

# Promoting SMEs in Pacific Island Countries Through Effective Marketing Strategies: A Systematic Literature Review and a Future Research Agenda

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## ABSTRACT

This study provides the first systematic review of the different marketing strategies used for promoting SMEs in Pacific Island countries (PICs). Literature published in high-ranked management journals was reviewed in this area using PRISMA guidelines published between 2000 and 2020. The study identifies three major marketing communication strategies useful for SMEs in the PICs: digital marketing strategies, market orientation strategies, and experience-based marketing strategies. Further, this study includes a detailed future research agenda under these three major themes. The digital marketing strategies are divided further into social media marketing strategies, blogs, and company websites. Market orientation strategies were categorised as the role of infrastructure development and the role of innovation. The experience-based marketing is another marketing strategy to attract customers. For example, it is identified through the literature that PICs can focus more on cultural festivals and cruise ship markets.

## KEYWORDS

Marketing Strategies, Pacific Island Countries, SMEs, Systematic Literature Review

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In high-income nations, SMEs account for 60% of GDP and 65% of employment; in middle-income countries, SMEs account for 70% of GDP and 95% of employment; and in low-income countries, SMEs account for 60% of GDP and over 70% of employment (Keskin et al, 2010). SMEs account for around 90% of all business entities in developing Asian countries and are the primary private sector employers, accounting for 66% of employment and 42% of gross value creation (Bello, Jibir, & Ahmed, 2018; Kartiwi & MacGregor, 2007). They also contribute to 20% of total exports (ERIA, 2018). In the Asia Pacific region, SMEs account for 96% of all enterprises and 62% of the labour force and contribute 42% to GDP (Yoshino and Taghizade-Hesary, 2018).

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