demographics on each platform and tailor content to that," while Participant C indicated that the core of the agency's approach to social media channels and content is that "the social media platforms are used to stimulate the interest of the product in the consumer market".



Figure 5-4 Rooibos Ltd's email marketing

The interviews indicated that social media is utilised by Rooibos Ltd to give a favourable image of Rooibos Ltd by using storytelling, interaction and engagement. From the viewpoint of a marketing and sales director, Participant D emphasised throughout the interview that the marketing and client liaison team handles these aspects.

Figure 5-5 is a visual representation of Rooibos Ltd's social media post. The last digital marketing element that was analysed is online advertising, which was described in section 2.3.7 as using paid, earned and owned media strategically. In businesses like Rooibos Ltd, online marketing can strengthen brand awareness, reach wider audiences and maintain greater control over how their brand is seen and experienced online.

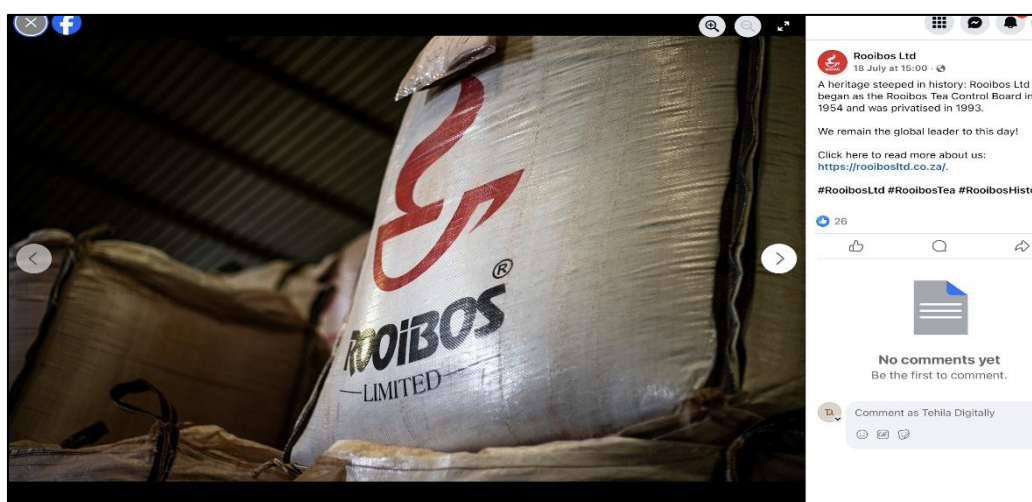


Figure 5-5 Rooibos Ltd's social media

Rooibos Ltd utilises online advertising, as stated by Participant C: “The reason behind why we use the channels: Rooibos Ltd focus on B2B marketing. Therefore, LinkedIn and Google Ads are platforms we try to focus on for the B2B perspective.” For this reason, both Participant A and Participant B supported Participant C’s view during their interviews. They indicated that, while Google Ads may not always appear or the result of it being seen physically or immediately, the result of utilising online advertising can be seen in general online browsing (by for example consistently using Google Ads), confirming that it is considered an important component of their marketing strategy.

The analysis above indicates that each digital marketing element has unique features and functions to build stakeholder and, in this case, customer relationships. In the case of Rooibos Ltd, Participant A indicated that their websites and social media channels aim to elicit feelings of being “cared for and also to know Rooibos Ltd have these qualities”. Participant B spoke to “visibility [and] sustainability”, while Participant C maintained that “there [are] a lot of interest stories, for them to have a sense of connection and sense of familiarity.” This suggests that Rooibos Ltd’s use of different digital marketing channels is not only about sharing information, but also about intentionally shaping emotional connections, helping customers feel cared for, building trust through visibility and sustainability and by fostering a sense of familiarity that strengthens long-term relationships.

It seems as if Rooibos Ltd’s Marketing and Communication Department aims to give an overall experience of care, quality, visibility, sustainability and a sense of connection and familiarity. One can ensure optimal results by enforcing digital marketing management sufficiently. Rooibos Ltd’s digital marketing management through strategy and planning is discussed in the next sub-section.

5.3.2 Digital marketing strategy and plan

As mentioned in section 2.4, digital marketing management includes marketing activities to form and build customer relationships by using digital methods to create impressions and to share content. The focus with these activities is to achieve emotional responses from customers and to intensify targeted actions.

This section aims to indicate Rooibos Ltd’s approach to digital marketing management through digital marketing strategy and digital marketing plan.

5.3.2.1 Digital marketing strategy

In section 2.4.1 the constructs of digital marketing strategy were outlined to give an overview of the importance of identifying each principle in the strategic process of thinking.

Segmentation is one of the aspects organisations utilise to identify target audiences' behavioural, geographical, psychological, demographical and benefit strategies. In this case, Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department indicated that the information above is relevant in practice to identify the market segment. Participant A explained: "We look at the demographics on each platform and tailor content to that." With this in mind, Participant A also added: "Over the past couple of years we are moving to a more organic logo, click throughs, buttons and language." Based on the interviews, it seems as if Rooibos Ltd actively applies digital insights in practice by adapting its content, branding and communication style to the specific demographics of each platform – demonstrating a data-driven and audience-responsive approach that strengthens the sufficiency of their marketing efforts. Participant B placed more emphasis on the market segment of the newsletters that are distributed via email marketing: "For instance years ago we had one newsletter, but we realised we need four different newsletters for to reach different people with different subjects. It works for other platforms as well. We plan according to stakeholder needs." Participant C also added in agreement: "I think it's a combination of following what we find in our reporting, seeing what works and where we get a lot of traction from." Participant D stated that segmentation can be achieved

by discussions with them. By going around, keeping your eyes and ears open and look what's happening in different industries. To implement it in your environment so that it is in the best interest for your customer at the end of the day.

Based on the interviews, Rooibos Ltd's marketing approach focuses on being more customer-centred and using data to segment their customers, as the organisation tailors its email newsletters and other platforms to align with distinct stakeholder needs, uses performance data to refine content and relies on ongoing industry awareness and stakeholder engagement to ensure its communication remains relevant and valuable. As indicated in section 2.4.1, there are strategic elements to segmentation that are viewed and identified through the interview findings. Firstly, the researcher identified which segments Rooibos Ltd seem to utilise:

- Demographic segmentation, based on Participant A's answers, which the researcher interpreted as that Rooibos Ltd adapts messaging and visuals to the demographic makeup of each digital platform.
- Behavioural segmentation, based on answers provided by Participant B and C. Their statements indicate that Rooibos Ltd's behavioural segmentation focuses on user actions such as engagement patterns, responses, browsing behaviour and content interaction.
- Psychographic segmentation was analysed by the researcher considering the interview findings from Participant A's responses, which seems that Rooibos Ltd's psychographics relate to attitudes, lifestyle preferences, values and motivations that are reflected in branding choices and message tone.
- Geographic segmentation was not explicitly stated but was found in the interview findings that indicate industry variations that may include regional differences.
- The interview findings indicate that Rooibos Ltd apparently manages benefit segmentation by focusing on the values or benefits that customers seek – information, relevance, usability or connection.

The second aspect, namely the target market, in strategy was outlined in section 2.4.2, which indicated that Rooibos Ltd – for the purpose of this study – mainly focuses on customers as their main stakeholder group. The literature refers to this focus as concentrated targeting. Therefore, it requires a specific position strategy to reach each customer. This is explained in the description below, which is based on the combined analysis of the literature and interview findings. From the interview findings stated above, one can infer that Rooibos Ltd does not follow an undifferentiated, mass-market approach, as their digital efforts are clearly tailored to different stakeholder groups rather than to one broad audience. Derived from the interview findings it seems as if Rooibos Ltd uses concentrated targeting, focusing its marketing resources on a clearly defined niche audience and adapts messaging – such as newsletters, platform-specific demographics and content themes – to meet the needs of this specific group. While Rooibos Ltd operates within a niche, the creation of four separate newsletters and platform-specific contents suggests elements of multi-segment targeting, where different audience subgroups receive distinct messaging based on their needs and behaviour.

5.3.2.2 Digital marketing plan

An overview of a digital marketing plan was discussed in section 2.4.2. A digital marketing plan is a structured and strategic process – guided by frameworks such as SOSTAC – that

integrates traditional marketing principles with digital tools to analyse the organisation's situation; set clear objectives; define strategic approaches, select appropriate tactics and channels; implement coordinated actions; and continuously monitor and control performance to achieve measurable digital marketing goals. This matters because a well-structured digital marketing plan enables organisations like Rooibos Ltd to make informed, data-driven decisions that improve sufficiency, ensure consistency and maximise the impact of their digital activities in a competitive and rapidly evolving digital environment.

Participant A, B, C answered in terms of determining the success of digital marketing platforms. Participant A stated: "We receive statistics on all our online platforms, an in-depth layout once in every four months and also frequently a short layout." Participant B explained that "the agency gives monthly reports and say if it is good or bad and give recommendations" and Participant C pointed out:

We have some performance indicators that we use so we want to see growth on month on month what we did for Rooibos Ltd. Typically the metrics are how many audience members are we reaching in a month or engagement rate.

Thus, Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department's team measures their success on having set performance indicators that they use to see whether the growth arrow is up or down. Participant D's mentioned that, from a marketing point of view, if people reach out to you and you present the organisation, it is seen as a positive outcome: "If something ended up[wards] in a sale, it was successful." This perspective highlights that proactive engagement with customers and generating sales are key measures of marketing success for the organisation, emphasizing the practical impact of marketing efforts on business outcomes.

Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department discussed their thoughts on how successful their current digital marketing plan is and why they think so. Participant A asserted:

If you look at the engagement we get and you measure it to the standard outside, we do relatively good. Although it is difficult to measure the success in sales in effect of digital marketing, as we would not see them, but we can see the success in the engagement and people seeing Rooibos Ltd online and also to further polish it.

She also added that the goal is not to drive sales but to be proactive. Participant B pointed out: "One reaches different age groups and people, so at the moment I think for each one it's good

because we reach different people.” Participant C was convinced that “what we do for Rooibos Ltd is definitely heading in the right direction. Analytics and metrics help with staying on track.” Participant D added that Participant A, B and C are directly associated with the digital marketing plan and trusted their judgement on this question. The participants’ responses in the interviews indicate that Rooibos Ltd’s marketing team perceives their digital marketing plan as sufficient in terms of engagement, audience reach and visibility, even if its direct impact on sales is difficult to measure. The team emphasised maintaining brand presence, reaching diverse audiences and using analytics and metrics to guide and refine their digital strategy, reflecting a focus on building awareness and being proactive rather than immediate sales conversion.

With regards to reviewing campaigns against objectives, Rooibos Ltd’s Marketing and Communication Department stated that the digital agency is in charge of handling this aspect in the digital marketing management of the plan. Participant C indicated that they do the macro reporting, having specific, measurable, adaptable, realistic and time (SMART) set to the objectives. The interview findings indicate that Rooibos Ltd relies on their digital agency to manage the review of campaigns against objectives, with Participant C noting that macro-level reporting is conducted using SMART criteria. This indicates that the organisation prioritises structured, measurable and time-bound evaluations of their digital marketing performances, while leveraging external expertise for oversight and accountability.

The interviewee asked the participants whether they think it is important to review and adapt digital marketing plans regularly to stay relevant and if they think the department in which they work lives up to it. This question was intended to get a view on how trustworthy and reliable they see their plan and team working on it. All four participants answered in favour of the question as they see that there are regular meetings. The digital agency especially added: “Ultimately, Rooibos Ltd is an innovative and dynamic organisation which makes it better to work with them to remain on trend besides from the fact that their product speaks for itself.” Participant D also declared: “We are fairly small, so we interact the whole time.” In accordance with what Participant D said, Participant B also added: “We try to be open and workforce to engage with what we feel, see and do. It’s a personal environment because It’s a small organisation, so what we believe in the whole work force must believe as well.” Participant A added: “Yes, we – in general – we have a yearly meeting to discussed for projects” and Participant B also indicated: “Yes, we try to do it. Over the past three years there was a big change.” From an external point of view, Participant C said:

Yes, I think it is essential. Things tend to change and if you don't keep up, you tend to fall behind. Ultimately, Rooibos Ltd is an innovative and dynamic organisation which makes it better to work with them to remain on trend besides from the fact that their product speaks for itself. When there is something interesting happening online, we help them keeping their ethos and brand aligning it to something more modern in the digital marketplace.

The interview findings indicate that Rooibos Ltd demonstrates a strong commitment to regularly reviewing and adapting its digital marketing plan, which is seen as essential by both internal staff and the external digital agency. This practice reflects the organisation's innovative and dynamic culture, its small and collaborative workforce and its proactive approach to staying current and relevant in the digital marketplace. Consequently, the team's adaptability, which is open communication and continuous engagement, contribute to the perceived trustworthiness and reliability of their digital marketing efforts.

Control and monitoring over the digital marketing plan is important to see opportunities and shortcomings and where to adapt in the future. Section 2.4.2 elaborated on the monitoring of the KPI and ROI, showing how tracking these metrics helps organisations measure performance, make informed decisions, and improve the effectiveness of their marketing strategies. Rooibos Ltd's approach to this aspect is simple, as both internal and external parties communicate on a frequent basis regarding new information or staying up to date with each other. During the interviews, only Participant C touched on this aspect because this participant C manages these controls and monitors the published content before reporting back to Rooibos Ltd. Participant C stated:

We have some performance indicators that we use so we want to see growth on month on month what we did for Rooibos Ltd. Typically the metrics are how many audience members are we reaching in a month or engagement rate. Month-to-month growth shows we are going in the right direction. Sometimes we might have hard goal to chase for instance a tradeshow they are attending. Thus, asking us to do a QR code for customers to leave their information digitally on some database. This is a hard-core outcome to achieve. But if we are talking about just the marketing, I would say to ensuring that all the metrics in our reposting go up on a month-to-month basis.

The interviews indicate that that Rooibos Ltd makes data-driven decisions and uses performance metrics to ensure that their digital marketing activities are progressing sufficiently,

enabling the organisation to adapt quickly, pursue strategic opportunities and refine future digital initiatives with confidence.

By applying this planning framework sufficiently, the next subsection analyses how Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing activities can deliver meaningful value to the organisation.

5.3.2.3 Digital marketing value

As mentioned in section 2.5, the value of digital marketing management is significant when one keeps strategy and planning in mind while the execution of interaction and engagements occurs. The five main values from which Rooibos Ltd and customers can mutually benefit are: sell (selling products); serve; speak (targeting the ideal audience, which can lead to building and maintaining relationships); save (saving costs); and sizzle, (grabbing attention through offerings and propositions that can contribute to differentiating the brand).

Participant A explained that "building the whole corporate culture around this look means that the moment they see this look... you know... ok... rooibos is a reputable brand and building those connotations in what they see and hear." The interview with Participant A, indicated that Rooibos Ltd directs its marketing activities towards customers so that they can immediately recognise the brand and associate it with quality and trustworthiness. It sizzles the brand via digital marketing elements. This aligns with Participant B's opinions on the value of being recognised: "When it comes to sustainability, which must always be part of how Rooibos Ltd promotes itself." In terms of ROI, Participant C declared: "Their biggest ROI will be in general brand awareness and maintaining that they are the biggest Rooibos tea organisation globally." Participant D added that the value of doing marketing sufficiently by means of strategy and planning can have an effect on how customers world-wide see Rooibos Ltd. This participant pointed out that, for example, "it helps, when some of our competitors attend a tradeshow, they use that same theme". In essence, the interviews indicated that the value gained from sufficient digital marketing strategy and planning enables Rooibos Ltd to differentiate itself in the marketplace by strengthening brand awareness and reinforcing what sets the organisation apart for customers through the sizzle value.

More values that Rooibos Ltd wants customers to experience during the overall digital experience on their digital platforms was emphasised by Participant A: "There's more than one: To be the best: quality, certification, client service, trust building, sustainability, community projects." Participant B argued: "Accountable, sustainability and reliable, that's what we want to communicate and stakeholders to know." Participant C added: "One should position them

as an organisation who is caring or investing in the community to soften the idea of them being dominant in the market,” and Participant D singled out three important aspects to consider when doing marketing: “In my opinion is that we should be trustworthy... we must be reliable... we supply top quality product on a sustainable basis.” Four more values that could possibly be derived from the interview findings are discussed in more detail below.

Firstly, the sell value could be a value of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd. This value is evident in Participant A’s statements about honesty in quality, certification and building trust; Participant D’s argument about supplying quality on a sustainable basis; and the focus on the reliable characteristic, as stated by Participants B and D. Thus, it seems as if the emphasis Rooibos Ltd places on quality, trust, reliability and sustainability directly supports the selling value described in the literature, as these attributes strengthen customer confidence and enhance the sufficiency of digital marketing efforts, ultimately enabling the organisation to reach wider audiences, influence purchasing decisions and generate a stronger return on investment through online channels.

The interviews indicated that serve value could be identified as customer service (Participant A). Participant B referred to the accountability from Rooibos Ltd, while Participant D added the caring aspect to serve customers. Participant B and D stated that they believe in the reliability factor to serve customers. Thus, these responses indicate that Rooibos Ltd’s focus on customer service, accountability, care and reliability aligns closely with the literature’s assertion that the serve value in digital marketing enables organisations to enhance customer experience by way of online dialogue and feedback, allowing them to compete sufficiently – even against larger corporations – by leveraging service-driven digital interactions to their advantage.

Considering the participants’ statements related to what the organisation wants to communicate and how it positions itself, it is evident that the speak value can be a value of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd. Participant A spoke about building trust and community projects, while participant B said that sustainability is what Rooibos Ltd wants to communicate and Participant C stated that Rooibos Ltd positions itself to be caring or investing in the community. Thus, it seems as if Rooibos Ltd leverages the speak value in digital marketing by actively communicating its values – such as trust, sustainability, community engagement and care – which aligns with the literature’s emphasis on two-way dialogue. By clearly positioning itself and targeting the ideal audience, Rooibos Ltd can engage stakeholders more sufficiently, understand their needs and adjust messaging to build stronger relationships and brand loyalty.

The save cost value cannot be recognised as being a value of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd by, none of the participants referred to it during the interviews.

Shifting focus to the corporate brand dimension, one can argue that the sufficient management of the digital marketing environment is crucial for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd, particularly when conveying clear and consistent messages to customers (henceforth just referred to as customers). The following section presents an analysis of corporate brand management and explores its key components in the context of Rooibos Ltd.

5.4 ROOIBOS LTD'S CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Section 5.3 described the analysis of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing elements, management and the values thereof for the organisation. This section includes an overview and analysis of Rooibos Ltd' approach to corporate brand management. To give an overall experience to customers, Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department, along with their external digital agency, explained their approach in managing certain digital marketing elements within the organisation, as well as formulating content and information to satisfy external stakeholder needs. Section 3.2 outlined the principles of corporate brand management. A corporate brand is conceptualised as the customers' overall perception of an organisation. The interaction of corporate strategy, business operations and the organisation's brand elements shape these perceptions.

5.4.1 Corporate brand elements

An overview of the corporate brand elements is outlined in section 3.3. In this case the constructs analysed from the semi-structured interviews are: corporate brand strategy as strategic orientation; vision, mission and corporate brand promise; corporate visual identity; corporate culture; corporate image; stakeholders; and corporate communication.

The corporate brand strategy for Rooibos Ltd, which includes its vision, mission, and brand promise (see § 3.3.1.1), is described internally as positioning the organisation as a global leader in the rooibos tea industry. The external digital agency concurred by arguing that their vision, mission and brand promise to be much more than just tea. To support this finding, Participant C stated: "What we [are] trying to do is communicate to their actual clients, the wide array of products they have available." The corporate brand promise seems to be part of Rooibos Ltd's strategic intention to communicate with customers. They focus on portraying the

quality in their products and work. Participant A also alluded to this by saying: “We do not give price promises but rather quality product and good service on a sustainable basis.” Participant B added “visibility... sustainability” as additional values that they emphasise in their portrayal to customers. This perception is supported by Participant D, who stated that a brand strategy means “to supply a quality product on a sustainable basis,” highlighting the organisation’s commitment to consistent quality and long-term value creation. Regarding the execution of communication, Participant C argued that they aid in: “Visually, when it comes to their promise; quality and consistency... from a communication perspective in terms of content, to break it down in process [to ensure] people can understand.”

The second corporate brand element is the corporate visual identity (see § 3.3.1.2). Rooibos Ltd’s Marketing and Communication Department argued that they want customers to see their corporate visual identity in their quality products and services. Moreover, to the personal side of the corporate brand identity, Rooibos Ltd also wants customers to view them as caring. Participant A maintained: “We see it as care for all stakeholders.” Participant B addressed the importance of collaboration by explaining that it should be seen “as a culture and personality,” while Participant C described it as: “trustworthiness [based on] showcasing experience obtained over the years.” Thus, Rooibos Ltd enforces their corporate visual identity by way of marketing activities and also by employing internal activities and relationships within the organisation.

The third corporate brand element is the corporate culture (see § 3.3.1.3). This aspect links to with the previous paragraph as all are interconnected to function optimally. Rooibos Ltd’s Marketing and Communication Department reiterated the fact that they are a small organisation and are close to one another in terms of working efficiently together, Participant A explained: “Our entire admin team is lean, and our business structure is lean and efficient,” Participant B pointed out that there are “only three people and the marketing agency”. Their corporate culture is very important to them and, therefore, Participant A highlighted that one should “care for all stakeholders. If it’s not mutually beneficial, then it would not be sustainable”. Participant B added that, from a communication perspective, “the culture would... be as personal as possible. People must feel that this comes from an area of involvement with product and believe what they do and how they do it.” An interesting viewpoint was derived from the external digital agency who praised Rooibos Ltd through saying: “In my mind you see Rooibos Ltd as the wise old grandfather in the room, showcasing experience obtained over the years and how big they've become.” This indicates that Rooibos Ltd is a very old organisation that values their corporate culture, believes and overall workforce.

The fourth element to be discussed is corporate image (see § 3.3.1.4). For Rooibos Ltd this element plays a significant role in building strong long-term customer relationships through marketing activities, regardless of the small number of employees managing this element. The corporate image Rooibos Ltd wants to portray is stated by Participants A as involving “reliable and also community projects”. Participant B also stated that a corporate image involves “transparency... to grow together with clients through communication and product development. Also, addressability, CSR and crisis management”. From an external perspective, Participant C stated that “trustworthiness [and] likability” are key components of a corporate image, emphasizing how these qualities shape stakeholder perceptions and influence brand reputation. It seems that Rooibos Ltd aims to be seen by stakeholders as reliable, transparent, trustworthy, and likable, while also showing care through CSR and being informative through crisis management.

The next element the researcher considered was the stakeholders (see § 3.3.1.5). As mentioned in the discussion above, internal stakeholders refer to the organisation’s small workforce and their external stakeholders – for the purpose of this study, their customers. Different interpretations exist regarding the identification of an organisation’s stakeholders, which is relevant to understanding the stakeholder landscape of Rooibos Ltd. Participant A alluded to this when identifying “buyers in South Africa,” in other words South African customers, as stakeholders. Participant B also included “farmers, clients, service providers in the industry, shareholders – national and international –” in the list of stakeholders. In the identification of stakeholder groups, Participant C argued that they find the stakeholder group to be: “More mature... 30–60... We reach a wide range of customers. There is not a big variety of differentiation at the moment. USA, SA, Botswana, Europe spread out. LinkedIn: Managers, exco level and up, food and beverage industry.” Thus, Rooibos Ltd has a big range of stakeholders with whom they communicate.

Lastly, the importance of corporate communication (see § 3.3.1.6) for Rooibos Ltd is described as the strategic process by which an organisation uses symbols, behaviours and messaging to shape its corporate identity, engage stakeholders and cultivate a positive image and reputation, encompassing management, marketing and organisational communication. As evidence of this type of communication, Participant A stated: “Comments on social media, newsletter feedback, website contact forms and also to manage by answering as fast as possible.” The interviews indicate that Rooibos Ltd leverages interactive digital marketing elements, such as social media, newsletters and website contact forms, to engage directly with stakeholders, gather feedback and enhance responsiveness, thereby demonstrating how

digital channels can be used to strengthen customer relationships and improve overall brand experience. Participant B added more on why Rooibos Ltd see the utilisation of their email marketing in terms of corporate communication as significant by saying: “It’s important, that’s why we started doing newsletter, because you can tell people more than other platforms.” Participant C asserted:

I think it is important. If we do get feedback from social media or digital channels, we usually push that back to Rooibos Ltd to take that further because usually the feedback is about orders or products that we might not be able to answer. And also, all Rooibos website enquiries go to Rooibos Ltd directly. They handle those immediately.

Therefore, the sufficient use of corporate communication can play a critical role in conveying corporate brand elements, including the organisation’s vision, mission, brand promise, corporate culture, visual identity and corporate image to stakeholders. In the context of Rooibos Ltd, as highlighted in the preceding discussion, the organisation aims to communicate quality in their products and services, enhance visibility and sustainability, ensure consistency in visual elements and present information in a clear and accessible manner to their customers.

Having analysed the corporate brand elements, the next subsection analyses the management of these elements as part of digital marketing management.

5.4.2 Corporate brand management

Section 5.4.1 analysed Rooibos Ltd’s Marketing and Communication Department’s approach and views on their corporate brand elements. This sub-section analyses how the above-mentioned elements are managed internally (employees) and externally (customers). The success drivers used to guide corporate brand management were outlined in section 3.4. Corporate brand management was analysed and identified in five aspects during the semi-structured interviews with Rooibos Ltd’s Marketing and Communication department:

- The role of senior management;
- The management of employees;
- The long-term relationships with stakeholders (customers for the purpose of this study);
- Consistent corporate communication management; and
- The alignment of strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image.

The first success driver, namely the role of senior management (see § 3.4.1) is analysed with the focus on Rooibos Ltd's approach to corporate brand management. Corporate brand management relies on senior management's involvement in guiding, communicating and supporting the organisation's brand values to maintain consistency and stakeholder engagement. Participant A alluded to this statement by referring to the trust in senior management's judgement and decision-making, saying:

Yes, I do, we have a very flat management structure. It is not in every international organisation which you could walk in the MD's office and say: I think this and this. This is the case here. That means discission making happens quick because you get direct feedback. The people who do the work can give input with direct feedback. Because of that, discissions are informed and you know why things are happening... very important for [an] employee [to] buy in.

Participant B also stated: "Yes I do trust the role management play for where they are now." From an external point of view, Participant C concurred with their trust in Rooibos Ltd's role of senior management and added what can be observed in the digital sphere:

Yes. As their marketing agency it's bit of a balancing act. We would typically take a brief in the form of them facing a challenge. Then we would come up with a suggestion to that. But we definitely play an advisory role when it comes to their brand positioning form a marketing perspective. Especially in the digital realm.

From a senior management point of view, Participant D answered in agreement with the rest of the participants, saying: "Definitely." This indicates that Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand management is heavily influenced by the active involvement and trusted decision-making of senior management. The flat management structure and open communication channels facilitate quick, informed decisions and encourages employee buy-in, while external partners also recognise and rely on senior management's guidance in strategic brand positioning. This demonstrates that senior leadership not only drives internal alignment and consistency in brand values but also enhances stakeholder confidence and engagement, highlighting the critical role of management in sustaining a cohesive and credible corporate brand.

The management of employees (see § 3.4.2) of organisations such as Rooibos Ltd is described to play a significant role in the workplace to align employee values with corporate brand values. It enables employees to act as sufficient brand ambassadors, enhancing stakeholder perceptions, delivering the organisational promise and creating a distinctive

competitive advantage. Participant A's statement that senior level makes decisions supports this perception. However, this participant also pointed out that "with input and throughout the process, it is implemented with input from all levels." Participant B added more to the success driver aimed at management of employees as a team: "Senior management and employees should work together to create a corporate culture. The overall feeling is good, and everyone listen to problems. It is departmental as everyone works together as a team." From management perspective, Participant D asserted: "Senior management always have to lead but when you look at corporate brand, you need to decide what you want to be and what you want to be known for." From the digital agency's perspective, Participant C – in their advisory role – acknowledged the previous participants' opinions: "Their brand is prevalent and fixed in the market that there is not really a lot of scope to suggest changes to the brand in terms of the actual logo or corporate identity." Considering these perspectives, it appears as if employee management at Rooibos Ltd is sufficient to maintain an internal flow of information regarding decisions and suggestions, enabling employees to communicate accurate and appropriate information to customers, as guided by management.

From this organisational level towards communicating with stakeholders, the next guiding aspect in corporate brand management, namely long-term relationships with stakeholders (see § 3.4.3, can be analysed. As mentioned in the previous subsection, Rooibos Ltd aims to communicate certain values to customers to satisfy their needs. Participant A alluded to this by saying: "Even though our clients are not customers, we still market to them. The reason we do this is we [are] driving demand." This can also be seen as satisfying customer needs when perceiving the corporate brand and to manage it sufficiently. Rooibos Ltd's response to building long-term relationships with customers is as follows: Participant A described how long-term relationships can be fostered by "regular communication and transparency in communication... and also, to be relevant, concrete". Participant B also stated: "I think to maintain that it's a personal contact that you have." In the execution of marketing efforts, Participant C argued that they aid in doing and understanding that "the trick is to create content that is impactful and meaningful and that has value. The idea is to keep on growing and moving into a more positive direction. We try to diversify content such as email newsletters". Participant D emphasised the need to build long-term relationships with customers by stating: "To establish long lasting, mutually beneficial relationships between us and customers. We are bulk suppliers and our success is very much depended on our customers." Thus, the findings from the interviews indicate that that Rooibos Ltd places significant emphasis on building and maintaining long-term relationships with stakeholders – particularly customers – by prioritising regular, transparent and personalised communication. Employees and management view sufficient

corporate brand management as not only conveying the organisation's values but also as satisfying customer needs and driving demand. Strategies such as creating meaningful, impactful and diversified content, including email newsletters, are employed to maintain relevance, foster engagement and develop mutually beneficial relationships, thereby highlighting the organisation's recognition that its long-term success is closely linked to stakeholder satisfaction and loyalty.

By doing so, the next guiding aspect to corporate brand management is communication management (see § 3.4.4), which is a strategic tool by which organisations convey consistency and transparency in their brand promise, foster stakeholder trust and facilitate two-way communication and feedback to strengthen relationships and reinforce the corporate brand holistically. Participant A alluded to this: "Comments on social media, newsletter feedback, website contact forms and also to manage by answering as fast as possible... Regular communication and transparency in communication. And also, to be relevant, concrete." Participant B stated: "We develop all marketing material. Our marketing agency does everything, and I oversee liaison ideas." Participant C argued that they

also take care of their social media, which include content creation part, community management, paper click advertising on Google ads and social media ads platforms. We also do a lot of their creative production; a good example is: this year we completed a video shoot for them that was intended for them to play at house of Rooibos to educate visitors of Rooibos and Rooibos Ltd as an organisation and the work they do. We physically go to Clanwilliam to create the content. We send out regular emails for their email subscribers. We do graphic design for them for instance advertisements in magazines or billboards up somewhere. We assist them with media listening. To understand what is said about Rooibos Ltd as a whole in the media globally, what sentiment is to rooibos. We do media listening for Rooibos Ltd as a brand too, to get that market sentiment and provide it to them.

Participant D referred to Participant C handling these matters by saying: "I don't use that a lot. That would typically lie with Participant A and Participant B."

Based on the interviews' findings, it seems as if Rooibos Ltd actively manages communication across multiple digital touchpoints to ensure consistency, transparency and timely engagement with stakeholders. The coordinated efforts between internal staff and the external digital agency, ranging from social media management and content creation to media monitoring and

rapid response mechanisms, demonstrate a deliberate approach to reinforcing the corporate brand and maintaining strong stakeholder relationships. This is significant as such intentional and coordinated communication practices enhance the organisation's brand credibility and trust and contribute to Rooibos Ltd's broader strategic positioning within the industry.

Through effective communication management by Rooibos Ltd and their digital agency, it is crucial for them to follow the fifth guiding principle of corporate brand management, which involves aligning the organisation's vision, mission, and corporate image. (see § 3.4.5). Participant A alluded to this by saying: "Our vision and mission is to be a world-wide winner. We strive for excellence by communicating our vision and mission." Participant B also stated that:

Our vision is to establish Rooibos Ltd as a world-wide winner and the mission is to satisfy customer expectations to facilitate return on shareholder investments to honour commitments to farmers, buyer and service providers. And the working environment for workers of Rooibos Ltd should be good.

Regarding the execution of strategically communicating the aligned vision, corporate culture and corporate image, Participant C argued:

What we [are] trying to do is communicate to their actual clients, the wide array of products they have available. Also, the idea of not just rooibos tea, but extract, rooibos mark line (premium rooibos) and also communicate that Rooibos Ltd owns other companies that sell other herbal plants: Honeybush.

From Rooibos Ltd's management point of view, Participant D made a clear statement: "Our mission is to act in a way that is beneficial to all stakeholders; shareholders, farmers, customers, customer. Our vision is to make Rooibos Ltd the world-wide-winner." The findings from the responses of the participants indicate that Rooibos Ltd places significant emphasis on aligning its vision, mission and corporate image with both internal stakeholders and that the digital agency actively communicates these strategic intentions across various platforms. This alignment is reflected in the organisation's consistent articulation of its ambition to be a world-wide winner, its commitment to stakeholder value and its efforts to showcase the breadth of its product offerings, thereby reinforcing a coherent and strategically grounded corporate brand.

Thus, from a digital marketing perspective there is significant value in managing all these success indicators for digital marketing management. The next subsection (see § 5.4.3)

focuses on the strategic value that a corporate brand management can possibly have for an organisation such as Rooibos Ltd.

5.4.3 Strategic value of corporate brand management for Rooibos Ltd

Section 3.5 outlined the values that an organisation can derive from managing the corporate brand elements. Looking into this subsection's analysis of the concept and constructs, Rooibos Ltd indicated what possible values they had received and provided thus far.

The differentiation value (see § 3.5.1.) represents a core objective for organisations, as it reflects their ability to distinguish themselves in the marketplace through strategic corporate brand management. Participant A alluded to this, saying: "Our USPs are to identify ourselves as the oldest and biggest in the industry, we have massive stock for sustainability, multiple social certifications and expertise." Participant B added to the importance by focussing more on the digital marketing side of things:

We keep up to date with new trends; service is very important to export side, lines and pricing. In terms of the digital environment: the posts we use, should be correct information and language used also. We use good imagery and new images. Video material as well which is ongoing.

Participant C stated a more corporate culture differentiation: "Most of the employees have been with them for years... 50 years plus. It says a lot of how the organisation dynamic is, how they treat the team, which is valuable in the market as well." Throughout the interview, Participant D stressed the fact that Rooibos Ltd has the quality product, service and competitive price as the value of differentiation.

Section 3.5.2 outlined the second strategic value of corporate brand management. The symbolism value is seen in participants' answers as they want to digitally portray quality, reliability, and sustainability in a consistent manner, showing that maintaining these values online helps strengthen the brand's reputation and build stakeholder trust. Participant A alluded to this by saying: "As previously discussed: quality and so forth." Participant B also stated: "That we are a reliable organisation." Participant C concurred with Participants A and B by saying: "To remain consistent and on be on brand for sure. Also to bend the rules slightly to be creative, for instance when there is a trend, to be creative and innovative. But also, to have that balance." Participant D added: "Quality, competitive price, service." Based on the findings from the interviews, it seems as if Rooibos Ltd expresses the symbolism value of corporate

brand management by means of a consistent digital representation of quality, reliability and sustainability. Participants further emphasised the importance of balancing brand consistency with creativity and innovation, suggesting that symbolic cues play a central role in reinforcing the organisation's desired brand associations.

The third strategic value is the memorising value (see § 3.5.3). Rooibos Ltd's approach to achieving this value was illustrated by Participant A who indicated that creating a memorable experience for digital viewers involves making "it more personal, behind the scenes information." Participant B focused specifically on the communication management: "The personal level of communication" and Participant C stated: "To remain consistent and to be on brand for sure. Also to bend the rules slightly to be creative for instance when there is a trend, to be creative and innovative. But also, to have that balance." Participant D added: "Logo, improve offering, to ensure the organisation is established in the industry."

To ensure the value of corporate brand development (see § 3.5.4), the management of the corporate brand should be taken into consideration. Rooibos Ltd's approach to managing the corporate brand in terms of developing the brand is as follows. Participant A pointed to the necessity to "evaluate logos and also to improve it". Participant B offered a communication management perspective: "Utilise corporate brand logo and language to communicate the culture of the organisation" and Participant C added a digital agency perspective: "We would push Rooibos Ltd to try new things, to be their eyes and ears in the creative space. And to come and see if it is something that they are open to." Participant D explained in terms of the corporate brand development of the elements: "What we've done, convert the logo in a quality logo. Whatever we do, whether it is online or digital campaigns or attending tradeshow, it always plays an integral part in it." Thus, all participants see the importance of development and maintained relevance as times changes with regards to marketing communication management.

The last strategic value is corporate reputation (see § 3.5.5). This value is analysed by viewing Rooibos Ltd's approach to corporate brand management. Participant A alluded to his saying:

I believe we have a good reputation. As it is a small industry, things can get interesting. We are established 1954, therefore we are the oldest and biggest in the industry. It gives us benefits such as sustainability in terms of big reserves.

Participant B also stated: “Being here so long, I believe we have a good reputation. I have a positive view of the organisation and how it is perceived by clients from Rooibos Ltd.” From an external point of view, Participant C concurred:

In the market they have a positive reputation, and in the market, they are seen as a trusted supplier... Thus, it is more of the image that the customers have of the organisation that matters. We focus on communicating to the clients and customers.

Rooibos Ltd's approach to maintaining a favourable reputation with customers was discussed in the interviews to determine how they want the customers to see them as a brand or what image they want to create. Participant A described this brand image as involving “quality and sustainability and service”. Participant B also stated: “To be as honest as possible with clients. To communicate problems or situations. Again, your reputation of an organisation should be clean and see trustworthiness in the organisation.” Regarding the execution of communication and corporate visual content design, Participant C argued that “sometimes in the digital marketing space you have to use the approach of being as creative and dedicated to client-based needs. Not to use duplication of strategies”. Participant D also maintained throughout his interview that quality product and service, trustworthiness and sustainability are qualities with which Rooibos Ltd aim to form the corporate reputation. Based on the interviews' findings, it seems as if Rooibos Ltd's corporate reputation is perceived as strong and long-established, with participants consistently emphasising the organisation's history, trustworthiness and position as a leading and reliable supplier in the industry. Furthermore, the findings suggest that this reputation is actively sustained by means of transparent communication, a focus on quality, sustainability and service, and a commitment to creative, customer-centred digital branding practices.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter answered the following research question (see § 1.3.1.3):

What is Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management?

This was done by discussing the results obtained from the semi-structured interviews with the three participants of Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department and one participant from their digital agency.

The results of the qualitative semi-structured interviews with the four participants were deliberated upon in accordance with the digital marketing concepts: digital marketing elements, digital marketing management, value of digital marketing management. Together with the constructs linked to corporate brand management, including corporate brand elements, corporate brand management and the strategic value of corporate brand management as referred to in Chapters Two and Three, Table 4-5 and Table 4-6.

The analysis of corporate brand elements shows how Rooibos Ltd strategically constructs and communicates its corporate brand via an integrated set of interrelated components. The findings from the interviews indicate that Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand functions as a strategic orientation, including the vision and mission, together with a corporate brand promise that is indicated as a world-wide leader in the rooibos industry – one that is focussed on the quality, sustainability and consistency.

The next construct that was analysed was the corporate visual identity. The results from the interviews indicate that this construct reinforces these commitments by means of visual and relational aspects such as caring, collaboration and trustworthiness. The third construct, namely the corporate culture, was analysed by considering the responses during the interviews. Rooibos Ltd applies the corporate culture as a foundational mechanism by which these elements are portrayed with digital channels enabling feedback from customers. The results of the interviews show that Rooibos Ltd characterises their corporate culture as a lean structure and a very close-knit workforce that foster internal cohesion and shared values, which are also considered from an external viewpoint.

The responses during the interviews also indicate that the organisation's desired corporate image is characterised by reliability, transparency trust and community responsibility. This image is intentionally shaped by their marketing activities and their efforts in engaging with customers. The results of the interviews indicate that the identification of stakeholders reveals a diverse and intentional audience that requires strategies for communication that can adapt to various target audiences.

The final construct analysis of corporate communication demonstrates that Rooibos Ltd sees it as a foundational mechanism by which these elements are perceived, with their digital channels enabling feedback from customers to enhance visibility and the alignment of internal and external perceptions. Collectively, the findings from the interviews indicate that Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand is actively constructed through the adaptability of these elements, each contributing to a consistent and strategically positioned brand identity.

For these elements to have an interchangeable effect on Rooibos Ltd, corporate brand management was the next concept to be analysed. Based on the interviews' findings, it seems as if Rooibos Ltd displays this concept by managing its corporate brand by means of an interconnected set of success drivers that strengthen internal alignment, stakeholder engagement and long-term brand cohesion.

Firstly, the findings highlighted senior management as a key success driver, showing that strong leadership encourages involvement, provides access to decision-making, and offers strategic guidance that helps the organisation maintain a relevant and distinctive brand. The second success driver is the management of employees, which was shown in the interview findings as employee participation, shared decision-making and a strong internal culture that contributes to consistent brand representation and the delivering of the organisation's promise. The third success driver emphasises long-term relationships with stakeholders, which analysis was based on the responses from the interviews. It seems as if Rooibos Ltd tries to maintain relevance, foster trust and ensure mutually beneficial engagement, demonstrating an awareness that sustains customer relationships that are central to the brand longevity and success. Furthermore, communication management was the next success driver to be analysed. The results of the interviews indicate that Rooibos Ltd aims to utilise a broad range of digital communication channels, supported by the external digital agency viewpoint, to ensure consistency, transparency and responsiveness by means of two-way communication with stakeholders. This suggests that managing communication infrastructure of Rooibos Ltd could possibly strengthen brand perceptions and uphold its brand promise. Lastly, the researcher analysed the alignment of strategic vision, corporate culture and corporate image. The results of the interviews indicate that Rooibos Ltd sees this construct as essential to maintaining a unified corporate brand, with participants emphasising a shared strategic direction internally, along with communicating the organisation's values and product range consistently across platforms.

Based on the findings from the interviews, the next concept to be discussed in more detail was the strategic value of corporate brand management, which is divided into five interrelated value dimensions – each contributing to the organisation's competitive position and long-term brand strength. Firstly, the construct known as differentiation value was unpacked, which is relevant to Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand. Based on the interviews' findings, it seems as if Rooibos Ltd's approach is to present itself as the oldest and largest rooibos producer, supported by the unique selling positions such as extensive reserves, multiple certifications, longstanding employee expertise and a sustained commitment to quality, service and competitive pricing.

The differentiating attributes, combined with updated digital practices and consistent communication, could enable the organisation to stand out in local and international markets.

The second value, namely symbolism value, was captured in the interview findings as Rooibos Ltd's attempts to reinforce efforts to communicate reliability, quality and sustainability across digital platforms. As participants emphasised the need for consistency in brand presentation, while allowing room for creativity and innovation, the findings also indicate that signalling symbolic cues – such as visual identity, language use and brand tone – play a significant role in strengthening stakeholder association with the brand.

Thirdly, the memorising value seems to be another value that Rooibos Ltd sees as important to doing digital marketing management. The findings from the interviews indicate that Rooibos Ltd intends to create memorable brand experiences by way of personalised communication, behind-the-scenes content and on-brand messaging. These practices can help the brand stay memorable and create an emotional connection, keeping the organisation visible and recognisable in a competitive digital market.

Fourthly, the corporate brand development value can be inferred from the interview findings as Rooibos Ltd's goal to foster ongoing commitment to refining and evolving the brand elements. Participants indicated that their approach is to evaluate and update the visual identity, adapt to new digital communication methods and to remain attentive to emerging creative trends. Such efforts could ensure that the brand remains relevant, contemporary and aligned with market expectations.

Finally, the researcher analysed the corporate reputation value by considering the interview findings, which indicate that Rooibos Ltd approach is that they want to be perceived as trustworthy, sustainable and dependable. Rooibos Ltd can uphold these perspectives they want to portray by transparent communication, ethical behaviour and on-going emphasises on product quality, sustainability and customer-centred service.

It seems that Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department have plans and strategies in place, working closely with a digital agency to execute their ideas visually and in a way with which to draw customers to Rooibos Ltd. The main aim is to build and maintain long-term customer relationships by engaging and interacting with customers via digital marketing channels. This is being achieved by using the digital marketing and corporate brand elements in an integrated manner to address the needs and wants of customers.

Based on the interviews' findings, it seems as if there are outstanding and well-developed aspects and also aspects that could be considered as recommendations (see § 7) within Rooibos Ltd's approach to corporate brand elements, corporate brand management and also the strategic value of corporate brand management.

The outstanding and well-developed aspects within Rooibos Ltd's approach to corporate brand elements are seen firstly, as the strategic orientation (vision, mission and brand promise) which is that Rooibos Ltd's approach appears to maintain consistent, accurate and clear vision and mission centred on global leadership, quality, sustainability and consistency. The second aspect seems to be the corporate culture with which Rooibos Ltd aims to be cohesive, with strong values and close-knit workforce that the participants reported. Thirdly, based on the interviews' findings, it seems as if the outstanding and well-developed aspect is the corporate image, identified by Rooibos Ltd's approach and efforts to create an image that is realisable, trustworthy and community based, by means of intentional communication via digital marketing and stakeholder engagement.

One can reflect on considerable recommendations, as indicated in Chapter Seven, by firstly considering Rooibos Ltd's approach to their corporate visual identity. The findings from the interviews show that the tendency to utilise updated visual identity guidelines emerges, along with the evaluation of whether current visuals finally reflect global and local competitiveness. Stakeholder identification is also seen as the element on which Rooibos Ltd could consider placing more emphasis in terms of the segmentation strategies tailored to differentiate geographic and demographic groups. This will help to expand communication reach across communication channels. Lastly, the results of the interviews indicate that the corporate communication element – as one of Rooibos Ltd's approaches – is seen to have a tendency in terms of utilising strong analytics and the integration of systematically feedback processes within the strategic processes. It could also be a recommendation for Rooibos Ltd to expand communication strategies to ensure alignment across South African markets.

A few recommendations could be considered in Chapter Seven based on the responses during the interviews. The first relates to the memorising value. This could enable interactive expansion and experimental digital initiatives to elevate memorability. Secondly, Rooibos Ltd's approach to corporate brand development value could formalise a continuous improvement process for the brand identity and communication. The last recommendation that Rooibos Ltd could consider is to emphasise the corporate reputation value, which could place more focus on emphasising sustainability and ethical transparency to differentiate rising market expectations.

The next chapter will discuss customer perceptions of the digital marketing management and corporate brand management, as applied by Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department, according to the results obtained by way of a quantitative online survey.

CHAPTER 6 CUSTOMER PERCEPTION OF ROOIBOS LTD'S DIGITAL MARKETING AND CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the approach that the four participants of Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department. This current chapter deals with customer perceptions of the digital marketing and corporate brand management applied by Rooibos Ltd. As indicated in section 4.4.2.1, the sample size that was needed was 100 respondents. Unlimited online surveys were distributed, and according to BaSSREC and statistical consultation the required sample size was 100; however, due to initial challenges in reaching this target, the data-collection period was extended. Ultimately, 125 completed responses were obtained, and statistical consultation approved the use of all 125 responses for analysis, which gives a completion rate of 125%. The response rate was utilised to enlighten the following specific research question (see § 1.3.1.4) and to answer it by discussing the results of the online survey:

What are the customer perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management?

The research question was answered by portraying the demographic information of customers. The demographic information provided data regarding customers. Thereafter, the chapter continued with the discussion and portrayal of the digital marketing elements including website, search engine optimisation was divided into two sections).

The first section referred to the concepts of digital marketing, digital marketing management and the value thereof, which informs the corporate brand to create a customer experience and the constructs that were measured, namely website, search engine marketing, mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing, online advertising, digital marketing strategy, digital marketing plan, sell, serve, speak, save costs and sizzle. The second section dealt with the concept of corporate brand elements, corporate brand management and the strategic value of the corporate brand, along with the constructs that were measured, namely strategy of the corporate brand; corporate visual identity; organisational culture; corporate image; stakeholders; corporate communication; role of senior management; management of employees; long-term relationships with stakeholders; consistent corporate communication; aligned vision; corporate culture and corporate image; differentiation; symbolism; memorising value; corporate brand development; and corporate reputation (see § Two and Three).

Each of these constructs will be supplemented with the information obtained from the online survey to point out what customer perceptions are of Rooibos Ltd's approach to their digital marketing and corporate brand management. Since the opinions on the relationship between the organisation and customers were addressed in the semi-structured interviews, some aspects of relationships were also tested with customers in the online survey. The online survey attempted to assist in identifying reference points for monitoring Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management in long-term relationship building with customers. The data obtained were used to compile a profile of the customer perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.

6.2 RESULTS FROM ONLINE SURVEYS

Frequency tables were used to provide a summary of the number of participants (N) who had answered the questions and were also stated as a percentage (%). References were made to the average and standard deviations (SD) which are also related to each other. The average (or mean) is the sum of all the answers, divided by the number of participants, based on the answers of the participants, according to the Lickert-scale (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly disagree). An option of *do not know* was not provided, so as to ensure a more accurate provision of data. The standard deviation also relates to the average. In the event that the standard deviation is large, the average has a large spread. The opposite is also applicable. When the standard deviation is small, the average is closely related (David & Sutton, 2011:482).

6.2.1 Demographic information of the respondents

In this section the demographic information of the respondents was described.

Table 6-1 portrays the respondents' demographic information with regard to their age, province of origin and devices in possession by specifying the frequency (n) and percentage (%) thereof.

Table 6-1: Demographic information regarding customers' age, province and device in procession

What age group are you in?		
Age	Percentage	
20–30	31.2	
31–40	18.4	
41–50	16	
51–60	23.2	
61–70	7.2	
71 and more	4	
TOTAL	100	
In which province do you live?		
Province	Valid percent (%)	
Eastern Cape	2.4	
Free State	13.6	
Gauteng	12.0	
KwaZulu-Natal	3.2	
Limpopo	0.0	
Mpumalanga	3.2	
North West	16.8	
Northern Cape	0.0	
Western Cape	48.8	
TOTAL	100	
Items selected that were in possession, applicable and used daily by customers.		
	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
Smartphone	99.1	0.9
Laptop	93.8	6.2
Desktop	65.3	34.7
Tablet	34.8	65.2

Table 6-1 depicts the demographic information of respondents with regards to their age, province and device in possession, indicating that almost half of the participants fall within the age group of 20–40 years, with 20–30 years 31.2% and 31–40 years 18.4% respectively. The participants were also respondents from the seven of the nine provinces (Eastern Cape, 2.4%; Free State, 13.6%; Gauteng; 12%; KwaZulu-Natal, 3.2%; Mpumalanga, 3.2%; North-West, 16.8%; Western Cape; 48.8%). The respondents also reported having access to multiple digital devices, with smartphones (99.1%) being the device to which most respondents had access, followed by Laptops (93.8%). Only a small number of respondents indicated that they use a tablet on a daily basis (34.8%). In a descriptive field, respondents were requested to indicate any other devices they used to gain access to the internet. The most relevant answers from the majority were the use of a television (n=5). Overall, the data suggests that respondents have widespread access to

mobile and computer devices, indicating strong capacity for engaging with digital marketing content across platforms.

The next subsection describes the outcomes on the customer perceptions about Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing approach.

6.2.2 Digital marketing

In this section, customers' perception of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing will be described.

Table 6-2: Customer objectives describing Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing

Customer objectives that best describe Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing?		
	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
Old-fashioned	33.7	66.3
Easy to use/follow	92.6	7.4
Transparent	86.7	13.3
Distinctiveness	74	26
Gives emotional connection	63.5	36.5
Honest communication	95.3	4.7
Authentic	89	11
Gives good online experience	81.9	18.1
Consistent (create awareness)	82.3	17.7
Visible	82.3	17.7
Flexible	65.2	34.8
Quick response	74.6	25.4

Table 6-2 presents customer perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing, identifying which objectives they believe best describe the organisation's digital approach. Respondents could choose between multiple options and the table reports the percentage of respondents who selected *Yes* or *No* for each descriptor.

The data indicated that a high percentage of respondents selected *Yes* for the following objectives: Easy to use/follow (92.6%), transparent (86.7%), distinctiveness (74%), gives emotional connection (63.5%), honest communication (95.3%), authentic (89%), gives good online experience (81.9%), consistent (create awareness) (82.3%), visible (82.3%), flexible (65.2%) and quick response (74.6%), whereas a high percentage of respondents selected *No* for the following objective: old-fashioned (66.3%).

The data indicates that respondents generally hold positive perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing approach. Overall, the findings suggest that the organisation largely meets customers' expectations in terms of usability, transparency, emotional engagement and online sufficiency

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-3 below and it indicates the specific digital channels through which customers report being exposed to Rooibos Ltd's online campaigns, highlighting the platforms where the brand's digital presence is most and least visible to its audience.

Table 6-3: Digital channels customers are exposed to receiving communication

Customers' exposure to Rooibos Ltd's online campaigns in the following channels:		
	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
Facebook	62.8	37.2
Google	52.9	47.1
Email	9.2	90.8
SMS	26.9	73.1
YouTube	4.8	95.2
Twitter	6.3	93.8
Blogs and podcasts	52.5	47.5
Website	15.2	84.8
LinkedIn	62.4	37.6
Instagram	36.7	63.3
Online advertising	32.6	67.4

Table 6-3 presents a summary of the digital marketing channels on which Rooibos Ltd's customers receive or view online campaigns. A high percentage of respondents selected *Yes* for the following exposed channels: Facebook account (62.8%) and LinkedIn (62.4%), whereas a high percentage of respondents selected *No* for the following exposed channels: email (90.8%), SMS (73.1%), YouTube (95.2%), Twitter (93.8), website (84.8%), Instagram (63.3%) and online advertising (67.4%). Reflecting on Google (52.9%) and blogs and podcasts (52.5%) it seems that these channels had close votes, indicating almost the same outcome.

A few participants commented in the descriptive field that they are exposed to information from Rooibos Ltd through television advertisements (n=3) and WhatsApp (n=3). One participant added: "I haven't seen a single piece of digital marketing material from Rooibos Ltd."

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-4 below and it indicates the specific features that attract customers to Rooibos Ltd's social media platforms (in this case specifically to Facebook and Instagram).

Table 6-4: Social media platform features that attract customers

Features indicated to attract customers to use Rooibos Ltd's social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram)		
	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
Information regarding product/service	86.6	13.4
Information easy to understand	85.1	14.9
Easy to interact on platforms	71.6	28.4
Consistent visibility in posts and uniqueness	69.5	30.5
Diverse layouts	59.2	40.8
Layout easy to follow	86	14
Clear brand elements (such as logo and images)	87.4	12.6
Quick response from Rooibos Ltd	69.3	30.7
Trustworthy messages	81.5	18.5
Stay on top of trends	63.8	36.3

Table 6-4 reports data about all features that attract customers to Rooibos Ltd's social media platforms, indicating that a high percentage of respondents selected Yes for the following: information regarding product/services (86.6%); information easy to understand (85.1%); easy to interact on platforms (71.6%); consistent visibility in posts and uniqueness (69.5%); diverse layouts (59.2%); layout easy to follow (86%); clear brand elements (such as logo and images) (87.4%); quick response from Rooibos Ltd (69.3%); trustworthy messages (81.5%); and stay on top of trends (63.8%). From Table 6-4 above, it is noticeable that diverse layouts feature a closer outcome than the rest. In a descriptive field, respondents were requested to indicate any other platform features that attract them to Rooibos Ltd's social media platforms such as: "Overall just information regarding the rooibos industry." Another respondent added: "Regarding Q5, a diverse layout can be difficult to follow."

The data indicate that respondents generally hold positive perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's features that attract them on social media platforms. Overall, the findings suggest that the organisation is largely meeting customer attraction in terms of receiving information, social media platform navigation and layouts, brand elements, quick responses and entertaining trends, whereas the diverse layouts is perceived otherwise in the minority.

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-5 below, indicating features that lure customers to follow social media platforms.

Table 6-5: Features that attracted customers to follow social media platforms

Features that attract customers to opt in and follow Rooibos Ltd's platforms							
Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
4.1 Interesting/ information (not just promotion messages)	25	3	20	42	18	3.2	1.4
4.2 It is easy to purchase products online	21	16	24	5	13	2.9	1.3
4.3 Language is easy to understand	21	1	10	44	27	3.5	1.4
4.4 Layout is easy to follow	21	4	16	36	27	3.4	1.4
4.5 Easy to interact and get feedback	13	2	33	29	13	3.3	1.1
4.6 Provides links to other informative platforms (such as the website)	12	5	27	31	15	3.4	1.2
4.7 Clear brand elements which I can resonate with	13	4	20	40	17	3.5	1.2

Table 6-5 reports the features that attracted customers to follow Rooibos Ltd's social media platforms. Considering the questions regarding the features that attract the respondents, the lowest mean was reported for 4.2 stating "It is easy to purchase products online" (mean = 2.9, SD = 1.3), indicating that respondents on average felt neutral regarding the statement. The highest mean was reported for 4.3 stating "Language is easy to understand" (mean = 3.5; SD = 1.4), indicating that respondents' average response was between *Neutral* and *Agree*. Overall, the data indicate that respondents tended not to express strong opinions, with all average responses clustering around *Neutral*.

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-6 on the next page and indicates customer satisfaction with interactive engagement with Rooibos Ltd on various platforms.

Table 6-6: Customers' satisfaction with Rooibos Ltd's interactive engagement on digital platforms

Customer satisfaction with interactive engagement with Rooibos Ltd in the following platforms							
Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
5.1 Facebook	12	5	39	38	10	3.28	1.0
5.2 Instagram	13	11	29	38	12	3.24	1.18
5.3 Email	6	11	42	25	7	3.18	0.97
5.4 Website	9	9	31	35	13	3.35	1.12
5.5 Internet	7	10	37	26	8	3.20	1.03

Customer satisfaction with interactive engagement with Rooibos Ltd in the following platforms							
5.6 SMS	7	15	45	9	5	2.88	0.94
5.7 Blogs and podcasts	5	12	48	9	4	2.94	0.85
5.8 Online advertisement	6	10	37	22	8	3.19	1.01

Section 4.4.2 outlines the data analysis to interpret data in an understandable way. This study used a five-point Likert-scale to measure respondents' level of agreement with each survey item, where 1 represented *Strongly disagree* and 5 represented *Strongly agree*. To ensure consistent and transparent descriptive statistics, the mean values were evaluated according to established Likert-scale interpretation ranges that are commonly applied in quantitative survey research. The Standard Deviation (SD) was examined alongside mean scores to reflect the spread and variability of responses.

Table 6-6 reports the customers' satisfaction with their perspectives on Rooibos Ltd's interactive engagement on their digital platforms. Considering the results (5.1–5.8), the reported means ranged between 2.88 (SD = 0.94)–3.35 (SD = 1.12), indicating respondents' average responses were *Neutral* for all of the platforms.

The low score for SMS (mean = 2.88; SD = 0.94) suggests that it is the least sufficient communication channel. Overall, the neutral responses indicate that Rooibos Ltd is not creating particularly engaging or memorable digital experiences. This means that there is room for improvement in how the organisation communicates and interacts with customers online.

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-7 on the next page. It indicates the preferred information consumption of Rooibos Ltd's customers, highlighting the content that they preferred.

Table 6-7: Customers' preference regarding information consumption from Rooibos Ltd

Customers' preference exposure to information about Rooibos Ltd regarding content matters:		
Content	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
6.1 Corporate social responsibility	52.8	47.2
6.2 Responding to customer needs and wants	78.5	21.5
6.3 Offers in new product/services	93.0	7.0
6.4 Product/service prices	86.7	13.3
6.5 Promotions	88.6	11.4
6.6 Values/benefits for customers	84.4	15.6
6.7 I do not want any information	24.0	76.0

Table 6-7 shows that the majority of the customers indicated that they want to be exposed to information such as *responding to customer needs and wants* (78.5%); *offers in new*

product/services (93%); *product/service prices* (86.7%) *promotions* (88.6%); and *values/benefits for customers* (84.4%). Almost half of the respondents indicated: *corporate social responsibility* (52.8%) and most of the respondents indicated No to: *I do not want any information* (76%). indicating that they prefer not to receive any information from Rooibos Ltd. These high percentages indicate a strong desire for relevant, value-driven communication. In contrast, far fewer respondents expressed interest in corporate social responsibility updates or that they do not want any information at all, suggesting these areas are less meaningful to them.

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-8 below, indicating information Rooibos Ltd's customers prefer seeing on social media platforms.

Table 6-8: Customers' information preference on what they want to see more on social media

Customers' preference to see certain information on Rooibos Ltd's social media		
	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
7.1 Consistent posting	68	32
7.2 Links to other sites/pages (such as website)	58.8	41.2
7.3 More offers	83	17
7.4 More videos	69.6	30.4
7.5 More feedback on requests from customers	55.1	44.9
7.6 Immediate and interesting news	88.4	11.6
7.7 More images	66.3	33.7
7.8 Online shop connected to Facebook/Instagram	83.5	16.5
7.9 Giveaways and competitions	82.5	17.5

Table 6-8 presents a summary of the customers' preference on what information they want to see more on social media, starting with the respondents' majority responses. A high percentage of respondents selected Yes for the following: consistent posting (68%); links to other sites/pages (such as website) (58.8%); more offers (83%); more videos (69.6%); immediate and interesting news (88.4%); more images (66.3%); online shop connected to Facebook/Instagram (83.5%); and giveaways and competitions (82.5%), whereas an almost equal distribution is reported for more feedback on requests from customers (Yes = 55.1%; No = 44.9%).

This indicates that customers seemingly want Rooibos Ltd to create a more active, engaging and visually appealing social media presence. Customer preference in getting feedback on requests from customers shows an almost even split in responses, meaning customers are less unified on this point as compared to the other categories, which all received strong majority responses.

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-9 below, indicating customers' preference regarding the frequency of receiving emails.

Table 6-9: Customers' feedback on how often they prefer to receive emails

Customers' preference on how often to receive emails from Rooibos Ltd	
	Percentage selected option
8.1 Daily	0.8
8.2 Once a week	14.5
8.3 Once every 2 weeks	11.3
8.4 Once every month	48.4
8.5 Not at all	25

Table 6-9 presents a summary of how often respondents prefer to receive emails. The table above reports that *Once every month* has the highest frequency (48.4%) and *Daily* has the lowest frequency (0.8%). Thus, from the table, one can infer that customers prefer fewer emails sent often from Rooibos Ltd or *Not at all* (25%).

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-10 below. It indicates the customers' information preference regarding emails, highlighting the content they prefer.

Table 6-10: Customers' information preference regarding emails

Information that customers would like to receive via email		
	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
9.1 New products	85.8	14.2
9.2 Latest news concerning customers	40.2	59.8
9.3 Corporate social responsibility	36.8	63.2
9.4 Payment options	39.2	60.8
9.5 Crisis management if necessary	31.6	68.4
9.6 Promotional emails	65.7	34.3
9.7 Loyalty program offers	64.9	35.1
9.8 Links to other sites	29.9	70.1
9.9 Other	10.3	89.7

Table 6-10 reports that a high percentage of respondents selected *Yes* for customers' information preference via email. They indicated a preference for *new products* (85.8%), promotional emails (65.7%) and *loyalty program offers* (64.9%). A high percentage of respondents selected *No* for: *Latest news concerning customers* (59.8%); *Corporate social responsibility* (63.2%); *Payment options* (60.8%); crisis management if necessary (68.4%); and *Links to other sites* (70.1%). A low percentage of respondents selected *Yes* for the *Other option* and indicated in an extra open-ended question, indicated that they prefer: "Cool information and facts about the products and health benefits of products and how it can be used (cooking and drinks)" and "Perhaps practical wellness posts linked to the benefits of using Rooibos."

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-11 below, indicating the preferred platforms.

Table 6-11: Customer digital channel preference for Rooibos Ltd information

Information customers prefer to see more of Rooibos Ltd through various platforms:		
	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
10.1 Website	63.6	36.4
10.2 Internet	65.1	34.9
10.3 Mobile marketing	50.0	50.0
10.4 Emails	45.7	54.3
10.5 Blogs and podcasts	49.4	50.6
10.6 Social media	88.0	12.0
10.7 Online advertising	56.0	44.0
10.8 Other	--	100

Table 6-11 presents a summary of customers' digital channel preference for Rooibos Ltd information. From the data, the following is presented. A high percentage of respondents selected Yes for the following preference in platforms to receive Rooibos Ltd information: website (63.6%); internet (65.1%); social media (88%); and online advertising (56%), whereas an almost equal distribution is reported for: emails (Yes = 45.7%; No = 54.3%) and blogs and podcasts (Yes = 49.4%; No = 50.6%). Considering the information regarding mobile marketing (Yes = 50%; No = 50%), results shows an equal preference in customers' channel preference for Rooibos Ltd information. Overall, respondents indicate that customers prefer receiving Rooibos Ltd information via highly visible and interactive channels especially social media but also the internet and the organisation's website, while showing more divided or limited interest in less engaging channels, such as emails, blogs and podcasts, and mobile marketing.

The analysis of the next question is shown in Table 6-12 below, which highlights customers' views on if Rooibos Ltd could improve their digital marketing.

Table 6-12: Customers' opinion about space for Rooibos Ltd' digital marketing to improve

Customer perceptions about space for Rooibos Ltd to improve in their digital marketing so that they can relate to the corporate brand.				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5.7	5.7	44.7	32.5	11.4

Table 6-12 reports respondents' opinion on space for Rooibos Ltd' digital marketing to improve. The frequencies were as follows: strongly disagree (5.7%); disagree (5.7%); neutral (44.7%); agree (32.5%); and strongly agree (11.4%), resulting in a mean of 3.38 (SD= 0.96).

In a descriptive field, respondents were requested to indicate any other perceptions that customers have on where Rooibos Ltd could possibly improve their digital marketing so that customers can relate to the corporate brand: Some of the responses included:

- “As stated earlier, I haven't seen a single piece of digital marketing from Rooibos Ltd. that I can remember”,
- “Be more personal in content seen on social media”,
- “I am a young South African. I grew up with Rooibos and drink it daily, yet I do not know much about the organisation or their products – other than those that I buy at the grocer. It would be wonderful to see and hear more of the health benefits etc, of Rooibos. We live in a world where health is a big concern for a lot of people and I think if the benefits are boosted more in ads, it would be great. Social media is basically the only way you get young adults and kids to engage as we do not use websites anymore”,
- “I have never had an encounter with Rooibos Ltd on any social media platforms thus far”,
- “I would like to see more of Rooibos Ltd on all communication platforms, not only Facebook”,
- “It feels old fashioned & like their target market is elderly. I also only know of the good old rooibos tea produced and no other product”,
- “Just keep up with trends and grow with the industry and you will do good”,
- “Looks super outdated example blogs from 2023 no posting on Instagram since 2016”,
- “More about what is happening live at Rooibos Ltd’, “More visible on social media platforms”,
- “Not enough on all platforms”,
- “Sometimes the messaging feels generic. There is an opportunity to bring in more of the brand’s unique South African roots and sustainability ethos”,
- “The brand’s digital content doesn’t always reflect the heritage or values of Rooibos Ltd. A more consistent tone and visual identity could help us connect better with the brand”,
- “There is anyway space for improvement”,
- “There is no website/online product purchase option. More social media could be focused on in terms of content distribution. For example, perhaps more interviews on stakes of the organisation.”

From the customers’ opinions, it seems that there is always space to improve digital marketing (see § Seven).

The next subsection elaborates on the customers’ responses about Rooibos Ltd’s corporate branding.

6.2.3 Opinions about Rooibos Ltd's corporate branding

Table 6-13: Customers' opinion about Rooibos Ltd's corporate branding

Section C: Opinions about Rooibos Ltd's branding							
Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
C.1 You like the way Rooibos Ltd represent themselves through clear symbols, behaviour, communication and employee service.	5	3	30	63	20	3.74	0.91
C.2 Your loyalty towards a corporate brand increase when you are satisfied with the brand.	2	2	18	49	48	4.17	0.87
C.3 You are passionate about brands you are loyal to and trust.	4	2	24	49	41	4.01	0.96
C.4 You are satisfied, stay loyal and purchase products/service of a corporate brand that communicate a consistent, transparent and interactive brand.	4	2	20	58	36	4.00	0.92
C.5 You see Rooibos Ltd operates consistently in communicating their values, brand promise, they are transparent and interactive with clients	3	7	43	43	20	3.62	0.97

Table 6-13 reports the customers' opinion about Rooibos Ltd's corporate branding from the statements. By considering the table above, the highest mean was reported for statement 3 stating: *You are passionate about brands you are loyal to and trust* (mean = 4.01; SD = 0.96), indicating that customers generally agree that they are passionate about the brands to which they are loyal and that they trust.

The report on statement 1, as the lowest mean, states: *You like the way Rooibos Ltd represent themselves through clear symbols, behaviour, communication and employee service* (mean = 3.74; SD = 0.91), indicating that customers agree that Rooibos Ltd represents itself sufficiently by means of clear symbols, behaviour, communication and employee service.

By looking at the rest of the information, Table 6-13 indicates that statement C.2, which states: *Your loyalty towards a corporate brand increase when you are satisfied with the brand* (mean = 4.17; SD = 0.87) as revealing that customers agree that their loyalty towards a corporate brand increases when they are satisfied with the brand.

Statement 4, which states: *You are satisfied, stay loyal and purchase products/service of a corporate brand that communicate a consistent, transparent and interactive brand* (mean = 4.00; SD = 0.917), elicited responses indicating that customers agree that they are more likely to be satisfied, remain loyal and continue purchasing from a corporate brand that communicates in a consistent, transparent and interactive manner.

Statement 5 states: *You see Rooibos Ltd operates consistently in communicating their values, brand promise, they are transparent and interactive with clients* (mean = 3.62; SD = 0.97). The responses suggest that customers agree somewhat that Rooibos Ltd operates consistently in communicating its values and brand promise and is transparent and interactive with clients.

Overall, the findings indicate that customers hold generally positive perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's corporate branding. Respondents seem to value satisfaction, trust and transparency as key elements that influence their loyalty towards the brand. Regarding Rooibos Ltd's efforts to maintain consistent and interactive brand communication, the findings suggest that there is room to strengthen the organisation's visual and behavioural representation in order to enhance the clarity and coherence of its brand identity, so that stakeholders can more easily recognise, understand, and trust the brand. Collectively, these insights suggest that fostering customer satisfaction and trust remains central to reinforcing brand loyalty and sustaining a strong corporate image.

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-14 below, indicating customer objectives that best describe Rooibos Ltd's communication.

Table 6-14: Customer opinions about Rooibos Ltd's communication

C.6 Customer' opinions that best describes Rooibos Ltd's communication.		
Statement	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
C.6.1. Rooibos Ltd's communication offer useful information and new offerings.	78.2	21.8
C.6.2 Rooibos Ltd's communication is consistent.	79.8	20.2
C.6.3 Rooibos Ltd's communication is professional.	97.1	2.9
C.6.4. Rooibos Ltd's communication is reliable.	91.5	8.5
C.6.5 Rooibos Ltd's communication reflects clear organisational vision, culture and image that is favourable in the eyes of clients.	84.8	15.2

Table 6-14 presents a summary of customers' opinion about Rooibos Ltd's communication. The above reporting suggests five important statements regarding customer opinions. Statement C.6.1 stating *Rooibos Ltd's communication offer useful information and new offerings* (78.2%) indicating that customers see Rooibos Ltd as offering useful information.

Statement C.6.2 states: *Rooibos Ltd's communication is consistent*. The percentage (79.8%) shows that Rooibos Ltd's communication is consistent, indicating a strong overall perception of reliability and uniformity in the organisation's messaging.

Statement C.6.3 states: *Rooibos Ltd's communication is professional*. Here the percentage (97.1%) indicates that Rooibos Ltd's communication is perceived as professional, reflecting a high level of confidence and satisfaction with the organisation's communication standards.

Statement C.6.4 states: *Rooibos Ltd's communication is reliable* and the high percentage (91.5%) shows that customers perceive Rooibos Ltd's communication as being reliable, showing a strong perception of trustworthiness and dependability in the organisation's communication practices.

Statement C.6.5 states: *Rooibos Ltd's communication reflects clear organisational vision, culture and image that is favourable in the eyes of clients*. The percentage (84.8%) reveals that largest frequency agree that Rooibos Ltd's communication reflects a clear organisational vision, culture and image that are favourable in the eyes of customers, indicating that customers perceive the brand's messaging as being well-aligned with its identity and positively representative of the organisation. Overall, the respondents suggested that the organisation's corporate brand strategy sufficiently reinforces brand loyalty and sustains a strong corporate image.

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-15 below, providing insight into what customers value in terms of features of Rooibos Ltd that form a positive corporate image and favourable reputation.

Table 6-15: Features of Rooibos Ltd that customers value that form a positive corporate image and favourable reputation

C.7 Customers value the following features of Rooibos Ltd that form a positive corporate image and favourable reputation:		
	Percentage Yes	Percentage No
7.1 Consistency	90.5	9.5
7.2 Distinctiveness	80.9	19.1
7.3 Visibility	80.6	19.4
7.4 Authenticity	90.2	9.8
7.5 Transparency	85.4	14.6
7.6 Emotional connection	64.2	35.8
7.7 Brand promise	84.8	15.2

Table 6-15 presents a summary of customers' opinions about the features of Rooibos Ltd that they value. The data show that a high percentage of respondents selected Yes for the following features customer values of Rooibos Ltd, which form a positive corporate image and favourable reputation: consistency (90.5%); distinctiveness (80.9%); visibility (80.6%); authenticity (90.2%), transparency (85.4%); brand promise (84.8%); emotional connection (Yes = 64.2%, No = 35.8%), indicating that emotional connection is a little less valued by customers. Overall, the descriptive data in Table 6-15 indicate that customers hold a largely positive perception of Rooibos Ltd's corporate image and reputation.

The next question's analysis is showcased in Table 6-16 below, indicating customer opinion about Rooibos Ltd's reputation and their satisfaction with the corporate brand.

Table 6-16: Customers' opinion about Rooibos Ltd's reputation and their satisfaction with corporate brand

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
8. The reputation of brand is key for you in maintaining brand loyalty	3	1	20	49	43	4.10	0.9
9. Rooibos Ltd has a good reputation.	4	5	24	55	29	3.85	0.96
10. Rooibos Ltd satisfies my needs and wants as a customer in terms of service and communication.	4	7	36	44	20	3.62	0.97

Table 6-16 reports customers' opinions about Rooibos Ltd's reputation and their satisfaction with the corporate brand. The response to the statement, *The reputation of brand is key for you in maintaining brand loyalty* presented as (mean = 4.10; SD = 0.9) indicates that, on average, respondents agreed that brand reputation plays an important role in maintaining their loyalty to the brand. Suggesting a strong positive perception of the importance of brand reputation. The standard deviation (0.9) shows that responses were fairly consistent, though there was some variation in the degree of agreement among respondents.

The responses to the statement, *Rooibos Ltd has a good reputation* (mean = 3.85; SD = 0.96) indicates that respondents generally agree that Rooibos Ltd enjoys a good reputation. The standard deviation of 0.96 suggests a moderate level of variability in responses, indicating that while most participants agreed, some expressed more neutral or differing views.

The customers' responses to the statement *Rooibos Ltd satisfies my needs and wants as a customer in terms of service and communication* (mean = 3.62; SD = 0.97) indicates that respondents agreed somewhat that Rooibos Ltd meets their expectations in terms of service and communication. Although overall perceptions are positive, the variation in responses suggests that Rooibos Ltd could further strengthen customer satisfaction by enhancing consistency in service delivery and communication practices.

The next section (see § 6.3) will elaborate on the analysis of factors used as attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation.

6.3 RELIABILITY

Reliability is defined as the degree to which a measurement instrument produces consistent and dependable results over time, across items or among different evaluators. A reliable instrument ensures that similar conditions yield comparable outcomes, indicating measurement stability and precision (Andersson *et al.*, 2024). As stated in section 4.2.2, reliability analysis of factors done, is to evaluate correlations between variables and to scrutinise the entire set of interdependent relations among variables. Factors are groups of variables used to measure specific concepts. Factors were analysed in terms of reliability using Cronbach's alpha to extract and verify the internal consistency of the factors. Reliability reflects the degree to which the survey, conducted at two different times, or the individuals who are equivalent on the measured constructs, should obtain similar scores. Pallant (2010) indicates the Cronbach's alpha coefficients above 0.7 are considered acceptable for reliability. The factor scores were calculated as the average of the items within each factor.

6.3.1 Factors used

Table 6-17 gives an indication of how the questions regarding the way in which Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing informs the corporate brand were grouped together, so that the analysis can more clearly show how digital marketing contributes to shaping and strengthening the organisation's brand identity. Since the sample size was too small to conduct factor analysis, these groupings were used as factors. The factors were labelled as follows:

- **Attraction:** How features attract customers to follow Rooibos Ltd's platforms, (4.1–7)
- **Satisfaction:** Customer satisfaction with Rooibos Ltd's interactive engagement in their digital platforms, (5.1–8)
- **Branding:** Customers like the way Rooibos Ltd present themselves through clear corporate elements (1.1–5) and
- **Reputation:** Customer perception of Rooibos Ltd's reputation. (C8–10)

The Cronbach's alpha values were 0.949, 0.916, 0.873 and 0.796, which indicates that the factors are reliable.

Table 6-17: Factors identified as attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation

Factor	Questions	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Attraction	4.1–8	0.95	3.06	1.37
Satisfaction	5.1–8	0.91	3.10	1.10
Branding	C 1–5	0.87	3.86	0.81
Reputation	C 8–10	0.8	3.82	0.84

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the factors for attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation (§ 4.2.2).

The factor scores of *Attraction* (mean = 3.06, SD = 1.37) and *Satisfaction* (mean = .10, SD = 1.10) both indicate that the average overall responses were *Neutral*. The factor scores of *Branding* (mean = 3.86, SD = 0.81) and *Reputation* (mean = 3.82, SD = 0.84) reflects an average overall response of *Agree*. The data indicate that the measurement was reliable and that respondents tended to indicate neutral opinions about attraction and satisfaction but indicated slightly more positive opinions about branding and reputation.

In the following section (see § 6.4) independent *t-tests* will be used to compare the means of two samples.

6.4 INDEPENDENT T-TESTS

The following section reports the influence that the different demographics from province may have on the factors by testing for differences between the mean of Western Cape and Other.

Table 6-18: Effect sizes in a t-test

Effect sizes	Interpretation
d = 0.2	Small effect
d = 0.5	Medium effect
d = 0.8	Large effect

Table 6-18 summarises the results of the t-tests. These are the guideline values that will be used for interpretation. The effect size indicates the practical significance (Cohen's d-values) of the difference between two means of two groups. The p-value indicates the statistical significance, which tells us how large or meaningful that effect is (Sathyanarayana *et al.*, 2024:155).

Table 6-19: Effect sizes in a t-test

Factor	Province	N	Mean	St Deviation	p-value	Effect size
Attraction	Westen Cape	58	3.28	1.31	0.09	0.30
	Other	62	2.86	.41		
Satisfaction	Westen Cape	59	3.13	1.09	0.84	0.04
	Other	64	3.08	.12		
Branding	Westen Cape	60	3.81	0.74	0.45	0.13
	Other	64	3.92	0.87		
Reputation	Westen Cape	60	3.74	0.77	0.31	0.17
	Other	63	3.9	0.91		

Based on the reported effect size (d-value = 0.04 to 0.30) in Table 6-19, only practically insignificant differences were found between the opinions of respondents from the Western Cape and the other provinces.

In the following section (see § 6.5) customer perceptions of digital marketing and corporate brand management strategy applied by Rooibos Ltd's will be discussed in accordance with the different age groups 'perceptions.

6.5 ANOVAs

Table 6-20: ANOVA results for age

Factor	Ages	N	Mean	St Deviation	Effect size 20–30	Effect size 31–50	ANOVA p-value	Welch p- value
Attraction	20–30	37	3.04	1.38			0.989	0.988
	31–50	42	3.08	1.29	0.03			
	51 and above	41	3.05	1.47	0.01	0.02		
	Total	120	3.06	1.37				
Satisfaction	20–30	39	2.99	1.15			0.749	0.767
	31–50	43	3.13	0.98	0.12			
	51 and above	41	3.16	1.20	0.15	0.03		
	Total	123	3.10	1.10				
Branding	20–30	39	3.82	0.86			0.783	0.756
	31–50	43	3.83	0.87	0.01			
	51 and above	42	3.93	0.69	0.13	0.12		
	Total	124	3.86	0.80				
Reputation	20–30	39	3.78	0.90			0.805	0.825
	31–50	43	3.80	0.72	0.02			
	51 and above	41	3.89	0.92	0.13	0.10		
	Total	123	3.82	0.84				

Table 6-20 presents the ANOVA results with the demographical variable *Age* as grouping variable. Only insignificant differences ($d = 0.01$ to 0.15) were found between the different age groups.

6.6 CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE FACTORS

The correlation coefficient provides an indication of the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, allowing the researcher to determine how changes in one variable correspond with changes in another. Correlations describe the degree of association among different factors, where a value of 0.1 indicates a small correlation, 0.3 a moderate correlation and 0.8 a strong correlation. The following correlation results were obtained and are discussed in greater detail below (David & Sutton, 2011:268 (see § 4.2.2)).

Yet again the p-values are reported for completeness sake but will not be interpreted since a convenience sample instead of a random sample was used for the purpose of this study. The interpretation is based on the effect sizes.

Table 6-21: Correlations between attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation constructs

		Attraction	Satisfaction	Branding	Reputation
Attraction	Correlation coefficient (r)	1.000	0.496	0.342	0.262
	p-value	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5
Satisfaction	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.5	1.00	0.52	0.53
	p-value	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5
Branding	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.34	0.52	1.000	0.72
	p-value	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5
Reputation	Correlation coefficient (r)	0.26	0.53	0.72	1.00
	p-value	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5

Table 6-21 presents the correlation analysis between the four variables, namely attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation, to determine the strength and direction of their interrelationships.

The guideline values from which the correlation size is determined as small or medium, based on Ellis & Steyn (2003), were as follows: small correlation: $r = 0.1$ (meaning there is a weak association between two variables), medium correlation $r = 0.3$ (indicating a moderate or notice a moderate relationship between the variables) and large correlation: $r = 0.5$ (reflecting a strong association between the two variables). Therefore, these values indicate the strength of the relationship between two variables.

The results reveal that attraction has a moderate positive relationship with satisfaction ($r = 0.5$), implying that an increase in attraction towards the brand is likely to enhance customer satisfaction. This indicates that a well-established and consistent brand image is closely associated with a stronger organisational reputation. The relationship between attraction and branding ($r = 0.34$), as well as attraction and reputation ($r = 0.26$), is weaker but still positive, indicating that attraction correlates modestly with perceptions of brand strength and reputation. A stronger relationship is observed between satisfaction and branding ($r = 0.52$), as well as between satisfaction and reputation ($r = 0.53$), suggesting that respondents who report greater satisfaction also tend to express more positive views of the organisation's brand and overall reputation.

The strongest correlation was between branding and reputation ($r = 0.72$), indicating a strong positive association. This finding highlights that a well-established and consistent brand image is closely linked with a favourable reputation in the eyes of customers. The strength of this correlation suggests that branding plays a crucial role in shaping how stakeholders perceive the organisation's reputation. This finding aligns with the theoretical understanding that strategic and coherent branding contributes to a favourable and trustworthy reputation in the eyes of customers.

6.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter customer perceptions were discussed regarding the digital marketing and corporate brand management in terms of planning and strategizing applied by Rooibos Ltd's. The aim was to answer the third research question: *What are the customers' perception of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management?* by analysing the results of the online survey.

Firstly, the research question was answered by discussing the demographic information of customers, followed by their perceptions about Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and, thereafter, Rooibos Ltd's branding. The next analysis subsection explained the factor analysis and the identification thereof by means of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Four factors were identified namely attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation (§ 6.3.1). By discussing these four factors, it was possible to link customer characteristics, perceptions and reliable measurement factors, enabling Rooibos Ltd to understand how different aspects of digital marketing and corporate brand management influence satisfaction and loyalty, which is critical for informed strategic decisions.

An independent t-test (§ 6.4) was conducted to determine the statistical, practical significance of factors and effect sizes, to determine the relevance thereof. A *t*-test was compiled dealing with the choice of Rooibos Ltd's planning and strategizing different digital marketing and corporate brand activities perceived by Western Cape respondents compared to others. Although this independent t-test was done, the responses indicated that the geographical location (Western Cape vs other) does not meaningfully influence customer perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand.

The correlation between the factors followed and indicated the correlation coefficient that provided an indication of the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, allowing the researcher to determine how changes in one variable correspond with changes in another. An ANOVA test was combined within the correlation (§ 6.5, Table 6-21) between factors to explain the sources of variance in a set of scores on one or more independent variables. Comparisons were drawn between the factors and customer ages. Correlations were interpreted using established thresholds, where 0.1 indicates a small correlation, 0.3 a moderate correlation and 0.8 a strong correlation. Although p-values were reported for completeness, they were not used for interpretation because of the convenience sampling method employed in this study; instead, the effect sizes guided the analysis. These responses suggest that Rooibos Ltd's investment in maintaining a consistent corporate brand is likely to enhance customer trust and loyalty,

reinforcing the strategic importance of integrated branding and reputation management within the organisation's digital marketing and corporate brand management framework.

Thereafter, Table 6-21 showcased correlations between attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation. The correlation results indicate that Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management strategies are reliable tools for building and maintaining strong relationships with customers. The consistent and positive correlations among attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation suggest that these factors work together to reinforce customer engagement and loyalty. The particularly strong link between branding and reputation ($r = 0.722$) emphasises that sufficient digital branding significantly enhances the organisation's overall credibility and public perception. These findings imply that when Rooibos Ltd executes its marketing and branding digital marketing and corporate branding strategically, they result in higher satisfaction and trust among customers.

Overall, throughout this chapter the responses suggested that Rooibos Ltd is perceived as a trustworthy and reputable brand with a solid digital presence. Yet, it has room to enhance the sufficiency and engagement of its digital marketing strategies. Strengthening the emotional and interactive dimensions of digital communication, alongside maintaining consistent and transparent brand messaging, could further consolidate customer loyalty and reinforce Rooibos Ltd's corporate reputation.

The results obtained from the online survey, as discussed in this chapter, clearly illustrated customer perceptions of the digital marketing and corporate brand management plan and strategies applied by Rooibos Ltd (see fourth research question in § 1.3.1.4). These results will now be made applicable in the next chapter to answer the general research question and to provide guidelines regarding what the digital marketing and corporate brand management plan and strategies for customer relationship building and maintaining at Rooibos Ltd should entail. The chapter will also include the conclusion to the study, limitations thereof and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ROOIBOS LTD'S DIGITAL MARKETING AND CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one introduced this study by referring to the context, problem statement and specific research to be answered in the study. Chapters Two and Three presented the literature that served as a basis for the study, focussing digital marketing and corporate brand management. This included a discussion of the elements, management and values of both the concepts. Chapter Four provided a detailed exposition of the qualitative and quantitative research approach and methodologies employed in the study. In Chapter Five, the results obtained from the semi-structured interviews conducted with the four participants relevant to Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department were discussed to determine their approach to digital marketing and corporate branding. In Chapter six the data obtained from the online survey that the customers had completed were analysed to show the significance of the data.

The purpose of this chapter is to propose guidelines that could serve as recommendations, to be implemented for customer relationship building and maintenance in Rooibos Ltd. These recommendations also answer the general research question of this study:

What should Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management entail?

This will be done by answering each of the following specific research questions:

- How does digital marketing inform corporate brand management?
- What does corporate brand management entail?
- What is Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management?
- What are the customer perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management?

The conclusions drawn from the literature study, semi-structure interviews and the online survey will be discussed first, after which certain guidelines will be proposed and illustrated.

7.2 CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

7.2.1 Conclusion to specific research question 1

Chapter Two answered the first research question:

How does digital marketing inform corporate brand management?

The answer was provided in accordance with a literature review conducted in Chapter Two. The overview covered digital marketing elements, digital marketing management and values of digital marketing for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd.

The evolution of marketing from traditional practices to the digital sphere represents a fundamental transformation in how organisations engage with customers and create value. There is an important emphasis on marketing that extends beyond promotion and sales – it is a process of relationship building, storytelling and the continuous creation of mutual value. As markets and customers became increasingly technology-driven, marketing practices adapted accordingly, integrating digital tools and data-driven approaches to enhance communication sufficiency and customer engagement.

7.2.1.1 Digital marketing elements

Digital marketing elements (see § 2.3) were identified as: websites, search engine optimisation (SEO), mobile marketing, email marketing, blogs and podcasts, social media marketing and online advertising. These marketing elements collectively enable interactive and targeted communication between organisations and their audiences. Each element plays a unique role: websites serve as a digital storefront; SEO ensures brand visibility; mobile and email marketing foster personal engagement; blogs and podcasts share brand narratives; social media marketing strengthens community presence; and online advertising expands reach through paid, earned and owned media. Together, these elements form a holistic ecosystem by which brands can connect with customers in real time and gather data-driven insights to refine marketing strategies.

In the context of Rooibos Ltd, the sufficient utilisation of these digital marketing elements demonstrates the organisation's commitment to maintaining relevance and accessibility in the digital environment. Rooibos Ltd's website design, SEO strategy and use of social media platforms showcase an integrated approach that enhances visibility and engagement, while mobile and email marketing strengthen direct communication with customers. The organisation's

application of online advertising further reinforces its ability to manage controlled brand communication and maintain consistent messaging across digital touchpoints.

In conclusion, digital marketing elements serve as the foundation for sufficient brand communication and relationship management in the digital era. By strategically combining these tools, organisations such as Rooibos Ltd can enhance their corporate brand image, attract and retain customers and strengthen long-term stakeholder relationships. The sufficient execution of these elements underscores the importance of adopting a planned, data-driven digital marketing strategy that aligns with broader organisational goals and fosters sustainable brand growth.

7.2.1.2 Digital marketing management

Digital marketing management (see § 2.4) represents a strategic approach to integrating modern digital tools with traditional marketing principles to enhance corporate communication, customer engagement and long-term relationship building. Despite the evolving digital environment, marketing fundamentals remain consistent, requiring organisations to implement structured digital marketing plans that are guided by strategic frameworks such as PR Smith's SOSTAC model. This management process ensures that organisations like Rooibos Ltd sufficiently formulate, execute and evaluate strategies that align with their corporate objectives while leveraging digital channels to create value-driven and customer-focused interactions

7.2.1.2.1 Digital marketing strategy

The strategic components of segmentation, target marketing, positioning and stakeholder identification are central to digital marketing management. Segmentation allows organisations to categorise audiences based on behavioural, demographic, psychographic, geographic and benefit-based variables, ensuring that messages and platforms are tailored to specific customer needs. Target marketing and positioning further refine this process by focusing on markets most likely to engage with the brand and by shaping a corporate image that fosters emotional connection and brand loyalty. Rooibos Ltd's application of these strategies demonstrates how clearly defined segments and targeted positioning can strengthen the organisation's digital identity and stakeholder trust.

7.2.1.2.2 Digital marketing plan

Through the stakeholder analysis, Rooibos Ltd aligns its digital marketing efforts with the expectations and needs of key audiences, including customers, employees and business partners. This stakeholder-centred approach enhances communication sufficiency and ensures

that the organisation's brand promise remains consistent across digital platforms. The implementation of the SOSTAC framework further supports this by offering a structured process for situation analysis, objective setting, strategy development, tactical execution and performance control, ensuring that all digital marketing activities contribute to measurable outcomes and sustainable growth.

7.2.1.3 Value of digital marketing management for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd

Value of digital marketing management for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd (see § 2.5) is discussed as sell (grow sales), serve (add value), speak (get closer to customers), save costs and sizzle. Applying these in organisational approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management demonstrates how digital marketing not only drives commercial outcomes but also enhances customer relationships, service delivery and brand differentiation.

The first two values of digital marketing are sell and serve, which illustrate how Rooibos Ltd can enhance performance and customer satisfaction. By leveraging digital platforms, the organisation can increase sales both online and offline, while expanding product visibility beyond physical store boundaries. Furthermore, by serving customers via online dialogue, service and feedback mechanisms, Rooibos Ltd adds value to the customer experience. These activities strengthen the organisation's competitive position and enable it to engage customers directly, fostering brand loyalty and trust.

The next set of values are speak and save, which further highlight digital marketing's contribution to relationship building and operational efficiency. Digital communication facilitates two-way interaction, allowing Rooibos Ltd to better understand customer preferences and adapt its marketing strategies accordingly. This direct engagement strengthens customer relationships. The findings of from the interviews indicate that Rooibos Ltd's approach to the value of *save costs* is to provide customers with quality products with competitive prizes, meaning Rooibos Ltd does not value saving costs as much as the rest.

Finally, the value of sizzle reflects the creative potential of digital marketing in enhancing the Rooibos Ltd brand. By developing new online experiences, innovative product propositions and interactive brand communities, Rooibos Ltd can differentiate itself from competitors and strengthen its online presence. This value-driven approach allows the organisation to extend its corporate identity beyond traditional platforms, ensuring continued brand relevance and customer engagement. In essence, the value of digital marketing lies in its ability to integrate sales growth,

customer service, communication, cost efficiency and brand differentiation into a cohesive strategy that drives sustainable organisational success.

Collectively, these findings illustrate that digital marketing informs corporate brand management by integrating sales enhancement, customer service, internal communication, operational efficiency and brand differentiation into the organisation's unified strategic framework, which strengthens organisational competitiveness and long-term relationship building.

7.2.2 Conclusion to specific research question 2

Attention was then directed to answering the second specific research question:

What does corporate brand management entail?

It was done in accordance with a literature study conducted in Chapter Three by providing an overview on corporate brand elements, corporate brand management and the strategic value thereof.

7.2.2.1 Corporate brand elements

The discussion on corporate brand elements (see § 3.3) revealed that Rooibos Ltd's brand strength lies in the strategic alignment of its vision, mission, brand promise, visual identity, corporate culture, image, stakeholder relationships and communication. These interconnected components form the foundation of its corporate identity and are sufficiently communicated through digital marketing to build trust, consistency and engagement among customers and stakeholders. By maintaining coherence between internal values and external representation, Rooibos Ltd sufficiently reinforces its credibility and positive reputation. This integrated approach enables the organisation to strengthen its relationships with stakeholders, enhance brand loyalty and sustain its competitive advantage in the marketplace.

7.2.2.2 Corporate brand management

Corporate brand management (see § 3.4) is a strategic and continuous process that integrates leadership, employee engagement, stakeholder relationships and consistent communication to build and sustain a strong organisational identity. For Rooibos Ltd, senior management plays a crucial role in shaping and maintaining the corporate brand by aligning the strategic vision with internal culture and external image. Employees, as key brand ambassadors, must embody the organisation's values through their behaviour and communication, ensuring credibility and

consistency in every stakeholder interaction. Sufficient management of long-term stakeholder relationships, built on trust and transparent communication, further strengthens brand loyalty and reputation. Ultimately, when Rooibos Ltd aligns its strategic vision, culture and image cohesively, it fosters a unified corporate identity that enhances competitiveness, stakeholder confidence and sustainable brand success.

7.2.2.3 Strategic value of corporate brand management

The strategic value of corporate brand management (see § 3.5) lies in its ability to create long-term differentiation, trust and emotional connection between an organisation and its stakeholders. When managed, corporate brand elements such as image, identity and reputation produce strategic advantages that contribute to both customer loyalty and organisational success. Key values from brand management include differentiation, which establishes distinctiveness and preference among customers; symbolism that creates emotional resonance and a sense of belonging; and memorability that enhances customer attachment and recognition. Furthermore, continuous corporate brand development ensures that the brand remains relevant and aligned with evolving stakeholder expectations. Ultimately, strong corporate brand management builds a credible, consistent and authentic reputation, and for Rooibos Ltd, this is key to earning stakeholder trust, securing competitive advantage and driving long-term value

Collectively, corporate brand management at Rooibos Ltd should emerge as a strategic, multidimensional process that integrates corporate brand elements, senior management, employee engagement, stakeholder relationships and consistent corporate communication to build a cohesive and credible organisational identity. These principles would create long-term differentiation, strengthen stakeholder trust and enhance the organisations competitive and corporate value.

7.2.3 Conclusion to specific research question 3

The research further investigated the third specific question:

What is Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management?

It is answered by discussing the findings derived from the semi-structured interviews.

The findings of the semi-structured interviews were discussed in Chapter Five (see § 5.2-5.4). The concepts are based on demographic information, digital marketing and corporate branding

with the focus on the concept digital marketing elements and the corporate brand, the management thereof and the value of the concepts.

7.2.3.1 Demographic information of Rooibos Ltd's Marketing Department

A demographic discussion about the Marketing and Communication Department of Rooibos Ltd (§ 5.2) indicates that the organisation is a small yet highly experienced unit, consisting of a communication manager with 23 years' experience and a client liaison officer with 13 years' experience. They also have a marketing director who has more than 36 years' experience and who is supported by an external digital marketing agency. Collectively, these professionals have extensive marketing expertise, which strengthens the organisation's ability to develop and maintain long-term relationships with customers. The department's roles aim to foster corporate social responsibility, develop marketing material, support sales and liaise with clients, while the external agency contributes to the digital execution of marketing activities, such as website management, SEO, social media and email marketing. This collaborative structure demonstrates a strategically aligned and experienced marketing team that combines traditional and digital marketing approaches to support relationship building and brand development for Rooibos Ltd.

7.2.3.2 Digital marketing approach of Rooibos Ltd

Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing approach to their digital marketing elements (see § 5.3) demonstrates a strategic integration to strengthen relationships with customers. The organisation utilises digital marketing elements (see § 5.3.1), such as its websites, SEO, social media and email marketing to foster engagement and visibility. Findings from the interviews indicate that, while management recognises the potential of digital platforms, traditional business-to-business (B2B) marketing remains an important approach in their relationship-building efforts (see § 5.3.1). Nonetheless, the organisation's online presence, particularly via cross-referenced platforms and tailored content, ensures a transparent and sustainable digital identity that enhances stakeholder connection, familiarity and trust.

7.2.3.3 Digital marketing management approach of Rooibos Ltd

Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing management is guided by a strategic plan rooted in their digital marketing strategy, which uses segmentation and target marketing to position the organisation effectively and engage specific audiences across diverse platforms. The digital marketing strategy approach of Rooibos Ltd is revised and implemented by their marketing team. They apply data-driven decisions and use performance metrics (see § 5.3.2.1), such as engagement rates,

audience reach and content sufficiency. Regular collaboration with their digital agency ensures that campaigns remain relevant and strategically aligned with business objectives.

The use of the SOSTAC framework supports a systematic planning approach that, in this case, is the digital marketing plan, which encompasses situation analysis, objectives, strategy, tactics, actions and control. This structure enables Rooibos Ltd to maintain trustworthiness, adaptability, consistency and accountability, thereby reinforcing the organisation's digital marketing credibility and strategic direction (see § 5.3.2.2).

The digital marketing value (see § 5.3.2.3) for organisations such as Rooibos Ltd lies in its ability to promote the Rooibos brand as trustworthy, sustainable and community oriented. Participants identified key benefits such as brand differentiation, cost efficiency, increased visibility and relationship building. By using digital storytelling and targeted engagement, Rooibos Ltd sufficiently conveys its values of quality, reliability and care, qualities that enhance its *corporate reputation* and strengthen its competitive position globally. Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing approach aims to reach these values as indicated by the literature (see § 2.5) to sell (grow sales), serve (add value), speak (get closer to customers) and sizzle (extend the brand online). Firstly, the sizzle value is indicated by Rooibos Ltd to differentiate itself in the market place; sell value supports what Rooibos Ltd intend to promote which is quality, trust, reliability and sustainability, serve value is approached by serving customers by means of their digital marketing for example by enhancing customer experience and to provide a service-driven digital interaction with customers, speak value is indicated by Rooibos Ltd as their approach to positioning the organisation and targeting the ideal audience, Rooibos Ltd's approach is to have a quality product and competitive price, which seems that Rooibos Ltd does not value the costs saving value as much as the other values.

7.2.3.4 Corporate brand elements approach of Rooibos Ltd

Rooibos Ltd's corporate brand elements approach (see § 5.4) demonstrates a strategic integrated approach. The organisation's brand is strategically positioned to reflect quality, trustworthiness, sustainability and care for stakeholders, supported by an internal Marketing and Communication Department and an external digital agency. The organisation's corporate brand elements (see § 5.4.1), including strategic value (vision, mission and corporate brand promise), corporate visual identity, corporate culture, corporate image, stakeholders and corporate communication, collectively shape how the organisation is perceived locally and internationally. Rooibos Ltd's brand promise of delivering high-quality products and sustainable service is consistently

reinforced by transparent and relatable communication that embodies the organisation's values and expertise.

7.2.3.5 Corporate brand management approach of Rooibos Ltd

Corporate brand management (see § 5.4.2) is seen in the approach where Rooibos Ltd integrates leadership involvement, employee collaboration, customer relationship-building and consistent communication. The role of senior management aids in fostering an open communication environment that encourages employee input and shared decision-making. This collaborative culture enhances employee management and engagement, which supports a unified brand message via the corporate culture. Furthermore, Rooibos Ltd emphasises long-term stakeholder relationships that are built on trust, transparency and personal interaction. Using a combination of traditional and digital platforms, the organisation ensures corporate communication management, responds promptly to customer feedback and maintains brand consistency across all touchpoints. The strategic alignment of Rooibos Ltd's vision, mission and corporate image further reinforces its position as an industry leader. The organisation's internal stakeholders describe Rooibos Ltd as having a positive reputation, a strong corporate culture and a respected market presence, while the external agency highlights its ability to communicate and manage challenges through a professional, balanced approach. Rooibos Ltd's brand management strategy, therefore, focuses not only on sustaining market leadership but also on ensuring that its brand image remains coherent, trustworthy and reflective of its core values across internal and external communications.

7.2.3.6 Strategic value of corporate brand management for Rooibos Ltd

The strategic value of corporate brand management for Rooibos Ltd (see § 5.4.3) lies in its ability to generate differentiation, symbolism, memorability, development and reputation. By positioning itself as the oldest and largest rooibos producer with extensive expertise and social certifications, the organisation achieves a strong differentiation value. Its emphasis on quality, reliability and innovation ensures ongoing relevance and memorability in a competitive market. Furthermore, by continuously developing its brand, including visual updates and creative digital campaigns, Rooibos Ltd sustains its market dominance while appealing to evolving customer expectations. Ultimately, the organisation's reputation for quality, transparency, sustainability and trustworthiness serves as its most valuable asset, underpinning long-term stakeholder loyalty and ensuring the enduring strength of its corporate brand.

Collectively, Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department adopts a strategic, integrated approach in which a highly experienced internal team, supported by an external agency, combines traditional-driven marketing practices with data-informed digital marketing to strengthen stakeholder engagement and brand visibility. This coordinated approach ensures consistent, value-based communication and reinforces the organisation's corporate brand by means of trust, transparency and alignment between its strategic vision and digital presence.

7.2.4 Conclusion to specific research question 4

The fourth specific research question stated:

What is the customers' perception of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management?

This is answered by means of a discussion on the responses obtained from the online survey.

7.2.4.1 Demographic information of customers

The demographic findings (see § 6.2.1) revealed that respondents (in this case customers of Rooibos Ltd) are diverse, digitally active and geographically oriented, with the largest concentration of respondents residing in the Western Cape (48.8%). The largest age groups are indicated as 20–30 years and 31–40, suggesting that the organisation's online marketing and communication efforts engage with a younger audience, while still maintaining relevance among older age groups. The exclusion of variables such as gender and race aligns with ethical research principles and strengthens the study's focus on participants' digital interaction and behavioural patterns. This overall profile indicates that Rooibos Ltd's digital reach is not only broad in scope but also positioned well to connect with key market segments that play a role in long-term corporate brand growth.

Furthermore, Table 6-1, which states the device possession data, highlights a high level of technological accessibility among participants, with nearly all respondents possessing smartphones and laptops, indicating access to devices for necessary communication and receiving information. These responses imply that Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing strategies should continue to prioritise mobile-optimised content and interactive online platforms to maintain engagement and strengthen brand loyalty. The widespread use of personal digital devices supports the organisation's strategic direction towards digitally integrated marketing and corporate brand management, indicating that the organisation's investment in online communication aligns sufficiently with the lifestyle and technological habits of its customers.

7.2.4.2 Digital marketing

The data on Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing (see § 6.2.2) revealed a generally positive perception of authenticity, transparency and ease of use, with respondents describing the organisation's digital marketing as honest, authentic and easy to follow. However, there remains room for improvement in emotional engagement and response times, as fewer participants felt a strong emotional connection or perceived flexibility in communication. Customers engage with Rooibos Ltd primarily via Facebook, LinkedIn and Google, while other platforms like YouTube, Twitter and Instagram show low engagement levels, indicating a need for more strategic cross-platform visibility. Respondents indicated that clear brand elements, trustworthy messages and user-friendly layouts attract them to use Rooibos Ltd's social media platforms, confirming that clarity, accessibility and design consistency are essential components of their digital experience.

Respondents emphasised that Rooibos Ltd's digital presence requires renewal and modernisation to remain competitive and relatable, especially among younger audiences. Responses showed the desire for more engaging and interactive content, such as videos, consistent updates, online shopping integration and health-related information. There were requests for immediate and interesting news and the majority respondents favoured online shopping via Facebook or Instagram. Email communication was preferred on a monthly basis, with the majority wanting updates on new products, promotions and loyalty programmes. Overall, respondents acknowledged that there is potential for growth and innovation in Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing approach, particularly in strengthening brand visibility, trend relevance and authentic storytelling to foster deeper emotional connections and customer loyalty.

7.2.4.3 Corporate branding

Customers' opinions regarding Rooibos Ltd's corporate branding (see § 6.2.3) indicate an overall positive perception of the organisation's corporate brand image, corporate communication and reputation. Respondents generally agreed that their loyalty towards Rooibos Ltd increases when they are satisfied with the brand, showing a strong connection between satisfaction and loyalty. Customers also expressed passion and trust toward brands to which they are loyal, highlighting emotional engagement as a key element of brand strength. Furthermore, customers agreed that Rooibos Ltd communicates in a consistent, transparent and interactive manner, although slightly lower scores on symbolic representation and behaviour suggest room for improvement in how the brand visually and behaviourally expresses its identity.

Additionally, the results indicate that customers perceive Rooibos Ltd's communication as professional, reliable and reflective of a clear organisation vision and culture, which contributes to a favourable corporate image. Key features, such as consistency, authenticity, transparency and brand promise, were highly valued, suggesting that customers prefer genuine and dependable branding practices. While an emotional connection was slightly less emphasised than the rest, the responses confirm that a stable reputation and sufficient communication are central to customer loyalty. Overall, Rooibos Ltd's corporate branding is viewed positively, with trust, professionalism and authenticity emerging as defining attributes that strengthen its reputation and customer satisfaction.

7.2.4.4 Reliability

The factor analysis (§ 6.3.1) identified four key constructs: attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation, which explain variance in customer perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate branding. Each factor achieved a high Cronbach's alpha value, which indicates a strong internal reliability and consistency in the data. The mean scores for attraction and satisfaction reflected neutral perceptions, indicating that customers are moderately positive about Rooibos Ltd's ability to attract and engage audiences via digital platforms. In contrast, higher mean scores for branding and reputation indicate general agreement and positive sentiment towards Rooibos Ltd's brand presentation and reputation management. These findings suggest that, while attraction and satisfaction levels are stable, customers perceive the organisation's branding and reputation as well-established and reliable, demonstrating sufficient corporate brand communication and trustworthiness.

The independent t-test results examined differences across provinces, revealing small and practically insignificant effects between respondents from the Western Cape and other regions. Although minor variations existed, customers from the Western Cape showed slightly higher mean scores across all factors – attraction, satisfaction, branding and reputation, which shows a stronger agreement with positive brand perceptions. However, these differences were not statistically significant, indicating that perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and branding efforts are consistent across provinces. Overall, the results highlight that Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing strategy has a uniform impact on corporate brand perceptions regardless of geographic location, reinforcing the brand's consistent communication and national presence.

The correlation analysis (§ 6.6) revealed positive relationships among all four factors, with varying degrees of strength. Attraction showed moderate correlations with satisfaction ($r = 0.5$), branding ($r = 0.34$) and reputation ($r = 0.26$), indicating that increased brand attraction modestly contributes

to higher satisfaction and improved perceptions of branding and reputation. More notably, satisfaction correlated strongly with both branding ($r = 0.52$) and reputation ($r = 0.53$), suggesting that customer satisfaction is central to strengthening both brand identity and corporate reputation.

The strongest correlation emerged between branding and reputation ($r = 0.72$), reflecting a strong and significant relationship. This demonstrates that a coherent and consistent brand identity directly reinforces a positive organisational reputation. In essence, when customers perceive Rooibos Ltd's branding as authentic, professional and well-aligned with its corporate values, they are more likely to associate the organisation with trust, reliability and credibility. These findings confirm that sufficient brand management and digital marketing efforts work synergistically to enhance customer loyalty and sustain a reputable corporate image.

Based on the findings, customers generally collectively perceive Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management positively, valuing its authenticity, professionalism, consistency and trustworthiness. This suggests that sufficient digital marketing and corporate brand management practices strengthen customer loyalty, reinforce the organisation's reputation and support long-term customer engagement and relationships.

7.3 ANSWERING THE GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTION

The general research question of the study was to consider what Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management should entail (see § 1.3).

What should Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management entail?

The findings from the semi-structured interviews (Chapter Five) indicated the participants' perceptions of Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management. Based on this, Table 7-1 on the next page offers an illustration of possible considerations for Rooibos Ltd.

While Chapter Five outlined interview findings about Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management, the findings in Chapter 6 showed customer perceptions on how these approaches are applied in Rooibos Ltd's day-to-day organisational activities. The conclusion below should be considered to improve the principles of digital marketing management and corporate brand management within Rooibos Ltd.

Therefore, the main research question can be answered as follows:

The key management principles for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management should, in the first instance, involve the role of senior management. Senior management

- offers equal opportunities for employees when making decisions;
- provides guidance about the vision of the organisation by way of consistent internal communication;
- prioritises development and maintenance of the corporate brand; and
- differentiates and maintains relevance.

The next management principle is employee management, consisting of

- aligning employee and organisational values;
- consistent corporate communication about behaviour and corporate visual identity; and
- maintaining relevance.

Table 7-1 Key management principles Rooibos Ltd could consider when formulating digital marketing management and corporate brand management (in order of importance)

Keys:	Measures poor, requires significant and immediate attention	Measures weak, requires substantial and immediate attention	Measures average, require moderate attention	Measures well, requires monitoring and maintenance
Level of importance for Rooibos Ltd approach (in terms of digital marketing and corporate brand management)	Key management principles for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management approach in terms of their Marketing and Communication Department and customer perceptions			
	Management principles	Attributes		
1	Role of senior management	Offer equal opportunities for employees in decision-making		
		Give guidance in the vision of the organisation through consistent internal communication		
		Prioritise development and maintenance of the corporate brand to differentiate and maintain relevance		
2	Management of employees	Align employee values with organisational values		
		Provide consistent corporate communication about expected behaviour and corporate visual identity		
		Offer ongoing training and information to employees to maintain relevance.		
3	Long-term relationship with stakeholders	Communicate consistent with stakeholder groups to approach their needs and wants		
		Leverage corporate brand elements to shape customer relationships and strengthen perceptions of credibility and trust		
		Manage two-way communication channels to gather stakeholder feedback and adjust organisational communication to meet evolving needs		
		Communicate and reinforce the visual corporate identity through appropriate and coherent marketing mix to attract customers.		
4	Consistent corporate communication	Establish and maintain a unified communication framework that ensures the corporate brand promise is consistently conveyed across all internal and external communication channels		
		Promote transparency in communication efforts which strengthen trust		
		Facilitate two-way communication enabling customers to give feedback		
		Ensures consistent, relevant and transparent communication practices to cultivate a favourable corporate reputation.		

Keys:	Measures poor, requires significant and immediate attention	Measures weak, requires substantial and immediate attention	Measures average, require moderate attention	Measures well, requires monitoring and maintenance
Level of importance for Rooibos Ltd approach (in terms of digital marketing and corporate brand management)		Key management principles for Rooibos Ltd’s digital marketing and corporate brand management approach in terms of their Marketing and Communication Department and customer perceptions		
		Management principles	Attributes	
5		Align vision, corporate culture and corporate image	The alignment of the vision, mission and corporate image, ensures the portraying of favourable internal and external image and reputation of the corporate brand.	
6	Digital marketing strategy		The digital marketing strategy is an integrated approach and is utilised sufficiently to firstly identify the segmentation characteristics of the online audience which gives direction to manage content to satisfy customer needs.	
			The target market identification ensures clear message focus, brand relevance and emotional connection on digital platforms and maximum relevance to niche audiences aligned with their brand promise	
			Positioning ensures memorability and shareability among online audiences, distinct and favourable place in customer mind, strong <i>credibility</i> and authority in the market	
			Stakeholder identification ensures targeted communication; stakeholder focus on consistency and alignment between internal performance and external satisfaction	
7	Digital marketing plan		The situation analysis ensures the organisation fully understands the online brand perception and competitive standing, forming and strengthening corporate brand identity and digital performance	
			Identifying the objectives ensures corporate brand growth, customer loyalty and digital visibility	
			Strategy stage ensures the corporate brand is positioned consistently across digital platforms, reinforcing its identity and shaping meaningful long-term stakeholder relationships	
			Utilising tactics ensures day-to-day digital activities, communicate the corporate brand elements consistently and reach the right audience with appropriate messaging	
			The actions stage ensures that employees deliver digital corporate brand promises consistently, strengthening internal brand alignment and external corporate brand execution.	
			The controls stage ensures brand performance and digital sufficiency are continuously evaluated, maintaining corporate brand credibility and supporting long-term digital improvement and development	

Other principles include:

- Long-term relationship with stakeholders, consisting of
 - consistent communication to meet stakeholders' needs and wants;
 - leveraging corporate brand elements to strengthen perceptions of credibility and trust;
 - managing two-way communication channels to gather stakeholders' feedback and adjust communication to meet their needs; and
 - communicating and reinforcing the corporate visual corporate identity via appropriate and coherent marketing mix to attract customers.
- Consistent corporate communication, consisting of
 - establishing and maintaining a unified communication framework, which ensures that the corporate brand promise is conveyed consistently across all internal and external communication channels;
 - promoting transparency in communication efforts, which:
 - strengthens trust;
 - facilitates two-way communication enabling customers to give feedback; and
 - ensures consistent, relevant and transparent communication practices to cultivate a favourable corporate reputation.
- Align vision, corporate culture and corporate image that consists of the alignment of the vision, mission and corporate image, which ensures the portrayal of favourable internal and external image and reputation of the corporate brand.
- The digital marketing strategy, consisting of
 - an integrated approach that is utilised sufficiently to identify the segmentation characteristics of the online audience to provide direction to manage content that will satisfy customer needs;
 - identifying the target market to ensure clear message focus, brand relevance and emotional connection on digital platforms and maximum relevance to niche audiences;
 - ensuring alignment with their corporate brand promise;
 - positioning that ensures memorability and shareability among online audiences;
 - seeking a distinct and favourable place in customers' minds;
 - building a strong credibility and authority in the market;
 - conducting strong stakeholder identification, which ensures targeted communication; and

- striving for a stakeholder focus on consistency and alignment between internal performance and external satisfaction.
- Digital marketing plan, consisting of
- conducting a situation analysis, which ensures that the organisation fully understands the online brand perception and competitive standing, thereby forming and strengthening corporate brand identity and digital performance;
 - identifying the objectives, which ensures corporate brand growth, customer loyalty and digital visibility;
 - the strategy stage, which ensures that the corporate brand is positioned consistently across digital platforms, thereby reinforcing its identity and shaping meaningful long-term stakeholder relationships;
 - using tactics that ensure day-to-day digital activities that communicate the corporate brand elements consistently and reach the right audience with appropriate messaging;
 - the actions stage, which ensures that employees deliver digital corporate brand promise consistently, thereby strengthening internal brand alignment and external corporate brand execution; and
 - the controls stage, which ensures brand performance and digital sufficiency are continuously evaluated, thus maintaining corporate brand credibility and supporting long-term digital improvement and development.

With the general research question of the study answered; recommendations can be made to Rooibos Ltd for its digital marketing and corporate brand management. These recommendations are presented in the following section (see § 7.4).

7.4 ASSESSING ROOIBOS LTD'S DIGITAL MARKETING AND CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PLAN: FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

In the competitive Rooibos landscape of South Africa; where the price is decided by the South African Rooibos council (SARC) and technological influences; encouraged rooibos organisations such as Rooibos Ltd to considering moving marketing strategies to a more digital approach. Although the MD of Rooibos Ltd form part of the decision-makers of the set price; the opportunity for digital marketing strategies and plans became more crucial in executing marketing activities (South African Rooibos Council: 2025). However; Rooibos Ltd embarked on a new strategy for 2020–2025 which has led to a restricting process that changed the way of moving to a more

modern way of approaching their marketing. The strategy was renewed by incorporating a more digital approach; taking hands with an external digital agency that executes and implements strategies from Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department. A digital strategy with the same vision is considered as a new dream: To establish Rooibos internationally as a worldwide winner (Rooibos Limited: 2025).

This new structure resulted in an integrated system where Rooibos Ltd's Marketing and Communication Department and their external digital agency do strategy and planning together. The coordination of all marketing efforts moved towards a more digital approach without leaving the traditional marketing approach involving business-to-business behind. Thus; marketing efforts were no longer only managed offline but followed a streamlined process that uses digital platforms to reach and communicate with stakeholders; supporting both digital marketing and corporate brand management.

Digital marketing is the guiding plan that provides the roadmap for reaching the marketing objectives of the newly established dynamic of the Marketing and Communication Department of Rooibos Ltd while collaborating with their external digital agency. The overall vision is to build and maintain long-term customer relationships by satisfying customer's expectations; facilitating realistic return on investments; honouring commitments made to producers; suppliers and buyers; creating a productive working environment for employees; and contributing to the development of South Africa's economy and its people. In reaching these marketing objectives; Rooibos Ltd will uphold its dream of becoming the international Rooibos worldwide winner. The context of circumstances provided above prompted the general research question stated and answered in the previous section (see § 7.3).

Taking all the aforementioned into consideration; recommendations can be made to assist Rooibos Ltd with improving the key principles of its digital marketing and corporate brand management in terms of customer perception. These recommendations can further be divided into two groups; namely (1) recommendations for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing strategy and plan and (2) recommendations for corporate brand management. The proceeding section (see § 7.4.1) presents these recommendations.

7.4.1 Recommendations for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing strategy and plan

Two recommendations can be made for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing strategy and plan. These recommendations are presented in Table 7-2 hereunder.

Table 7-2: Recommendations for Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management

Recommendation 1: Defining and identifying digital marketing
Rooibos Ltd should consider conducting a strategic session regarding digital marketing. This session should include the directors; especially the marketing director; candidates in management positions and employees who have marketing and digital marketing responsibilities (also the external digital marketing agency). The aim of the session should be to define digital marketing by considering the digital marketing elements Rooibos Ltd apply in their communication with customers and also to identify what they want to achieve with each communication channel (website; SEO; Mobile marketing; email marketing; blogs and podcasts; social media marketing and online advertising). Furthermore; the following strategies should be identified: segmentation; target marketing; positioning and identification of stakeholders. A document capturing this information of Rooibos Ltd should result from this session. This document should be utilised when developing a strategic plan for digital marketing at Rooibos Ltd. Thereafter; the digital marketing plan should be discussed (situation analysis; objectives; strategy; tactics; actions and controls). Lastly; the value of digital marketing for Rooibos Ltd (sell; serve; speak; save costs and sizzle or develop the brand online) should be kept in mind.
Recommendation 2: Defining and identifying corporate brand management
Rooibos Ltd should consider conducting a strategic session regarding corporate brand management. This session should include the directors; especially the marketing director; candidates in management positions and employees who have marketing and digital marketing responsibilities (also the external digital marketing agency). The aim of the session should be to define digital marketing by looking at the corporate brand elements and to stipulate each element (vision; mission and corporate brand promise; corporate visual identity; corporate culture; corporate image; stakeholders and corporate communication). The next discussion should be about corporate brand management (role of senior management; management of employees; long-term stakeholder relationships; consistent corporate communication and aligning vision; corporate culture and corporate image). Lastly; the strategic value of corporate brand management should be discussed (differentiations; symbolism value; memorising value; corporate brand development and corporate reputation). A document capturing this information of Rooibos Ltd should result from this session.

The proceeding 7-3 and 7-4 presented recommendations for the different stages and is now followed by the execution of the digital marketing strategy and plan for Rooibos Ltd.

Table 7-3: Digital marketing strategy analysis example

Analyse the digital market through
Stage 1: Segmentation
The results obtained from the research indicated the following:
Demographic:
Age: 20–30 = 31.2%; 31–41 = 18.4%
Province of residence: Western Cape = 48.8%
Behavioural:

Device in possession: smartphone = 99.1%; laptop = 93.8%; desktop = 65.3%

Features that attract customers to social media platforms: information regarding product/service = 86.6%; information easy to understand = 85.1%; easy to interact on platforms = 71.6%; consistent visibility in posts and uniqueness = 69.5%; layout easy to follow = 86%; quick response from Rooibos Ltd = 69.3%; trustworthy messages = 81.5%; stay on top of trends = 63.8%.

Features that attract customers to follow social media platforms: interesting/Informative information (not just promotion messages); language is easy to understand; layout is easy to follow; easy to interact and get feedback; provides links to other informative platforms (such as the website); clear brand elements with which I can resonate.

Customer preference in how often to receive emails: Once every month = 48.4%

Information preference via email: new products = 85.8%; promotional emails = 65.7%; loyalty program offers = 64.9%

Digital channel preference: website = 63.6%; internet = 65.1%; social media = 88%; online advertising = 56%

Psychographic:

Customer information preference on what they want to see on social media: consistent posting = 68%; more offers = 83%; more videos = 69.6%; immediate and interesting news = 88.4%; more images = 66.3%; online shop connected to Facebook/Instagram = 83.5%; giveaways and competitions = 82.5%

Benefit:

Information preference from Rooibos Ltd: responding to customer needs and wants = 75.5%; offers in new product/services = 93%; product/service prices = 86.7%; promotions = 88.6%; values/benefits for customers = 84.4%

Stage 2: Target market

From the findings and customer segmentation above; Rooibos Ltd's target market group is identified as: concentrated targeting; showing the niche market in the segmentation stage being selected to better meet customer needs and to have a stronger positioning.

Stage 3: Positioning

The unique selling propositions (value proposition) by positioning the organisation were identified as the following:

- Market leaders
- Extensive product range
- Global distribution
- The very best quality
- Approach to business
- Research and development

Stage 4: Identifying: Stakeholders

The following stakeholders should be targeted:

- South Africans between the age of 20 and 40 years.
- Possible customers such as restaurants; coffee shops and organisations who develop rooibos products

Table 7-4: Digital marketing plan informing corporate brand management

Analyse the digital marketing plan: SOSTAC framework		
Situation analysis		
The results obtained from the research indicated that the following is the situation analysis: S (strength): website = 63.6%; internet = 65.1%; social media = 88%; online advertising = 56% W (weakness): less exposes channels perceived from customers. O (opportunities): leveraging – email marketing; SMS; YouTube and Twitter; website; Facebook; Instagram; online advertising; consistent posting; links to other sites/pages (such as websites); more offers; more videos; immediate and interesting news; more images; online shop connected to Facebook/Instagram; giveaways and competitions. T(threats): competitive organisations who could have more sales than Rooibos Ltd due to their marketing strategies and plans.		
Objectives		
Objectives for reaching the digital marketing communication goals with SMART criteria:		
Objective	Activity	Framework
To attract customers to follow Rooibos Ltd by raising awareness	Launching a digital advertising campaign on social media (Instagram and Facebook) across all provinces in South Africa about the positioning of Rooibos Ltd.	December to January
To ensure customer satisfaction via interactive engagement in digital platforms	Create personal content that is engaging and satisfies customer needs by posting them in a unique layout that speaks to each digital element.	Continuous
To ensure branding	Launch a digital campaign on all digital platforms that incorporates corporate brand elements in corporate visual elements.	February to July

To remind customers about Rooibos Ltd	Database marketing via emails. Sponsoring events and posting content on social media platforms and email marketing. Blogs and podcasts can be elevated by offline marketing activities.	August to December
Strategy		
The strategic intent to the plan is discussed in Tabel 7.1. Corporate brand management informed by the digital marketing plan is through: 1. Role of senior management: enforcing the corporate vision; mission and corporate culture. 2. Management of employees: elevating the corporate culture by keeping every employee informed with monthly meetings and access to two-way communication in terms of decision-making. 3. Long-term relationships with stakeholders: attract; satisfy customer needs; branding likability and maintaining a favourable reputation. 4. Consistent corporate communication: ensuring that the corporate vision; mission and corporate brand promise is communicated; as well as the corporate visual identity; corporate culture; corporate image; considering stakeholder needs/wants. 5. Align the vision mission and corporate image: all marketing activities and engagement with customers should represent strategy.		
Tactics		
This part of the plan requires bringing the goal; objectives and strategies together by: keeping key stakeholder management; budget planning and by having regulators in place.		
Actions		
In the action stage; the process continues to execute tactics. Actions are created for <i>who</i> does what in the form of a content calendar to easily navigate through what is prompted for which date; set to a planned budget to achieve certain objectives in a certain timeframe.		
Control		
The control stage is crucial for Rooibos Ltd to indicate how the organisation is bound to get there. Key point indicators and results are measured by controls. The reason for this is to see if the organisation is reaching their objectives. Data analytics and specific skill sets are important within the controls stage. Through this; the ROI calculation adjustments can be made; for example; execute control by reviewing traffic on paid social media campaigns and adapt the strategy and budget according to the success of the set objectives.		

7.5 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Any study has inherent and specific limitations and for this study; the following limitations were identified: The focus of the study was primarily on Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management; specifically examining Rooibos Ltd's approach thereof and customer perceptions in the South African context. While the study provided valuable insights into how digital marketing influences customer perceptions and brand loyalty; it was limited to the perspectives of customers within South Africa (not evenly spread across the country) and included only management's internal viewpoints and no other employee's viewpoints. This limitation restricts the comprehensiveness of understanding how digital marketing strategies are aligned internally with an organisation's brand identity and external communication efforts with; specifically; customers spreading across South Africa.

The use of a convenience sample rather than a randomised sample limits the generalisability of the findings. While the results are statistically reliable; they may not represent the broader customer base or industry.

Furthermore; research could explore integrated communication strategies beyond digital marketing; examining how organisations like Rooibos Ltd use a combination of digital marketing; public relations and traditional media to strengthen brand reputation. Additionally; exploring the role of emerging technologies; such as Artificial Intelligence could provide valuable insights into enhancing customer engagement and brand authenticity.

REFERENCES

Aaker, D.A. 2004. Leveraging the corporate brand. *California Management Review*, 46(3):6–18.

Andersson, M., Boateng, K. & Abos, P. 2024. *Validity and reliability: The extent to which your research findings are accurate and consistent*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/384402476>
Date of access: 28 Oct. 2025.

Armstrong, G., Adam, S., Denize, S., Volkov, M. & Kotler, P. 2018. *Principles of marketing*. 7th ed. Melborn: Pearson Education.

Aslam, M.B., Baig, M.N. & Shams, M.S. 2012. *How to establish corporate brand*. Sweden: Linnaeus University. (Dissertation – MBA).

Balmer, J.M.T. & Greyser, S.A. 2003. *Revealing the corporation*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Balmer, J.M.T., Powell, S.M. & Brexendorf, T.O. 2017. Advance in corporate branding. *Journal of Brand Management*.
https://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=oRV_DQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Balmer,+J.M.T.;+Powell;+S.M.+%26+Brexendorf;+T.O.+2017.+Advance+in+corporate+branding.+Journal+of+Brand+Management.+DOI+10.1057/9781352000085%5B&ots=KjD6eTSRJe&sig=RbZb34eEbgZTZGtYpUKSO9ajVCg&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

Balmer, J.M.T. 2021. Managerial corporate brand orientation: explication, significance and antecedents. *Journal of Brand Management*, 29(1):1–12.

Basu, P. 2023. The impact of digital marketing on consumer behaviour: A comprehensive review. *International Journal of Applied Science and Engineering*, 11(2):99–107.

Berthon, P., Ewing, M.T. & Napoli, J. 2008. Brand management in small to medium-sized enterprises. *Journal of Small Business Management*. 45(1):27–45.

Beverland, M. 2018. *Brand management: Co-creating meaningful brands*. London: SAGA Publications.

Blankson, C. 2016. Positioning a brand. In: Dall'Olmo Riley, F. & Singh, J., eds. *The Routledge companion to contemporary brand management*. Abbingdon: Routledge. pp. 162–185.

Burmann, C., Riley, N., Halaszovich, T. & Schade, M. 2017. Identity-based brand management: Fundamentals – strategy – implementation – controlling. DOI [10.1007/978-3-658-40189-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-40189-4)

Cant, M., Gowall, Y. & Dilotsotlhe, N. 2025. *International brand management*. Cape Town: Juta.

Cant, M.C. & Van Heerden, C.H. 2016. *Marketing management: A marketing perspective*. 2nd ed. Juta & Academi Press.

Chaffey, D. & Ellis-Chadwick, F. 2022. *Digital marketing: Strategy, implementation and practice*. 8th ed. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Cloete E. 2012. An exploration of the strategic implementation of marketing communication within social networking communication context. Potchefstroom: North-West University. (Thesis – MA).

Cloete E. 2016. Exploring the organisational structure of professional social media within a modern marketing communication context. Potchefstroom: North-West University. (Thesis-MA).

Cohen, J. 1988. *Statistical power analysis for behavioural sciences*. 2nd ed. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Conradie, T.J. 2016. The development of a recommended digital marketing strategy for Pan Macmillan, South Africa. Grahamstown: Rhodes University. (Thesis – MBA).

Cornelissen, J. 2017. *Corporate communication: A guide to theory & practice*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Creswell, J.W. 2009. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. 3rd ed. London: Sage.

David, M. & Sutton, C.D., 2011. *Social research: An introduction*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE.

De Chernatony, L. 2006. *From brand vision to brand evaluation*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier.

De Chernatony, L. & Riley, F.D. 1998. Modelling the components of the brand. *European Journal of Marketing*, 32(11/12):107401501090.

Degenaar, H.J. 2018. *Assessing the marketing communication plan for student recruitment at the North-West University*. Potchefstroom: North-West University. (Dissertation – MBA).

Doorley, J. & Fred, H. 2015. *Reputation management: The key successful public relations and corporate communication*. 3rd ed. New York, NY: Routledge.

Du Plooy, G.M. 2017. *Communication research: techniques, methods and applications*. 2nd ed. Claremont, Cape Town: Juta.

Dwivedi, Y.K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D.L., Carlson, J., Filieri, R., Jacobson, J., Jain, V., Karjaluoto, H., Kéfi, H., Krishen, A.S., Kumar, V., Rahman, M.M., Raman, R., Rauschnabel, P.A., Rowley, J., Salo, J., Tran, G.A. & Wang, Y., 2021. Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. *International Journal of Information Management*, 59:102168. <https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/163654/1/1-s2.0-S0268401220308082-main.pdf>

Ellis, P. and Steyn, H., 2003. *Statistical methods for research workers*. 1st ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Ellis, S.M. & Steyn, H.S., 2003. *Practical significance (effect sizes) in the analysis of differences*. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Flew, T. & Martin, F.R. 2022. *Digital platform regulation: Global perspective on internet governance*. Cham, CH: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foster, C. 2017. Level 6 Digital marketing strategy.
https://abeuk.online/sites/default/files/pdf/23042018upload/26JAN18/RQF-L6-Resources/6UDMS_StudyGuide.pdf

Gowpall, Y. 2024. *Digital advertising*. 1st ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Gowpall, Y., Coetzee, C., Dalziel, R., Mpinganjira, M., Rabie, C., Siebert, M., & Steenkamp, M. 2024. *Digital marketing: Trends and developments*. 1st ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Gray, N. & Fox, M. 2018. *Social media marketing: Step by step instructions for advertising your business on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn and various other platforms*. 2nd ed. [Kindle edition]. Noah Gey.

Grundling, N. 2015. *Personeel se persepsies van onderskeidelik die Noordwes Universiteit en Potchefstroomkampus se korporatiewe handelsmerk en -bestuur*. Potchefstroom: Noordwes Universiteit. (Thesis – MA).

Hanlon, A. 2025. How to create a marketing plan in 2025. <https://www.smartinsights.com/marketing-planning/create-a-marketing-plan/how-to-create-a-marketing-plan/> Date access: 10 Nov 2025.

Hatch, M.J. & Schultz, M. 2003. Bringing the corporation into corporate branding. *Journal of Marketing*, 37(7/8):1041–1064.

Hayhoe, G.F., Brewer, P.E. & Hughes, M.A., 2021. *A research primer for technical communication: methods, exemplars and analyses*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hiltunen, P. 2019. *Roadmap for branding an industry*. Haaga Helia: University of Applied Science. (Dissertation – MBA).

Iglesias, O., Ind, N. & Schultz, M. 2022. *The Routledge companion to corporate branding*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Johnson, R.B. & Christensen, L. 2014. *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Johnson, R.B. & Onwuegbuzie, A.J. 2004. Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7):14–26.

Kalam, K.K. 2020. Market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy adaptation for the global business of Vodafone Telecommunication Company. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)* 4(6):2454–6186

- Kapferer, J.N. 2008. *The new strategic brand management*. 4th ed. London: Kogan Page.
- Kaul, A. & Chaudhri, V. 2018. Corporate communication through social media: Strategies for managing reputation. *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, 43(3): 171–174.
- Keller, K.L. 2013. *Strategic brand management: Building[, measuring, and managing brand equity*. 4th ed. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education Limited.
- Keller, K.L. & Swaminathan, V. 2020. *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*. 5th ed. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education Limited.
- Khan, B.M. 2009. Corporate brand management: past, present and future. *Corporate Brand Management Perspective*, 12(1):21–36.
- Kingsnorth, S. 2016. *Digital marketing strategy: An integrated approach to online marketing*. 1st ed. London: Kogan Page.
- Knox, S. & Bickerton, D. 2003. The six conventions of corporate branding. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(7/8):998–1016. DOI: [10.1108/03090560310477636](https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560310477636)
- Kotler, P., Armstrong, G & Balasubramanian, S. 2024. Principles of marketing. Available from Pearson e-books ISBN: 978-1-292-44933-3. Date of access: 10 Nov. 2025.
- Krajnovic, A., Raguz, & Perkovic, 2021. A strategic and digital marketing in cultural institutions and the impact of the covid-19 pandemic – A comparative analysis of two case studies. *Interdisciplinary Description of Complex Systems*. 19(2):257–280.
- Kumar, V. & Mittal, S. 2020. Mobile marketing campaigns: Practice, challenges and opportunities. *International Journal of Business Innovation and Research*. DOI:[10.1504/IJBIR.2020.105996](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBIR.2020.105996)
- Lalaounis, S.T. 2021 *Strategic brand management and development*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lamb, C.W., Hair, J.F., McDaniel, C., Boshoff, C., Terblanche, N., Elliott, R. & Klopfer, H. 2019. *Marketing*. 6th ed. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Leavy, P. 2009. *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based and community-based participatory research approaches*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod, J.E. 2016. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. 11th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Le Grange, J.J. 2016. *Personeel se persepsies rakende die aard van Senwes hoofkantoor se korporatiewe handelsmerk en werknemerverhoudings*. Potchefstroom: Noordwes Universiteit. (Thesis – MA).

McCain, M. 2023. *Effective digital marketing strategies for increased engagement in real estate*. Arizona: Trident University International. (Tesis – PhD)

McCarthy, E.J. & Perreault, W.D. 1993. *Basic Marketing*. 11th ed. Homewood, IL: Von Hoffman Press.

McDonald, M. 2007. *Marketing plans: How to prepare them, how to use them*. 6th ed. Burlington, MA: Jordan Hill Oxford.

McGruer, D. 2020. *Dynamic digital marketing: Master the world of online and social media marketing to grow your business*. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/northwu-ebooks/reader.action?docID=5988987&ppg=9> Date of access: May 2023.

Mello, T.L. 2020. *Usage of Twitter by state-owned enterprises to communicate with customers: a case of Transnet South Africa*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town. (Dissertation – MCom). <http://hdl.handle.net/11427/32862>

Mocanu, A.A. & Szakal, A.C., 2023. *Digital marketing strategies: A comprehensive literature review*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377288649_Digital_Marketing_Strategies_A_Comprehensive_Literature_Review/fulltext/659e9be0af617b0d873b91cc/Digital-Marketing-Strategies-A-Comprehensive-Literature-Review.pdf?origin=publication_detail&tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uRG93bmVxYWQILCJwcmV2aW91c1BhZ2UiOiJwdWJsaWNh Date of access: 10 Nov. 2025.

Mouton, A. 2025. The blog and podcast project: Developing new media literacy and cross-functional skills. *Communication teacher*. 39(3):258–264.

Pallant, J. 2010. *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS*. 4th ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press/McGrawHill, Maidenhead.

Pashiera R.S., Sardjono W. 2024. The role of digital marketing as a company strategy to gain a competitive advantage in dealing with consumer behavior in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. *Journal of Economics and Business* 8(2):1396.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/384346897_The_Role_of_Digital_Marketing_as_a_Company_Strategy_to_Gain_a_Competitive_Advantage_in_Dealing_with_Consumer_Behavior_in_the_Era_of_the_Industrial_Revolution_40

Penalver, P. 2021. A step-by-step guide to structuring a digital marketing plan.

<https://www.wearemarketing.com/blog/a-step-by-step-guide-to-structuring-a-digital-marketing-plan.html>

Date of access: 3 Feb. 2022.

Pollák, F. & Markovič, P. 2022. *Brand management*. 1st ed. London: IntechOpen.

Potgieter, A. 2020. The influence of employer branding and employees' personal branding on corporate branding and corporate reputation. *African Journal of Business and Economic Research*, 15(2):107–133.

Raj, M.P.M. & Choudhary, A. 2008. Conceptual framework on corporate branding. *IUP Journal of Brand Management*, 5(1): 20–33.

Rampedi, I. 2008. The development path of rooibos tea – a review of patterns and lessons learnt for the commercialisation of other indigenous teas in South Africa. *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies*, 3(2):5–20.

Rana, N.P., Slade, E.L., Sahu, G.P., Kizgin, H., Singh, N., Dey, B., Gutierrez, A. & Dwivedi, Y.K. (2020) *Digital and social media marketing: Emerging applications and theoretical development*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Cham.

Richard, S. 2024. *Cronbach's alpha*. <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/science/cronbachs-alpha#background>

- Robertson, M. 2019. *What is digital branding and how to do it right: the ultimate guide*. <https://99designs.com/blog/logo-branding/digital-branding/> Date of access: 5 May 2021.
- Rooibos Limited. 2025. *About us*. <https://rooibosltd.co.za/index.php/about-us/> Date of access: 10 November 2025.
- Rosario, R.A., Roshini, R & Pillai, V. 2022. A study on digital marketing and its types: A deep review of pros and cons. *Integrated Journal for Research in Arts and Humanities*, 2(4):140–145.
- Rowles, D. 2018. *Digital branding: A complete step-by-step guide to strategy, tactics, tools and measurement*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Kogan Page.
- Rubio, N. & Yagüe, M.J. 2019. *Customer loyalty and brand management*. Available from MDPI e-books: <https://www.mdpi.com/books/pdfdownload/book/1561> Date of access: 17 Sept. 2022.
- Ryan, D. 2014. *Understanding digital marketing*. 3rd ed. London: Kogan Page Limited. <https://library.uniq.edu.iq/storage/books/file/Understanding%20Digital%20Marketing/166676471516.pdf>
- Sandeep, V. & Taneja, G. 2022. *Digital marketing strategies: A comprehensive guide*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/386250670_Digital_Marketing_Strategies_A_Comprehensive_Guide Date of access: 10 Nov. 2025
- Sathyanarayana, S.S., Pushpa, M.P. & Harsha, H. 2024. *Selecting the right sample size: Methods and considerations for social science researchers*. DOI: [10.35629/8028-1307152167](https://doi.org/10.35629/8028-1307152167) . Date of access: 11 Nov. 2025.
- Santiago, J.K. 2020. Integrating knowledge and employer brand management: A conceptual model. *Online Journal of Applied Knowledge Management*. <https://web-p-ebsscohost-com.nwulib.nwu.ac.za/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=8&sid=f7011446-0cd9-4334-a8e1-9548cec5c910%40redis>
- Sardjono, W. 2024. The role of digital marketing as a company strategy to gain a competitive advantage in dealing with consumer behaviour in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0. *Economics: Journal of Economics and Business*, 8(2):1396–1406.

Scharrer, E. & Ramasubramanian, S., 2021. *Quantitative research methods in communication: the power of numbers for social justice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Schoonenboom, J. & Johnson, R.B. 2017. How to construct a mixed methods research design. *Quality & Quantity*, 51:105–131. PMCID: [PMC5602001](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35602001/)

Sickler, J. 2020. *Create a digital marketing plan: 9 step strategic guide*.
<https://terakeet.com/blog/digital-marketing-plan/> Date of access: 1 May 2022.

Smith, PR. 2018. SOSTAC the guide to your perfect digital marketing plan.
<http://prsmith.org/sostac/> Date of access: 9 Sept. 2022.

South African Rooibos Council. Available at: <https://sarooibos.co.za/> Date of access: 10 Nov. 2025.

Steenkamp, J.B.E.M. 2017. *Global Brand Strategy: World-wise Marketing in the age of branding*. 1st ed. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature.

Steyn, B. 2000. *Model for developing corporate communication strategy*. *Journal for Communication Sciences in Southern Africa*, 19(2):1–33.

Storm, M. 2020. *Importance of digital marketing: 6 reasons why digital marketing is important*.
<https://www.webfx.com/blog/marketing/importance-of-digital-marketing/> Date of access: Jun. 2022.

Suharyati, H.N. 2023. The impact of SOSTAC's digital marketing planning strategy on marketing performance through competitive advantage. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Studies (IJEASS)*, 3(1). <file:///C:/Users/Fedsas1/Downloads/2023-Suharyati.dkk-DigitalMarketingSOSTAC-IJEAS.pdf>

Tataryntseva, Y., Pushkar, O., Druhova, O., Makarenko, A., Osypova, S. & Mordovtsev, O. 2022. Economic evaluation of digital marketing management at the enterprise. *Journal of Enterprise Technologies*, 2(13):24–30. doi: <https://doi.org/10.15587/1729-4061.2022.254485>

Tisdell, E.J., Merriam, S.B. & Stuckey-Peyrot, H.L., 2025. *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Available from EBSCO Host e-book collection. <https://download.e-bookshelf.de/download/0003/7195/84/L-G-0003719584-0007575839.pdf>

Urde, M. 2016. The brand core and its management over time. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 25(1):26–42.

Van Heerden, N., Mulder, D. & Sephapo, C.M. 2019. *Integrated marketing communication*. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Van den Braber, H., Dera, J., Joosten, J., & Steenmeijer, M. 2021. *Branding books across the ages: Strategies and key concepts in literary branding*.

<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/48378> Date of access: 17 Sept. 2022.

Visconti, R.M. 2020. *The valuation of digital Intangibles*. <https://link-springer-com.nwulib.idm.oclc.org/book/10.1007/978-3-030-36918-7> Date of access: May 2023.

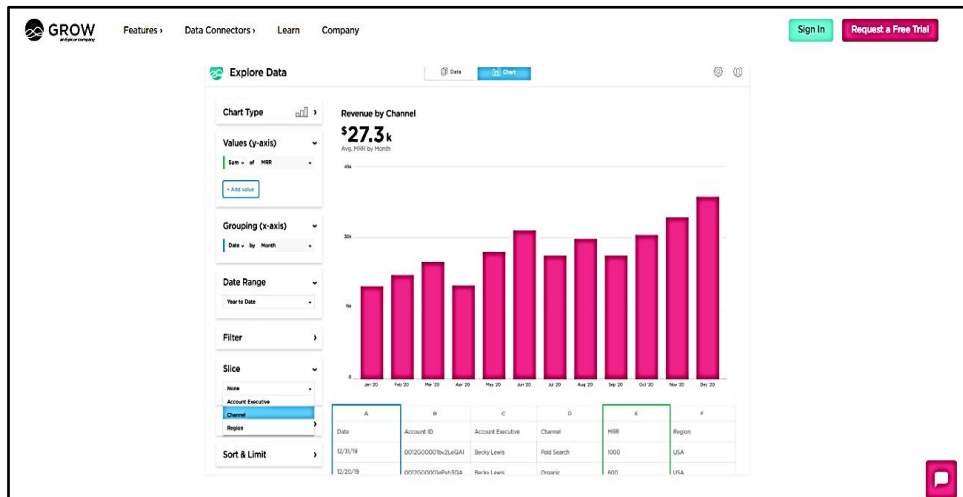
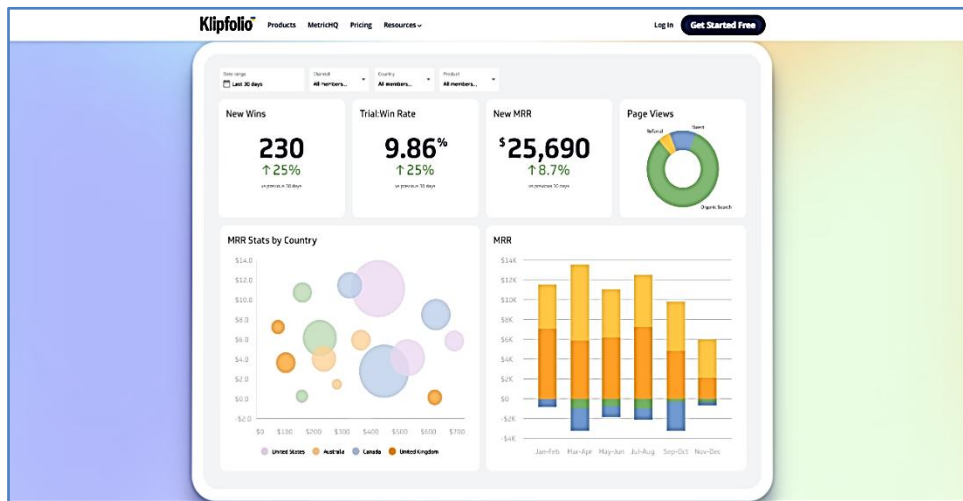
Wang, J., Li, M., Li, C., Li, D. Lin, G. 2022. Revisit the formation of destination brand personality. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21:1–14.

Wepener, M.L. 2014. *The development of a new instrument to measure client-based corporate reputation in the service industry*. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch. (Thesis – PhD).

Wildali, M.M. 2025. Digital marketing: Strategies, challenges, and opportunities in the digital technology. *Conference Paper*. Date of access: 10 Nov. 2025.

Zahay, D. 2021. Advancing research in digital and social media marketing. *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, 29(1):125–139.

ADDENDUM A: IMAGES OF AUTOMATED MARKETING DATA AND REPORTING PLATFORM



The TapClicks website landing page features a blue background with the TapClicks logo at the top left. The main headline reads: "The #1 Automated Marketing Data And Reporting Platform". Below the headline, a quote from Bill Macaitis, former CMO of Slack, states: "TapClicks has put together a truly remarkable marketing operations platform. This is a must-have for marketers in this day and age. They automate the ingestion of huge volumes of data and the campaign executables associated with that data." To the right of the text is a video player showing a person using a tablet. The video player has a play button and a volume icon. The TapClicks logo is also visible in the bottom right corner of the video player.

ADDENDUM B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. Demographic information
a) How long have you been in your current position? b) Please describe your key performance areas. c) In your opinion, do you trust the role of senior management in judgment and decision they make? d) What are the different functions, responsibilities and activities of the Marketing and Communication Department at Rooibos Ltd? e) How big is the team responsible for the corporate brand and digital marketing and what are their responsibilities? f) What role does senior management play in terms of the corporate brand inside the organisation?
2. Digital marketing
a) Which digital channels do you use to engage with customers, why and how frequently? b) How do you manage the digital marketing plan generally? What guidelines or principles do you follow? c) When you do the situational analysis of the organisation's online environment; how do you identify what types of principles can be seen as strengths/weakness/opportunities/threats? (For example; does social media give a positive experience to customers? / Are newsletters informative and valid in terms of the corporate brand? – how do you identify this in research?)

- d) In your opinion, what are the advantages (what do you get from stakeholders) of using corporate brand elements in formulating digital marketing campaigns? (strategy)
- e) How do you identify the stakeholder needs and wants and address them accordingly? (Positioning through value proposition - what you can offer)
- f) When you formulate digital marketing strategies to build and have long-term customer relationships, what aspects do you consider in satisfying their needs?
- g) How do you evaluate or measure the success of your current digital marketing plans? (for example, social media campaigns and emails)
- h) Can you describe how successful the current digital marketing plan is and why you think so?
- i) In your opinion, are the skills of employees delivering the plan, digital team structure and systems in place sufficient and function correctly?
- j) How do you review campaigns against objectives set out for them? (for example, using google analytics, Klipfolio, Insights etc.)
- k) Do you think it is important to regularly review and adapt digital marketing plans to stay relevant and do you think the department lives up to it?
- l) Can you describe how you monitor and control the whole digital marketing plan weekly or monthly? (evaluate goals, strategies, structure, digital performance – for example Gantt Chart illustrates strategies are points in progress meeting the objectives. Weekly, monthly)
- m) What are the things you would organize differently in formulating the next communication plan and strategies?

- n) What value do you want to accomplish by marketing your brand and product on digital communication channels?
- o) What do you want customers to feel when they visit your communication channels? (such as social media/ website?)

3. Corporate brand management

- a) What is the vision and mission of Rooibos Ltd? And how do you communicate it to stakeholders?
- b) Describe your view regarding the brand promise and values communicated to customers through for example, your behaviour, visual elements and communication?
- c) What is your definition of Rooibos Ltd's culture and personality?
- d) What image does the organisation want to portray to customers in terms of relationship building? (Trustworthy, likable) And how do you do it?
- e) Describe typical stakeholders of a profitable organisation such as Rooibos Ltd?
- f) How does the department build and maintain stakeholders for long-term relationships?
- g) What is your formed image of the organisation and also the perceived reputation regarding the organisation and its values?
- h) What do you think is the image Rooibos Ltd want customers to have of the organisation and also the perceived reputation regarding the organisation and its values?
- i) Is consistent corporate communication with customers important and how do you manage their feedback in response?

- j) How do you differentiate yourselves from other similar companies?
- k) What do you want to achieve with your corporate brand management you portray to stakeholders? (Such as reputation, differentiation)
- l) How do you create a memorable experience to customers via the corporate brand?
- m) How do you use the corporate brand to develop the corporate brand?
- n) How do you maintain a favourable reputation with customers?

ADDENDUM C: ONLINE SURVEY DESIGN

Section A: Demographic information			
1. What age group are you in?			
20–30		51–60	
31–40		61–70	
41–50		71 and above	
2. In which province do you live?			
Eastern Cape		Mpumalanga	
Free State		North West	
Gauteng		Northern Cape	
KwaZulu-Natal		Western Cape	
Limpopo			
c) In your possession, select the items that are applicable and used in your everyday life. (Check all that apply)			
Smartphone		Desktop	
Laptop		Tablet	
d) Should you use other devices to have access to the internet, please indicate them by typing in the typing field.			

Section B: Opinions on Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing				
1. What objectives best describe Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing?				
(Check all that apply)				
Old-fashioned	Distinctiveness	Authentic	Consistent (create awareness)	Flexible
Easy to use/follow	Gives emotional connection	Gives good online experience	Visible	Quick response
Transparent	Honest communication			
2. You are exposed to Rooibos Ltd's online campaigns in the following channels:				
(Check all that apply)				
Facebook	SMS	Twitter	Website	Instagram
Google	YouTube	Blogs and podcasts	LinkedIn	Online advertising
Emails	Other (remember they need to type something on the other box)			
3. Indicate which features attract you to use Rooibos Ltd's social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram)				
(Check all that apply)				

Information regarding product/service	Easy to interact on platforms	Diverse layouts	Clear brand elements (such as logo and images)	Trustworthy messages
Information easy to understand	Consistent visibility in posts and uniqueness	Layout easy to follow	Quick response from Rooibos Ltd	Stay on top of trends
Other (participant typing space)				
4. Indicate how these features attract you to opt in and follow Rooibos Ltd's platforms (Check all that apply)				
Interesting/Informative information (not just promotion messages)				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
It is easy to purchase products online				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Language is easy to understand				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Layout is easy to follow				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Easy to interact and get feedback				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Provides links to other informative platforms (such as the website)				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Clear brand elements which I can resonate with				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
5. You are satisfied with interactive engagement with Rooibos Ltd in the following platforms				
Facebook				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Instagram				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Email				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Website				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Internet				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
SMS				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Blogs and podcasts				

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Online advertisements				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
6. You would like to be exposed to information about Rooibos Ltd regarding the following matters:				
Corporate social responsibility	Offers in new product/services	Promotions		
Responding to customer needs and wants	Product/service prices	Values/benefits for customers	I so not want any information	
7. You would like to see more of the following on social media:				
(Check all that apply)				
Consistent posting	More offers	More feedback on requests form customers	More images	Giveaways and competitions
Links to other sites/pages (such as website)	More videos	Immediate and interesting news	Online shop connected to Facebook/Instagram	Other (field for participant feedback)
8. In your opinion, you would like to receive emails on a consistent basis of:				
Daily	Once a week	Once every 2 weeks	Once every month	Not at all
9. Information you would like to receive via email:				
New products	Corporate social responsibility	Crisis management if necessary	Loyalty program offers	
Latest news concerning customers	Payment options	Promotional emails	Links to other sites	Other (field for participant feedback)
10. You would like to see more of Rooibos Ltd through the following:				
(Check all that apply)				
Website	Mobile marketing	Blogs and podcasts	Online advertisements	
Internet	Emails	Social media	Other (field for participant feedback)	
11. There is definitely space for Rooibos Ltd to improve in their digital marketing so you can relate to the corporate brand.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Section C: Opinions on Rooibos Ltd's branding				
1. You like the way Rooibos Ltd represents themselves through clear symbols, behaviour, communication and employee service.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
2. Your loyalty towards a corporate brand increase when you are satisfied with the brand.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
3. You are passionate about brands you are loyal to and trust.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
4. You are satisfied, stay loyal and purchase products/service of a corporate brand that communicate a consistent, transparent and interactive brand.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
5. You see Rooibos Ltd operates consistently in communicating their values, brand promise, they are transparent and interactive with clients				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
6. Which of the following best describe Rooibos Ltd's communication?				
(Check all that apply)				
I. Rooibos Ltd's communication offer useful information and new offerings.				
II. Rooibos Ltd's communication is consistent.				
III. Rooibos Ltd's communication is professional.				
IV. Rooibos Ltd's communication is reliable.				
V. Rooibos Ltd's communication reflects clear organisational vision, culture and image that is favourable in the eyes of clients.				
Rooibos Ltd's communication offer useful information and new offerings.				
7. You value the following features of Rooibos Ltd which form a positive corporate image and favourable reputation:				
Consistency	Visible	Transparency	Brand promise	
Distinctiveness	Authenticity	Emotional connection		
8. The reputation of brand is key for you in maintaining brand loyalty.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
9. Rooibos Ltd has a good reputation.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
10. Rooibos Ltd satisfies your needs and wants as a customer in terms of service and communication.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

ADDENDUM D: RECRUITMENT LETTER



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Date 06/10/2025

RE: APPLICATION FOR POTENTIAL SUPPORT WITH RECRUITMENT

Dear Mr/Mrs

My name is Leney Vos, I currently serve as Master student. At present, I am affiliated with the NWU Potchefstroom. My research specialisation centres on Communication and the new age in which communication and marketing takes place.

At present I am preparing for my envisaged study with the preliminary title of "Rooibos Ltd's approach to corporate brand management and digital marketing." The focus and objectives of the study include digital marketing and corporate brand management principles. In-keeping with this, as the primary investigator, I will seek to conduct semi-structured Zoom-interview with participants of your Communication and Marketing team. I will use Zoom video-conferencing interviews in respect of your time, health, safety and traveling costs. Participants may also, if they so prefer, complete a self-administered questionnaire with the same questions used during the interviews. The study seeks to contribute to the field of communication studies.

The research proposal for the present study will be reviewed by the Scientific Committee of the Faculty of Humanities' during 2024. The next step requires ethical approval to undertake the empirical component of the study (i.e. the *method of data collection*). Given the potential sensitivity of the topic and the importance I ascribe to undertake an ethically sound academic inquiry into the topic, I hereby wish to request your assistance. As part of the ethics application, I am required to submit the following documentation:

- My approved research proposal.
- An informed consent statement that should be signed in advance of any interview by myself and the participant who voluntarily consents to participate in the study. This document clearly demarcates the title of the study; my name, organisational affiliation and contact details; the main objectives of the study; the role (rights and obligations) of the researcher and the participants and most importantly, how I will seek to observe academically ethical principles and procedures (e.g. ensuring the anonymity, confidentiality and privacy of participants; avoiding the infliction of any emotional, psychological, physical, economic and social harm on them and to obtain the voluntary informed consent from participants before commencing with *method of data collection*).
- A letter of agreement from particular individuals, institutions and/or organisations who agree to assist the researcher with gaining access to potential participants for the study – *hence my letter to you*. This process involves the following:
 - As soon as ethical clearance is obtained and an Ethics Number is awarded for the study, the researcher will forward a summary of the study to the said individual, institution and/or organisation who has consented to assist the researcher to recruit potential participants for her study.
 - The said individual of the organisation, who has consented to supporting the researcher, will be requested to do semi-structured interviews via Zoom with the researcher as well as emailing online questionnaires to consumers who may possibly wish to participate in the study. Potential participants may then *voluntarily* fill out the survey with the possibility to win a prize of R2 000 funded by the researcher. Online survey participants may contact the researcher for further information about the study.
 - In terms of the latter, the researcher will gladly oblige to forward the informed consent statement and interview schedule to the participants beforehand, if they request this.
 - The researcher will also gain approval from a registered psychologist (*if applicable*), to assist participants if they experience any unforeseen emotional, social and/or psychological distress

during or directly following the interview. The researcher will, of course, conclude the interview at any time at the request of the participant.

- o The above procedures therefore foreground the fact that the researcher will *at no time* during their study, directly contact participants if the latter have not already agreed to participate in the current study beforehand. Any contact from the researcher will be restricted to gaining informed consent from the participant and arranging and conducting the *fieldwork*. The researcher will also, at the request of the participant, share the final draft of the research report with the participants for member-checking before submission for examination or eventual publication of the results in peer-reviewed academic journals.

Based on the preceding background to the study and the sensitivity surrounding its thematic focus, the undersigned party hereby wishes to request your participation in assisting the researcher to gain access to/recruit participants through the noted measures above to participate in the study. You are, of course, welcome to note additional requirements from your side to further inform your decision and to also safeguard yourself and the participants.

If you are in agreement and willing to assist me in this regard, either complete and sign the document on the following page and return to me at your earliest convenience. Alternatively, you are welcome to draft your own official letter in which you stipulate your consent to assist with the recruitment of participants through the measures noted above.

If you require any further information from myself, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Leney Vos
Email address: lenevaneeden97@gmail.com
Cell phone number: 079 050 8487



RE: AGREEMENT TO ASSIST WITH PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT FOR THE STUDY

I, _____, identity number / staff number: _____, affiliated with _____, hereby acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the request from Leney Vos to assist her in gaining access to/helping to recruit participants (i.e. being a participant in the qualitative research). I hereby express my willingness to voluntarily share information regarding the title, background, objectives and ethical considerations (i.e. the recruitment material for the study) with the potential participants on my personal/the company's (please select):

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Social media platforms | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |
| • Online website/s | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |
| • Email message-threads | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |
| • WhatsApp groups | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |
| • Other (please specify) _____ | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |

I further acknowledge that:

- I may contact Leney Vos if I require any further information regarding the study.
- That I will not be required to contact individual persons directly to participate in the study. I will simply | share the noted information about the study and participants on the indicated platforms above, in order for interested parties to *voluntarily* contact (*the researcher*) to gain more information or to schedule *the fieldwork*.

Full name(s) and surname: _____

ADDENDUM E: ROOIBOS LTD'S CUSTOMER RECRUITMENT LETTER

Recipients

NWU MASTERS RESEARCH PROJECT

STAND A CHANCE TO WIN R2 000!

I am a Master student at the NWU doing my Thesis on Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.

Please fill out the survey below at the link provided. **About the survey:**

- This survey is absolutely voluntary.
- It will take 15 minutes of your time.
- Your feedback will enable me to complete my Chapter on customers' views regarding Rooibos Ltd's digital marketing and corporate brand management.
- If you decide to proceed in participating in my research project please know that personal information will be kept confidential.
- Your feedback will only be utilised for outcomes to this study.
- This survey must be completed within the next few months. (from March 2025)
- **You stand a chance to win a cash prize of R2 000.**

<https://forms.gle/6HWUYkDePwJTEYX26>

Ts & Cs apply:

Due to the POPI act, your personal information will be handled confidentially. To enter the prize winning project is optional.

Indicate your name and email address on the survey.

The prize winner will be randomly selected via Wheel of names.

(Link to the online survey)

If you have any questions with regards to the survey or outcomes at the end of my study, please contact me

lenevancendeen97@gmail.com

079 050 8487

Kind regards

Leney

ADDENDUM F: ETHICAL APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics
Committee (BaSSREC)**

**Faculty of Humanities Ethics Office for Research,
Training and Support**
Tel: 018 285 2457

Email: Erhabor.Idemudia@nwu.ac.za

Senate Committee for Research Ethics
Tel: 016 103 4446
Email: Feziwe.Mseleni@nwu.ac.za

23 August 2024

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)** on **21/08/2024**, the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: An assessment of Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management.

Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Prof L. Holtzhausen and Ms. R. Isaacs

Student/Research Team: L. van Eeden (27168360)

Ethics number:

N	W	U	-	0	1	0	2	8	-	2	4	-	A	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Institution Study Number Year Status
Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

Application Type: Single Study

Commencement date: 21/08/2024

Risk: Low risk

Expiry date: 21/08/2025

Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- The study leader/supervisor (principal investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the BaSSREC:
 - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and

- without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.
- The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the BaSSREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRE and BaSSREC reserves the right to:
 - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;
 - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;
 - withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the BaSSREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;
 - submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- BaSSREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via BaSSREC-Admin@nwu.ac.za.

The BaSSREC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the BaSSREC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof. E. Idemudia

Chairperson NWU Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

ADDENDUM G: LETTER FROM THE COPY-EDITOR



Santisa Viljoen
Academic Editing Services Pty Ltd
Company registration number: 202322252507
Tax number: 9571693200

110 Scorgie Street
Baillie Park
Potchefstroom
2531
santisa.viljoen@outlook.com
082 371 4321
02 December 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This to confirm that I assisted Ms Leney Vos with the copy-editing of her MA dissertation while she was preparing the manuscript for assessment. The title of the research study is: *Rooibos Ltd's approach to digital marketing and corporate brand management*.

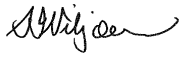
I went through the dissertation making corrections and suggestions with respect to:

- Grammar, spelling, and sentence construction, with adherence to UK English;
- Stylistic adjustments suitable for academic writing and in adherence with the client's requests;
- Structural suggestions, where necessary, to improve overall coherence;
- Technical aspects, including headings, numbering and spacing and the quality of illustrations, examples, tables and figures;
- References, including verification of in-text citations and conformity of the reference list to prescribed guidelines stipulated by the NWU Harvard style; and
- Cross-referencing in-text citations with the reference list.

I only did some light editing of the annexures as these had already been sent to the relevant parties prior to the copy-editing process.

I am willing to enter into further discussions with the candidate and/or her supervisor(s) if necessary. I may be contacted at the above-mentioned address for further information or for confidentiality purposes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Santisa Viljoen', with a stylized, cursive script.

Prof. Santisa Viljoen