

DIGITISATION IN B2B MARKETING ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

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Over the span of the past two decades there have been major changes in marketing due to digital. Digitization has got an evident impact on marketing as a discipline, which is currently getting shaped by digital and digital is getting shaped by marketing (markets and actors) (Stephen&Lamberton, 2016). This paper examines the existing literature on digital impact on marketing in B2B environment and will provide a detailed review in this arena. The review tackles what new technology has brought about, regarding changes in traditional marketing models and techniques. This does not only concern technology for communicating, delivering value and maintaining value, but also changes in products and services, which were not imaginable by the scholarship before. Talking about firms' strategies and tactics referring to business-to-business (B2B) interactions, they are currently going through major transformations as well. Some of the latter include the appearance of infomediaries (e.g. e-Bay), a chance to mitigate competition with better options for market segmentation and B2B auctions (Yadav&Pavlou, 2014).

By introducing the framework, the purpose of this paper is to get familiar with the research that has been done in the field already and propose a strong research agenda for the future work. Some of the research opportunities include making the field of digital marketing more integrated and holistic by opening the currently "black-boxed" technology and getting more insights from practice. Specifically, there is a noticeable gap that have been identified in the literature already, such as lack of focus on B2B interactions in digital marketing. Further, this explains a plethora of papers being consumer-oriented and lacking marketing managers' perspective on digitization. Academia as well wonders if marketing practitioners in firms are skilled enough to recognize the value of new technology and therefore decide to adopt it in the process. The latter opens many more questions and new research opportunities.

This detailed review, outlining research questions and opportunities, will give a clear image of what scholars have to focus upon in their work. New future produced work will then establish a bridge between academia and practice, which are now in asynchrony (Kumar, 2017). Furthermore, filling the current gaps, will add to more strategic mindset in digital marketing, which contributes to integration and more holistic approach to it. Finally, the review as well emphasises that in the moment of now, the innovation and change are ongoing and have no defined final destination (Simkin&Quinton, 2016).

Keywords: digitization, digital marketing, digital technology, strategic digital marketing, B2B, internet

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INTRODUCTION

Given digital technology causing changes in marketing, a new phenomenon - digital marketing comes to existence (Stephen&Lamberton, 2016). What is more, the latter reflects the need for a shift in marketing paradigm (Hoffman&Novak, 1997, Quinton, 2013, Quinton&Simkin, 2016). What is more, due to the flux and turbulent, unpredictable, rapid, unprecedented environment, marketing arena constantly calls for new transformation (Barthon&Hulbert, 2003, Simkin&Quinton, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016). However, changes in marketing paradigm have so far been rare, as well as the urgency for changes in marketing strategies and models (Carter&Paramenswaran, 2012).

Marketers need to make wise decisions and be developing market capabilities to keep company's competitive advantage on a satisfactory level. The latter specifically relates to shaping new marketing models, strategies and techniques (Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Verhoef et al, 2017).

This digital marketing review will give a systematic overview of immerse changes marketing has been a subject to to date (see: The "Evolution of digital marketing" table). Starting out with papers introducing new medium – internet, in 1991 (Glazer) and finishing up with most recent discoveries in the field, in 2017.

As much as the latter provided answers, that much it raised questions, therefore this review will provide the future research agenda, focus being put on B2B marketing, digitisation, new medium – internet, strategic marketing, marketing strategy formation, practical insights to strategic digital marketing and marketing practitioners' perspective.

Some of the included in the agenda is to make marketing be whole and holistic again, rather than fragmented Carter&Paramenswaran (2012), as well more practical insights and bridging academic with practical marketing are more than needed (Kumar et. al., 2016).

This paper is aiming at touching upon unspecified interaction in digital marketing, as well as B2C and B2B interactions and is as well aiming at identifying gaps that lead to forming a strong research agenda. The following core themes were identified from the examined literature around digital marketing and this paper is focusing upon: B2B marketing, digitization, digital technology, mainly new medium – internet, strategic digital marketing, digital marketing strategy, academic and practical digital marketing and computer-mediated vs. capability-mediated (marketing) environment.

These are the areas in digital marketing that will be examined, which will lead to the core of this paper – digital marketing in B2B environment.

A REVIEW METHOD

First a brief scan through the literature on Google scholar on digital marketing was made. The search was not year or journal specific, however, it was conducted to get a brief feeling of what it is out there to examine.

From that search seminal articles were selected to read through and get a further idea of what is it existing on the topic and where are debates amongst scholars leading to. These were the following articles: Glazer (1991), Hoffman&Novak (1996), Hoffman&Novak (1997), Yadav&Pavlou (2014), Lamberton&Stephen (2016), Quinton&Simkin (2016) and Kannan&Li (2017). The first three were selected to define the early starts of digital marketing and the recent ones were selected to get familiar with how far the debates have come to and to select keywords and phrases to conduct further searches.

A starting point of 1991 was selected because we believe Glazer then first solidly spoke about the impact of information technology on marketing. Moreover, the author took information and / or knowledge as assets to be managed in terms of building the strategy. The topic was then developed further and extended by several authors, as well Hoffman&Novak (1996 and 1997), speaking of computer-mediated environment and e-commerce. The end-point of this review are articles published in 2017 (e.g.: Kannan&Li, 2017).

To gather appropriate articles (arena: digital marketing), a strategy for the search had to be decided. Systematic search of the existing literature was done, with the use of two big databases: EBSCO Host and Web of Science. Both of the mentioned are databases of articles, where one sets limiters in order to get desired results. The limiters for this systematic search were set as: peer-reviewed, full text, published between 1991 and 2017, publication type: academic journal, document type: Article, collection: Social science (Search modes: Boolean/Phrase).

Keywords and phrases used in the search
Digital marketing
Strategic marketing
Marketing management
Marketing strategy
Internet marketing
Online marketing
e-marketing
Industrial marketing
Electronic commerce
e-commerce
Computer-mediated / computer-mediated environment
Electronic marketing
e-marketing
Marketing on the internet / marketing and internet
Electronic marketplace

Next step was comprised of excluding articles that were not a match to the topic of the research. The first step exclusion was done by examining the title, abstract, introduction and conclusion of articles. The excluded topics / areas were: purely business-to-consumer orientation, pure retailing, purely consumer oriented, service digital marketing, international digital marketing, global branding and local branding.

Further inspection of the list of articles was done by content, however, still having in mind the criteria from the above paragraph (topics that were excluded).

The selection went on with citation analysis of every relevant article. That is from the list of relevant articles, references were reviewed and chosen for further examination for relevance by similar than above criteria and process.

Given the gathered relevant articles in the digital marketing arena, analysis and identification of gaps followed.

CHANGES CAUSED BY DIGITIZATION

This literature review is aiming at providing a good presentation of changes that digitisation caused in business environment, particularly in marketing environment. This section touches upon various sections in marketing that have been impacted by technological change. As well it provides a definition around digital technology, to which this literature review refers to.

There is a colourful array of digital technology that has been causing changes in marketing paradigm (Quinton&Simkin, 2016), such as smart cards, biometrics, enhanced computer speed, GPS tracking, smart phones, smart products, internet of things and other (Shugan, 2004, Kannan&Li, 2016). However, this literature review will mostly focus upon the **internet as a digital marketing tool** (Huizingh, 2002, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016).

Even if calling it digital technology, causing digitisation in digital environment, what scholarship really means by that is the arousal of internet (Tackas&Freiden, 1998: originally designed for U.S. Defence department in 1989 and put in public in 1991) that slowly started to take over the marketplace in a role of a new channel (Varadarajan&Yadav, 2002, Geykens et. al., 2002).

From the very beginning scholarship believed that internet would come with its positive and negative sides to marketing. The latter to be easier to debate and deal with (Huizingh, 2002). Moreover, scholars in the past research claim there were both, opportunities and shortcomings it was bringing Watson&Zinkhan (1997). First, opportunities, such as a chance to communicate with stakeholders easier and quicker, information richer contents, reaching out to wider audiences, which could improve the image of a firm, as well as its reputation. However, the second, drawbacks, such as risk of inefficiency, risk of lack of knowledge on the Web, lack of studies conducted on how new medium influenced marketing strategies, lesser face-to-face interaction, no tangible access to commodities, payment security, privacy issues, lack in procedures of returning products (Huizingh, 2002, Watson&Zinkhan, 1997).

As traditional marketing borders have been redrawn and the map redrafted, it is useful to observe the change in the following people, subjects or concepts separately (Humpreheys, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016): 1.marketing, marketers and marketing activities, 2.customers, 3.costs, expenses and prices, 4.communication, 5.marketing strategies, 6.research methods.

Marketing, marketers and marketing activities

First, with the emergence of internet, naming the environment “hyper media computer-mediated”, scholars think that **world wide web** is a phenomenon that calls for a new foundation to understand the role of marketing (Hoffman&Novak, 1996, Hoffman&Novak, 1997). However, plenty of issues, such as privacy, access, presence, identity, consumer confidence and social interaction, were still under-researched (Hoffman&Novak, 1997).

Slowly, new conceptualisations arise, which include findings on online transactions in business-to-business environment (Grewal, Cormer and Mehta, 2001). From that time on, not only customers, but also strategies are starting to be put in the foreground of debates (Srinivasan et. al., 2002).

It is starting to be noticed that traditional marketing mix as well gets influenced by new media (Trim, 2002), as well due to an empowered consumer that is recognised to be managed more carefully (Kucuk, 2009, Urban, 2004, Kannan&Li, 2017), as they, as important stakeholders to a company cause changes to traditional marketing models (Deighton&Kornfield, 2009).

Customers

Second, apart from marketers, customers as well get affected by internet. Not long after the emergence, customer starts to be perceived (theorised) differently - not passive as before, but rather active and engaged (Hoffman&Novak, 1997). Predictions about the latter include “being involved in the design of new products, the development of product and marketing strategy and the innovation of content” (Hoffman&Novak, 1996, p. 29).

Customers are faced with endless choices, which enables them to browse for products online limitlessly (Iyenga&Lepper, Schwartz, 2000), then recommendation agents and comparison matrices come to use to help customers organise their searches (Haubl&Trifts, 2000). To help them more, search engines are identified (Bradlow&Schmittlein, 2000) and websites contribute to their online experience (Brown et. al., 2007).

Costs, expenses and prices

Third, due to internet-empowered customer, retailers get challenged, given there is a vast amount of choice for the same product available online (Broniarczyk et. al., 1998, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Quinton&Simkin, 2016, Yadav&Pavlou, 2014, Leeflang et. al., 2014). For the latter reason, prices are going down and competitions is increasing. At the same time firms realise that with having internet as an option, they can segmentize the market and therefore increase market power and decrease competition.

Communication

Fourth, internet causes change in the nature and the way business and customers communicate between each other. Moreover, instead of one-way, communication turns into two-way from 1998 on (Lamberton&Stephen, 2016). Soon after, “infomediaries”¹ come to existence (Chen et. al., 2002, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016). Interactions, such as consumer-to-consumer, consumer-to-business, business-to-consumer and business-to-business get examined theoretically (Yadav&Pavlou, 2014).

The occurrence of online communities contributes to great shifts in customers’ online participation, as much as offline lives with new perspectives, new ways of communicating

¹ An infomediary is “*an internet company that gathers and links information on particular subjects on behalf of commercial organizations and their potential customers*” (English Oxford dictionary, 2018).

and perceiving things, which contributes to the evolvement of UGC and WOM (Kannan&Li, 2017). The launch of all the social media and devices, enables users' co-creation of products online and therefore constant interaction with companies (Hoyer et. al., 2010).

Marketing strategies

Fifth, due to vast amount of novelties brought by digitisation, marketing strategists have to form smart, effective and well-thought through digital marketing strategies, developing the right capabilities and ideally exploiting new technology to the fullest (Phillips&Halliday, 2008, Carter&Paramenswaran, 2012).

There are five types of digital marketing capabilities (calling them modes), starting with immersive mode, then information mode, relational mode and confluent mode. The latter helps build a strong digital strategy that is a balance between business objectives and ethical capabilities. "Digital market business becomes the adaptive enterprise" (Carter, 2009, p.19) already in late 90s (Haeckel, 1999, Bradley&Nolan, 1998).

To "**sense and respond**" to threats or opportunities from outside of the company, managers need to build an **adaptive (digital) strategy, specifically prospector or analyser type of it**, which takes into account external changes and develops internally accordingly (Magretta, 2002, Sinivasan et. al., 2002, Yadav&Varadarajan, 2002, Phillips&Halliday, 2008, Chaffey, 2010, Day, 2011). The latter can relate to changing business culture that reflects certain norms and behaviours accordingly (Slater et. al., 2011).

Day (2011) states that that division between the "**inside-out**" and "**outside-in**" approach to form a strategy is based on market orientation of a company. The "**outside-in**" approach is first focusing on the customers and their fast-changing needs and then develop/re-configure resources accordingly (Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016). "Outside-in" oriented companies are flexible, ready to predict changes and respond to them. That as well describes a **proactive** approach (rather than **reactive**). However, the "**inside-out**" starts from the inside of the company, building on internal relationships (see: Hoffman&Novak in 1996, examined and believed as best approach by Philips&Halliday, 2008). Apart from the latter, business strategy is co-dependent on business culture as well (Slater et. al., 2011). **Market** and **adhocratic** (opposite to them are hierarchy and clan business culture) type of culture are most appropriate for fluctuating and unpredictable digital environment and go in line with outside-in market orientation and are externally focused.

Related to the above, the **prospector** and **analyzer** type of strategies are in congruence with the outside-in market orientation. As Slater et. al. (2011) conclude from their empirical results, norms and behaviours different types of culture induce in the company, go well with adhocratic and market organizational culture (these cope well with the fast-changing digital environment). The first is externally oriented and extended to managers from all-levels, while the second includes all the described, but is also focused on studying competitors' strengths and weaknesses.

Innovation can first, relate to both adopting new emerging technology and coming up with new ideas, models, strategies, which is non-technological (REF) and second, innovation is related to reactive and active approach to adopting digital technology in the strategies.

On one hand, **reactive** means that managers learn from others first to adopt new technology, with the main goal to avoid losing customers (Geyskens et. al., 2002), which is still in order around 2002 and means giving preference to increasing profits over studying new technology (Takacs&Freiden, 1998, Geyskens et. al., 2002, Huizingh, 2002). However, **proactive** approach makes companies "first-movers" (Huizingh, 2002) and is following the sense-and-

respond approach (Srinivasan et. al., 2002, Yadav et. al., 2007, Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016) and *includes technological opportunism as a capability (Srinivasan et. al., 2002) and innovation², taken outside of the company (Day, 2011)*. Here, Srinivasan et. al. (2002) argues that business's **capability** to create new products (innovation) cannot be equalled to business's **capability** to sense and respond to radical technology (opportunism). One way or another, Cooper (2006) believes that **insight**, which is related to new information (meaningful, intelligent), is actionable and goal oriented, leads to sensing new opportunities (**the author equals innovation with opportunism**) and needs to be part of company's strategies (as well: Coviello&Joseph, 2012).

As well, **innovation** can be determined by the level in management on which it is considered. This is by top managers and by functional managers. On one hand Srinivasan et. al. (2002) believes that innovation happens on middle-manager levels (drive of technological change is there) and top-level managers are involved to a little extent only. However, on the other hand, Yadav et. al. (2007) disagree with statements that top managers are too busy dedicating their time to novelty. Balancing tactic and strategic **insightful** thinking is necessary in order to be able to keep up with fluctuating environment. **Strategic insight** (e.g. proactive approaches) enables major changes, while **tactical insights** (e.g. direct and database marketing approaches) are still strong and powerful, but do not lead to bigger and long-lasting changes (Cooper, 2006). However, Yadav et. al. (2007) believe that innovation happens on top-management level, assigning it features: 1. **detection**, 2. **development** and 3. **deployment**. Keeping the latter features, but presenting the recent views, an alignment between hierarchical levels needs to be achieved and the information flow between them become more transparent (Huizingh, 2002, Srinivisan et. al, 2002). The latter is because **top managers'** need to engage with digital more, given they are a direct link to **innovation** (Day, 2011).

Detection (innovation) relates to expectations of digital technology, as well as the **expectance of future events**, which is along with **future focus** an important characteristic of a marketing manager (Yadav et. al., 2007, Day, 2011). However, **development** (innovation), relates to exploitation of digital technology (see: Chaston&Mangles, 2002) and the latter to the emerged social media and other channels, which require the satisfaction of interest of different groups of people at the same time (Lamberton&Stephen, 2016). Both, expectation and exploitation of digital technology are meaningful features for building a successful, **surviving-in-the fluctuating environment (digital) strategy**. Some studies show that the uncertainty and lack of exploitation of digital technology remains (Leppaniemi&Karjaluo, 2008, Quinton&Simkin, 2016).

Adaptive way of responding to rapidly changing environment - new perception of information (**intelligent information**, see: Carter, 2009), control shifting from information to resources (**resource-based view**) and fast-moving choices (Day, 2011) - requires changes of **business models**.

New models should include possession of **vigilant³ skills** and capabilities that are most importantly **mindful, open-minded** and **deep** for real success. Specifically, the team, being part on a **non-hierarchical** and **transparent**-between-levels internal business environment, should be open to new techniques and most importantly **flexible** enough to take **risks** and **uncertainty** as a good thing and something to learn from. Business's culture should however,

² "The way a company introduces new ideas, methodologies, workflows, services or products." (Tech- target, 2018), e.g. business model innovation, marketing paradigm innovation, partnership innovation.

³ "Keeping careful watch for possible danger or difficulties." (English Oxford dictionary, 2018). Moreover, observant, attentive and aware (Day, 2011).

be closer to adhocratic, that is, in congruence with adaptive mindset (Srinivasan et. al, 2002, Day, 2011).

The above contributes to better **responsiveness** of company’s managers to external changes of digitisation. Forming **e-alliances** (a well-built network of partners internally and/or externally) allows for taking better advantage of internet, as well as internet allows for better e-alliance formation. (Phillips&Halliday, 2008, Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016).

There are three types of companies reflecting capabilities to respond to the digitized environment. Adaptive and proactive approach to digitisation characterizes **advanced** type of companies that is vigilant and wants to appropriately **balance resources** between the following **activities**: digital channel strategy development, online customer acquisition, customer development and growth, cross-channel integration and brand development, online customer conversion and experience and overall digital channel governance and change management (Chaffey, 2010). What is more, advanced companies will have the potential to not only see digital technology (e.g. internet) as a tool only, but will tend to implement it in their long-term strategies (Zwick&Dhokalia, 2008, Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016). All the latter is in contrast with passive, reactive and **immature** company. The latter will focus on activities to keep the growth and act in an unsophisticated manner regarding planning their digital strategy. The latter includes poor senior management involvement, decisions at marketing function level only and less awareness of changes in the environment, therefore less competitive advantage (Chaffey, 2010, Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016). The last group of companies - **ignorant** to external environment, are the ones that will stick with their routines and “ignore” market demands. The latter are more common in early years of internet (Watson&Zinkhan, 1997, Tackas&Freiden, 1998). *For more characteristics of mature, immature and ignorant companies see Table 2 below:*

Advanced	Immature	Ignorant
“outside-in” orientation	“Inside-out” orientation	These companies would no matter digitization keep their own traditional approach to forming strategies.
Adaptive capabilities (Day, 2011) / Non-adaptive capabilities (Coviello&Joseph, 2012)	Static capabilities, dynamic capabilities	
Focused on customers’ needs and value	Focused on the inside - profit first	
Flexible, adhocratic culture	Inflexible, stable, hierarchic culture	
Resource-based approach	Control of information approach (Carter, 2009)	
Proactive: “sense-and-respond”, technological opportunism, hard to copy (Day, 2011)	Reactive: “wait-and-respond”, mimic, easy to copy (Huizingh, 2002, Day, 2011)	
Vigilant – aware, curious	Vulnerable, non-resilient	
Just-in-time decision making (technology advances in no time)	Longer time needed to make a decision	
Consistent (in pricing and resource allocation)	Inconsistent	
Building networks and sharing of information	Less networks built	
Learning from risk and uncertainty	Risk and uncertainty are a bad thing	
Strategy, based on adaptive capabilities	Strategy, based on unsophisticated capabilities	
Vigilant leadership and learning	Hierarchical, Little transparency between levels	

Long-term effectiveness	Mostly shorter term of operation effectiveness	
Creative, explorative, adaptive	Routinized processes	
New marketing mix approach (Constantinides, 2006)	Traditional marketing mix approach (Constantinides, 2006)	

Recent research

Sixth, four papers were taken under closer examination from the recent literature to be aligned with the last debates in digital marketing arena. Those are studies from Yadav&Pavlou (2014), Quinton&Simkin (2016), Lamberton&Stephen (2016) and Kannan&Li (2017).

First, Lamberton&Stephen (2016) focus on macro exploration of the literature on digital in marketing, to my best knowledge, the first, providing a clear definition to digital marketing (Kannan&Li, 2017, p. 23). Second, Yadav&Pavlou (2014) make a thematic exploration of the impact of internet and belonging technology on various interactions, such as B2B, B2C, C2C and C2B, in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Third, Simkin&Quinton (2016) present digital journey of marketing, forming it in a sequence of past events, put in a timeline that starts with people’s first interactions with technology, follows on with arrival, acceptance and adoption of internet and new marketing paradigm. Fourth, the most recent examined study from Kannan&Li (2017) starts to uncover the before, “black-boxed” digital technology, intending to answer the question “**how**” it affects marketing. The latter is done through a framework, built around consumer behaviour in digital environment, search engines and two-sided markets⁴.

TRADITIONAL vs. NEW DIGITAL MARKETING

As the environment has changed into digital, so will have to change business models, (marketing) strategies and marketing managers’ mindsets. The scholarship is forecasting a complete shift in marketing paradigm (Quinton, 2013, Simkin&Quinton, 2016).

One study is pointing out that what scholars called new digital marketing before, can now be called **traditional** digital marketing and the marketing of new times **post-modern** marketing (Kannan&Li, 2017). In order to achieve a shift in paradigm it is suggested that “*e-business should be seen as a challenge of organisational re-design, rather than a phenomenon*” (Phillips&Halliday, 2008, p. 767).

The point where marketing managers are to **liberate from traditional marketing** thinking is when information started to be shared (people give away their profiles to share information), under less control and more “intelligence”, with information capabilities to build successful strategy presented (this was in late 90s) (Carter, 2009, see: Table 1: “Digital marketing evolution”). Moreover, the latter information is called “*intelligent information*” and was described as follows: “*...It thinks. It finds you. We call it intelligent information.*” (Carter, 2009, *After*: Thomas Reuters Wall Street Journal, 2005, p. 5).

However, for the purposes of better coordination this review will refer to traditional and new marketing, as well as presented in the table below.

TRADITIONAL MARKETING	NEW DIGITAL MARKETING
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⁴ Two-sided markets are concerned around two groups of users that provide benefit to each other through network-type interactions in the market (Kannan&Li, 2017).

1.Mass-marketing 2.Segmentatation 3.One-to-one marketing (Watson&Zinkhan, 1997, p.194)	1.Mass-audience 2.Customer convergence 3.One-to-one interaction (Watson&Zinkhan, 1997, p.194)
Separate, individual information	Blurred lines between private and public sector – transparency of information
Privacy of information	
Individual transactions	Shared intelligence and transactions
Private content codes – almost no transparency	Digital marketing management competency techniques
Traditional marketing management computing technology	Confluence competency coding (collaboration between customers and firms)
High control of information (Carter, 2009)	Collaborative intelligence (between customers and firms)
Significantly lesser access to information	Enriched pool of information for firms
Longer product cycle (Takacs&Freiden, 1998: Coca-cola website example)	Short product cycle
One-to-one communication (Hoffman&Novak, 1996, 1997)	Many-to-many communication (Quinton&Simkin, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016)
Department-based approaches to planning e-business (Phillips&Halliday, 2008)	Interconnectedness of departments, e.g. marketing and accounting when planning e-business (Phillips&Halliday, 2008, Cahffey, 2010)
	To develop capabilities that are not easy to copy FIRST (Cooper, 2006, Phillips&Halliday, 2008, Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin., 2016)
Mass marketing – only information about the products/services and sales were available (Huizingh, 2002)	The capability to know how customers make decision (Huizingh, 2002)

Table 1: “Differences between traditional and digital marketing” (Watson&Zinkhan 1997, Carter, 2009, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Quinton&Simkin, 2016)

The above table takes traditional and new digital marketing as two opposing sides, as various authors illustrate it through theory and speculations.

Table 1 being a reflection of changes digitization caused in marketing, some predictions of digitization consequences from the very start were: *shorter product life cycle* (Tackas&Freiden, 1998), *shift from product-focused to market-focused*, *more power to buyers*, *shifted importance to non-product mix elements*, *focus on maximizing transactions with the same buyers*, *more collaboration*, *little or no distinction between firm and customer* and *little or no distinction between marketing and other departments in a firm* (Glazer, 1991).

What past and recent debates are about, is not much different from the predicted: highly competitive environment, technologically advanced, technologically-mediated, focused on customers’ needs, affecting intermediaries, sellers, buyers, info providers, competitors and other industries (Shugan, 2004, Constantinides, 2006, Yadav&Pavlou, 2014, Quinton&Simkin, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Kannan&Li, 2016).

IDENTIFYING GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

The following sections are titled by gaps that were identified in the literature and serve as cues for framing emerging themes in digital marketing arena. These gaps lead to identifying gaps in the B2B strategic marketing. They are 1. **Fragmentation**, 2. **“black-boxing of digital technology**, 3. **From computer-mediated to capabilities-mediated** and 4. **Under-researched strategic digital marketing**.

Digital marketing being fragmented

It has been for more than two decades that marketing environment can be described as turbulent and revolutionary (Watson&Zinkham, 1997). When internet emerged nobody was sure, what the new phenomenon might bring about (Poon&Colin, 1997) and has therefore been under close research since then (Hoffman&Novak, 1996, Hoffman&Novak, 1997, Quinton, 2013, Carter&Paramenswaran, 2012, Quinton&Simkin, 2016 and others). Due to significant changes, internet caused in various arenas, research took a very “**crumbled**” approach of studying them. That has led to (digital) marketing becoming very fragmented. This section examines the studies that touched upon fragmentation and builds a gap that needs to be filled.

Fragmentation can be divided in two groups: 1. **Fragmentation due to specialization** (Quinton&Simkin, 2016) and 2. **Fragmentation due to crumbled approach** of digital marketing research (Quinton&Simkin, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Yadav&Pavlou, 2014).

Speaking of the **first** type of fragmentation, Simkin&Quinton (2016) point out a gap between specialized and sub-specialized knowledge (segmentation). That has been widening fragmentation with new advancements. Marketing getting specialised and sub-specialised in areas, which sets people with particular specialised knowledge in and others with different knowledge out (Simkin&Quinton, 2016). The latter can as well refer to outsourcing, as stated in the area of e-mail marketing strategy, where specialised (functional, particular) functions should get outsourcing, while specific (individual, exact) can be insourced with experts hired in (Watjatrakul&Drennan, 2005).

Second type of fragmentation reflects well in Lamberton&Stephen (2016) study, precisely (Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, p. 166):

“After all, incentives exist for maximizing every data set as a stand-alone study. However, our fragmented approach may also be due to divergence in nomenclature, reflected in the previously discussed pro-liferation of keywords, with little understanding of whether these terms reflect the same or different phenomena. This level of precision may be a positive, in that researchers are not attempting to conflate distinct ideas, but it may also pose a barrier to researchers.”

Through years, academic debates were on a variety of phenomena in several marketing arenas. The latter building up through years, it majorly contributed to fragmentation of digital marketing. As no major advancements to see digital marketing more holistically were made, fragmentation still exists (Carter&Paramenswaran, 2012, Simkin&Quinton, 2016). This opens an opportunity for new research in the field, no matter some opinions that scholars should stop trying to see marketing as a whole and rather start solving problems, caused by digitization, one at a time (Valos et. al., 2010).

Finishing with fragmentation of digital marketing, this gives a good base for the on-coming sections, the very next presenting digital technology that has through years become “black-boxed”. The latter needs to be opened in order for marketing paradigm to move further in time and advancements.

Digital technology being “black-boxed”

This section will comprise of how modern marketing overtook traditional marketing. As the latter happened so quickly, academia and practitioners did not manage to develop with the

same pace as digitization was causing changes. Therefore, digital marketing, including technology, is now “black-boxed” (Chaston&Mangles, 2002, Quinton&Simkin, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Kannan&Li, 2017). This can be defined as: “*blurred, secretive image of inner working or capabilities of devices, processes or systems, while their inputs, outputs and relationships between are well discussed and known*” (Business Dictionary, 2018).

Lack of knowledge

With other words, there is lack of knowledge, hidden features and undiscovered features marketers in both academia (REF) and practice (REF) are facing. By lack of knowledge in digital technology two things can be emphasized. First, in academia, this is **lack of practical insight** and therefore **lack of accurate definitions** of terms and phenomena. And second, **lack of recognizing technological features and capabilities** to use them appropriately in firms’ own benefit (Day, 2011).

Looking closely at the **lack of accurate** (practice-based) **definitions** there is a big gap that can be identified here. However, even if mostly based on theoretical grounding, recent literature still provides with some meaningful definitions. For example, **digitization** can be defined as: “*the development and use of digital technologies and the internet in all aspects in marketing*” (Simkin&Quinton, 2016, p. 8). And **digital marketing** was provided a definition of: “*an adaptive, technology-enabled process by which firms collaborate with customers and partners to jointly create, communicate, deliver and sustain value for stakeholders*” (Kannan&Li, 2017, p. 23). However, for uncovering **what digital marketing does and in what way**, more insight in digital from “natural environment” and out of theorizing will be needed in the future.

Lack of recognizing technological features and capabilities can lead to three discussions. First, **risk and uncertainty** amongst marketers, which results in the second – not being able to **exploit** digital technology to its full potential (Leppaniemi&Karjaluo, 2008, Quinton&Simkin, 2016), which leads to third – miss out **opportunities** digitization is constantly presenting marketers with. The three mentioned consequently leaves company with inability to **develop certain capabilities**, needed for appropriate **allocation of resources** and furthermore, capability to build an **appropriate strategy** (Quinton, 2013).

Importantly, Slater et. al. (2011) point out uncertainty about the fact that the right things in a business do not happen and related to that strategies fail. The latter is the reason why the lack of knowledge needs to be filled.

LACK OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Fragmented digital marketing and black-boxed digital technology discussions both lead to realization that practical insight is needed.

Beginning with theorizing (Eid et. al., 2006), studies slowly moved to the use of qualitative research with a, then new approach to collecting data, netnography (internet-based ethnography), first used by Kozinets (Kozinets, 2002). However, now, it is evident that digital marketing needs more practical insight (Carter&Param, 2012, Quinton, 2013, Yadav&Pavlou, 2014, Quinton&Simkin, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Kannan&Lee, 2017 and others). Therefore, bridging between practice and academia is needed (Kumar et. al., 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Quinton&Simkin, 2016 and others).

This section highlights the lack of empirical research done, as well it presents three types of un-matching accordingly, which names were assigned to according to the characteristics they reflect.

The first un-matching (“Market capabilities”) represents market capabilities gap and therefore un-matching of capability and digitized marketplace development speed (Quinton&Simkin, 2016). The “lagged” activities are identified by Day (2011), who believes that due to fast changing digital marketing (for illustration see Table 1:”Digital marketing evolution”) capability development can never go absolutely in line with it. **Intangible (e.g. skills, knowledge)** and **tangible (e.g. innovation)** resources need time to develop, while digitization is developing at fast pace, given for example Facebook, YouTube, Periscope and other media that emerged fast.

The second un-matching (“practice vs. academia”) is between practice and academia, which according to a plethora of scholars needs bridging (Kumar et. al., 2016, Quinton&Simkin, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016). Academic debates suggest that the “frustrating asymmetry” (Day, 2011) should be decreased as follows: 1.Connecting academia and practice is needed (Lohse et. al., 2000), 2.Academics need to get involved in practice and vice versa (Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Quinton&Simkin, 2016) and 3.Past and recent theory needs to be tested (Lamberton&Stephen, 2016).

Third un-matching (“Technology perception”) is all rooted in marketing academics and marketing practitioners thinking of digital technology differently. On one hand, academics see digital technology with over-enthusiasm, over-optimism and over-excitement as for their theoretical amazing characteristics. The latter is evident from the way digital technology is described in the articles examined, some examples of it as as follows: 1.”*life-changing emergence of internet*”, 2.calling advancements in digital environment “*core elements of a successful digital survival kit*” (Quinton&Simkin, 2016, p.11) ND 3.”*exciting new platforms*” (Lamberton&Stephen, 2016). On the other hand, marketing practitioners have a practical perception of it, as they can speak from experience (to the limit of digital technology being “black-boxed” even in practitioners’ world).

All three presented un-matchings have share a common ground. They reflect **un-matching between expectations** from **digital technology** of academics on one hand and practitioners on the other, for which concerns were expressed by Geyskens et. al. (2002), Jakobson (2005) and Lamberton&Stephen (2016). Consequently, they can be overcome by empirical, ideally longitudinal (Geyskens et. al., 2002, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016) research, as well to move debates forward, away from theorizing only, marketers should work on common data sets (Lamberton&Stephen, 2016).

FROM COMPUTER-MEDIATED TO CAPABILITIES-MEDIATED

Consequently, the lack of empirical research causes debates in digital marketing that fail to recognize that thinking has shifted from computer-mediated to capabilities-mediated in order to be able to help with digitization.

Starting with **e-commerce** (such as: Srinivasan et. al., 2002, capabilit&Mangles, 2002, Hoffman&Novak, 1997, Kalakota et. al., 1999, Watson&Zinkhan, 1997), gradually debates on it have advanced and scholarship needs to look beyond the phenomena (Rohm&Sultan, 2004, Carter, 2009, Moore&Breazeale, 2010, Day, 2011).

This means looking beyond **control of information** (Glazer, 1991, Carter, 2009) to **allocation of resource**, including the following: *new advanced knowledge (skills)*,

advancements in communication, sharing, coordination and pattern recognition (Day, 2011, p.189). Moreover, advancing from **tangible** assets mostly to **intangible assets** as was predicted at the starts (Kalakota et. al., 1999). Moreover, looking beyond allows for interacting, sensing and innovating in the digital environment (Carter, 2009, Day, 2011, Carter&Parameswaran, 2012).

Computer-mediated is characterised as: *bidirectional* (one person can be a sender and receiver of info), *timely* (proximity between information and respondent allows for short time communication), *mutually controllable* and *responsive* (Varadarajan&Yadav, 2002, Yadav&Pavlou, 2014), these have now progressed. However, some scholars still refer to it (Yadav&Pavlou, 2014), even if marketing has been advancing and a demand for a thorough shift in marketing paradigm has been made.

Given that the fluctuating digital environment requires flexible, **future oriented** and **future-event-expectant** top marketing management, debates should be focused on “**mediating capabilities**” (Carter, 2009, Theodosiou et. al., 2012), rather than “computer-mediating environment”. Where capabilities-mediated is enables for sensing and adapting (Carter, 2009, Day, 2011).

Today, digital marketing strategies depend on two things – **digital technology** and **digital marketing capabilities** (Carter, 2009). The latter are key to gain competitive advantage (Day, 2011).

Referring to the above stated, as **effective** digital marketing strategy is what a company needs to “survive” and keep a competitive advantage in the current era. **Adaptive capabilities** are the ones most appropriate in this case. As well naming them **sense-and-respond capabilities**, their focus is “**outside-in**”, where through detecting and anticipating advancements in digital technology, customer is given top priority (Carter, 2009, Day, 2011). The latter helps with sensing opportunities quicker (technological opportunism capability, see: Srinivasan et. al., 2002, Day, 2011). For the purpose of understanding, the “outside-in” market orientation was by many authors as most appropriate, in the contrast to the “inside-out”.

Belonging under sense and respond capabilities, confluent capabilities justify why e-commerce is no longer appropriate to use in debates between scholars. That is the ubiquitous pointing of digital marketing towards information networks, where a good balance between business’s goals and societal ethics is needed (Carter, 2009). Carter&Paramewsaran (2012) claim that **ubiquity** “*widens the market’s potential for digital transaction*” (p. 128) and that **fluidity**, being another feature of digital marketing is “*the flexibility of digital content*” (p. 128).

Well-developed marketing capabilities enable for digital technology to be implemented better (Theodosiou et. al., 2012, Setia et. al., 2014).

Articles examined for the purposes of showing advancements from “computer-mediated” (Hoffman&Novak, 1996, Hoffman&Novak, 1997, Varadarajan&Yadav, 2002, Yadav&Pavlou, 2014) positioning of digital marketing are not strictly linked to digital marketing, marketing or digital technology (Gosain et. al., 2004, Theodosiou et. al., 2012, Setia et. al., 2014, Quinton&Simkin, 2016). The latter speaks for understanding of digital marketing strategy expanding in other areas, such as **information technology literature**, **innovation management** and such and other parts of the company beyond marketing department - company as a whole and its functions (Phillips&Halliday, 2008, Chaffey, 2010). This literature is aiming at keeping strict focus on the topic.

Specifically, Gosain et. al. (2004) article is based in information technology, while Theodosiou et. al. (2012) and Setia et. al. (2014) focus on banking sector and customer services. All the mentioned are off the focus of this review, but contribute to a meaningful debate on advanced digital marketing and its strategies.

Having come to the conclusion that computer-mediated should be looked beyond, this notion will be useful in forming strategic marketing grounds in the following sections.

STRATEGIC DIGITAL MARKETING (B2B MARKETING)

This section will examine studies from the list of systematically searched for articles in digital marketing arena that put the emphasis on B2B and provide implications for marketing managers. Moreover, it will focus on digital marketing strategy and how marketing managers go about it.

Strategic digital marketing is one part of digital marketing this review has been narrowed down to. Drawing on all that is said in previous sections, it can be defined as marketing, where strategies within a particular (digital) business model are formed, taking in digital technology, digitized environment and digitized customer. Previous sections of this review do most of the time not specify whether they are focusing on B2B or B2C environment, however, this section focuses on digitized B2B and therefore on a customer being a company, rather than an end user. However, this section will as well take in some of the B2C oriented studies, as it importantly contributes to the shaping of B2B literature and further thinking.

Unspecific digital marketing literature

Drucker (1954) believed that there was no need for operational or strategic perspective. The latter started to change with “technicalization of Marketing” as Simkin&Quinton (2016) note.

The B2B electronic markets have become significantly important in terms of economic value in the past years (Grewal et. al., 2010). In alignment with the latter fact B2B environment or type of collaboration starts to come to foreground in year 2002 with Chaston&Mangles (2002) and Srinivasan et. al. (2002) that clearly indicate that their empirical study was focused strictly on businesses in B2B environment. What is more, a handful of other scholars start to focus on business-to-business as well (Geyskens et. al., 2002, Rohm&Sultan, 2004, Constantinides, 2006, Eid et. al., 2006, Zhou&Zho, 2010, Grewal et. al., 2010, Coviello&Joseph, 2012).

Before that year and even in recent studies debates on digital marketing are very general and mostly theorized about and speculating on what will possibly happen in the future of internet (Hoffman&Novak, 1996, Hoffman&Novak, 1997, Kalakota et. al., 1999). What is more, most of the examined studies between years 1991-1998 cannot categorize in any of the B2C or B2B groups, as they focus on introducing various phenomena to marketers (even this is not defined – if academics or practitioners) (Hoffman&Novak, 1996, Morgan, 1996, Hoffman&Novak, 1997, Watson&Zinkan, 1997, Poon&Colin, 1997). Even some recent studies refute that digital marketing is still being theorized about, rather that providing clear, solid evidence of events in industry (Varadarajan&Yadav, 2002, Rohm&Sultan, 2004, Cooper, 2006, Phillips&Halliday, 2008, Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016, Kannan&Li, 2017). The latter (especially more recent articles) has a positive point in providing a good theoretical ground for further research, as well in stating a clear and strong future research agenda.

Theoretical studies done up to date are a good ground for the future research, as well for acknowledging the B2B market features. The latter is explained to more detail in the next section.

B2B e-marketplace and its features

B2B environment is one that consists of business to business collaborations. For the purposes of this review, it focuses on electronic marketplace interactions between businesses. Sometimes scholars refer to participants of B2B e-markets as sellers and buyers, other times as suppliers and manufacturers or wholesalers and retailers (Zhou&Zhu, 2010).

B2B e-markets can be defined as “*digital environment, where big data, limitless data, transactional details, information, such as on prices, products, services, qualities, quantities and such are shared*” (Zhou&Zhu, 2010, p. 1125). The latter as well refers to two features of B2B e-market – **interaction** (confluent capabilities) and **transparency of information** (Carter, 2009, Zhou&Zhu, 2010). The latter causes / enables sharing and enhances efficiency of digital marketing strategy. This way company’s objectives (core business objectives) and societal ethics (ethical capabilities) is in order (Carter, 2009, Carter&Parameswaran, 2012). One needs be aware that B2B e-alliances are of great importance when building a successful survival digital marketing strategy. This happens under the umbrella of the core business strategy and core business model (see: Carter, 2009, Slater et. al., 2011)⁵.

There are two ways one can see information transparency – vertically and horizontally. First, on the vertical line, we refer to e-alliances, e.g. between seller and buyer or supplier and manufacturer and second, horizontally, we refer to information transparency between competitors, where the latter seek information between each other (Zhou&Zhu, 2010).

From 1999 (see: Shapiro&Varian, 1999) the so called “**information rules**” changed industrial marketing to economic information economy (Carter&Parameswaran, 2012). Here, the shifts from information based through information gaining intelligence, to resource-based is of great importance (Srinivisan et. al., 2002, Chaston&Mangles, 2002, Yadav&Varadarajan, 2002, Day, 2011). Scholars start debating B2B performing online – online shopping, online exchange, online transactions (Grewal, Corner&Mehta, 2001).

The two environments (B2B and B2C) differ from each other in many ways, also in terms of number of suppliers, manufacturers cooperate with, which in B2B interactions is smaller as transactions are more specific and valuable. Moreover, the letter compared to B2C needs longer planning and arrangements, mutual trust, quality requirements, product specification, arrangements of shipment and payments and such (Zhou&Zhu, 2010, p. 1128). Overall requirements are higher, arrangements longer lasting and building relationships of great importance.

Features of B2B are important to understand how successful digital marketing strategy in this environment should be built. The following capabilities explain that through its features, networking, intelligent information and resource allocation.

B2B market capabilities, e-alliances and information transparency

B2B interactions have evolved to the resource-based level with the occurrence of intelligent information (Carter, 2009, Day, 2011).

⁵ No matter the fact that Carter’s (2009) and Slater et. al. (2011) study are focused upon B2C markets, we assume that core B2C capabilities and the way author uses core business strategy in relation to digital marketing strategy, can be used to illustrate B2B e-markets as well.

(Digital marketing) strategy is not anymore about controlling resources, but about networking – interacting and within that sharing, which leads to sense-and-respond strategy/capabilities (Day, 2011). Part of confluent core strategy as Carter (2009) calls it and interaction dimension is transparency. The latter opens opportunities between e-alliances in B2B partners, which improves efficiency of digital strategy.

Much was said about capabilities in the previous section of this review (3). Moreover, pretty much every study in the arena of digital marketing, especially from late 90s on, as we believe (Bradely&Nolan, 1998, Haeckel, 1999), speaks of adaptive business and adaptive (sense and respond) capabilities of a company. However, seeing it from another setting, given the significant growth of e-markets in B2B environment (Grewal et. al., 2010), capabilities in this environment need to be given more attention.

Most of the scholarship participate in the debates about adaptive business that possesses adaptive capabilities in order to go in line with the fluctuating environment (as described in the previous paragraphs) (Bradely&Nolan, 1998, Grewal et. al., 2010, Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016). However, Coviello&Joseph (2012) dedicate their study to show that company needs to go beyond the adaptive approach. Speaking of which, Day (2011) believes that external environment is out of marketing managers' control, while Teece (2007) and Coviello&Joseph (2012) disagree stating that capabilities in dynamic digital environment should be the ones shaping, not only adapting to surroundings. The latter are called non-adaptive capabilities, using an effectual approach (Coviello&Joseph, 2012 use them on an example of capabilities needed in the process of new product development and major innovation, where customers in B2B environment are included in the mentioned processes).

Learning which capabilities are good and which are not in line with digitized environment, is through failing or succeeding in innovation (major innovation). Moreover, it is through networking or forming e-alliances in B2B interactions, that is including customers in the process of innovation. Three major capabilities were recognized as the ones managers need to possess: customer mobilization, learning agility and mindful trial and error (Coviello&Joseph, 2012). All the latter are non-adaptive and effectual., Linking product development capabilities to Day's (2011) marketing capabilities, Coviello&Joseph (2012) think they give more sense to capabilities relevant to marketing. Authors refer to relational approach, where balancing between firms builds a competitive advantage, which is resource-based and calls for sharing resources (skills, knowledge and such).

Taking the above fact, B2B digital marketing needs more empirical insight to how marketing managers should build the strategies and what capabilities do they need to possess in order to do so (successful, digital marketing strategy). As most of the studies are theory based, it is not sure how all related to strategy building and digital technology in B2B environment happens in an actual environment.

CONSLUSIONS

In the before sections four major areas with gaps were identified and taken as cues to outline the existing literature in various fields of digital marketing. The first three sections (Fragmentation, Black-boxing and Digital marketing capabilities) are not specific in terms of the type of interactions (B2B or B2C), however, the fourth gap section (Under-researched B2B strategic digital marketing) is narrowed down to the area of strategic digital marketing, focusing on what is the main focus of the research this review is done to be the fundamental for.

First, the gap of digital marketing fragmentation needs to be closed and so does digital marketing paradigm need shifts and changes to it. At the moment scholars illustrate the development of knowledge in various areas within digital marketing, which means there is a lot out there, however, not seen holistically. Given that digital marketing is an ever and fast changing, without a final destination or a definite point (Quinton&Simkin, 2016), researchers can only predict where it will go in the following years.

Second, even though many debates are still around “computer-mediated”, advanced, however, mostly theoretical studies, indicate that part of digital marketing shift in the paradigm is starting to speak of “capability-mediated” digital marketing. As Day (2011), no matter if focused on B2C, indicates marketing managers need to go beyond static activities and adopt flexible ones that are in congruence with fast changing, dynamic environment. Adaptive capabilities are required and networking (Carter, 2009, Zhou&Zhu, 2010) much needed, therefore re-configuring business models and business strategies are on the go. However, Coviello&Joseph (2012) believe there is more to sense and respond capabilities – non-adaptive capabilities in effectual surroundings.

No matter the forces turned to fill it, there is still a big gap between market demands for change in terms of digital advancements and firms’ ability to recognise that demand and **react** accordingly (Day, 2011), this widens the marketing capabilities gap, capabilities can be related to strategies and those to fragmentation.

Third, as challenges brought by digitalization opens up new opportunities for development of knowledge at all times, this calls for requirement of constant definitional evolvement. As well linked to fragmentation, scholarship seems to fail to have digital marketing theorized as a whole, it is as well lacking knowledge on digital marketing as a whole and particular phenomena. This black box needs to be opened.

The latter is as well calling for more research, particularly on strategic level and implications for marketing managers (Yadav&Pavlov, 2014, Simkin&Quinton, 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016). No matter the level or orientation (B2B/B2C) academia and practice need bridging (Rohm&Sultan, 2004, Kumar et. al., 2016, Lamberton&Stephen, 2016, Quinton&Simkin, 2016).

Overall, more insight (preferably longitudinal research) on how marketing managers work and sense and respond to new digital environment is what scholarship needs (Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016).

This literature review does not focus on digital technology in general, however, it embraces internet that develops as a leading changer of the marketing paradigm. As well the review does not go general when speaking of interactions, however, it leads the discussion from broad (B2B and B2C) to narrowed down environment (B2B) and digital marketing strategies, where the focus of the research lies in.

FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

Gaps in the literature

Even if the purely B2B literature in strategic digital marketing does not say so, this review clearly indicates that general gaps identified (B2B, B2C or unspecified) in the literature importantly contribute to forming gaps in the B2B-specific part of strategic digital marketing.

Gaps derived throughout this literature review of digital marketing will follow in this section.

Already mentioned before one common gap that needs to be filled lies between theory and practice. The will be taken to build **cues for further research** as follows:

1. Different expectations (over/under-optimism) of digital technology between academics and marketing practitioners;
2. Lack of knowledge about digital technology (digital technology being black-boxed) between academics and marketing practitioners;
3. What does digital technology do and how might be differently perceived by academics and marketing practitioners;
4. The capabilities marketing managers need to develop to build a successful strategy might differ between academics and marketing practitioners and
5. Setting criteria for when outsourcing is good/bad as part of digital marketing strategy might be different between academics and marketing practitioners;
6. More strategic view to digital marketing is needed (therefore more B2B focused research and studies) (Day, 2011, Quinton&Simkin, 2016).
7. Black box of digital technology needs to be opened and understood better so that tools can start being used integrated in digital marketing strategies, rather than as separate tools.

To conclude, themes in digital marketing need to become more narrowed down, specific and reflective of practice. The following research questions are aiming at addressing the mentioned requirements.

Research questions

Research questions derived from these gaps are as follows:

- Academics do not fully understand what does digital technology (digitization) “do” to the paradigm of marketing, as well how it changes business models and business strategies.
- Part of the change digitization brought is decisions that need to be made about outsourcing digital marketing activities, views on this are different in academia and in practice.
- Academics are overly-optimistic about various digital technology (especially internet) in B2B environment compared to marketing practitioners.
- In B2B environment digital marketing and therefore digital technology with its functions and capabilities are not completely understood (it is believed to be “black-boxed”) and are different in academia and practice.
- Digital technology is currently taken as a set of tools to be used in the occurrence of demand, rather than integrated in digital marketing strategies.
- More research and insight on strategic digital marketing (B2B environment) is needed, especially longitudinal empirical research.

The above research questions are derived from the examined articles and gaps that were identified from the mentioned. The research questions are a solid foundation for further research in the fast changing environment of the 21st century, that is without a map, with and with no final destination (Quinton&Simkin, 2016).

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