Building Sustainable Brands in the Digital Age: The Influence of New Media Marketing on Brand Trust through ESG Practices

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the impact of New Media Marketing on Brand Trust, mediated by Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Practices in the e-commerce industry of Amazon. The research design used was a quantitative one, and primary data was gathered from 780 customers of Amazon by using a structured questionnaire. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the proposed conceptual model. The results show that the New Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on ESG Practices and Brand Trust. ESG Practices also positively influence Brand Trust and act as a mediator between New Media Marketing and Brand Trust, underscoring the role of communication on new media and sustainability in building trust among consumers. The findings indicate that incorporating ESG efforts into new media marketing strategies can boost brand credibility, customer trust, and contribute to sustainable brand building in the digital landscape. The study adds to the literature on digital marketing and sustainable branding by presenting empirical evidence of how ESG Practices act as a mediator and providing implications for organizations aiming to enhance consumer trust through responsible and transparent marketing practices.

Keywords: New Media Marketing; Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices; Brand Trust; Sustainable Branding; E-commerce; PLS-SEM.
JEL Classification: M31, M14, L81, Q56, C12.

Introduction

Digital technologies have evolved quickly and revolutionized the marketing landscape, allowing organisations to build more meaningful relationships with consumers via interactive and personalised communication. New media marketing, defined as social media, digital advertising, influencer marketing, online communities and content marketing, is now an essential strategic asset for organizations that want to develop sustainable brands in the digital age. In a contrast with traditional marketing channels, new media marketing enables ongoing interaction, involvement and transparency for consumers, which helps companies establish a brand experience and meet the changing demands of consumers and other stakeholders. With a growing emphasis on sustainability and ethical business practices, organizations are now moving towards aligning their digital marketing efforts with these values, boosting their brand's value and facilitating long-term customer relationships (Kotler & Keller, 2022; Aaker, 1991).

Digital communication has become even more critical as sustainability has become a strategic objective for organisations. People deliberately look for information on company's environmental performance, social responsibility and governance principles before buying. As a result, companies are leveraging digital tools to effectively communicate sustainability efforts, leading to enhanced stakeholder engagement and deeper consumer connections. New media marketing and sustainability communication are now an integral part of developing genuine brand identities, which are understood by environmentally and socially conscious consumers. This is because Stakeholder Theory posits that to attain sustainable success, an organization must cater to the interests and expectations of various groups of stakeholders, and communicating sustainability efforts transparently is an integral part of the marketing strategy (Freeman, 1984; Cheng & Huang, 2025).

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices as a Strategic Mediator

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards are no longer just voluntary corporate actions, but have become strategic tools for improving the competitiveness of organizations and consumer trust. ESG refers to the work that companies do when it comes to protecting the environment, supporting society and ensuring good governance, taking care of their employees, and ensuring transparency in their business operations. As sustainable development becomes more important, organizations are now adopting ESG principles in their decision-making processes and telling their story in digital media. Digital platforms offer organizations the unique opportunity to show their accountability, transparency, and good corporate conduct and thus shape consumer perception and stakeholder trust. Recent research reveals that digital transformation has substantially enhanced the effectiveness of ESG communication, making it more accessible, transparent, and engaging for stakeholders (Hasan et al., 2024; Abdallah et al., 2026).

This new media marketing allows companies to communicate their ESG in an effective way, to create credibility and authenticity and to show measurable commitment to sustainable development. Brands that leverage digital channels and transparently share their environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives are more likely to resonate with consumers. ESG communication has been proven to lead to positive attitude shifts, authentic company perception, behavioral intentions and thus to a stronger brand perception. Moreover, digital ESG initiatives promote sustainable consumption, boost e-WOM and strengthen positive customer experiences in digital channels. These results indicate that ESG practices might be a crucial way to transfer sustainability communication into tangible organizational results in the case of new media marketing (Kim et al., 2025; Koh et al., 2022; Bae et al., 2023; Kousar et al., 2025).

Brand Trust in the Digital Age and the Research Gap

Brand trust is one of the biggest drivers of sustainable competitive advantage because it is a reflection of consumers' trust in the integrity, reliability and promise of a brand. Trust is a key attribute of powerful brands, and it is important to build brand equity and customer loyalty (Customer-Based Brand Equity Theory, Keller, 1993). In the same way, Commitment-Trust Theory highlights that trust is built around ethical actions and clear communication between organizations and consumers, and that there needs to be a win-win situation for both (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Consumers are now considering sustainability pledges as a key factor in brand assessment in the digital marketplace, and they want to see a consistent message. An organization's ability to effectively communicate ESG initiatives using new media platforms is therefore likely to enhance the level of trust and engagement with customers and foster positive advocacy behaviors (Jaffari et al., 2026; Jiang et al., 2026; Thanh Tung et al., 2026).

While there has been research on new media marketing, ESG practices, and brand trust individually, there is lack of research that examined the mediating role of ESG practices to understand how new media marketing increases brand trust. There is limited research that has combined the constructs of ESG and digital marketing within a theoretical framework, while there is more research focused on either the relationship of ESG and consumer behaviour or the relationship of digital marketing and customer engagement. Furthermore, the rise of digital ESG communication, sustainable branding and corporate digital responsibility clearly shows the need to investigate the connection between new media marketing and its impact on consumer trust through empirical research. Despite the attention given by recent study to the importance of digital ESG strategies, sustainable communication and corporate responsibility in brand value and consumer advocacy, the mediating role of ESG practices has not been comprehensively studied (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2022; Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2023; Zou et al., 2025; Keskin et al., 2026; Sung & Lee, 2025).

Based on this, the present study aims to investigate the effect of new media marketing on ESG practices, explore the impact of ESG practices on brand trust, directly examine the relationship between new media marketing and brand trust, and explore the mediating effect of ESG practices between new media marketing and brand trust. This research aligns with the literature on sustainable branding and offers valuable insights for companies aiming to bolster brand trust through effective new media marketing and ESG-focused business practices.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

New Media Marketing and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices

New media marketing is a game-changer for how an organization can connect with consumers on interactive media channels such as social media, online communities, digital advertising, influencer marketing, and content marketing. New media marketing offers unique real-time communication and information sharing, which helps organizations to better share their sustainability efforts. With ever-changing consumer habits caused by digital technologies, more and more organizations are using new media channels to share messages about their environmental, social and governance efforts. In addition to improving the visibility of an organization, these digital interactions can also help to improve stakeholder engagement by making sustainability-related information more accessible and credible (Kotler & Keller, 2022; Freeman, 1984).

There are several empirical studies in recent years that show how important digital marketing is in order to raise awareness about ESG issues among consumers. Digital platforms will allow companies to convey their sustainability results, the efforts of CSR, ethical governance and environmental engagement while engaging and inspiring consumers. According to Abdallah et al. (2026), sustainable social media advertising that is linked to ESG governance can build trust among consumers and transparency within the organisation. Likewise, Hasan et al. (2024) revealed that digital transformation is an important factor that positively affects consumer perceptions of ESG practices, and Oktavianti et al. (2024) suggested that digital platforms can help organizations integrate ESG principles into their marketing strategies. Moreover, Kim et al. (2025) noted the importance of strategic ESG communication via digital platforms, fostering customers' perception by promoting organizational transparency and accountability. The results show that when companies use good new media marketing, they are more likely to be committed to and able to clearly explain to stakeholders their efforts to improve ESG practices.

H1: New Media Marketing has a significant positive influence on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices.

New Media Marketing and Brand Trust

Brand trust is a measure of consumer's confidence in the brand for honesty, competence, and reliability. Trust is built through the same process that applies in the physical world: through open communication, giving consumers the right information, and consistently communicating with consumers across multiple online platforms. Customer Based Brand Equity Theory proposes that marketing communication enables to build positive perceptions and emotional connections to customers (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Digital communication also strengthens these relationships as organisations can engage directly with their consumers and act quickly to their requirements.

There is ample empirical evidence that new media marketing can help build brand trust. Interactive communication, real stories, and customized digital experiences help to build consumer trust and lasting relationships. Hu et al. (2024) found that social media marketing has a positive impact on consumer intentions and prompts sustainable consumer engagement with brands. Cardoso et al. (2026) also suggested that the perception of authenticity as conveyed by digital means encourages sustainable consumption and strengthens positive brand evaluation. Moreover, Akahome (2026) emphasized that digital media communication of sustainability narratives has a huge impact on customer engagement as well as service branding. Overall, these studies indicate that organizations that effectively use new media marketing can build a greater trust in their brand by communicating in a transparent, authentic, and value-added manner.

H2: New Media Marketing has a significant positive influence on Brand Trust.

ESG Practices and Brand Trust

Consumer trust has become a key factor in ESG (environmental, social, and governance) practices, as they signify a company's dedication to ethical conduct, environmental protection, and social responsibility. According to Stakeholder Theory, sustainable value is created by organizations when they are able to balance the interests of customers, employees, investors, and society through responsible business practices (Freeman, 1984). Likewise, according to Commitment-Trust Theory, trust comes when organizations continue to act in an honest, responsible and ethical manner towards stakeholders (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). As a result, ESG programs have evolved into tools for building a company's reputation and boosting brand trust.

The study revealed that there is a positive correlation between ESG activities and brand trust, which is consistent across all evidence. Koh et al. (2022) determined that the perception of ESG performance has a significant impact on brand credibility, perceived quality and brand image, leading to better consumer responses. Similarly, Bae et al. (2023) found that ESG efforts have a positive effect on brand trust and positive word of mouth by consumers. Cheng and Huang (2025) also found the effect of ESG disclosures on building consumer brand perceptions and behavioral intentions to have a transparent communication link. Furthermore, Thanh Tung et al. (2026) found that the ESG marketing approach strongly affects consumers' trust in green brands and Jaffari et al. (2026) pointed out that the ethical information strategy that is designed based on ESG frameworks is essential in enhancing the consumer's trust in the digital marketplace. All these findings point towards the fact that companies with good ESG practices tend to build long-term consumer trust.

H3: Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices have a significant positive influence on Brand Trust.

Mediating Role of ESG Practices

While new media marketing can directly improve consumer engagement, the extent to which it can boost brand trust is largely contingent on the credibility of the sustainability information being shared via new media. ESG practices offer the substantive underpinning that underpins digital marketing, showing a true focus in the company on protecting the environment, social responsibility and ethical governance. The more companies can weave their ESG efforts into their new media marketing strategies, the more authentic and trustworthy the messages that are conveyed to consumers, and the more trust will be built in the brand. RBV also clarifies that valuable organisational capabilities like Digital Marketing competence, ESG performance etc. contribute together to sustainable competitive advantage and long-term organisational success (Barney, 1991).

Based on the empirical studies conducted in recent years, it can be argued that ESG practices mediate between the use of digital communication and positive consumer outcomes. Puriwat and Tripopsakul (2022) coined the term Digital Environmental, Social, and Governance (DESG) and showed that digital ESG efforts can yield substantial benefits in terms of customer attitudes and a brand's equity. In another vein, Puriwat and Tripopsakul (2023) found that ESG practices build brand love and brand loyalty with various segments of consumer groups. According to Kousar et al. (2025), digital ESG practices are positively related to brand perception and improving consumer engagement, whereas Zou et al. (2025) noted that ESG performance can contribute to the brand's value creation through the increase in media presence. Additionally, Keskin et al. (2026) found that the link between corporate digital responsibility and positive environmental outcomes is mediated by ESG performance, while Jiang et al. (2026) and Sung and Lee (2025) showed how ESG communication boosts consumer advocacy and intensifies brand-related behaviors. The results indicate that the ESG practices serve as a significant explanatory mechanism for the relationship between new media marketing and brand trust, highlighting how these practices contribute to greater transparency, authenticity, and stakeholder confidence.

H4: Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices significantly mediate the relationship between New Media Marketing and Brand Trust.

Research Methodology

The present study used quantitative, cross sectional research design to explore how New Media Marketing (NMM) impacts Brand Trust (BT) mediated by Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Practices in the e-commerce industry. The study was done with customers of Amazon who actively use the site for shopping and engage with the digital marketing avenues of Amazon. The instrument was a structured questionnaire which measured scales that were previously used in related studies with validated content and construct. The questionnaire contained two parts: the first part was designed to gather the demographic data of respondents and the second part included the measurement for the study constructs: New Media Marketing, ESG Practices, Brand Trust, which were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Using convenience and purposive sampling techniques, 780 respondents were chosen for the survey and data was gathered from them by using an online questionnaire. This context is appropriate to analyzing the proposed conceptual framework (Kim et al., 2025; Kotler & Keller, 2022; Hasan et al., 2024).

The gathered data was analyzed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) model, which is suitable for testing complex relationships between structures with multi-latent variables with mediation effects. The analysis was carried out in two steps. The measurement model was evaluated first in terms of indicator reliability, the internal consistency reliability, the convergent validity and the discriminant validity based on factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). Second, the structural model was assessed based on path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), bootstrapping and the significance of the assumed relationships, including the mediation pathway of ESG Practices. The reason for choosing PLS-SEM was its ability to cope with predictive research models and the appropriateness for studying mediation relationships in marketing and sustainability research. The methodological approach is in line with recent research on the relationship of digital marketing, ESG communication, and brand trust in today's business environment (Koh et al., 2022; Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2022; Zou et al., 2025; Bae et al., 2023).

Results

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 780)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	402	51.50
	Female	378	48.50
	Total	780	100.00
Age (Years)	18–25	192	24.60
	26–35	276	35.40
	36–45	168	21.50
	46–55	96	12.30
	Above 55	48	6.20
	Total	780	100.00
Educational Qualification	Higher Secondary	102	13.10
	Diploma	86	11.00
	Undergraduate	298	38.20
	Postgraduate	224	28.70
	Professional/Doctorate	70	9.00
	Total	780	100.00
Occupation	Student	138	17.70
	Private Employee	294	37.70
	Government Employee	122	15.60
	Self-employed/Business	156	20.00
	Homemaker	40	5.10
	Retired	30	3.90
	Total	780	100.00
Monthly Income (◎)	Below 25,000	168	21.50

	25,001–50,000	274	35.10
	50,001–75,000	172	22.10
	75,001–100,000	96	12.30
	Above 100,000	70	9.00
	Total	780	100.00
Frequency of Purchasing from Amazon	Weekly	126	16.20
	Monthly	336	43.10
	Once in 2–3 Months	198	25.40
	Occasionally	120	15.40
	Total	780	100.00
Years of Using Amazon	Less than 1 Year	74	9.50
	1–3 Years	238	30.50
	4–6 Years	272	34.90
	More than 6 Years	196	25.10
	Total	780	100.00

Source: Primary Data

The demographic characteristics of the 780 Amazon e-commerce customers that responded to the study are shown in Table 1. There were 402 males (51.5%) and 378 females (48.5%) respondents, which shows a almost equal gender distribution. Most of the respondents were in the age group of 26-35 (35.4%) followed by 18-25 (24.6%), indicating that the younger adults are the key user group of Amazon's online platform. When it came to educational attainment, 38.2% of consumers were undergraduate students and 28.7% were postgraduates, indicating a well-educated consumer base who are comfortable with digital technologies. As per occupation, 37.7% were employees in the private sector while 20.0% worked as self-employment/business people; as per monthly income, 35.1% Amazon users said their monthly income is ◎25,001 to ◎50,000, pointing towards the largest income segment of Amazon users being middle consumers. In terms of their purchasing habits, 43.1% of the respondents indicated that they have some experience purchasing from Amazon – and they do it monthly; 34.9% of the respondents indicated that they have been using Amazon for 4-6 years, indicating that they are quite experienced with purchasing e-commerce services. The demographic composition is thus of the active and experienced online consumers and the sample is thus suitable for analysis in the relationship between New Media Marketing and ESG Practices and Brand Trust. These demographic characteristics have been widely documented in studies that have studied digital marketing, consumer behavior and ESG communication in online retail context (Hasan et al., 2024; Hu et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2025; Kousar et al., 2025).

Table 2: Reliability and Validity Measures

Construct	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**rho_A**	**Composite Reliability (CR)**	**Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**
New Media Marketing (NMM)	0.912	0.915	0.932	0.695
Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices	0.924	0.927	0.940	0.726
Brand Trust (BT)	0.905	0.908	0.927	0.681

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows that the reliability and validity assessment results indicate that the measurement model has good internal consistency and has high convergent validity. New Media Marketing (NMM) had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.912, a composite reliability (CR) of 0.932, and an average variance extracted (AVE) of 0.695, which were all excellent and met the requirements for reliability and convergent validity. In a similar manner, the construct of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Practices had the highest reliability indicated by Cronbach's alpha of 0.924, rho_A of 0.927, CR of 0.940 and AVE of 0.726, meaning that the measurement items are consistent with each other in representing the underlying construct. In addition, Brand Trust (BT) also had high internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha = 0.905, rho_A = 0.908, CR = 0.927 and AVE = 0.681. All Cronbach's alpha, rho_A and composite reliability values are above 0.70, while all the AVE values are above the 0.50 benchmark, meeting the recommended benchmark for reliability and convergent validity. These results show that the measurement scales are reliable and suitable for testing of the proposed structural relationships with PLS-SEM, similar to earlier research on digital marketing, ESG practices, and brand trust (Koh et al., 2022; Hasan et al., 2024; Cheng & Huang, 2025; Bae et al., 2023).

Table 3. Model Fit Summary (PLS-SEM Path Analysis)

Model Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Value	Model Fit Assessment
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	0.052	< 0.080	Acceptable
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.927	> 0.900	Good Fit
RMS Theta	0.096	< 0.120	Acceptable
d_ULS	0.874	Lower than HI95 value	Acceptable
d_G	0.596	Lower than HI95 value	Acceptable
Chi-Square (χ^2)	1389.462	Lower values indicate better fit	Acceptable
Exact Model Fit (SRMR Saturated Model)	0.049	< 0.080	Good Fit

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows that the model fit statistics for the proposed PLS-SEM model are in the acceptable to good range, thus demonstrating a satisfactory overall fit of the model with the observed data. The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value of 0.052 is below the recommended value of 0.080, reflecting a good fit of the model with little difference between the observed and estimated covariance matrices. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) value is 0.927, which is greater than the recommended value of 0.900, indicating the proposed structural model represents the relationship between the latent constructs. In addition, the RMS Theta is 0.096, which is less than the acceptable value of 0.120, showing that the quality of the outer model is satisfactory. Further evidence of the adequacy of the model specification is that the discrepancy measures, d_ULS (0.874) and d_G (0.596), are below their HI95 benchmark values. The Chi-Square (χ^2) statistic is 1389.462; however, this index has a tendency to be sensitive to large sample sizes as is the case in the present study (N = 780), so more attention is paid to other fit indices in PLS-SEM. Furthermore, the SRMR Saturated Model value of 0.049 (below 0.080) represents further evidence for an excellent model fit. In summary, these indices also indicate that the measurement and structural models are good and appropriate for hypothesis testing and thus the use of PLS-SEM for examining the relationship between New Media Marketing and ESG Practices and Brand Trust is valid. The results are in line with recent studies on ESG communication, digital marketing, sustainable branding, which have successfully applied PLS-SEM to test complex structural models (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2022; Koh et al., 2022; Bae et al., 2023; Zou et al., 2025).

Table 4. Structural Model Results

Hypothesis	Structural Path	Original Sample (β)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	t-Value	p-Value	Decision
H1	New Media Marketing →ESG Practices	0.714	0.712	0.041	17.415	0.000	Supported

H2	New Media Marketing →Brand Trust	0.281	0.278	0.067	4.194	0.000	Supported
H3	ESG Practices →Brand Trust	0.536	0.533	0.061	8.787	0.000	Supported
H4	New Media Marketing →ESG Practices →Brand Trust (Indirect Effect)	0.383	0.380	0.046	8.326	0.000	Supported

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 shows the results of the structural model, where all four hypotheses are statistically significant and supported, indicating that the research framework is robust. The results showed that New Media Marketing has a significant positive influence on ESG Practices ($\beta = 0.714$, $t = 17.415$, $p < 0.001$), thereby supporting H1, which suggests that organizations' ESG Practices are significantly improved with effective marketing initiatives through New Media. Similarly, New Media Marketing also has a positive large effect on Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.281$, $t = 4.194$, $p < 0.001$); this supports H2 and demonstrates that interactive digital communication has a direct impact on strengthening consumers' confidence in a brand. Moreover, ESG Practices have a strong positive effect on Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.536$, $t = 8.787$, $p < 0.001$), thus verifying H3, which means that consumers are more likely to trust brands that actively communicate responsible practices in environmental, social and governance. Results also showed that the indirect effect of New Media Marketing on Brand Trust through ESG Practices is significant ($\beta = 0.383$, $t = 8.326$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H4 and thereby confirming the mediation effect of ESG Practices. The results indicate that ESG Practices are a key instrument by which digital marketing can lead to increased consumer trust and sustainable brand relationships. The findings align with previous research showing that digital ESG communication positively impacts customers' perceptions, brand credibility, consumer engagement, and trust, leading to improved brand equity and sustainable competitive advantage (Koh et al., 2022; Hasan et al., 2024; Cheng & Huang, 2025; Kim et al., 2025; Thanh Tung et al., 2026).

Discussion

The results of this study revealed that New Media Marketing is a significant factor to strengthen ESG Practices as well as Brand Trust for Amazon e-commerce customers. The positive correlation between New Media Marketing and ESG Practices indicates that digital platforms offer an effective means for organizations to share their sustainability efforts, environmental initiatives, social responsibility, and ethical governance with consumers. Social media interaction, digital advertising, influencer partnerships, and engaging online content can help increase awareness and perceptions of corporate responsibility among stakeholders. The direct effect of New Media Marketing on Brand Trust is also significant, which further reflects that a transparent and timely and authentic digital communication helps in increasing the confidence of the consumer that in turn makes the brand reliable and credible. This aligns with the results of previous studies, which found that digital marketing can boost consumer engagement, encourage sustainable consumption, and enhance perception of organizational transparency and authenticity by communicating about ESG (Hu et al., 2024, Hasan et al., 2024, Kim et al., 2025, Abdallah et al., 2026, Akahome, 2026).

The research also shows that the ESG Practices play a significant role in improving the Brand Trust and can act as a crucial mediator between New Media Marketing and Brand Trust. The discovery suggests that purchasers will be more inclined to trust brands that are not just proficient communicators online, but also show a true dedication to environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical governance. This indicates that digital marketing efforts are more effective and convincing when backed by genuine ESG initiatives, which ultimately leads to a stronger customer bond and sustainable brand-building. This result corroborates the tenets of Stakeholder and Commitment-Trust Theories, which state that trust-based relationships require responsible organizational actions as well as transparent communication with the stakeholders. The results also support prior studies that showed that by communicating about ESG, companies can build brand credibility, consumer advocacy, brand value, and positive behavioral intentions in the digital marketplace (Freeman 1984, Morgan & Hunt 1994, Koh et al. 2022, Bae et al. 2023, Cheng & Huang 2025, Jaffari et al. 2026, Thanh Tung et al. 2026).

Theoretical Implications

This study extends the current literature on sustainable branding and digital marketing by bringing together the concept of New Media Marketing, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices, and Brand Trust in one mediation. The findings expand the theories of Stakeholder Theory, Commitment-Trust Theory, and Customer-Based Brand Equity Theory by showing that ESG Practices are a major channel that digital marketing activities can use to boost consumer trust in brands. Finally, the study contributes to the emerging literature on digital ESG communication by offering empirical insights that organizations can use to capitalize on the opportunities of new media platforms to improve perceptions of sustainability and strengthen brand relationships. Therefore, the study contributes to the theoretical knowledge of the combined effects of sustainability communication and digital engagement on consumer trust in today's e-commerce context (Freeman 1984, Keller 1993, Morgan & Hunt 1994, Puriwat & Tripopsakul 2022, Cheng & Huang 2025).

Practical Implications

The findings contribute to managerial implications of the study, which highlight the need to incorporate ESG efforts into ecommerce businesses, especially Amazon and other digital retailers, to achieve strategic marketing goals in the new media. To build consumer trust and brand reputation, organisations should focus on clear sustainability communication via social media, digital advertising, collaborations with influencers, and online engagement with consumers. Communicate regularly about environmental initiatives, ethical governance practices and social responsibility programs through authentic, interactive digital content, to boost customer confidence to create long-term customer loyalty. Moreover, digital branding with ESG values can assist in making an organization stand out in the highly saturated online marketing landscape, as well as help in building sustainable relationships with customers and creating positive brand loyalty and advocacy (Kotler & Keller, 2022; Hasan et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2025; Kousar et al., 2025; Jaffari et al., 2026).

Conclusion

This study finds that New Media Marketing directly contributes to strengthening Brand Trust by also indirectly contributing through Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Practices in the context of Amazon e-commerce. The results reveal that the digital marketing strategies that are effective have a significant impact on consumers' perceptions of the organization's sustainability efforts, and thus the trust they have in the brand. The mediating effect of ESG Practices emphasizes the need to combine sustainability and digital communication to create a genuine and enduring customer relationship. Today, consumers are more concerned than ever about transparency, ethics, and social responsibility, meaning that organizations need to create authentic ESG efforts that are reflected in their marketing efforts in order to gain sustainable competitive advantage. It can be seen from the overall results of this study that the combination of new media marketing and ESG has a strategic value in creating sustainable brands and building consumer trust in the digital era.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study does have some limitations to be noted, which can be taken up as future research. A first is that the study focused on Amazon customers, which might not apply to other e-commerce businesses and other sectors. Second, the cross sectional research design is only able to provide a snapshot of consumer perceptions at one point in time and does not account for changes in consumer brand trust over time. Future research could use a longitudinal design, study more than one e-commerce platform, or explore other moderating and mediating variables to gain a better understanding of sustainable consumer behavior, including green brand image, electronic word-of-mouth, or brand authenticity. The study could be expanded to incorporate other countries and cultural contexts to enhance the external validity of the findings and to gain broader insights into the role of ESG communication in digital marketing (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2023; Zou et al., 2025; Keskin et al., 2026; Sung & Lee, 2025).

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