

Evaluating Marketing Strategy GrabFood Through Agile Marketing Capability Framework: A Case Study of XYZ Coffee

Wulan Yuniar Rahmawati¹, Adam Hermawan², Asep Nuryadin³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

Email: wulanyuniar@upi.edu, adamhermawan@upi.edu, asep.nuryadin@upi.edu

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Abstract

The rapid growth of digital food delivery platforms has transformed marketing practices among micro and small enterprises (MSMEs), requiring greater adaptability and data-driven decision-making. This study aims to evaluate how Soulja Coffee's digital marketing strategy on the GrabFood platform demonstrates the four dimensions of the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework: adaptability, collaborative integration, continual innovation, and forecasting and monitoring of market needs. An explanatory sequential mixed-method design was employed. The quantitative phase analyzed six-month Grab Merchant Dashboard data (January–June 2025), including sales trends, advertising performance indicators such as click-through rate and return on ad spend, and promotional outcomes. The qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews with two internal informants (a manager and a marketing staff member) to contextualize the quantitative findings. Results indicate evidence of adaptability through rapid promotional adjustments following sales declines; collaboration through routine coordination between management, marketing, and frontline staff; and innovation through dashboard-based experimentation, including the use of a discount calculator, which contributed to an increase in ROAS from 1.68 in March to 37.43 in June. Forecasting and monitoring practices were still descriptive, relying on manual dashboard review rather than predictive analysis. Overall, Soulja Coffee demonstrates early-stage marketing agility that remains operational rather than strategically institutionalized. The study extends AMC application to Indonesian micro-MSMEs, showing how informal learning, platform-provided tools, and iterative experimentation shape marketing agility under resource constraints, offering guidance for MSMEs to strengthen data-driven decision-making in platform-based commerce.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, coffee has transformed from a daily beverage into a lifestyle symbol and part of people's social identity. This shift is particularly evident among urban communities, where coffee shops serve as “third places” that facilitate social interaction and strengthen community networks (Oldenburg, 2013; Ghaffarinasab et al., 2021; Xue et al., 2022; Dökmeci et al., 2024). In Indonesia, coffee consumption has grown steadily at an average rate of 13.9% per year between 2016 and 2021, surpassing the global average growth rate of 8% (Ifthiharfi, 2021; Paryanto, 2025). This upward trend has stimulated rapid expansion in the national coffee industry, with production projected to reach 11.3 million bags in 2025/2026 and more than 20,000 active coffee shops recorded in 2023 (Aji, 2025; Rahmanulloh, 2025).

A similar pattern is observed at the local level. In Tasikmalaya City, the number of coffee shops increased dramatically from 66 outlets in 2019 to more than 250 in 2024 (Widagdo et al., 2022; Open Data Kota Tasikmalaya, 2025). This expansion has been accompanied by the rising use of digital marketing platforms to improve efficiency and reach more customers. This digital

shift is increasingly visible in Tasikmalaya, where coffee businesses have optimized delivery applications and social media-based promotional strategies to reach broader audiences (Demir & Dincer, 2020; Widagdo et al., 2022; Irawan & Ghonisyah, 2023; Khristianto et al., 2023).

Among the available food delivery services, Grab has emerged as the dominant platform. Momentum Works, as cited in *Tech in Asia* (Ahmad, 2024), reported that GrabFood accounted over 50% of the total gross merchandise value (GMV) in Southeast Asia's food delivery market. Consistent with this regional dominance, a survey by Snapcart found that GrabFood is used by 82% of culinary businesses in Indonesia, compared with GoFood (71%) and ShopeeFood (28%) (Puspita & Setyowati, 2023). This preference is also reflected at the local level in Tasikmalaya, where consumers favor GrabFood for its comprehensive features, delivery speed, and transaction convenience. Furthermore, promotional activities on the platform have been shown to influence up to 55.6% of consumer purchasing decisions (Ramadhany & Nopebrianti, 2022).

Reflecting this digital trend, Soulja Coffee, one of the leading coffee MSMEs in Tasikmalaya, illustrates its digital transformation through hybrid marketing strategies that integrate offline and online channels (Nurhaliza et al., 2025). Among several digital platforms, GrabFood consistently generated higher revenue than offline sales because Soulja Coffee applied data-driven marketing strategies (Maharani et al., 2025). Preliminary performance data from January to June 2025 reveal notable monthly fluctuations in GrabFood's contribution to total sales, which formed the basis of this study's observation period.

Table 1. GrabFood Sales Performance of Soulja Coffee (January–June 2025)

Month	Gross Sales (Rp)	Grab Contribution (%)	Monthly Growth (%)
January	12,490,000	27.71	-8.51
February	8,755,000	20.59	-29.9
March	4,811,000	11.76	-45.05
April	9,467,000	21.55	+96.78
May	9,184,000	19.63	-2.99
June	12,828,000	26.83	+39.68

Source: Soulja Coffee internal data (2025)

The data in Table 1 show noticeable fluctuations in GrabFood's contribution to Soulja Coffee's total monthly revenue between January and June 2025. The lowest contribution occurred in March 2025 at 11.76%, while the highest reached 26.83% in June 2025. These fluctuations indicate that GrabFood's marketing performance was unstable, affecting Soulja Coffee's total sales. Such performance volatility aligns with Kaleka and Morgan's (2019) argument that firms often become overly reactive to short-term performance results, leading to inconsistent marketing directions and fluctuating outcomes. In contrast, marketing strategies built upon strong marketing capabilities, such as the ability to manage market information, maintain customer relationships, and develop products effectively, tend to adapt more consistently to change and sustain long-term performance stability.

This situation underscores a critical issue in the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies among coffee MSMEs, particularly in sustaining short-term performance through delivery platforms. Accordingly, assessing Soulja Coffee's internal marketing capabilities during the January–June 2025 period is necessary to identify existing limitations and enhance strategic

responsiveness. Marketing effectiveness should be understood not merely in terms of increased activity, but in how efficiently an organization adapts to dynamic market conditions. Without systematic evaluation, marketing initiatives risk becoming inefficient or even counterproductive (Yendra, 2023; Hanssens, 2024).

The inconsistency observed in performance reflects a broader challenge for MSMEs in maintaining digital marketing effectiveness. Therefore, an evaluation framework that measures both marketing outcomes and internal adaptive capabilities is required. Among the available theoretical approaches, the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework is the most appropriate for this study, as it conceptualizes digital marketing as an adaptive, collaborative, and continuously learning process rather than a set of isolated tactical practices (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021b).

According to Moi and Cabiddu (2021b), Agile Marketing Capability refers to an organization's ability to manage marketing activities adaptively and responsively through rapid learning, cross-functional collaboration, and continuous innovation in response to dynamic market changes. This capability emphasizes not only strategic decision-making but also the effectiveness of daily marketing operations such as campaign design, promotional execution, and digital communication with consumers. In practice, marketing effectiveness largely depends on the team's ability to learn quickly from market dynamics, adjust strategies appropriately, and optimize promotional outcomes efficiently.

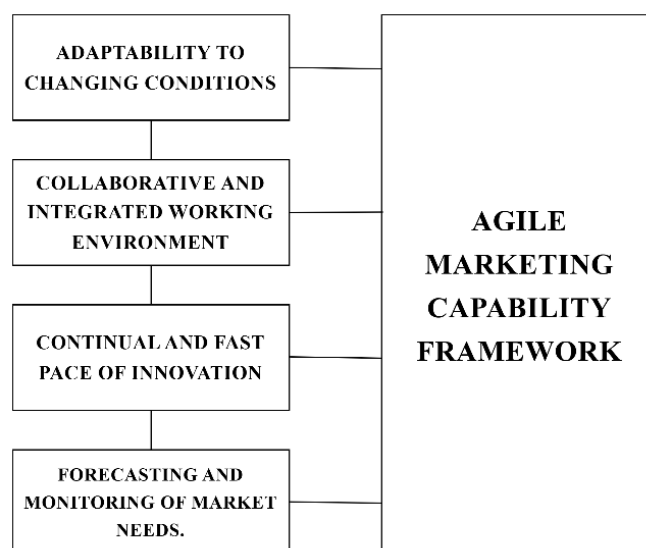


Figure 1. Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) Framework
Source: Adapted from Moi and Cabiddu (2021b)

The Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework, developed by Moi and Cabiddu (2021b) through the Spotahome case study, provides an updated empirical model comprising four key dimensions: adaptability to changing conditions, a collaborative and integrated working environment, a continual and fast pace of innovation, and forecasting and monitoring of market needs. As illustrated in Figure 1, these dimensions collectively serve as evaluative indicators for assessing the extent to which an organization demonstrates adaptability, collaboration, innovation, and market foresight in managing its digital marketing activities. Conceptually, the AMC framework explains how marketing agility operates as a dynamic capability that enables firms to continuously adjust their strategies in response to market changes. Accordingly, it functions as a diagnostic tool for evaluating an organization's readiness to adopt and sustain agile digital marketing practices (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021b).

Most studies on GrabFood's marketing performance focus on how promotions influence purchasing decisions and consumer preferences (Ramadhany & Nopebrianti, 2022; Puspita & Setyowati, 2023; Prasetyo et al., 2024; Sektiyaningsih & Febriarhamadini, 2024), while giving limited attention to the internal marketing team's capability to design and adapt strategies for sustained performance. In contrast, research on Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) highlights how organizations develop internal capacities to respond to dynamic digital markets through the four dimensions (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021a, 2021b). Subsequent studies have expanded its application to diverse industries, such as insurance, tourism, and digital business (Gera et al., 2019; Omididi et al., 2021; Celik, 2023; Hoseini et al., 2023).

Based on this analysis, the present study identifies a research gap between previous works that focus primarily on promotional outcomes and the limited exploration of internal digital marketing capabilities. To address this gap, the study applies the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework, comprising adaptability to changing conditions, a collaborative and integrated working environment, a continual and rapid pace of innovation, and forecasting and monitoring of market needs, as an evaluative lens to assess the effectiveness of Soulja Coffee's digital marketing strategy on GrabFood. Specifically, this study evaluates the extent to which Soulja Coffee's marketing capabilities align with the four dimensions of the AMC framework and how such alignment contributes to the effectiveness of its digital marketing strategy. The novelty of this study lies in the direct application of the AMC framework to evaluate marketing capability within the local MSME coffee sector in Indonesia, providing new empirical insights into how adaptive, collaborative, innovative, and predictive capacities enhance marketing agility and performance on digital delivery platforms.

METHODS

Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-methods approach with an explanatory sequential design (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This design was chosen because assessing Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) requires both quantitative evaluation of performance outcomes and qualitative exploration of managerial decision-making. The research began with a quantitative analysis of platform and internal sales data to identify performance patterns, followed by qualitative inquiry to interpret the underlying capability dynamics.

A single-case exploratory study was conducted on Soulja Coffee, an MSME operating in Tasikmalaya, Indonesia (Yin et al., 2018). The case study method was considered suitable to capture the context-specific nature of agility within small enterprises, where adaptive practices and innovation often evolve from local, informal routines rather than standardized systems. The observation period (January–June 2025) was purposively selected because it represented an intensive phase of digital marketing activity on GrabFood, characterized by fluctuating sales and campaign outcomes. This timeframe provided a relevant basis for examining how AMC dimensions, adaptability to changing conditions, a collaborative and integrated working environment, a continual and fast pace of innovation, and forecasting and monitoring of market needs, manifest in response to shifting platform competition and customer behavior (Kaleka & Morgan, 2019; Moi & Cabiddu, 2021b). The sequential combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses thus enabled a comprehensive understanding of Soulja Coffee's agility in managing digital marketing strategies.

Research Object and Subject

This study focuses on evaluating Soulja Coffee's digital marketing strategy on the GrabFood platform during January–June 2025. The research subject is Soulja Coffee, a micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) based in Tasikmalaya, Indonesia, that actively utilizes GrabFood as its primary online sales channel.

The case was selected using purposive sampling based on two criteria: (1) consistent execution of digital marketing activities on the GrabFood platform, and (2) observable fluctuations in sales, promotional outcomes, and advertising performance during the study period. These criteria ensure the case provides a relevant and information-rich context for analyzing digital marketing capability dynamics through the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework.

Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected sequentially following the explanatory mixed-method design. Quantitative data were obtained from the GrabFood Merchant Dashboard (Ads, Ad Group, Campaign, and Promotion Reports) and Soulja Coffee's internal monthly sales records for January–June 2025 ($n = 6$ months). These datasets captured key performance indicators (e.g., sales, month-on-month growth, assisted sales, CTR, ROAS) used to identify performance trends over time.

Table 2 summarizes the mapping of quantitative indicators to the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework. Each metric reflects multiple, interrelated dimensions of marketing agility rather than a single construct. For example, ROAS demonstrates innovation in advertising effectiveness, adaptability through budget reallocation based on feedback, and forecasting in evaluating campaign efficiency, while assisted sales reflect both collaborative integration and innovative promotional practices. This integrative mapping highlights the multidimensional nature of agile marketing capabilities within Soulja Coffee's digital ecosystem.

The qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews designed to explain the managerial decisions and adaptive responses underlying the observed performance patterns. Two internal informants: the manager and a marketing staff member, were purposively selected for their direct involvement in Soulja Coffee's digital marketing activities, ensuring access to both managerial and operational insights (see Table 4). The interview protocol followed the AMC framework proposed by Moi & Cabiddu (2021b) and adapted to the MSME digital marketing context (see Table 3 for the mapping of AMC dimensions to interview focus areas and guiding questions).

Interviews lasted 25–45 minutes, conducted either in person or online with participant consent, and were audio-recorded with complementary field notes. All interviews were conducted in Indonesian and later translated into English by the researcher to maintain meaning accuracy. The combination of platform analytics, internal business records, and interview data enabled methodological triangulation, enhancing the reliability and interpretive validity of findings on Soulja Coffee's agile marketing capability.

Table 2. Mapping of Quantitative Performance Indicators Based on Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) Dimensions

AMC Dimension	Quantitative Indicators	Data Source
Adaptability to Changing Conditions	Monthly Sales, GrabFood Contribution, Month-on-Month (MoM) Growth	Monthly Report
Collaborative & Integrated Working Environment	Assisted Sales, Active Ad Campaigns, Payout	Promotions and Campaign Reports
Continual & Fast Pace of Innovation	Types of Promotions Active (discounts, bundling, campaign themes), Assisted Sales, Return on Ad Spend (ROAS)	Promotions and Campaign Reports
Forecasting & Monitoring of Market Needs	Digital ad data: Active Ad Campaigns, Impressions, Click-Through Rate (CTR), Return on Ad Spend (ROAS)	Ads and Ad Group Reports

Source: Processed by the researchers based on GrabFood Merchant Dashboard reports of Soulja Coffee (2025)

Table 3. Mapping of Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) Dimensions to Interview Focus Areas and Guiding Questions

AMC Dimension	Interview Focus Areas	Example Interview Question
Adaptability to Changing Conditions	Response to market changes and strategic adjustments	How does Soulja Coffee adjust its marketing strategies in response to internal and external changes that affect marketing performance during the January–June 2025 period?
Collaborative & Integrated Working Environment	Internal coordination and integration with the Grab platform	How are coordination and communication carried out among the owner, marketing team, and baristas in designing and executing GrabFood campaigns?
Continual & Fast Pace of Innovation	Ideation, execution, and barriers to marketing innovation	How are new marketing or product ideas developed and implemented as campaigns within a short timeframe at Soulja Coffee?
Forecasting & Monitoring of Market Needs	Monitoring of consumer needs and data utilization	How does Soulja Coffee utilize dashboard data, reviews, or consumer feedback to understand and predict market trends, and how are these insights applied in formulating subsequent marketing strategies?

Source: Processed by the researchers based on Moi and Cabiddu (2021b)

Table 4. Profile of Research Informants

Informant	Position	Role in Soulja Coffee	Duration
Informant 1	Manager	Oversees daily operations and coordinates the digital marketing strategy	±45 minutes
Informant 2	Marketing Staff	Plans and executes GrabFood marketing activities	±25 minutes

Source: Primary data from researchers' interviews (2025)

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was conducted in line with the explanatory sequential mixed-method design, beginning with quantitative analysis followed by qualitative interpretation and integration. In the quantitative phase, descriptive analysis of key performance indicators, drawn from the GrabFood Merchant Dashboard and internal sales records for January–June 2025, was conducted to identify

trends and fluctuations in Soulja Coffee's digital marketing performance. In the qualitative phase, interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2023), comprising stages of familiarization, coding, theme development, review, and interpretation. Coding was deductively guided by the four dimensions of the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework (as summarized in Table 3), while allowing for inductive emergence of additional themes relevant to MSME digital marketing behavior.

Finally, findings from both phases were integrated through a joint display matrix (QUAN → QUAL) (Guetterman et al., 2015; Creswell & Creswell, 2017), which connected numerical trends with managerial narratives explaining those trends. This integrative process enhanced methodological triangulation and strengthened the interpretive validity of conclusions about Soulja Coffee's agile marketing capability.

Data Validity

Data validity and trustworthiness were enhanced through multiple strategies consistent with the mixed-method research standards (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Source triangulation was applied by cross-verifying quantitative performance data (sales records and GrabFood Merchant Dashboard metrics) with qualitative interview evidence and internal operational documents. Method triangulation was conducted by integrating descriptive quantitative analysis with thematic qualitative procedures.

After preliminary themes were developed, member checking was carried out by sharing key findings and thematic summaries with both informants to confirm accuracy and ensure that interpretations aligned with actual managerial practices (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In addition, an audit trail was maintained through systematic documentation of data sources, coding notes, and analytical decisions to enhance the dependability and confirmability of the findings. All methods were implemented in accordance with ethical research principles, ensuring the credibility and reliability of the study's findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

This subsection summarizes Soulja Coffee's digital marketing performance on GrabFood from January to June 2025. The analysis focuses on key indicators including gross sales, revenue contribution, month-on-month growth, CTR, and ROAS as benchmarks for assessing platform-based marketing outcomes during the period.

Table 5. Summary of Soulja Coffee's Digital Marketing Performance, January–June 2025

Month	Gross Sales (Rp)	Grab Contribution (%)	Monthly Growth (%)	CTR (%)	ROAS
January	12,490,000	27.71	-8.51	2.18	23.10
February	8,755,000	20.59	-29.90	2.07	5.13
March	4,811,000	11.76	-45.05	2.16	1.68
April	9,467,000	21.55	+96.78	2.30	4.24
May	9,184,000	19.63	-2.99	2.38	20.79
June	12,828,000	26.83	+39.68	2.12	37.43

Source: Soulja Coffee internal data (2025)

Table 5 presents Soulja Coffee's digital marketing performance on GrabFood from January to June 2025. The data show clear fluctuations in digital marketing results throughout the six-month observation period. Monthly gross sales ranged from Rp 4,811,000 in March (the lowest point) to Rp 12,828,000 in June (the highest). The month-on-month (MoM) growth rate also varied sharply, dropping by -45.05% in March before rebounding strongly by $+96.78\%$ in April.

The GrabFood contribution to total sales ranged between 11.76% and 27.71% . The click-through rate (CTR) remained stable across the months, fluctuating slightly between 2.07% and 2.38% . Meanwhile, the Return on Ad Spend (ROAS), as illustrated in Figure 2, decreased sharply from 23.10 in January to 1.68 in March, then increased steadily to reach 37.43 in June.

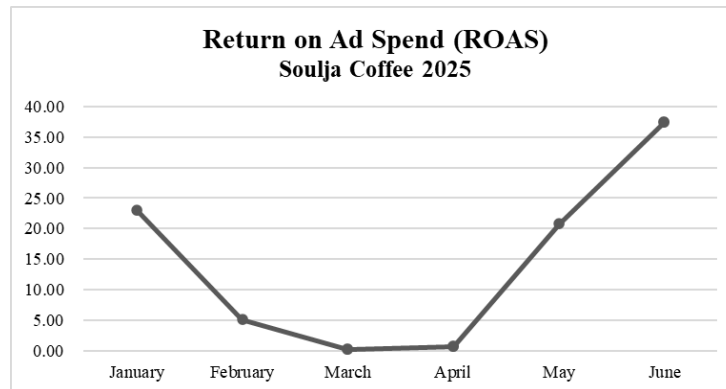


Figure 2. Soulja Coffee's Return on Ad Spend (ROAS) Trend, January–June 2025
Source: Processed by the researchers based on Soulja Coffee's internal data (2025)

These quantitative results provide a descriptive overview of Soulja Coffee's marketing performance during the first half of 2025 and form the basis for further analysis in the discussion section.

Dimension 1: Adaptability to Changing Conditions

The findings show that Soulja Coffee adjusted its digital marketing activities in response to changes in sales performance and platform dynamics during January–June 2025.

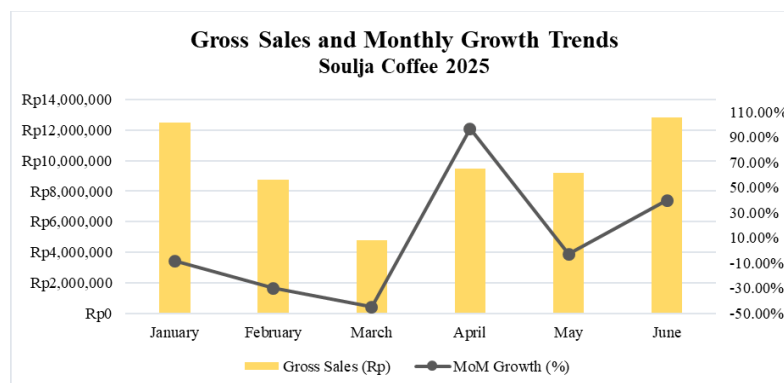


Figure 3. Gross Sales and Monthly Growth Trends as Indicators of Soulja Coffee's Marketing Adaptability (2025)
Source: Processed by the researchers based on Soulja Coffee's internal data (2025)

Figure 3 illustrates fluctuations in Soulja Coffee's gross sales and monthly growth rates from January to June 2025. Sales performance declined sharply in March (-45.05%) before recovering in April ($+96.78\%$), as detailed in Table 5. Monthly growth patterns continued to vary throughout the observed period.

Qualitative insights further reinforced the quantitative trend. The manager noted that advertising activation in March was delayed until mid-month, contributing to weaker performance during that period. In April, the marketing staff implemented Eid-themed promotions and bundling initiatives to address declining sales, while ongoing monitoring of the GrabFood dashboard guided weekly adjustments. These actions reflect shifts in campaign timing, budget distribution, and promotional design in response to sales fluctuations.

Overall, the evidence shows a consistent pattern of responsive decision-making and tactical adjustments in reaction to short-term performance changes. These observations indicate a practical tendency to recalibrate marketing execution based on platform dynamics. The theoretical implications of these findings are elaborated in the subsequent discussion section.

Dimension 2: Collaborative and Integrated Working Environment

The results suggest that coordination among marketing, operations, and management roles supported the execution of GrabFood campaigns during the research period.

Table 6. Digital Campaign Data of Soulja Coffee, January–June 2025

Month	Assisted Sales (Rp)	Active Campaigns	Payout (Rp)
January	8,570,000	2	7,126,094
February	3,457,000	5	4,673,269
March	655,000	3	2,845,163
April	1,694,000	1	5,656,869
May	6,651,000	1	4,858,300
June	6,421,500	2	7,218,276

Source: Soulja Coffee internal data (2025)

Table 6 summarizes Soulja Coffee’s digital campaign performance from January to June 2025. The highest number of active campaigns occurred in February (five campaigns), while March recorded the lowest assisted sales (Rp 655,000) and payout (Rp 2,845,163). Campaign intensity declined in March and April before gradually increasing in May and June. Correspondingly, payout values fluctuated, with a temporary decrease in May (Rp 4,858,300) before reaching the highest value in June (Rp 7,218,276).

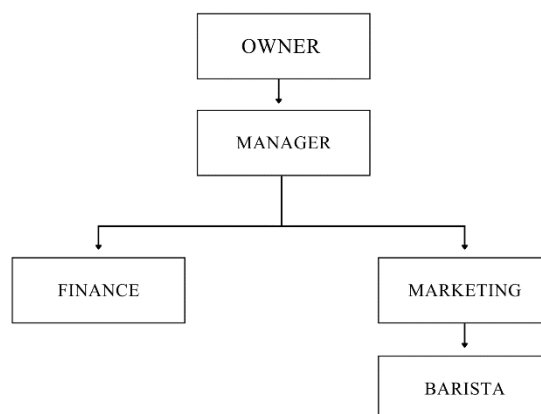


Figure 4. Internal Collaboration Process Scheme in Soulja Coffee’s Digital Campaign Implementation

Source: Processed by the researchers based on interview data (2025)

Figure 4 illustrates the internal coordination structure of Soulja Coffee's GrabFood marketing activities. The manager acts as a liaison between ownership directives and operational execution, while the marketing staff manages campaign settings and communicates promotional information to baristas.

Qualitative summaries showed that campaign preparation and activation were supported by regular communication among the owner, manager, and marketing staff. One informant noted that marketing settings were reviewed collectively before activation, while another explained that briefings were delivered to baristas to ensure consistent promotion execution, although timing sometimes varied during high-demand periods. These observations illustrate coordinated decision-making and shared operational responsibilities in carrying out campaign activities.

Overall, the evidence reveals a pattern of collaborative involvement across roles in planning and executing marketing. This suggests that shared communication routines and joint task execution played a role in maintaining consistency across marketing activities. The broader implications of this collaborative dynamic are examined in the discussion section.

Dimension 3: Continual and Fast Pace of Innovation

The findings indicate that Soulja Coffee made ongoing adjustments to its digital marketing and promotional activities based on performance feedback from GrabFood metrics and campaign outcomes.

Table 7. Indicators of Digital Marketing Innovation at Soulja Coffee, January–June 2025

Month	Active Promotions	Assisted Sales (Rp)	ROAS
January	4	8,570,000	23.10
February	3	3,457,000	5.13
March	5	655,000	1.68
April	3	1,694,000	4.24
May	5	6,651,000	20.79
June	4	6,421,500	37.43

Source: Soulja Coffee internal data (2025)

Table 7 presents Soulja Coffee's promotional activity and assisted sales performance from January to June 2025. The number of active promotions ranged from three to five per month. Assisted sales declined from Rp 8,570,000 in January to Rp 655,000 in March, then increased to Rp 6,421,500 in June. ROAS also fluctuated, decreasing from 23.10 in January to 1.68 in March, before rising to 37.43 in June.

Qualitative summaries indicated that the marketing team reviewed previous promotional outcomes before adjusting subsequent strategies. One informant explained that discount levels and bundling combinations were modified in accordance with sales performance trends. Another noted that a simple discount-calculator tool was introduced in April to enable faster price adjustments and streamline promotional execution. These observations illustrate ongoing refinement in promotional tactics and pricing decisions in response to performance feedback.

Overall, the results show a pattern of continuous experimentation and adjustment in advertising approaches and pricing mechanics. This suggests that iterative refinement processes

were used to improve promotional effectiveness over time. The theoretical interpretation of this pattern is elaborated in the discussion section.

Dimension 4: Forecasting and Monitoring of Market Needs

This dimension describes how Soulja Coffee anticipates and responds to shifts in market demand by continuously monitoring performance indicators and adjusting its advertising activities.

Table 8. Digital Advertising Efficiency Data, January–June 2025

Month	Active Campaigns	Impressions	CTR (%)	ROAS
January	2	21,205	2.18	23.10
February	5	31,427	2.07	5.13
March	3	28,538	2.16	1.68
April	1	21,584	2.30	4.24
May	1	16,304	2.38	20.79
June	2	10,032	2.12	37.43

Source: Soulja Coffee internal data (2025)

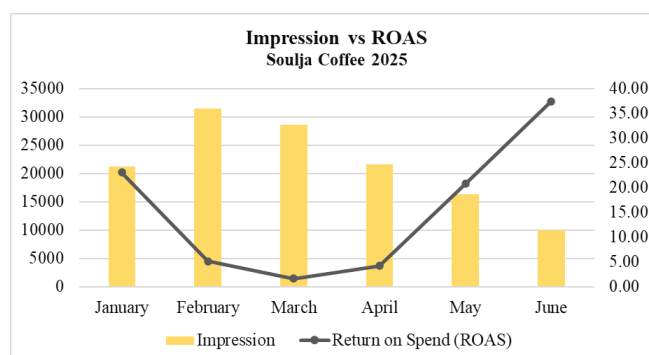


Figure 5. Comparison of Impressions and ROAS of Soulja Coffee, January–June 2025

Source: Processed by the researchers based on Soulja Coffee's internal data (2025)

Table 8 presents Soulja Coffee's advertising activity and performance from January to June 2025. The number of active campaigns ranged from one to five per month, with impressions fluctuating between 10,032 and 31,427. CTR remained relatively stable across the period, ranging from 2.07% to 2.38%, suggesting consistent audience engagement with the ad placements. Meanwhile, ROAS showed notable variation, declining to 1.68 in March before rising sharply to 37.43 in June.

Qualitative insights further indicate that the marketing team routinely reviewed dashboard performance data to evaluate campaign outcomes. One informant described adjusting product bundling when certain menu combinations performed poorly, while another noted regular checks on advertisement results, although more detailed breakdown analysis had not yet been adopted. These observations illustrate that Soulja Coffee monitored key digital performance indicators to inform near-term promotional adjustments.

Overall, the findings demonstrate ongoing tracking of platform-based metrics to support tactical marketing decisions in daily operations. This suggests an emerging data-driven approach to monitoring performance signals and adjusting execution accordingly. The theoretical interpretation of this monitoring behavior is elaborated in the subsequent discussion section.

DISCUSSION

Dimension: Adaptability to Changing Conditions

Within the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework, adaptability represents a firm's capacity to adjust marketing operations rapidly through iterative learning loops and evidence-based responses (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021b). Quantitative findings reveal that Soulja Coffee's monthly performance between Januari and June 2025 experienced notable volatility.

After a steady start in January, sales in February declined by 12.53%, marking the first indication of slowing momentum. March experienced the sharpest contraction, with sales dropping by 45.05%, representing the lowest point during the observed period. The downturn was followed by a strong rebound in April, which surged by 96.78% the highest monthly growth recorded in the first semester. However, May fell again by 32.86%, suggesting that the recovery was still fragile, before June increased by 39.28%, indicating a return to a more stable trajectory.

This pattern of alternating declines and rebounds demonstrates that Soulja Coffee's sales dynamics were closely tied to the cadence and timing of its marketing activities, forming the empirical basis for the qualitative discussion that follows.

From the qualitative perspective, the downturn and recovery can be traced to several interrelated factors. At the internal level, February's transition in the marketing position temporarily slowed adaptation; the manager explained that the new hire still needed substantial guidance on how marketing activities should be executed, which reduced responsiveness during early campaigns. External circumstances also pressured sales performance. The Ramadhan month in March restricted dine-in operations, while the team decided to raise online menu prices due to several considerations. Both actions collectively constrained customer demand and online conversion. More critically, advertising execution lagged behind schedule. The manager admitted,

"In March, we were late in setting up the ad. So, it should have been set from the 1st to the 31st. But in March, it wasn't set until mid-March. [...] In April, there was also a delay, with the ad only being posted on the 8th. Although there was a delay in June, we tried several other methods, such as participating in other promotions." (Manager, translated)

These delays disrupted campaign continuity and weakened Grab visibility during the most competitive period. The rebound began once adaptive learning occurred. As the marketing officer recalled,

"The highest sales were for hamper packages in April. Because it was the Eid month. Then there were also promotions on double dates, and payday sales too." (Marketing staff, translated)

Seasonal bundling, payday promotions, and holiday hampers effectively re-energized sales. The process culminated in June when digital optimization and platform programs amplified reach. The manager emphasized,

"We followed the program [...] And finally, in June sales actually increased quite a bit in June, because we received 44 orders." (Manager, translated)

Integrating quantitative and qualitative evidence, Soulja Coffee's trajectory reflects the adaptive experimentation pattern described by Moi and Cabiddu (2021b). Initial instability caused by staffing changes and environmental disruption was mitigated through iterative learning and campaign experimentation that gradually produced consistent performance.

This evolution mirrors the Spotahome case, where digital agility emerged through rapid feedback loops between data, managerial insight, and operational execution underscoring that adaptability in SMEs is a dynamic, learning-driven capability rather than a one-time reaction. Ultimately, this adaptive mechanism also depended on how internal collaboration supported those learning cycles, suggesting that organizational coordination and communication were critical enablers of agility an aspect examined further in Dimension 2.

Dimension: Collaborative and Integrated Working Environment

Within the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework, the collaborative and integrated working environment dimension highlights how marketing agility depends on cross-functional coordination that links marketing, operations, and management teams within a continuous learning loop (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021b). In the Spotahome case, Moi and Cabiddu (2021b) showed that integration among marketing, analytics, and content units enabled rapid campaign adjustments through close coordination, regular feedback, and weekly review cycles.

Quantitatively, Soulja Coffee's digital campaign data (Table 6) show notable fluctuations in assisted sales and payout during the first half of 2025. Assisted sales decreased sharply from Rp8,570,000 in January to Rp3,457,000 in February, before reaching the lowest point of Rp655,000 in March. This decline coincided with varying campaign intensity, as the number of active campaigns rose from 2 to 5 in February and then fell to 3 in March, suggesting that the increase in campaign quantity did not translate into proportional performance gains. From April onward, campaign results began to recover gradually. Assisted sales rose to Rp1,694,000 in April, showing the first sign of improvement after two consecutive declines. The upward momentum strengthened in May, reaching Rp6,651,000, and remained relatively stable in June at Rp6,421,500. Payout values followed a similar trend, climbing from Rp5,656,869 in April to Rp7,218,276 in June.

From the qualitative perspective, the marketing staff explained that marketing activities were primarily handled by the marketing division, while the owner served as the final decision-maker. The manager oversaw coordination between these roles, ensuring that approved marketing were implemented and communicated to frontline baristas. According to the manager, marketing plans were drafted and supervised under quality control before execution. Once approved, the marketing team briefed the baristas, maintaining operational alignment across levels as illustrated in Figure 4. The manager described this workflow as follows:

"From marketing, they make a marketing plan under supervision, then they pass QC [...] then the marketing team briefs the barista group, today there is this promo, please upsell, please cross-sell." (Manager, translated).

This coordination extends to ensuring on-site readiness and communication to support marketing. The marketing staff confirmed this interface but acknowledged occasional gaps:

"Synchronizing is more about barista readiness [...] sometimes there's a glitch: Grab has a promotion, but the barista doesn't know about it yet because marketing hasn't provided a brief." (Marketing staff, translated).

These accounts demonstrate that collaboration at Soulja Coffee is driven by direct communication and mutual understanding rather than formalized routines. Such an approach supports speed and adaptability but also introduces variability, as evidenced by occasional delays in promotion briefings to frontline staff. In AMC terms, this positions the firm at the level of

functional integration where cross-team cooperation enables quick execution yet systematic review and reporting mechanisms remain undeveloped.

Integrating quantitative and qualitative findings, Soulja Coffee's collaborative structure illustrates an early stage of organizational integration that facilitates fast response but relies on informal coordination. Compared with the Spotahome model (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021b), which institutionalized agile collaboration through structured feedback routines, Soulja still operates through verbal alignment and ad-hoc communication. To advance its agile maturity, the firm needs to formalize cross-unit interaction, introducing scheduled review meetings, shared performance dashboards, and briefing protocols to turn informal collaboration into sustainable organizational agility.

Ultimately, this collaborative foundation serves as the bridge to the next dimension, Continual and Fast Pace of Innovation, where adaptive coordination evolves into structured learning and process improvement based on data-driven feedback.

Dimension: Continual and Fast Pace of Innovation

Within the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework, the continual and fast pace of innovation dimension reflects how organizations sustain marketing agility through cycles of experimentation, learning, and improvement (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021b). Innovation in this sense is not limited to introducing new ideas but involves a repetitive process of testing, refining, and implementing marketing practices based on data-driven insights. In the Spotahome case, Moi and Cabiddu (2021b) emphasized that continual innovation was achieved through the integration of performance analytics and customer feedback, allowing the marketing team to refine content and promotional strategies rapidly across markets through short testing loops and weekly evaluations.

Quantitatively, Soulja Coffee's innovation activity (Table 7) shows noticeable fluctuations between January and June 2025. The number of active promotions ranged from three to five per month, with substantial variation in outcomes. Assisted sales declined sharply from Rp8,570,000 in January to Rp655,000 in March, a decrease of around 92% in two months, before rebounding to Rp6,421,500 in June, indicating nearly tenfold recovery after the promotions realignment initiated in April. Similarly, Return on Ad Spend (ROAS) fell drastically from 23.10 in January to 1.68 in March (−92.7%), then rose sharply to 37.43 in June, showing a significant increase in promotions efficiency in the second quarter. These fluctuations indicate that Soulja Coffee continuously refined its promotional strategies in response to observed market feedback and customer demand patterns.

From the qualitative perspective, the marketing staff explained that data from the Grab Merchant Dashboard played a central role in guiding promotional decisions. Marketing routinely reviewed best-selling menu lists to create bundles and payday promotions, aligning new promotions with historical data and prior sales results. The team also emphasized the importance of ongoing evaluation, discussing what worked and what did not during regular internal reviews to ensure that each new promotions built upon previous experiences. These insights collectively reveal that innovation emerged not from radical changes but from iterative adaptation, informed by performance data and cumulative learning. The manager elaborated on how Grab data shaped ongoing promotional cycles:

“We use Grab's dashboard to determine what promotions we want to run next month. For example, during a meeting, we mentioned that the 10% promotion [...] really helps sales. We'll hold it again next month, it's been quite helpful.” (Manager, translated).

Beyond this ongoing use of data, Soulja Coffee's innovation process also involved reflecting on past marketing cycles. The manager described that the team often referred to previous years' marketing activities, particularly around high-demand periods such as Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, to identify what could be improved and implemented earlier in the current year. This process of "wave the trend" represented how Soulja translated past experiences into more refined and timely promotions, such as preparing hampers earlier to capture seasonal demand in April. The marketing staff further noted that benchmarking served as another layer of learning:

"Soulja also looks at other merchants, benchmarking them. Other merchants have this promotion, and we're probably trying to observe and copy it." (Marketing staff, translated).

These statements indicate that innovation at Soulja Coffee materialized through short-cycle experimentation and reflective learning, where past promotions results directly informed subsequent marketing decisions. The test–evaluate–reapply pattern demonstrates that learning occurred continuously, albeit informally, through the Grab Merchant Dashboard as a feedback mechanism. Meanwhile, the manager introduced a small-scale internal innovation aimed at improving efficiency:

"So, finally, in April, we created a 'discount calculator,' which means that from now on, the marketing team no longer needs supervision regarding discounts, except for the content itself. [...] It automatically passes QC." (Manager, translated).

This initiative represents a process innovation that streamlines decision-making and reduces managerial dependency. The "discount calculator" aligns with AMC's principle of iterative refinement, transforming experiential learning into operational tools that accelerate execution and minimize human error.

Integrating quantitative and qualitative findings, Soulja Coffee's innovation approach demonstrates adaptive operational innovation rapid, experience-based adjustments that sustain marketing agility. However, the process remains predominantly observational and imitative rather than systematically data-driven. In AMC terms, this represents a developing stage of agility, where innovation stems from experience and reflection rather than institutionalized experimentation cycles.

Comparing this with the Spotahome model, which embedded analytics, experimentation, and weekly evaluation in a formal loop, Soulja Coffee's approach is still evolving toward structured learning. Establishing standardized mechanisms, such as post-promotions review sessions, performance documentation, and data-linked promotional planning, would transform ad-hoc experimentation into a measurable, repeatable innovation cycle. This refinement would elevate Soulja Coffee's marketing agility by embedding innovation as a continuous, organization-wide learning process, ultimately preparing the foundation for Dimension 4: Forecasting and monitoring of market needs, where learning translates into predictive and analytical capabilities that enhance long-term strategic agility.

Dimension: Forecasting and Monitoring of Market Needs

Within the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework, the forecasting and monitoring of market needs dimension refers to an organization's ability to continuously track marketing performance and anticipate market shifts through systematic data analysis (Moi & Cabiddu, 2021b). Monitoring provides the foundation for organizational learning, while forecasting represents a higher-level capability that enables proactive and predictive decision-making. In the

Spotahome case, Moi and Cabiddu (2021b) demonstrated how AMC principles were operationalized through data-driven monitoring that refined campaigns in anticipation of short-term market changes, forming a proactive feedback loop that strengthened responsiveness and performance consistency.

Quantitatively, Table 8 shows that Soulja Coffee conducted varying levels of advertising activity from January to June 2025, ranging from one to five active campaigns per month. Impressions peaked in February (31,427) before declining to 10,032 in June, while CTR remained relatively stable throughout the period (2.07%–2.38%), indicating consistent audience engagement with ad placements. In contrast, ROAS fluctuated more significantly, dropping to 1.68 in March and rising sharply to 37.43 in June. This pattern suggests increasingly efficient advertising expenditure over time, as higher returns were achieved despite lower exposure levels. These trends indicate that while promotional reach varied, campaign efficiency improved as marketing activities became more selectively targeted across the semester.

From the qualitative perspective, the marketing staff explained that Soulja Coffee actively monitors performance through the Grab Merchant Dashboard to track sales and promotion outcomes. Both the marketing and management teams acknowledged that their analysis primarily focuses on short-term observations rather than structured evaluations. The manager further mentioned that although ad performance data were accessible, the team did not yet conduct audience segmentation or customized targeting, relying mostly on Grab's automatic ad settings for convenience.

“Well, actually, to this day, we don't know the details of why this ad works or doesn't work. Because we don't customize the target market, whether it's targeting repeat customers or new ones. Grab itself has settings for automatic ads, which makes things really easy for us. So far, it's working, but it makes it a bit confusing for us to analyze.” (Manager, translated).

The marketing staff added that advertising expenditure was maintained at a consistent level throughout the period, ranging between Rp350,000 and Rp400,000 per month, allowing continuous visibility while testing promotional effectiveness. Beyond paid ads, the manager described an adaptive adjustment strategy when campaign performance declined:

“So, for example, if something isn't working, we can't just rely on Grab's tools. For example, with the March decline, our strategy is to increase it through KOLs as well. The hope is that when awareness increases, Grab's sales will also increase. Although, we don't really know how much conversion from KOLs actually results in this level of Grab sales.” (Manager, translated).

Meanwhile, the marketing team also recognized that customer feedback and reviews on Grab significantly influenced buyer decisions and were therefore monitored as part of ongoing performance assessment:

“Testimonials or reviews from people on Grab are also very influential and influence future purchasers. So, we also take into account reviews.” (Marketing staff, translated).

Finally, the manager reflected on the current state of monitoring, noting that data analysis remains limited to broad observations rather than detailed evaluations of campaign outcomes:

“We check our dashboard and marketing activities, and then we check how much impact they have on our marketing and sales. But from things like that, we only look at the overall,

general picture [...] but we don't really know which promotions are truly working.”
(Manager, translated).

Overall, Soulja Coffee demonstrates an emerging monitoring capability rooted in observational feedback and intuitive learning. The practice supports tactical adjustments and short-term reactions, yet forecasting remains limited, as analysis is primarily descriptive and relies on intuition rather than structured metrics. In AMC terms, the firm currently embodies reactive monitoring rather than predictive forecasting. Its learning cycle identifies “what happened” but does not yet integrate systematic projections of “what will happen.”

To advance AMC maturity, formal mechanisms such as scheduled performance reviews, basic trend-tracking routines, and target-setting based on dashboard insights could enhance proactive planning. Institutionalizing these practices would transition Soulja Coffee from immediate observation toward forward-looking interpretation, thereby strengthening agility in a dynamic marketplace.

Comparatively, while Spotahome institutionalized predictive analytics and data-driven forecasting to anticipate user demand, Soulja Coffee’s agility emerges through intuitive experimentation and platform-supported learning. This distinction highlights how AMC principles manifest differently across organizational scales, where digital agility in micro-SMEs is nurtured through platform mentorship, peer benchmarking, and rapid but informal iteration.

Ultimately, the development of forecasting and monitoring capability at Soulja Coffee reflects the culmination of its agile transformation journey. Progressing toward predictive marketing will require converting descriptive dashboard analysis into structured forecasting processes bridging operational agility with strategic foresight. This trajectory not only consolidates learning from prior dimensions but also reinforces the broader implication of AMC in small-scale food-beverage enterprises operating within platform-based ecosystems.

CONCLUSION

This study evaluated Soulja Coffee’s digital marketing agility on the GrabFood platform using the Agile Marketing Capability (AMC) framework. The findings confirm that the firm demonstrates early-stage marketing agility characterized by adaptive promotional timing, collaborative coordination, continual experimentation, and proactive monitoring of performance data. Across the six-month observation, Soulja Coffee repeatedly adjusted campaign schedules, bundling strategies, and budget allocation in response to dashboard feedback and short-term sales outcomes. These adjustments were supported by continuous dashboard monitoring and informal coordination between the owner, manager, and marketing staff.

The study extends AMC literature by illustrating how marketing agility manifests in a resource-constrained micro-SME operating within a platform-based food and beverage ecosystem. Rather than relying on structured sprint cycles or advanced analytics typical of large digital firms, agility emerged through iterative learning, peer benchmarking, and platform-driven support mechanisms. This finding enriches AMC theory by highlighting that adaptive, collaborative, and innovative capabilities can co-evolve informally through experiential learning in small-team contexts.

Practically, the results emphasize the importance for micro-SMEs to formalize routine performance evaluations, document insights from promotional experimentation, and strengthen the analytical use of platform dashboards to transition from reactive adjustments toward predictive agility. Establishing simple learning mechanisms, such as monthly review sessions, metric

documentation, and goal-setting routines can help institutionalize agility and sustain long-term competitiveness.

As this study was limited to one case within a single digital platform ecosystem, future research could adopt comparative or longitudinal designs to examine how different MSMEs develop agile marketing capabilities across varying digital maturity levels and market conditions.

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