

## The impact of digital marketing on customer loyalty at the Sofitel Algiers hotel

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*Received:13/04/2025*

*Accepted:02/08/2025*

*Published:01/09/2025*

### **Abstract :**

In the era of digital marketing, customers' relationships with hotels have changed considerably, as has their loyalty. This article focuses on how hotels are using certain digital tools, including social media, email marketing campaigns and their online loyalty programs to achieve these goals. The use of these digital assets allows them to promote their offers and make them more diversified, adapted to customer expectations, and, therefore, more attractive. As a result, they become more satisfied and come back more often, and these goods also facilitate permanent and direct communication between customers and the manager. Digital rewards and actions that customers participate in online make them want to come back, and this time, the information obtained from reviews and recommendations refined according to their numbers makes the hotel's work easier.

**Keywords:** Marketing, loyalty, artificial intelligence, hospitality

**JEL Classification :** M31, M31, O33, L83

## **1. Introduction**

Marketing is an essential practice in the business world. Its applications have expanded exponentially, and its tools have been tailored to fit every sector of activity. With the advent of the internet, the world has undergone an extraordinary digital revolution, and every industry has been impacted by the digitalization of activities.

Digital marketing is now a pervasive part of our daily lives and has become an integral component of modern marketing. Its influence has disrupted traditional marketing rules, creating new opportunities. Mastering these new trends in digital marketing requires a deep understanding of how these levers work and the creation of a robust marketing action plan.

Among the key features of digital marketing, we can mention real-time marketing, which enables economies of scale, performance-based pricing models, and a marketing approach grounded in mathematical and algorithmic principles. While the internet has made customer relationships more direct, digital marketing allows for real-time interactions between the customer and the brand. This revolution in customer engagement is not always easy for companies to navigate, as they often have to balance available time, budget, and resources when choosing the right tools to build lasting relationships with their customers and retain them.

The digitalization of society presents businesses with opportunities to harness these advancements. The SOFITEL Hamma Garden Hotel in Algeria has managed to adapt to this new paradigm by embracing a digital perspective to tap into its potential. From this, the following question arises: What is the impact of digital marketing on the customer loyalty of SOFITEL Hamma Garden Hotel? To answer this question, we have the following hypotheses:

- Guests of SOFITEL Algiers Hamma Garden Hotel are satisfied with the hotel's loyalty programs.
- The digital marketing strategies adopted by SOFITEL Algiers Hamma Garden Hotel have an impact on customer loyalty.

## **2. Research methodology**

The purpose of this study is to explain how new digital marketing technologies contribute to customer loyalty. In other words, how does digital marketing impact customer loyalty?

To determine the role of digital marketing in the customer loyalty process, our case study is based on analyzing responses to a questionnaire sent to customers of the SOFITEL Hamma Garden Hotel, which we will briefly introduce.

In this context, and to ensure a more thorough analysis of the results, the majority of the questions developed focus on variables using nominal scales, as the data we aim to collect in our research is of a qualitative nature.

The population targeted by our survey consists of a small group of individuals, specifically customers of the hotel.

The sample size chosen is approximately 100 individuals.

Our research does not aim to construct a new reality but rather to describe and interpret an existing reality from the perspective of the participants. It is essentially positioned within the interpretive epistemological paradigm. By applying theoretical frameworks, our role is to interpret the responses collected from the questionnaire.

## **Digital marketing and loyalty**

### **2.1 Definition of digital marketing**

"Digital marketing refers to the promotion of brands and products to consumers, through the use of all digital media and points of contact, it therefore attempts to bring together all the interactive digital tools at the service of the marketer to promote products and services, while seeking to develop more direct and personalized relationships with consumers"(Measuring the effectiveness of digital marketing, 2024)

Another definition of digital marketing

Digital marketing covers all marketing activities carried out online to connect with customers or prospects, such as maintaining a website or blog, social networks, or digital advertising.(Hillion, nd)

Digital marketing includes in its channels all the digital tools existing in a given period. It ensures the sharing of information in record time, the placement of a product at low cost, the distribution of certain products and services at very low transaction costs, the valorization of the product or service through photos and explanations online as well as the increase in the notoriety of the firm thanks to the effects of acquired networks.(colin, 2015)

### **2.2 Definition of loyalty**

Customer loyalty is the marketing approach that seeks to encourage customer loyalty. Loyalty consists of seeking a state of desired loyalty. Loyalty is a global approach that can use many actions and the implementation of multiple systems. It is not limited to the implementation of a loyalty program in the narrow sense of the term. A successful loyalty approach has a very strong impact on the profitability of most companies.(Jadhav, 2020)

### **2.3 Loyalty techniques:(Deschênes, 2017)**

- a. Social networks:** Offer a value-added service to the customer, not available on the website (broadcast news on a sector of activity, provide after-sales service, etc.) Local communication remains the best way to approach your customers.
- b. E-mailing:** Maintain contact with customers This is a technique that remains very effective in terms of customer loyalty and it is a communication tool used to disseminate information concerning the SME's website (new products, current promotions, etc.)
- c. Sponsorship:** Retain current customers and acquire prospects, allow the customer to obtain substantial discounts. This is a loyalty technique which also allows you to acquire new "quality" customers since they have experienced the product, the service.
- d. Loyalty card:** Simple, fast and inexpensive demand stimulation tool It is a technique that stimulates the purchase of the customer who knows that he will be able to benefit from discounts or exclusive offers later.
- e. Customer Service:** Managing complaints, listening to customer comments and criticisms, and also informing them about new products and services. Customer service remains the guarantor of a direct relationship with its customers. If the service is efficient, Customer Service is one of the most powerful loyalty tools.
- f. Consumer magazine:** Send a free magazine to subscribing customers frequently, containing general and specific information on the SME's products or services.

Without a well-maintained customer file and an efficient postal mailing service, this technique will remain ineffective.

- g. Customer sheet:** Maintaining a loyalty relationship with your customers, to get to know them and optimize marketing operations. Qualifying the customer file is one of the techniques used.

### **3. Processing of collected data**

To study the contribution and impact of digital marketing on customer loyalty, we proceeded by analyzing and explaining each question asked to the different customers interviewed.

#### **3.1 Presentation of the Sofitel Algiers Hamma Garden hotel:**

It is part of the Accor group and is located at the gates of the Jardin d'Essai d'Hamma, has 309 rooms and 23 air-conditioned and spacious suites with free Wi-Fi access. It has 3 restaurants offering gourmet, French or regional dishes, a bar, a terrace with swimming pool, a solarium and a fitness room. It also has 6 meeting rooms.

#### **3.2 Main problem**

What is the impact of digital marketing on customer loyalty at the SOFITEL hotel?

General assumptions

- SOFITEL Algiers Hamma Garden Hotel guests are satisfied with the hotel's loyalty programs
- The digital marketing strategy adopted by the SOFITEL Algiers Hamma Garden hotel has an impact on customer loyalty.

##### **a. The defining characteristics of SOFITEL hotel customers**

We will now show the different results of our survey in their raw forms according to different visualizations which will allow us to draw conclusions.

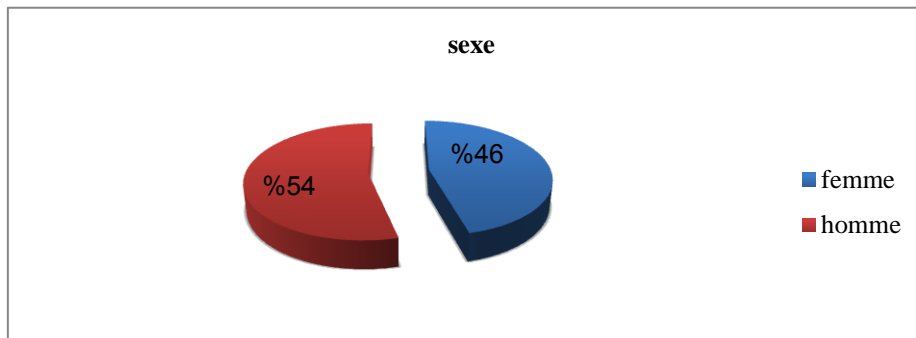
The following summary table summarizes general information on the 100 customers surveyed (Data Sheet):

No.	Variables	Values	Effective
01	Sex	Women	46
		Man	54
02	Age	Under 25 years old	4
		From 25 to 40 years old	61
		From 40 to 50 years old	34

		Over 50 years old	1
03	Category	Student	0
		Official	49
		Senior Executive	32
		Liberal profession	16
		Others	3

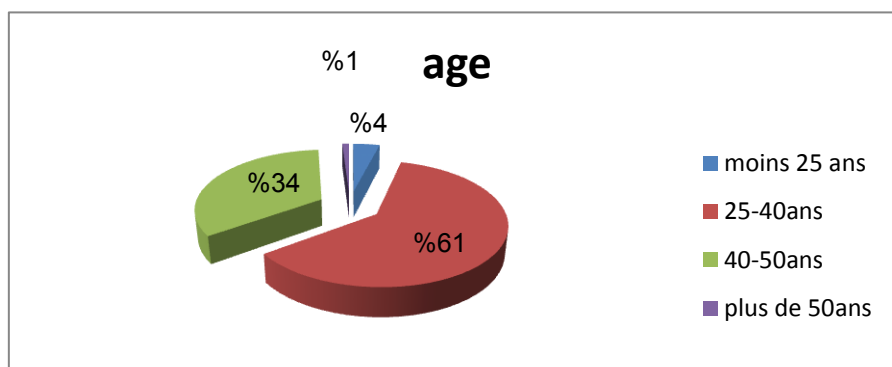
**Table 1:** Customer data sheet

First, we see that the distribution of the sample according to gender is almost balanced: 46 women against 54 men out of a total of 100 clients, which is shown by the following figure:



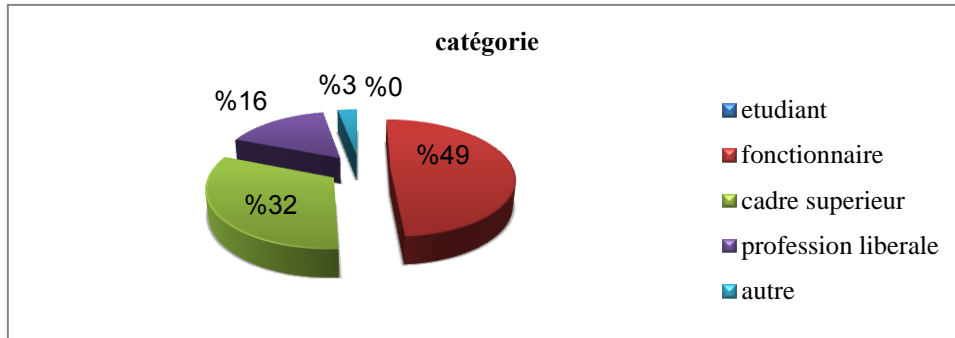
**Figure 1** Pie chart: Sample distribution by gender

Then, it is clear from the table that most of the respondents are between 25 and 40 years old with a headcount of 61 out of a total of 100 individuals. While almost a third of the respondents are between 40 and 50 years old, while only 4 customers who are below 25 years old and only one customer who is above 50 years old. The following figure shows this distribution well:



**Figure 2** Pie chart: distribution of the sample by age

Finally, it is quite clear that out of the total respondents who participated in the study as part of this study, the majority were civil servants and senior executives with numbers of 49 and 32 respectively, while 16 respondents had liberal professions and 3 clients were out of category. Note that there were no students among our clients interviewed. The following figure illustrates this distribution well:



**Figure 3** Pie chart: Sample distribution by category

It can be concluded that most of the clients who make up our sample are young men or women aged 25 to 40 and who are civil servants first and senior executives second.

**b. Analysis of the agreement**

To show the agreement between each item (customer loyalty and digital marketing strategy) and the whole scale and then between the two items, the Spearman correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was used. “Spearman’s rank correlation is a non-parametric test. Non-parametric tests are also called distribution-free tests. These tests do not require the assumption of normality or homogeneity of variance.”

The table below shows the results found using SPSS 24 software:

The agreement between:	Correlation coefficient	Statistical significance
Customer loyalty and the whole scale	'0.614	Significant at the 0.05 threshold
Digital Marketing Strategies of Scale	"0.774	Significant at the 0.01 threshold
customer loyalty and digital marketing strategy	'0.622	Significant at the 0.05 threshold

**Table 2** Analysis of agreement of the headings

Therefore, both parts generally agree with the whole scale and with each other.

**c. Descriptive study: Flat sorting**

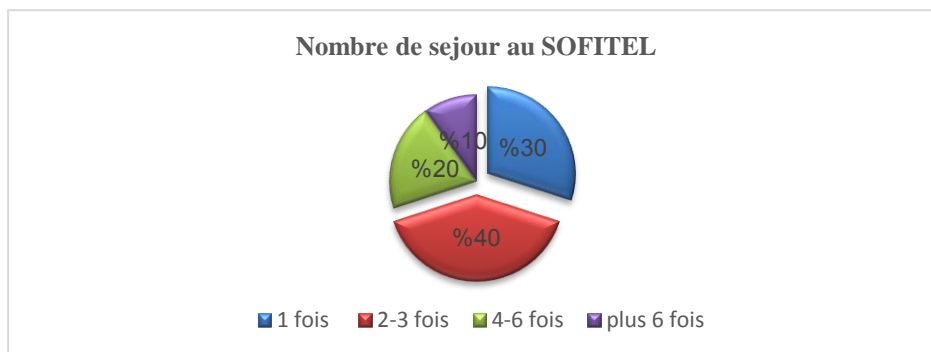
Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “thenumber of times stayed at the Sofitel»

Answers	Staff	Percentages
1 time	30	30
2-3 times	40	40
4-6 times	20	20
More than 6 times	10	10

**Source :**made by ourselves using SPSS 24

The table shows that the majority of customers surveyed have stayed one to three times at Sofitel Hotel with 70% staff occupancy out of a total of 100 guests

**Figure 3:** *Distribution of the sample according to the number of stays at the Sofitel hotel*



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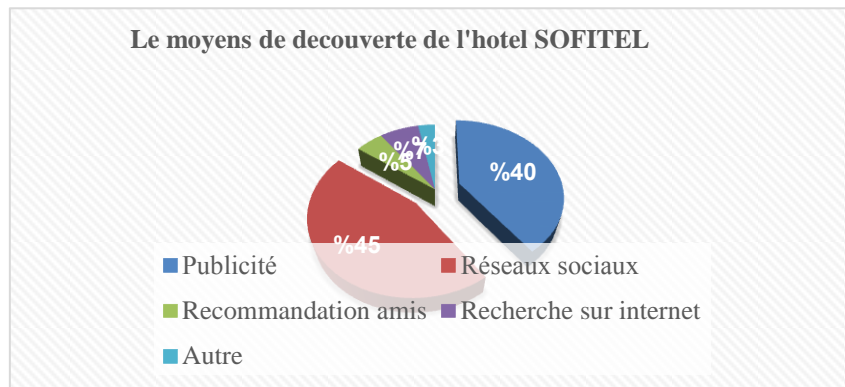
Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “**the means of discovery of the Sofitel hotel**»

Answers	Staff	Percentages
Advertisement	40	40

<b>Social networks</b>	45	45
<b>Friends recommendation</b>	5	5
<b>Internet search</b>	7	7
<b>Other</b>	3	3

**Source :**made by ourselves using SPSS 24

Likewise, it is clear that most of the customers discovered the hotel for the first time through advertising and social networks achieving a percentage of 85%.



**Figure 4:** Sample distribution according to the means of hotel discovery

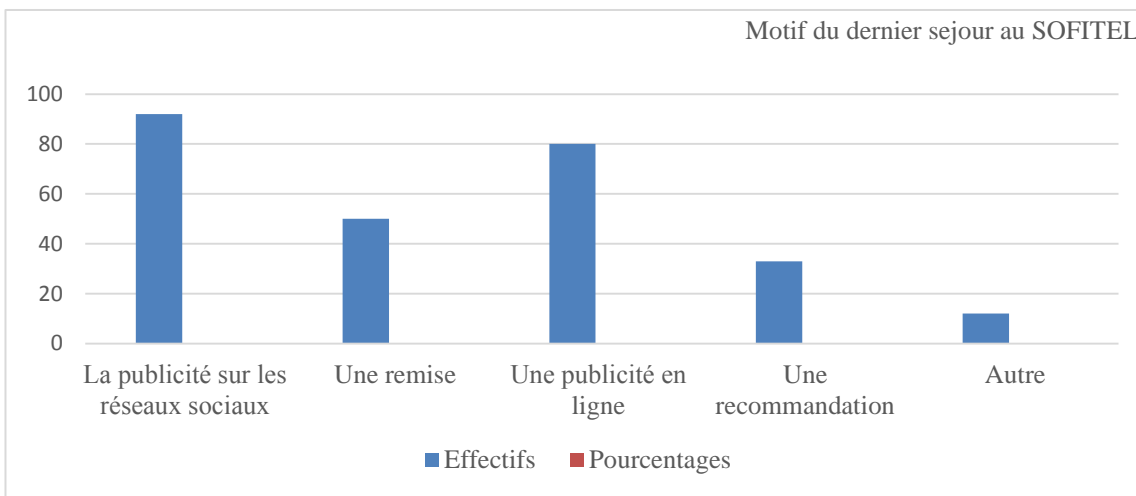
Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “The reason for the last stay in **SOFITEL hotel**»

<b>Answers</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Advertising on social networks</b>	92	/
<b>A discount</b>	50	/
<b>An online advertisement</b>	80	/
<b>A recommendation</b>	33	/

Other	12	/
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**Source :** made by ourselves using SPSS 24

According to the table above, we see that the SOFITEL hotel is chosen by its customers first following advertisements on social networks with 92 opinions out of 100, then thanks to online advertising its quality of service with 80 respondents out of 100, then thanks to the discount for 50 customers and for price discounts with 33 opinions and other reasons not mentioned for 12 individuals, which is well illustrated in the following figure:



**Figure.5:** Reason for choosing SOFITEL last stay

Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “reservation method” at the SOFITEL hotel»

Answers	Staff	Percentages
Social networks	60	
By phone	15	
Pub On the site	20	
other	5	

**Source:** made by ourselves using SPSS 24

Regarding the booking method, we observe that 60% of the sample made their bookings from social networks, while 20% of customers chose to book from the site, while 15% of respondents followed the telephone method and 5 customers chose other booking methods, these results are represented in the following figure:

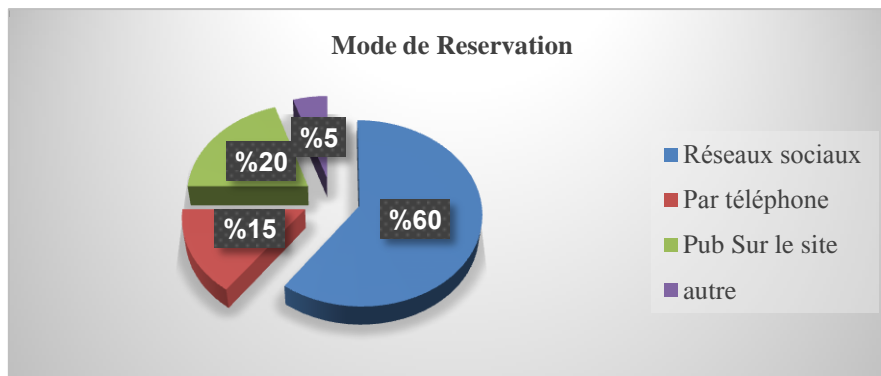


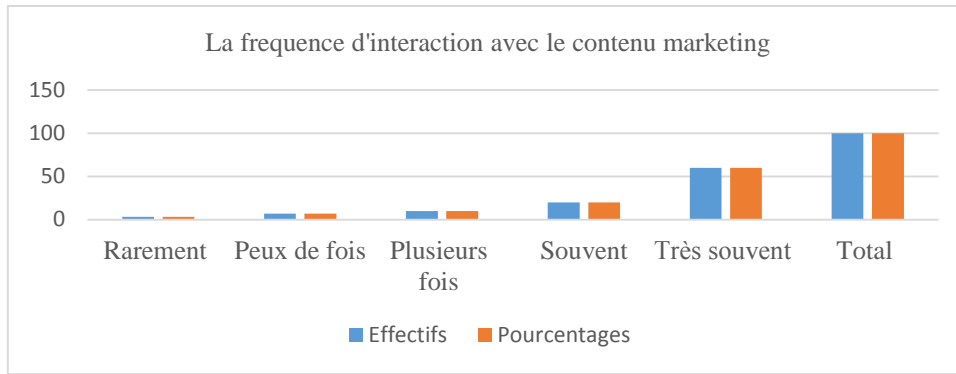
Figure.7: Reservation mode

Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “the frequency of interaction with the hotel’s marketing content»

Answers	Staff	Percentages
Rarely	3	3
Few times	7	7
Several times	10	10
Often	20	20
Very often	60	60
Total	100	100

Source :made by ourselves using SPSS 24

According to the previous table, we observe that 60% of customers interact very often with the hotel's marketing content. This distribution is illustrated in the following figure:



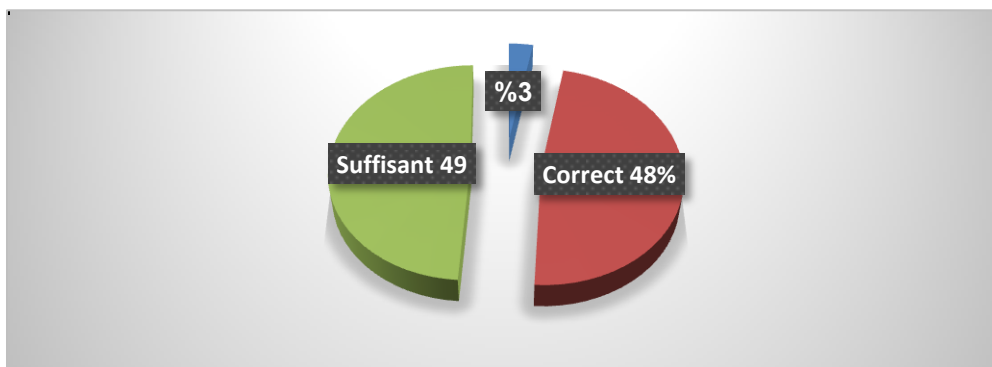
**Figure.8** *Frequency of interaction with marketing content*

Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “the relevance of digital content”

Answers	Staff	Percentages
<b>Insufficient</b>	3	3
<b>Correct</b>	48	48
<b>Sufficient</b>	49	49
<b>Total</b>	100	100

**Source :** *made by ourselves using SPSS 24*

We note that 97 customers in our sample find that the digital content is sufficient or correct at the SOFITEL hotel, the following figure gives the percentages of each category:



**Figure 9:** *The relevance of digital content*

Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “The most used digital channel to interact with the Sofitel”

Answers	Staff	Percentages
Website	15	15
Social networks	45	45
Email Companion	10	10
Online advertising	30	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source :made by ourselves using SPSS 24

It is clear that the most used digital channel is social networks with 45% of our sample, followed by online advertising with 30% achieving the following percentages:

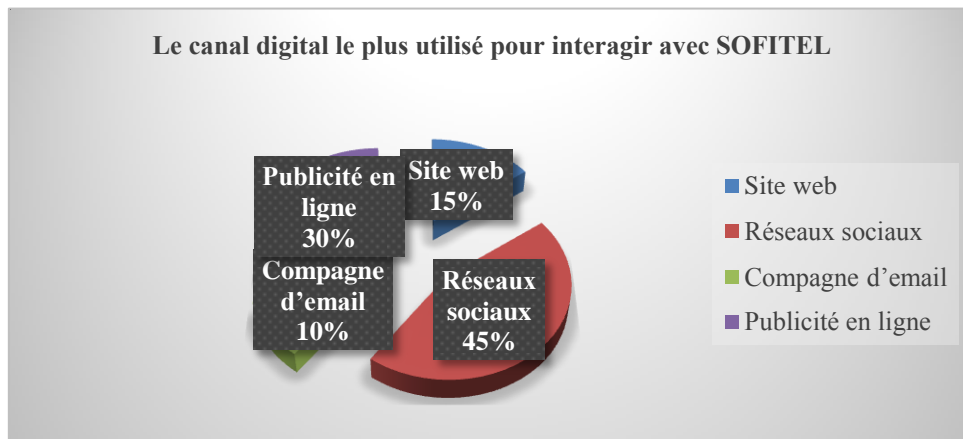


Figure 10: The most used digital channel for interaction

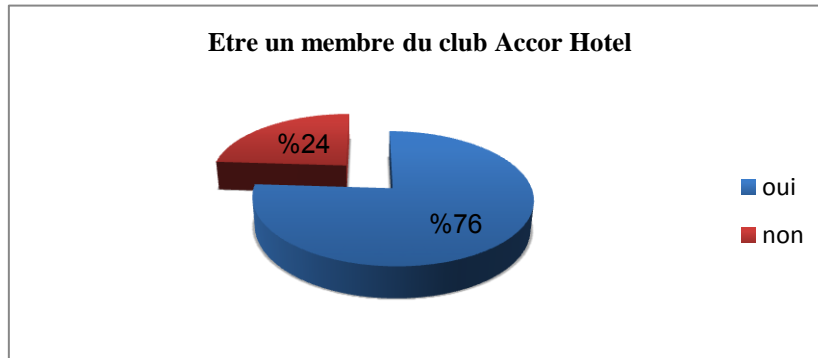
Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “being a member of the Accor Hotel club”»

Answers	Staff	Percentages
Yes	76	76
No	24	24

<b>Total</b>	100	100
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Source :made by ourselves using SPSS 24

It is clear that 76 customers of our sample are members of the Accor Hotel club while the rest are not, achieving the following distribution of percentages:



**Figure 8:** Being a member of the Accor Hotel club

Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “the level of the Accor Hotel card”»

Answers	Staff	Percentages
classic	42	55
silver	22	29
gold	9	12
platinum	3	4
<b>Total</b>		100

Source :made by ourselves using SPSS 24

From the table above we can see that 42 customers who are members of the Accor Hotel club have a classic card while 22 members have a silver card and 9 members have a gold card, the remaining 7 members have the platinum card; achieving the following distribution of percentages:

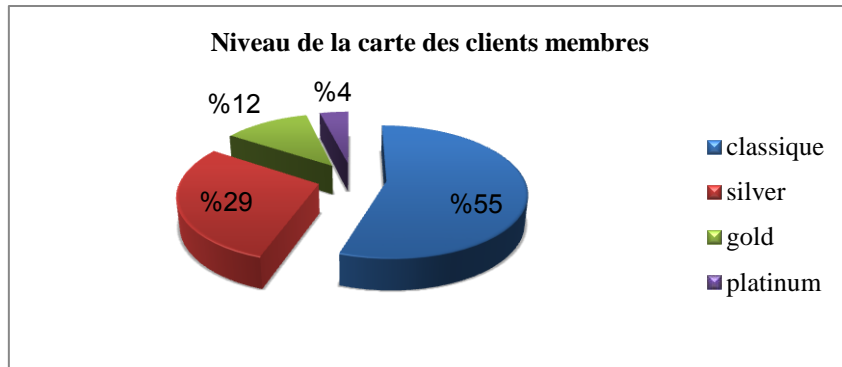


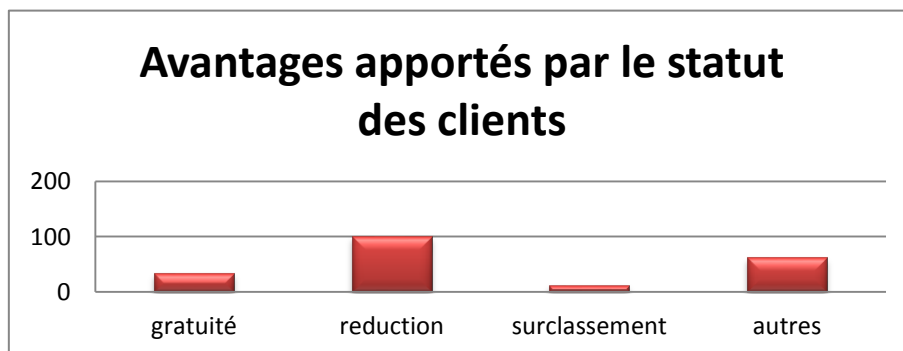
Figure.9: Level of the Accor Hotel club member customer card

Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “the advantages that status brings in Accor Hotel»

Answers	Staff	Percentages
Free	34	/
Reduction	100	/
On ranking	12	/
Others	62	/

Source :made by ourselves using SPSS 24

The first common benefit provided by the different customer statuses is the discount, then 62 customers claim that there are other benefits not offered in the questionnaire, while 34 member customers have benefited from free services and 12 customers have benefited from an upgrade. The following figure shows this distribution well:



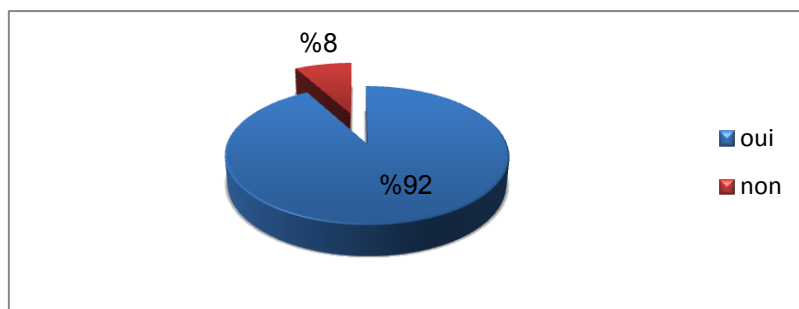
**Figure 10** *Benefits of customer status*

Distribution of the sample according to the variable: “stay loyal to the SOFITEL hotel”»

Answers	Staff	Percentages
YES	92	/
NO	8	/
TOTAL	100	/

Source : made by ourselves using SPSS 24

It is quite clear that customers believe that they will remain loyal to the SOFITEL hotel with an average of 92%. The following figure shows this distribution well:



**Figure 11:** *Customer loyalty*

**d. Cross sorting**

Distribution of the variable “Digital Marketing” and “Customer Loyalty”

What do you think about the relevance of digital marketing content?

		insufficien t	correct	sufficient	total
<i>Do you plan to remain loyal to the SOFITEL hotel?</i>	Yes	1	45	46	92
	Effective	included in 1.08%	48.91%	50%	92%
	% included in service				

	No	Effective	2	3	3	8
		% included in service	25%	37.5%	37.5%	8%
Total		Effective	3	48	49	100
		% included in service	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source :made by ourselves using SPSS 24

We can see from this table that:

- The majority of customers who say that the digital content is sufficient are the same ones who think they will remain loyal to the SOFITEL hotel with a percentage of (48.91%) and (50%) respectively.

That said, we can conclude that the variable "digital marketing" is strongly related to the variable "loyalty". This is represented in the figure:

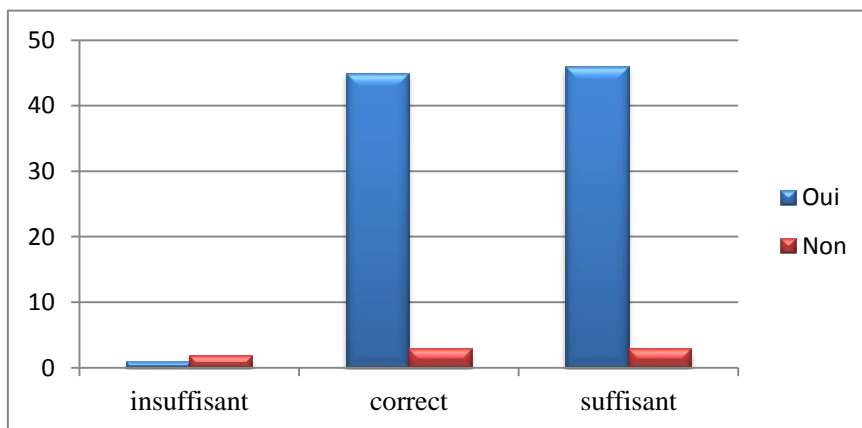


Figure 12: distribution of digital marketing/loyalty variables

e. Hypothesis testing

- **Guests of the SOFITEL Algiers Hamma Garden hotel are satisfied with the hotel's loyalty programs. To verify this hypothesis, it is sufficient to summarize the previous results:**

Item	Decision
<i>Member of the Accord Club?</i>	YES

<i>10-Advantage of the loyalty card?</i>	Reduction
<i>12-Do you think you will remain loyal to the SOFITEL hotel?</i>	Yes

It is clear that all the responses are positive, in fact, we note a high level of satisfaction with the loyalty program offered by the SOFITEL hotel.

**So we answer the first question positively: The customers of the SOFITEL Algiers Hamma Garden hotel are satisfied with the hotel's loyalty programs.**

- **The digital marketing strategy adopted by the SOFITEL Algiers Hamma Garden hotel has an impact on customer loyalty.**

To confirm this hypothesis, we need to apply the chi-square test of independence, so we first formulate the following statistical hypotheses:

**H0:** absence of connection between "SOFITEL Hotel Digital Marketing Strategies" And "customer loyalty" at the threshold level 0.05

**H1:** existence of a link between "SOFITEL Hotel Digital Marketing Strategies" And "customer loyalty" at the threshold level 0.05

**The following table gives the results found:**

	Value	Asymptotic meaning
Chi-square	89,760	0.012
V of Cramer	0.874	0.012

**Source :** *made by ourselves using SPSS 24*

We can see that the chi-square value is equal to 89.760, and the asymptotic significance is equal to 0.012, a value less than 0.05, which means that there is statistical significance, so we reject the hypothesis H0, and we accept the alternative hypothesis, which means that there is a relationship between SOFITEL Hotel Digital Marketing Strategies" And "customer loyalty". The Cramer's V value for this relationship was 0.874, a value greater than 0.5, which proves that the relationship between the two variables is a strong relationship.

SOSOFOITEL Algiers Hamma Garden hotel's digital marketing strategies have an impact on customer loyalty.

## **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study at the Sofitel hotel proves that digital marketing is the key tool for customer loyalty. Data from questionnaires and case studies show that digital targeting, including message personalization, interactivity in social networks and emails, have demonstrated tangible results in strengthening the relationship between customers and the

establishment. To do this, we can conclude that digital marketing is an essential element in the customer loyalty strategy because it ensures customer longevity.

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