



## Cultivating brand visibility and loyalty in Jordanian startup hotels: The role of e-marketing strategies and market competition intensity

Abdullah Helalat<sup>1</sup>

Zeyad Alkhazali<sup>2\*</sup>

Ammar

Mohammad Al-Ramadan<sup>3</sup>

Jebril Alhelalat<sup>4</sup>

Lu'ay Al-Mu'ani<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,4</sup>Department of Hotel Management, Petra College for Tourism and Archaeology, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University, Ma'an, Jordan.

<sup>1</sup>Email: [Abdullah.helalat@ahu.edu.jo](mailto:Abdullah.helalat@ahu.edu.jo)

<sup>2</sup>Email: [aladaileh.mohd@usal.es](mailto:aladaileh.mohd@usal.es)

<sup>2</sup>Department of Business Administration, Business School, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Amman, Jordan.

<sup>2</sup>Email: [z.alkhazali@ammanu.edu.jo](mailto:z.alkhazali@ammanu.edu.jo)

<sup>3</sup>Hospitality and Culinary Arts, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Amman, Jordan.

<sup>3</sup>Email: [o.taha@yu.edu.jo](mailto:o.taha@yu.edu.jo)

<sup>5</sup>Department of e-Marketing and Digital Communications, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Amman, Jordan.

<sup>5</sup>Email: [a.ramadan@ammanu.edu.jo](mailto:a.ramadan@ammanu.edu.jo)



(+ Corresponding author)

### ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to better understand how these elements could cooperatively impact brand visibility by presenting how market competition strength forms a mentioned relationship within startup hotel businesses, focusing mainly on the Jordanian hotel industry. This study contained 260 employees at the managerial level with different roles within Jordanian startup hotels. SEM was utilized to analyze the collected data, enabling the investigation of direct, indirect, and moderating influences. The findings showed varied relations among the e-marketing capabilities, e-relationship management, e-marketing orientation, and brand visibility with market competition strength playing a critical role as a suitable moderator in forming these differences. This study examined the elaborate relationships among the abilities of e-marketing, e-relationship management, brand visibility, e-marketing orientation, and loyalty aligning with the main role of market competition intensity effects as a moderating variable. Startup hotels must always adjust their strategies for digital marketing to be competitive and perceptible in a changing market.

**Contribution/Originality:** This research uniquely investigates the moderating influence of market competition intensity on the critical relationships among e-marketing capabilities, e-marketing orientation, e-relationship management, and brand visibility within startup hotels in Jordan. This specific interplay has not been previously investigated which provides novel understandings into digital marketing strategies in developing hospitality markets.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The significant growth of the startup hotel business has led to several challenges, mainly in having brand visibility and enhancing customer loyalty (El khazri, 2022). Unlike established hotel chains, startup hotels operate with limited financial plans and human resources which may restrict their operational ability to compete successfully in highly competitive markets (Putra & Law, 2024). The mentioned challenges are better compounded

by the necessity to distinguish their services and build customer trust, a critical factor for brand loyalty (Alsold, Alfdool, Trawnih, Helalat, Al-Mu'ani, & Mahrakani, 2023; Le, Khoi, & Nguyen, 2021). For numerous startup hotels, competing against these barriers requires adopting innovative strategies that give priority to digital marketing, personalized services, and customer engagement (Alrwashdeh, Ali, Helalat, & Alkhodary, 2022; Sakhanenko, 2024).

Digital marketing, with its tools, such as email campaigns, search engine optimization (SEO), and social media marketing plays a critical role in enhancing brand visibility for startup hotels. Furthermore, building more valuable customer relationships through practical e-relationship management is important in keeping customers and enhancing brand loyalty (Alharthey, 2023; Göçen & Okur, 2017). Setting strategies should be oriented to cope with the dynamics of market competition which always directs the effort level needed to continue serving in crowded marketplaces (Basaille-Gahitte, Abrouk, Cullot, & Leclercq, 2013; Reimann, Carvalho, & Duarte, 2022). For instance, in a highly competitive situation, startup hotels should increase their efforts in e-marketing and create more innovative abilities to strengthen their position and enhance brand recognition. Research shows that e-marketing orientation acts as a strategic facilitator, supporting organizations to optimize their e-marketing capabilities and practices of e-relationship management. By adopting a customer-centric method, e-marketing orientation develops the digital marketing strategies effectiveness leading to better brand performance (Mahmutović, 2021; Pscheidt-Gieseler, Didonet, Toaldo, & Martins, 2018). Furthermore, market competition intensity plays a moderating role that impacts the relationship between e-marketing strategies and brand effects. Businesses operating in very competitive markets have a chance to adopt innovative digital marketing practices and modify communication to differentiate themselves and maintain customer loyalty (Talari & Khoshroo, 2023).

Scarce studies have tested the mutual effects of e-relationship management, e-marketing orientation, and e-marketing capabilities on brand visibility and loyalty in the hotel business despite the increasing research on e-marketing strategies. Recent research has mainly focused on selected elements in separation without finding their interdependencies or their role in moderating market competition intensity. McDowell Marinchak, Forrest, and Hoanca (2018) investigated the influence of e-marketing capabilities on brand visibility while the study by Stăncioiu, Spînu, Sanda, Sanda, and Trifan (2023) examined the role of e-relationship management in promoting loyalty of customers. Accordingly, there is a shortage of studies that combine these elements to understand their collaborative influence on brand performance in the context of the startup hotel business. The current study addresses the gaps mentioned by employing a holistic approach to investigate the interplay between e-marketing orientation, e-marketing capabilities, and e-relationship management with a light shed on brand visibility and loyalty. It also examines market competition intensity that plays a moderating factor role, providing a valuable understanding of how competitive pressures form the efficiency level of e-marketing strategies (Khalaf, 2023). The study led to a deeper insight into how startup hotels can strategically improve their brand performance in operating and dynamic market environments by studying these direct and indirect relationships.

Previous research has mainly examined the individual influences of e-relationship management e-marketing capabilities, and e-marketing orientation, on brand performance in several industries. However, research within the hospitality industry is still limited. McDowell Marinchak et al. (2018) and Mullatahiri and Ukaj (2019) test the impacts of e-marketing capabilities on brand visibility. Similarly, Alharthey (2023) and Stăncioiu et al. (2023) examined the main role of e-relationship management in leading brand loyalty. Regardless, the mentioned studies often investigate these variables individually and never consider their mutual effects on brand visibility and loyalty in the hotel industry.

The current study takes a further comprehensive approach by inspecting the interplay of e-marketing orientation, e-marketing capabilities, e-relationship management and their combined influence on brand performance in the field of the hotel industry. The considerable growth of startup hotels in Jordan has led to several challenges, especially in achieving brand visibility in the right way and enhancing the level of customer loyalty (Aldaamy, 2024). The study highlights the mediating impact of e-marketing orientation, which acts as a strategic

enabler for supporting e-relationship management and e-marketing capabilities to improve brand effects. This technique builds on the understandings of Pscheidt-Gieseler et al. (2018) and Khalaf (2023) who emphasized the significance of strategic alignment in making the most of marketing effectiveness. Additionally, this study extends the current literature by including market competition strength as a moderating factor. While some previous studies have recognized the importance of competitive dynamics, limited research has systematically tested how competition forms the effectiveness of e-marketing strategies, especially in Jordan's startup hotel industry (Aldaamy, 2024). By handling this gap, the current study contributes to a subtler understanding of how startup hotels can navigate competitive market conditions and enhance e-marketing strategies to improve brand visibility and loyalty. The study structure includes several sections that present a review of the related studies and methodology followed by the results interpretation, discussion, conclusion, implications, and recommendations.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1. E-Marketing Capabilities, E-Marketing Orientation, and Brand Visibility

E-marketing capabilities refer to the skills, resources, and capacities that enable hotel organizations to effectively utilize digital channels and technologies for marketing purposes (Alharthey, 2023). Pscheidt-Gieseler et al. (2018) and Alharthey (2023) clarify the importance of these capabilities and discuss how startups with better digital marketing expertise, such as SEO, content, social media, and email marketing could enhance their online presence and increase brand recognition and customer relationship management (CRM) in the digital realm. This aligns with the resonance in the scholarship suggested by Hollenbeck and Patrick (2023) who emphasize the indispensability of adeptness across varied strategies of digital marketing for startups to penetrate and effectively reach their target customers across the extensive digital landscape. E-marketing capabilities generally play a vital role in the operational framework of startup hotel organizations, wielding significant influence over their strategic orientation toward digital marketing and their brand visibility results (Aldaamy, 2024). A robust e-marketing capability boosts marketing performance, especially through improved brand visibility and increased brand loyalty (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2024). Mandal (2017) indicates that e-marketing capabilities are also crucial in delivering excellent business growth by promoting brand visibility. Capitello, Agnoli, Begalli, and Codurri (2014) highlight the strategic significance of capable social media strategies in enhancing corporate brand visibility. Madaan, Singh, and Sharma (2024) confirm that by embracing social media as a pivotal marketing tool, the hospitality industry can amplify brand visibility, enhance customer relationships and gain a competitive edge. Mohammad Abu-Taweel et al. (2024) reveal that e-marketing capabilities in hotels can enhance brand visibility. Sharabati, Ghaith, Morshed, Abusaimeh, and Al-Haddad (2024) find that the use of e-marketing has a positive impact on brand visibility. Thus, hotels that harness the power of e-marketing capabilities are better positioned to connect with their customers and increase brand visibility (Madaan et al., 2024).

Startup hotels are adept at high social media platforms that are essential features of their e-marketing capabilities and can positively impact customer engagement and brand recognition. This indication is consistent with the perspective of Pscheidt-Gieseler et al. (2018) and Adaileh et al. (2024) who illustrate that startups with advanced capabilities have the right to adopt strategic styles and invest wisely in digital marketing tools to reach effectively their target audience. E-marketing orientation has acquired global scholarly honor result of advancements in technology use (Alharthey, 2023). Alharthey (2023) states that e-marketing orientation directs to a business strategy that emphasizes the usage of digital channels and updates strategies to achieve and engage with their customers, advertise products and services, and operate online sales. Bilgihan and Ricci (2024) demonstrate that hotels must possess an e-marketing orientation that smoothly integrates competitive strategies, marketing innovation, and active marketing capabilities to acquire brand visibility. Research conducted by Capitello et al. (2014) proves that the employment of social media in e-marketing orientation showed good results concerning brand visibility. Jafari, Fakhimiazar, Iranzadeh, and Budaghi (2023) suggest the social media branding model of a

marketing consultancy and the suitability of its usage to brand visibility and confirmed the chance of cumulative brand visibility with the support of e-marketing orientation.

Additionally, in line with this paper's assumptions e-marketing orientation plays a mediating role in the connection between e-marketing capabilities and brand visibility and emerges as a noticeable consideration. Pscheidt-Gieseler et al. (2018) propose that e-marketing capabilities could mediate this relationship successfully by creating the strategic orientation of startup hotels toward digital marketing activities. Additionally, Bilgihan and Ricci (2024) suggest that brand visibility in startups can mediate this relationship by creating an e-marketing orientation and brand loyalty. This alignment among direction and capabilities inspires the implementation and growth of e-marketing capabilities, directing brand visibility to thrive. Thus, it is critical to note that the influence of e-marketing orientation on e-marketing capabilities is a substantial determinant of success in the digital world (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2024).

Therefore, startup hotels providing preparation of trained digital marketing roles and skills are essential to enhance their online existence and expand brand mention (Capitello et al., 2014; Pscheidt-Gieseler et al., 2018), and as startups hotels enhance innovative capabilities and are more focused on employing strategic practices and investing additionally in digital marketing tools to maintain their audience effectively, the interaction among e-marketing capabilities, e-marketing orientation, and brand visibility becomes explicit (Adaileh et al., 2024; Hollenbeck & Patrick, 2023; Pscheidt-Gieseler et al., 2018). Accordingly, these studies have integrated findings that underline the importance of developing e-marketing capabilities through the growth of e-marketing orientation with brand visibility in the hotels at the startup phase. Hotels that prioritize e-marketing orientation as a main part of their overall strategic focus are more conformed to enhance e-marketing capabilities and expand brand visibility. Thus, based on these explanations, the following hypotheses are posited:

*H1: E- marketing capabilities influence brand visibility in startup hotels.*

*H2: E- marketing capabilities influence e-marketing orientation in startup hotels.*

*H3: E- marketing orientation mediates the impact of e-marketing capabilities on brand visibility in startup hotels.*

## 2.2. E-Marketing Orientation, E-Relationship Management, and Brand Visibility

E-relationship management considered by its strategic importance in building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders and customers through digital platforms strongly influences brand visibility. Alharthey (2023) and Stăncioiu et al. (2023) state that by adapting electronic tools and networks for interaction and data analysis, businesses can increase customer satisfaction, thus enhancing brand visibility. When startup hotels invest in active strategies for e-relationship management, they encourage strong connections with their overall audience, resulting in better brand recognition and a positive reputation in the digital world. Furthermore, e-relationship management is crucial in affecting e-marketing orientation within hotel organizations. Lawal and Adejuwon (2022) highlight the importance of active relationship management in influencing a hotel's strategic approach to digital marketing. E-relationship management inspires startups to employ e-marketing orientation strategies allied with their customer-centric character by adopting a customer-centric orientation that leads to satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty. Startup hotels that invest in e-relationship management will be more motivated to employ digital marketing styles that prioritize personalized communication and more engagement, which will shape their e-marketing orientation in general (Aldaamy, 2024).

Additionally, e-marketing orientation plays the role of mediator between e-relationship management and brand visibility. Stăncioiu et al. (2023) propose that a strong e-marketing orientation enables the effective employment of the strategies of e-relationship management improving brand visibility. When startup hotels prioritize customer-centric approaches and employ electronic resources to build strong customer relationships, they improve e-marketing orientation beneficial to enhancing brand visibility. This association between e-marketing orientation and e-relationship management develops brand visibility, allowing startup hotels to enhance customer relationships

for a better digital presence. According to empirical evidence summarized from the literature, it is necessary to expand that e-marketing orientation mediates the relationship between e-relationship management and brand visibility in startup hotels. However, it is still critical to consider suitable theoretical frameworks. In this regard, e-marketing orientation significantly influences the strategic direction of the startup hotels when it comes to designing an approach to digital marketing.

As a result, e-marketing orientation positively correlates with the development of brand visibility in startup hotels. Startups hotels with a suitable e-marketing orientation are more likely to implement innovative marketing strategies and develop active e-relationship management. Therefore, the relationship between orientation to e-marketing and the expertise in this field is essential for brand visibility. E-marketing orientation successfully mediates the impact of e-relation management on brand visibility. The supportive actions of e-relationship management lead startup hotels to e-marketing orientation (Aldaamy, 2024; Lawal & Adejuwon, 2022; Setiari, Hubbansyah, & Hatta, 2023).

Thus, when a hotel emphasizes the orientation of e-marketing, it is more likely to develop e-relationship management to improve its online presence and promote interaction with the target audience which would result in brand visibility. According to this explanation, the following hypotheses are formulated:

*H<sub>1</sub>: Effective e- relationship management significantly influences brand visibility in startup hotels.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: Effective e- relationship management significantly influences e- marketing orientation in startup hotels.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: E-marketing orientation significantly mediates the impact of e- relationship management on brand visibility in startup hotels.*

### 2.3. Brand Visibility and Brand Loyalty

Brand visibility is an important aspect of brand loyalty in startup hotels, particularly those operating in competitive and resource-constrained environments (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2024). Enhancing brand visibility and fostering brand loyalty represent essential objectives for startup hotels navigating the dynamic landscape of the digital marketplace. The interplay between these constructs underscores the significance of strategic e-marketing initiatives in establishing a formidable presence and cultivating enduring customer relationships.

Brand visibility, as a base of startup success is essential in influencing perceptions, trust, loyalty, and engagement of consumers within competitive and resource-constrained environments (Capitello et al., 2014). It is an influential factor for the direction and survival of any startup business as it enables companies to secure as well as retain their customers in the face of growing competition in the digital period (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2024). Startups seeking to increase their niche in the market recognize the imperative of expanding brand visibility to attract and keep customers amidst the growth of digital competition (Sumague & Briones, 2022). Brand visibility is actualized through an interactive digital marketing strategy that allows businesses to engage with customers through social media, present their content, and create variations that make better brands stand out (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2024). Research emphasizes that strengthened brand visibility contributes to brand recognition and promotes positive consumer associations, thereby supporting a startup's credibility and market positioning (Hosseini et al., 2025). Enhancing strategies of digital marketing corporations with e-marketing orientation and capabilities appears as a crucial method for startups to develop brand visibility through practices like social media engagement, content distribution, and innovative branding organizations (Setiari et al., 2023; Shulga, Busser, & Bai, 2021). In an entrepreneurial ecosystem environment like Jordan, considered by dynamic entrepreneurial activities, the strategic imperative of brand visibility exceeds mere market existence, playing a crucial role in enabling market penetration and promoting growth rotations for startups (Capitello et al., 2014). Succeeding startups enhance their visibility to attract investor interest, improve strategic alliances, and enlarge their customer base, catalyzing their rotation toward sustainable growth and market reputation (Bhanot, Reena, & Kaur, 2023).



The symbiotic relationship between brand visibility and brand loyalty is well documented in extant literature, with empirical evidence indicating that heightened brand visibility correlates positively with heightened customer engagement and loyalty (Jafari et al., 2023). Alharthey (2023) examines brand visibility as a mediator in the relationship between e-marketing capabilities and brand loyalty and find that brand visibility positively influences brand loyalty. Apparently, there is a relationship between brand visibility and brand loyalty as illustrated in the literature review. Customers tend to develop trust and affinity towards brands exhibiting consistent visibility across diverse touchpoints, fostering enduring brand loyalty and advocacy (AL-share, AL-zoubi, Al-zoubi, & Alzu'bi, 2023; Stăncioiu et al., 2023). Building upon the synthesized literature, we propose the following hypothesis:

*H<sub>1</sub>: Brand visibility significantly influences brand loyalty in startup hotels.*

#### 2.4. The Moderating Effect of Market Competition Intensity

An intense competition market is a situation where several companies and hotels compete for market share. Intense competition increases the likelihood that business organizations will strive to enable firms to offer competitive prices, thereby improving the dynamic efficiency of markets (Handoyo, Alfani, Ibrahim, Sarmidi, & Haryanto, 2023).

To remain competitive, startup hotels must offer both high-quality products and competitive prices. It is essential to consider market competition intensity in forming the relationship between e-marketing capabilities and brand visibility within startup hotels (Al-Adamat, 2015). The competitive landscape influences how organizations apply their marketing tools and capabilities to increase market situation and visibility. In dynamic competitive markets, hotels face more pressure to be differentiated and attract more consumers (Reimann et al., 2022). Therefore, the influence of e-marketing capabilities on brand visibility could vary depending on the strength of market competition (Aziz et al., 2018). In open markets characterized by intense competition, startup hotels with creative e-marketing capabilities may enhance innovative strategies of digital marketing to be in amongst competitors and intensify their brand visibility (Schmidt, 2013). Conversely, in less competitive markets, the impact of e-marketing capabilities on brand visibility might be less noticeable as startups face fewer obstacles in achieving visibility and attracting more customers (Talari & Khoshroo, 2023). In this regard, the following hypothesis is formulated:

*H<sub>2</sub>: Market competition intensity significantly moderates the impact of e-marketing capabilities on brand visibility in startup hotels.*

The moderating role of market competition intensity significantly influences the relationship between e-marketing orientation (EMO) and brand visibility in startup hotels. In highly competitive markets, where consumer awareness and market share are fiercely contested, the strategic adoption of digital marketing becomes increasingly critical (Reimann et al., 2022; Veleva & Tsvetanova, 2020). This is because strong competition imposes startups to create and innovate digital tools more efficiently to inspire consumer attention and enhance market relevance. In such environments, startups hotels must adopt a customer-centric e-marketing orientation, emphasizing personalized communication and deploying advanced strategies to differentiate themselves and enhance brand visibility (Sanusi, Januarsi, Purbasari, & Akhmadi, 2023). For instance, the usage of data analytics, social media engagement with its activities, and targeted advertising become crucial to stand out better in saturated markets.

However, in small or less-competitive markets, startups may present a less evident e-marketing orientation as the concern to differentiate the services and attract customers is moderately lower (O'Leary, Doran, & Power, 2022). In these viewpoints, classic marketing techniques may be satisfactory and the requirement to invest heavily in digital models decreases. Therefore, the result of e-marketing orientation on brand visibility is desired to differ depending on the intensity of market competition. Startups hotels operating in positively competitive markets are likely to experience a more powerful relationship between EMO and brand visibility as the need to improve digital tools and strategies becomes more apparent. This activity emphasizes the significance of related factors. For

example, market competition in forming the efficacy of digital marketing strategies for startups hotels. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H9: Market competition intensity moderates the influence of e-marketing orientation on brand visibility in startup hotels.*

The impact of market competition intensity extends to e-relationship management (ERM) and its effect on brand visibility among startup hotels. In busy competitive markets where customer loyalty is critical, startups hotels should invest in proactive e-relationship management strategies to promote stronger customer relationships and enrich brand visibility (Talari & Khoshroo, 2023). This is based on its intense competition and significant focus on retaining customers through personalized dealing, suitable time communication, and better value-added with significant interactions, all of which are significant to sufficient ERM. Startups hotels that operate in highly competitive conditions have more potential to assume e-relationship management initiatives to distinguish themselves and retain customers in saturated marketplaces, i.e., enhancing the tools of (CRM) customer relationship management, personal email campaigns, and fostering loyalty programs could lead startups to create lasting interactions and associations with their respected target audience (Sanusi et al., 2023). On the contrary, in less competitive markets, startup hotels could meet fewer challenges in structure and sustaining customer relationships, potentially resulting in a weaker relationship between ERM and brand visibility (Aziz et al., 2018). In such settings, the need to implement innovative ERM strategies diminishes, as customer gaining and retention may need less effort. Therefore, market competition intensity moderates the effectiveness of ERM in enhancing brand visibility. Startups hotels operating in highly competitive markets are likely to experience a stronger relationship between ERM efforts and visibility outcomes, as the need to differentiate and retain customers becomes more critical. This presents the related nature of ERM's influence, emphasizing the primary role of market competition as an important determinant of its achievement. Thus, the following hypothesis is postulated:

*H10: Market competition intensity significantly moderates the impact of e-relationship management on brand visibility in startup hotels.*

Figure 1 shows the study conceptual model.

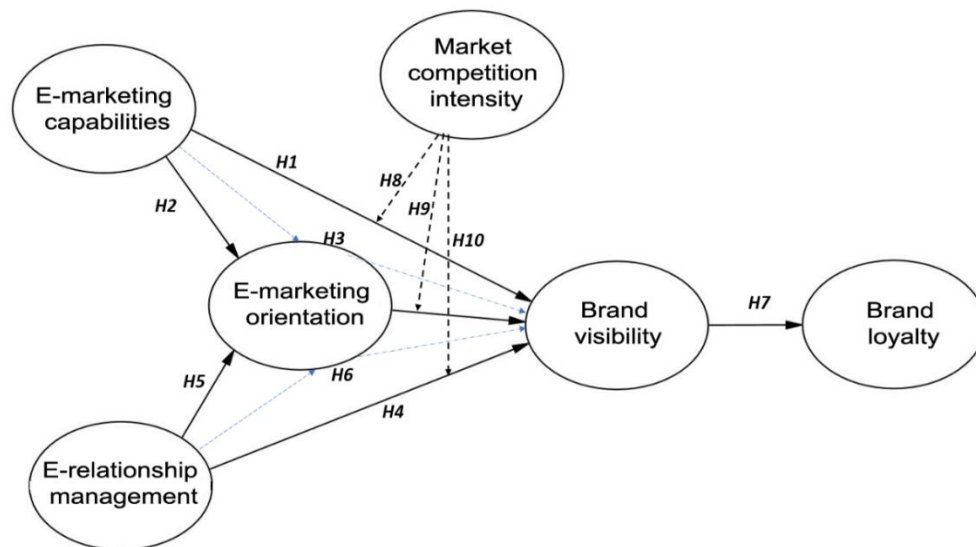


Figure 1. The conceptual model.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. The Study Instruments

A carefully designed questionnaire survey was developed to evaluate the study's variables and test the proposed hypotheses. The survey was constructed using established scales from existing literature, ensuring the validity and

reliability of the measurement items. A pre-validation procedure was performed, which included some of the expert evaluations representing the respective target demographic to improve the data collection tool's robustness. Academic experts' input was also included to refine the questionnaire well and confirm its alignment with the current study's objectives. The final survey questionnaire, comprising 32 items (see [Appendix 1](#)) was designed to assess various dimensions related to the digital marketing practices of startup hotels.

E-marketing orientation was measured through items focusing on digital marketing initiatives, investment in innovative practices, and the development of competitive strategies, reflecting the strategic emphasis of startup hotels on leveraging digital networks ([Farida, Naryoso, & Yuniawan, 2017](#); [Huang & Chen, 2019](#); [Mandal, 2017](#)). Similarly, e-relationship management items evaluated the extent to which organizations prioritize personalized communication, utilize electronic tools for customer data analysis, and engage in regular interactions to build lasting relationships ([AL-share et al., 2023](#); [Alharthey, 2023](#); [Harrigan, Ramsey, & Ibbotson, 2012](#); [Stăncioiu et al., 2023](#)).

E-marketing capabilities were assessed through factors such as investment in digital tools, emphasis on innovative practices, and the adoption of customer-centric strategies, providing insights into the readiness of startup hotels to navigate the digital landscape ([Capitello et al., 2014](#); [Farida et al., 2017](#); [Hosseini et al., 2025](#); [Huang & Chen, 2019](#); [Jafari et al., 2023](#); [Mandal, 2017](#); [Sumague & Briones, 2022](#)). Brand visibility dimensions included the use of digital tools, prioritization of customer engagement, and monitoring of brand perceptions to enhance visibility and recognition ([Avicenny & Rahayu, 2022](#); [Hosseini et al., 2025](#); [Jafari et al., 2023](#); [Rather et al., 2022](#); [Rinaldi, Millanyani, & Trianasari, 2024](#); [Setiarini et al., 2023](#); [Sumague & Briones, 2022](#); [Yousafzai, 2023](#)).

Brand loyalty items explored startups' commitment to maintaining long-term relationships, emphasizing customer satisfaction, and employing digital tools to improve engagement and foster loyalty ([AL-share et al., 2023](#); [Bhanot et al., 2023](#); [Harrigan et al., 2012](#); [Stăncioiu et al., 2023](#)). Finally, market competition intensity items assessed participants' perceptions of operating in competitive environments, the challenges of gaining visibility, and the adoption of customer-centric e-marketing orientations in response to intense competition ([O'Leary et al., 2022](#); [Reimann et al., 2022](#); [Sanusi et al., 2023](#); [Talari & Khoshroo, 2023](#)). As a popular measurement in social science research, a 5-point Likert scale was utilized to collect the responses of the participants, ensuring a consistent and measurable method of data collection. The survey was distributed to participants representing startup hotels in Jordan, providing valuable insights into the digital marketing practices of this demographic.

This study was conducted during a quick digital transformation period in Jordan's hotel industry, especially in response to market competition growth and developing consumer behavior toward digital connections. The reason for selecting this timeframe is that it aligns with the post-pandemic recovery time; the data collection period was during June and July 2024, when startup hotels are strong and actively adopting e-marketing strategies to develop their brand visibility as well as customer loyalty. Besides, the development of digital marketing in the hotel industry has been enhanced by changing tourism practices, improved trust in online booking platforms, and moving customer expectations toward personalized engagement within the digital network. This makes the selected period highly relevant for studying the e-marketing dynamics approach within startup hotels.

### *3.2. Sample and Data Collection*

Due to challenges in establishing an exact figure for the study population and the absence of consistent statistics regarding the number of Jordanian startup hotels encompassing registered and unregistered entities, the researchers opted for a convenient sampling approach to fulfill the study's objectives. Engaging with the managers of these companies proved arduous owing to the need for precise records facilitating communication with such entities. Consequently, startup companies were identified through online searches and raising personal connections within the research team to establish contact with the managers. Data was collected through direct communication with managers, email correspondence, or WhatsApp, utilizing Google Forms. Two hundred eighty-three complete



responses were garnered from diverse managerial positions within Jordanian startup hotels. Subsequent scrutiny of the data led to the exclusion of 17 responses deemed unsuitable for analysis due to outliers or lack of engagement. Thus, the resulting sample size of 260 individuals furnishes a robust dataset for scrutinizing the proposed hypotheses utilizing SMART-PLS. The findings in Table 1 offer valuable insights into the demographic composition of the study sample, encompassing 260 employees occupying varied functional roles within Jordanian startup hotels.

The sample selection was conducted by the study's emphasis on startup hotels in Jordan, a selected sector lacking a comprehensive statistical archive due to its emerging nature. Based on the absence of official records listing all registered and unregistered startup hotels, probability-based sampling was impossible. Therefore, a convenient sampling approach was selected to ensure a useful yet meaningful illustration of managerial-level employees in the selected industry. The study specifically included participants in managerial positions from startup-level hotels as these establishments were in the early stages of operation and those employees were available to participate.

The demographic profile of the study sample offers valuable insights into the managerial level within Jordanian startup hotels. Most customer respondents, forming 53% of the sample are between the ages of 30 to 39 years, indicating a fairly young affiliate of managers. Male illustration dominates the study sample, forming 94% of the target respondents, emphasizing the insignificant existence of women in managerial positions within the Jordanian startup hotel sector (women's representation is 6%). Concerning professional experience, 43% of the target respondents hold experience of less than ten years, showing a mix of relatively early-career professionals. In comparison, 26% have more than 15 years of direct experience, presenting the presence of seasoned people in managerial roles. Hotel marketing officer and director of technology officer appear as the most general job positions overall among respondents, presenting 23% and 17%, respectively, highlighting a strong emphasis on marketing and technology-related positions within Jordanian startup hotels. Thus, the demographic arrangement of the current study sample paints an image of an active and various managerial landscape indicated by youthfulness, various experience levels, and a principal focus on marketing and technology-related positions across the hotel industry.

**Table 1.** Demographic information of the study sample.

Age	N	%
Less than 30	54	21%
31 – 40	141	53%
Above 41	65	24%
Gender		
Male	243	94%
Female	17	6%
Years of experience		
Less than 10	112	43%
10: less than 15	81	31%
Above 15	67	26%
Job position		
Hotel manager	26	10%
Hotel operating manager	14	5%
Hotel technology officer	44	17%
Hotel financial officer	18	7%
Hotel marketing officer	61	23%
Director of sales	38	15%
Front office director	11	4%
Human resources (HR) manager/ Director	21	8%
F&B manager/ Director	9	3%
Customer relationship manager	18	7%
Total	260	100%

### 3.3. Data Analysis

According to Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, and Kuppelwieser (2014) the analysis formula utilized the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method using Smart-PLS software (4). This procedure included proving the measurement model's both reliability and validity and hypotheses testing within the structural model.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. The Measurement Model

Researchers thoroughly measured the validity and reliability of the measurement of the study model by inspecting the factor loadings of all items measuring the study constructs under exploration. As suggested by Hair Jr et al. (2014) items with factor loadings above the minimum threshold of 0.7 were kept in the study model, leading to the exclusion of 8 out of the 32 items according to their fairly low factor loadings as presented in Appendix 1. Additionally, the researchers found the values of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to measure the potential effect of multicollinearity on the robustness of the outcomes. Normally, VIF values less than 5 indicate an acceptable level of multicollinearity, whereas values greater than 10 warrant further scrutiny. However, the research analysis presented that all study construct items showed acceptable multicollinearity levels, therefore bolstering the reliability of the research findings.

Furthermore, the researchers evaluated the internal consistency reliability of the model by measuring Cronbach's alpha level and the value of composite reliability (CR) as shown in Table 2. Both metrics exceeded the suggested threshold of 0.70 (Hair Jr et al., 2014) which means satisfactory reliability. Convergent validity was confirmed by investigating the average variance extracted (AVE) through all study construct values above the suggested threshold of 0.50 (Hair Jr et al., 2014) (see Table 2 for further verifying the validity of the research model).

Finally, the researchers employed the criterion of Fornell and Larcker (1981) to establish discriminant validity, it entails comparing the AVE square root of each model construct with the intercorrelations among constructs. As shown in Table 3, the square root exceeded the intercorrelations, hence approving discriminant validity by the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria set forth. This careful validation procedure can enhance the confidence level in the reliability and validity of the study's results.

The analysis findings indicate that the measurement model has strong inner consistency, reliability, and convergent validity, ensuring that the study constructs are measured well. Moreover, the discriminant validity of the model was confirmed by employing the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which provides that each construct of the model is distinct. These overall findings support the robustness of the measurement model, which is required for the validity of the study's judgments.

Table 4 illustrates the outcomes of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) of correlations for evaluating discriminant validity. The diagonal components (bolded) exemplify the correlations between each construct and itself, whereas the off-diagonal components show the correlations among different study constructs. Regarding the HTMT ratios shown in Table 4, the researcher concludes that discriminant validity is recognized among the constructs in the current study. This suggests that each construct evaluates a distinct and unique element of the underlying theoretical constructs, improving the robustness and credibility of the study measurement model (Hair Jr et al., 2014).

These results indicate that all constructs were empirically distinct. This supports the argument that the model constructs are free from multicollinearity matters and that each construct contains a unique factor of the theoretical framework. Moreover, these results highlight the credibility of the measurement model and its alignment with selected methodological criteria.

**Table 2.** Measurement model reliability and validity.

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Brand loyalty	0.851	0.899	0.69
Brand visibility	0.855	0.896	0.632
E-marketing capabilities	0.858	0.898	0.637
E-marketing orientation	0.797	0.868	0.623
E-relationship management	0.808	0.874	0.635
Market competition intensity	0.739	0.834	0.557

**Table 3.** Discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion).

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6
Brand loyalty	0.83					
Brand visibility	0.58	0.8				
E-marketing capabilities	0.62	0.49	0.8			
E-marketing orientation	0.65	0.5	0.62	0.79		
E-relationship management	0.63	0.51	0.64	0.61	0.8	
Market competition intensity	0.58	0.55	0.48	0.47	0.59	0.75

**Table 4.** Assessment discriminant validity (Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT)).

	Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1	Brand loyalty					
2	Brand visibility	0.65				
3	E-marketing capabilities	0.71	0.56			
4	E-marketing orientation	0.78	0.6	0.74		
5	E-relationship management	0.75	0.6	0.76	0.75	
6	Market competition intensity	0.74	0.66	0.61	0.61	0.75

#### 4.2. Testing the Structural Model, Direct and Indirect Effect, and Moderation

Table 5 shows a comprehensive understanding of the study model's hypotheses, moderation, and mediation effects contributing to a better understanding of the overall relationships among the study variables. The hypotheses are assessed individually based on the path coefficient ( $\beta$ ), standard deviation (STDEV), mean, p-value, t-value, and the result concerning whether the evaluated hypothesis is supported and positively correlated. Starting with direct relationships, H1 tests the relationship between e- marketing capabilities and brand visibility. The study path coefficient is 0.130, with a p-value of 0.059, a t-value of 2.023, and representing that the relationship is slightly significant but not completely supported. This may be referred to external factors, such as market competition or the need for more integrated marketing approaches. H2 investigates the e- marketing capabilities and its relationship with e- marketing orientation, the path coefficient result is 0.384, with a significant p-value of 0.000, and a t-value of 5.521, indicating strong hypothesis support. This emphasizes the crucial role of e- marketing capabilities in forming a firm's e- marketing orientation and highlights the significant role of technological and strategic management in digital marketing efforts. H3 extends the relationship from e- marketing capabilities to brand visibility through e- marketing orientation. The path coefficient result is 0.064 with a significant t-value of 2.370 and a p-value of 0.018, supporting the hypothesis. This underlines the essence of fostering a great e- marketing orientation to strengthen the influence of capabilities on visibility. According to the H4, which investigates the e-relationship management and the relationship with brand visibility, the path coefficient is 0.123, with a p-value of 0.059, and a t-value of 1.882, showing a lack of complete support for the current hypothesis relationship. This may indicate that e-relationship management alone is not sufficient to improve brand visibility without concentrated strategies, such as marketing scope or social media engagement.

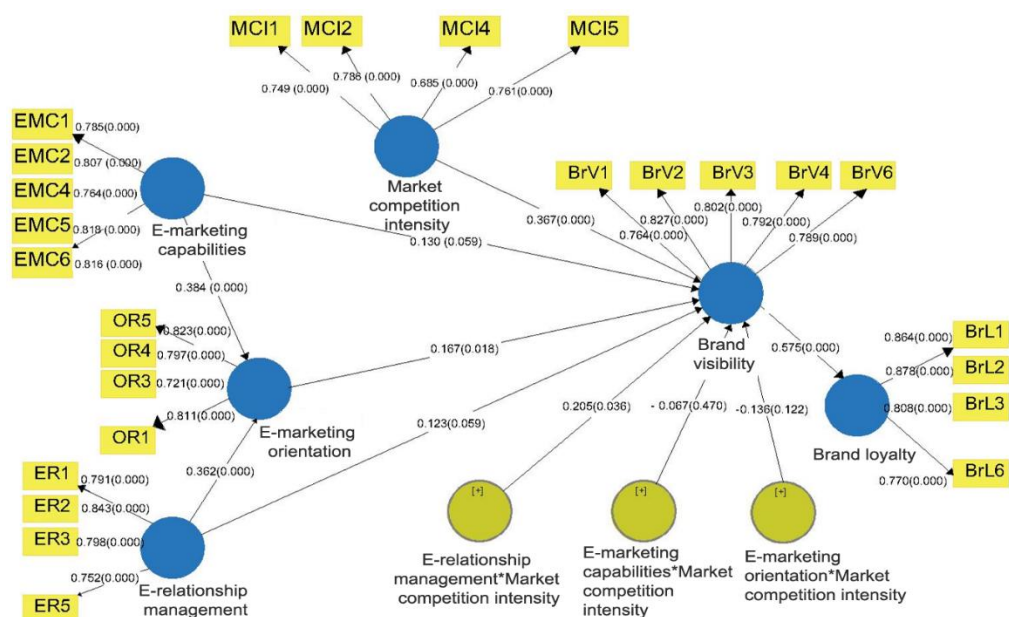
Moving to H5, which investigates the connection between e-relationship management and e-marketing orientation, the path coefficient is 0.362 with a significant t-value of 5.254 and a p-value of 0.000, supporting the hypothesis. Accordingly, it is important to create and maintain better digital relationships with customers as this helps with a more customer-centric and digitally introduced marketing strategy. H6 extends the relationship from

e-relationship management to brand visibility through e-marketing orientation. The path coefficient is 0.060, with a significant t-value of 2.022 and a p-value of 0.044, supporting the hypothesis. H7 explores the relationship between brand visibility and brand loyalty. The path coefficient is 0.575 with a highly significant t-value of 11.025 and a p-value of 0.000, strongly supporting the hypothesis. Finally, regarding moderation effects, H8, H9, and H10 assess the impact of market competition intensity on the relationships between e-marketing capabilities, e-marketing orientation, e-relationship management, and brand visibility. H8 and H9 are not supported as indicated by non-significant p-values. However, H10 is supported by a path coefficient of 0.205, a t-value of 1.999, and a significant p-value of 0.036. The moderating influence of market competition intensity on the e-relationship management and brand visibility relationship indicates that companies operating in highly competitive markets may focus on relationship control to differentiate their services and enrich visibility.

**Table 5.** Testing direct hypotheses, mediation, and moderation.

Hypotheses		$\beta$	Mean	STDEV	T value	P values	Decision
H1	E-marketing capabilities -> Brand visibility	0.130	0.128	0.064	2.023	0.059	Not supported
H2	E-marketing capabilities -> E-marketing orientation	0.384	0.383	0.07	5.521	0.000	Supported
H3	E-marketing capabilities -> E-marketing orientation -> Brand visibility	0.064	0.064	0.027	2.37	0.018	Supported
H4	E-Relationship management -> Brand visibility	0.123	0.12	0.066	1.882	0.059	Not supported
H5	E-relationship management -> E-marketing orientation	0.362	0.362	0.069	5.254	0.000	Supported
H6	E-relationship management -> E-marketing orientation -> Brand visibility	0.060	0.062	0.03	2.022	0.044	Supported
H7	Brand visibility -> Brand loyalty	0.575	0.579	0.052	11.025	0.000	Supported
H8	Market competition intensity moderates the impact of e-marketing capabilities on brand visibility.	-0.067	-0.06	0.098	0.683	0.470	Not supported
H9	Market competition intensity moderates the impact of e-marketing orientation on brand visibility.	-0.136	-0.13	0.091	1.49	0.122	Not supported
H10	Market competition intensity moderates the impact of e-relationship management on brand visibility.	0.205	0.178	0.102	1.999	0.036	Supported

**Note:**  $\beta$  = Path coefficient; P value is significant  $P < 0.05$ , bootstrapping 1000 subsamples.



**Figure 2.** The structural model testing results.

Figure 2 illustrates a structural model analysis outcomes diagram presenting the relationships among various variables and their constructs in marketing and brand loyalty in the hospitality area. The diagram is a path model with considerable variables illustrated by processes and linked by arrows showing the direction and relationship strength. The results of these relationships are presented below in tables (2 to 5) which show the effect level between the constructs.

The presented diagram visually illustrates how e-marketing elements influence orientation, competition, and relationship marketing impacting both brand visibility and loyalty. The benefit of using the blue color for constructs is and the diagram visually represents how e-marketing factors influence competition, orientation, and relationship marketing, eventually impacting both brand visibility and loyalty. The use of color (blue for variables, yellow for items) and the presence of statistical values deliver a better overview of the research model's dynamics.

## 5. DISCUSSION

As the results indicate, rejecting the moderating variable hypotheses (H8 and H9) highlights the subtle influence of market competition intensity on the relationships between marketing capabilities, orientation, and brand visibility. The non-significance of H8 and H9 in this context may reflect the unique market dynamics and varying competitive landscapes within the Jordanian startup hotel sector while literature suggests a moderating effect of competitive dynamics on marketing strategies and outcomes. In practical terms, these findings hold significant implications for startups in Jordan. Startups hotels can tailor their marketing strategies to navigate competitive market environments and enhance brand visibility effectively by understanding the nuanced relationships between marketing capabilities, orientation, and brand outcomes. Moreover, recognizing the mediating role of digital marketing orientation underscores the importance of strategic alignment between marketing capabilities and orientation in driving brand visibility. Additionally, while the non-significance of market competition intensity as a moderator may seem counter intuitive, it emphasizes the need for startups to adopt a holistic approach to marketing strategy formulation, considering various contextual factors beyond competitive intensity (Alsolamy, 2023; Talari & Khoshroo, 2023). In line with prior research (e.g., Trainor, Rapp, Beitelspacher, and Schillewaert, 2011)) the current research results indicate that market competition does not particularly moderate the relationship between e-marketing capabilities and brand visibility. Accordingly, this indicates that internal capabilities in the hotel industry are very important and more necessary than external competitive pressures in presenting brand-related services and outcomes (Ofori & Appiah-Nimo, 2021).

The outcomes from testing the hypothesis about the moderation impact of market competition intensity on e-relationship management and brand visibility relationship (H10) result in a significant association. ( $\beta = 0.205$  and  $p = 0.036$ ), thus supporting the mentioned hypothesis. This result proposes that the effect of e-relationship management on brand visibility depends upon the market-level competition intensity. In highly competitive market environments, where businesses compete strongly for more consumer attention and better market share, the significance of relationship management strategies in improving brand visibility becomes pronounced in a better way (Putra & Law, 2024; Talari & Khoshroo, 2023). Limited research has simultaneously addressed the market competition intensity in e-relationship management and brand visibility relationships in the hotel industry (Ofori & Appiah-Nimo, 2021). Startup hotels operating in such competitive sceneries are inclined to embrace and invest in e-relationship management strategies to differentiate their own and retain customers in highly intense competition (Talari & Khoshroo, 2023). This outcome is consistent and with several theoretical beliefs and empirical confirmation matching with prior studies, proposing that the efficiency of relationship management strategies could vary based on the market's competitive activities (Cao, Feng, Chen, & Zhou, 2019). In deeply competitive markets, prioritizing individualized communication and more engagement with their customers through digital networks becomes critical for startup hotels to enhance their brand visibility (Aziz et al., 2018). Energetically managing customer relationships in like environments strengthens and enhances customer loyalty and may lead to increased



brand visibility, thereby equipping startup hotels with a high competitive edge (Reimann et al., 2022). This moderation influence emphasizes the significance of considering contextual aspects, like market competition intensity in forming the efficacy of marketing strategies within startup hotel organizations (Xie & Li, 2017). Prior research in the hotel industry by Stankov, Filimonau, and Vujičić (2020) and Alafi and Ismaeel (2024) suggest that for startup hotels in Jordan understanding the important relationship between management and competitive dynamics relationship can notify strategic decision-making procedures to brand visibility and market competitiveness enhancement (Alsolamy, 2023). Startup hotels can strategically allocate suitable resources and grow tailored marketing strategies to guide competitive market environments sufficiently and achieve sustainable evolution by identifying the interplay role between management and competitive intensity relationship (Sanusi et al., 2023; Schmidt, 2013). Figure 3 presents the moderation of market competition intensity on the effect of e-relationship management on brand visibility which leads to market competition intensity strengthening the positive influence of e-relationship management on brand visibility.

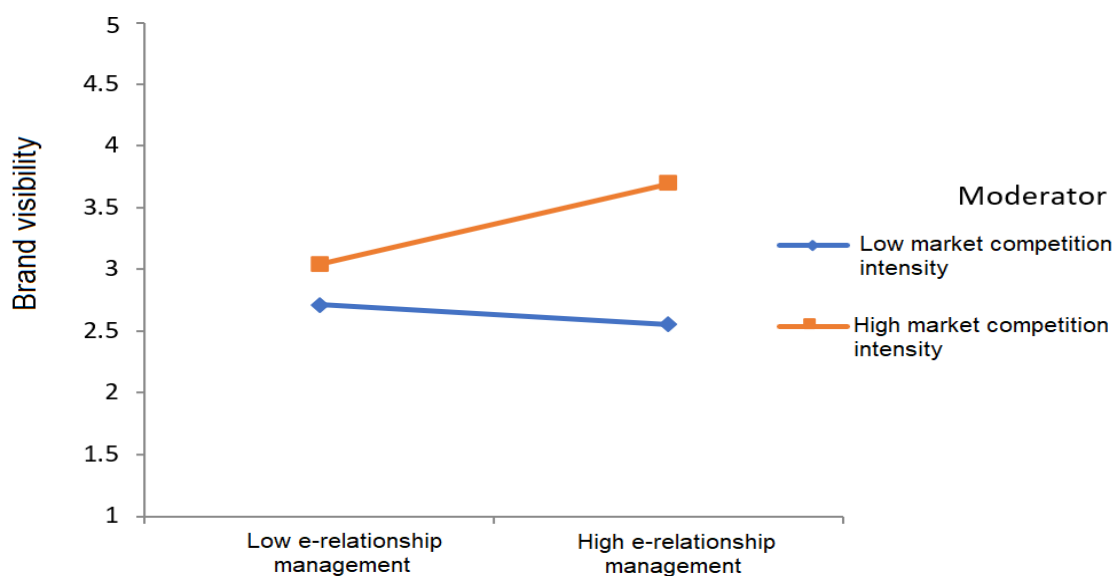


Figure 3. Plotting the moderation of market competition intensity on the impact of e-relationship management on brand visibility.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This research paper highlights the pivotal role of e-marketing capabilities, orientation, and relationship management in influencing brand visibility within startup hotel organizations. The current study underlines the necessity for hotels to adopt an integrated digital marketing approach, utilizing data analytics codes and personalization to increase brand engagement. Study findings highlight the importance of innovative e-marketing capabilities with a customer-centric orientation in positively influencing brand recognition, highlighting the strategic significance of digital marketing strategies in general.

Furthermore, e-marketing orientation appears as an important mediator between e-marketing relationship capabilities management and brand visibility, highlighting the need for startup hotels to align and manage their marketing efforts with a suitable strategic orientation toward digital networks. This alignment is not simply a practical adjustment but an essential shift in how hotel businesses approach customer engagement in the digital phase. However, whereas e-marketing orientation can enhance brand visibility, its efficiency depends on the ability of startup hotels to familiarize themselves with rapidly growing digital settings and individual behaviors. One of the challenges is a resource limitation often met by the hotels in the startup phase. Unlike established brands, startups may lack some resources, like technical or financial, to fully influence innovative e-marketing tools or maintain a consistent presence across multiple digital platforms. This may lead to split efforts, reducing the possible result of

their e-marketing strategies. Besides, the overstress on digital platforms without a clear insight into target audiences can produce generic campaigns that fail to interact with customers, eventually weakening brand identity rather than supporting it. Another significant consideration is balancing mechanization and the human touch. An overreliance on mechanization can create interactions that feel impersonal, discouraging the relationship-building feature of marketing while an e-marketing orientation often relies on automated tools for efficiency. Startup hotels must hit a delicate balance, utilizing technology to balance their efforts while ensuring transmissions remain reliable and customer-centric. However, the achievement of e-marketing orientation also centers on data-driven decision-making. Startup hotels should invest in analytics to measure the success of their campaigns and enhance their strategies accordingly. Hotel businesses risk wasting resources or missing their opportunities to communicate with their target audience in significant ways without strong data analysis. Efficient e-relationship management positively inspires brand visibility, mainly in dynamic and highly competitive market situations whereas engagement strategies and individual communication are vital for fostering and enhancing long-term current and expected customer loyalty. Customer engagement over interactive platforms, AI-operative recommendations, communications, and loyalty programs also strengthen brand perception and long-lasting retention. Furthermore, this strategy leads to higher and better customer satisfaction, stronger brand loyalty, and sustained hotel business growth. Whereas market competition intensity was found to moderate the relationship between e-relationship management and brand visibility, its moderation impact on e-marketing orientation and capabilities was insignificant, highlighting the slight influence of competitive dynamics on marketing strategies and results.

These insights present valuable implications for startup hotel organizations, especially in the Jordanian industry, directing them to develop effective marketing strategies to navigate competitive market environments and gain sustainable improvement and growth. Future studies could explore the crucial role of emerging technologies, such as machine learning and AI tools, in clarifying e-marketing strategies and enhancing competitive advantages in the hotel industry.

### 6.1. Theoretical Implications

This research study contributes to the literature bases by providing new empirical evidence on the interplay between relationship management, orientation, e-marketing capabilities, and brand visibility within startup hotel businesses. Theoretical implications contain better insights derived from the theory of (RBV) and active capabilities, emphasizing the strategic significance of aligning resources, market orientation, and capabilities to better enhance brand visibility and gain the advantage of sustainable competition in highly dynamic market environments.

The current study findings emphasize the significant value of e-marketing capabilities as strategic tools and valuable resources that startup hotels can grow to enhance brand visibility (Alhawamdeh, 2023). According to the theory mentioned, (RBV) organizations attain a better competitive advantage by getting and employing exceptional, valuable, sustained, and non-substitutable resources. With this regard, advanced e-marketing capabilities demonstrate their available resources, supporting startup hotels to differentiate their services industry in strong competitive markets and expand brand recognition. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of e-marketing orientation in driving brand visibility (Anser, Yousaf, Usman, & Yousaf, 2020). According to the employed theory of (RBV) which recommends that it is important for organizations to align their adopted tools and valuable resources within the main objectives of their strategic, startup hotels emphasizing a customer-centric e-marketing orientation can effectively employ their e-marketing capabilities to enhance brand visibility. Additionally, the mediation investigation of the study suggests that e-marketing orientation is a critical aspect that ties e-marketing capabilities to relationship managing within brand visibility, illustrating its role in turning these resources into significant tangible outcomes. Moreover, the existing research study highlights the dynamic environment of marketing capabilities and their related activities with market competition intensity (Jung & Shegai, 2023). The theory of dynamic capabilities recommends that organizations should adapt and improve their

capabilities in response to changing market requirements to maintain a competitive advantage in the right way. The moderation influence of market competition intensity on e-relationship management and its relationship with brand visibility highlights the essential for startup hotels to better modify their relationship management strategies and methods in extremely competitive environments to strengthen brand visibility efficiently (O'Leary et al., 2022; Talari & Khoshroo, 2023).

### 6.2. Practical Implications

The understandings provided by current research propose better actionable recommendations for the hotels in the startup phase to optimize their efforts in digital marketing, sustain brand visibility, and achieve sustainable growth in different dynamic market situations. The practical implications presented by the current research are multifaceted. For a startup hotel business, understanding the main role of e-marketing capabilities, e-marketing orientation, and e-relationship management in enhancing brand visibility is crucial. Startup hotels can effectively increase diverse online platforms to expand well their online presence and brand distinction by investing in creating advanced skills in digital marketing. Similarly, encouraging a customer-centric e-marketing orientation and prioritizing individual communication through e-relationship management strategies can create reliable relationships with stakeholders, users, and customers. Thus, enhancing brand visibility and increasing loyalty. However, identifying the influence and increase of market competition intensity on the significance of marketing strategies gives a strong chance for startup hotels to adjust their techniques accordingly.

The regulators of governments and industry organizations can play a significant and clear role in supporting startup hotels by applying actionable measures. For instance, funded training programs can be presented, where governments or authorities offer supported training that is oriented to digital marketing custom-made for the hotel industry. This would allow startup hotels to grow advanced e-marketing services without incurring major costs. Additionally, collaboration between governments, industry associations, and technology providers is able to be established to generate shared resources, like a centralized hub for digital marketing which could offer significant support to startup hotels that operate in small competitive markets.

In highly dynamic and competitive situations, startup hotels must emphasize implementing innovative strategies built especially for digital marketing to differentiate their services and enhance brand visibility. Inversely, in average competitive markets, startup hotels can influence their relative benefit by investing in targeted marketing efforts to shape and strengthen their brand existence. To foster innovation, authorities can provide tax incentives or valuable awards for startups that show creative and operative strategies in digital marketing. Like measures not only foster differentiation but also promote a culture of creativity and innovation in hugely competitive markets. These practical implications measures would not only entrust startup hotels to increase marketing effectively but also create an enabling condition for well sustainable development and brand visibility in various market conditions.

### 6.3. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While this study offers significant insights into the relationships among e-relationship management, e-marketing orientation, e-marketing capabilities, and brand visibility in Jordanian startup hotels, it is very important to recognize its limitations and suggest directions for prospective research. First of all, the reliance on a solo sampling technique may limit the generalizability of the results, suggesting the need for more varied and illustrative samples in prospective research. Secondly, assuming a cross-sectional design limits understanding of how these interactions develop, emphasizing the potential advantages and values of longitudinal research. Thirdly, utilizing self-reported data increases concerns regarding response bias level and social desirability impacts, encouraging the objective incorporation of criteria or alternative methodologies and other processes to enhance the research validity. In the end, the focus on startup hotels in the Kingdom of Jordan industry may constrain the

relevance of the findings to other geographic or cultural settings, highlighting the significance of studying various contexts in prospective research. Prospective researchers could examine mediating mechanisms such as consumer engagement, customer satisfaction, or brand prestige, adopting a dynamic capabilities perspective to comprehend how startup hotels adjust their digital marketing strategies and approaches, perform comparative investigations across diverse sectors, regions, cities and utilize longitudinal procedures to track the growth of digital marketing methods over time. By addressing these limitations and pursuing avenues for future research, scholars can advance our understanding of digital marketing in startup hotels and offer practical guidance for entrepreneurs and managers navigating the digital landscape.

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**Transparency:** The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.

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**Authors' Contributions:** Conceptual framework, literature review, hypothesis development, data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation of findings, drafting, reviewing, editing, Abdullah Helalat (AH); conceptual framework, literature review, hypothesis development, data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation of findings, drafting, reviewing, editing, Zeyad Alkhazali (ZA); conceptual framework, literature review, hypothesis development, drafting, reviewing, editing, Ammar Mohammad Al-Ramadan (AMAR); conceptual framework, literature review, hypothesis development, data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation of findings, Jebril Alhelalat (JA); data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation of findings, drafting, reviewing, editing, Lu'ay Al-Mu'ani (LAM). All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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## Appendix 1. Questionnaire items and factor loading.

Question			
E-marketing orientation		Factor loading	VIF
OR1	Our hotel prioritizes digital marketing initiatives as a strategic emphasis for reaching our target audience	0.811	1.7
OR2	Our hotel invests in innovative marketing practices to enhance our online presence*		
OR3	We dynamically improve competitive strategies to differentiate our hotel in the digital marketplace	0.721	1.357
OR4	Our hotel adopts active marketing capabilities to adjust to changing digital marketing trends	0.797	1.754
OR5	We use e-commerce platforms successfully to increase our marketing performance and brand visibility	0.823	1.985
E-relationship management			
ER1	We highlight personalized communication with our customers via digital platforms	0.791	1.519
ER2	We use electronic tools to collect and analyze customer data to improve our understanding of customer preferences	0.843	1.979
ER3	We are involved in regular interactions with our customers through digital channels to build strong relationships	0.798	1.799
ER4	Our hotel increases digital platforms to offer personalized services personalized to individual customer needs and preferences *		
ER5	At our hotel, we actively use tools of e-CRM to manage and increase customer relationships via digital means	0.752	1.515
E-marketing capabilities			
EMC1	We dynamically invest in digital marketing tools and technologies to influence our overall target audience	0.785	2.137
EMC2	Our hotel emphasizes innovative marketing practices to keep up with competition in the digital marketplace	0.807	2.05
EMC3	We usually evaluate and develop our digital marketing efforts using data analytics and insights *		
EMC4	Our hotel adopts a customer-centric approach in our online marketing strategies	0.764	1.605
EMC5	We actively keep engaging with our target customers via social media networks to enhance brand visibility	0.818	2.271
EMC6	Our hotel grows content-sharing practices to augment our brand visibility and engagement on social media	0.816	2.44
Brand visibility			
BrV1	We strongly increase digital marketing tools to improve our brand visibility	0.764	1.86
BrV2	We prioritize customer experience and engagement to enhance brand visibility	0.827	2.103

BrV3	We use innovative social media strategies to promote our brand and connect with our target audience	0.802	1.964
BrV4	We emphasize content-sharing practices to enhance our brand visibility through social media	0.792	1.949
BrV5	We usually control and analyze customer perceptions and their interactions to gauge our hotel's brand visibility	0.789	1.874
<b>Brand loyalty</b>			
BrL1	Do we prioritize maintaining long-term relationships with our direct customers	0.864	2.572
BrL2	Our hotel values customer satisfaction and aims to meet their needs for longer	0.878	2.88
BrL3	We employ digital tools and platforms to engage with customers and enhance their experience	0.808	2.02
BrL4	We believe that promoting strong customer relationships contributes to hotel brand's success *		
BrL5	We attempt to enhance customer loyalty via personalized communication and direct services *		
BrL6	Our hotel believes that efficient customer relationship management is critical for hotel competitiveness	0.77	1.421
<b>Market competition intensity</b>			
MCI1	Our hotel operates in a great competitive market environment where companies vie for consumer attention and market share	0.749	1.433
MCI2	Our hotel faces pressure to differentiate itself and get consumer attention due to strong competition	0.786	1.372
MCI3	Hotel experiences challenges in achieving visibility and attracting customers because of the competitive role of the market *		
MCI4	Our hotel is exposed to fewer competitive markets where there are fewer difficulties in having visibility and attracting customers	0.685	1.46
MCI5	The startup hotels in our market are motivated to approve customer-centric E-Marketing Orientations in response to strong competition	0.761	1.618

**Note:** \* Removed during confirmatory factor loading.

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