

**T.C.
ISTANBUL GEDİK UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**ANALYSIS OF REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES
MARKETING STRATEGY IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

MASTER'S THESIS

Raneem HERETANI

**Business Administration Department
Business Administration Master in English Program**

DECEMBER 2021

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Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Ahmet ERKASAP

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LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

Yüksek Lisans Tez Onay Belgesi

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DECLARATION

I, Raneem HERETANI, as a result of this declare that this thesis titled “Analysis of Real Estate and Construction Companies Marketing Strategy in the Middle East” is original work I did for the award of the master's degree in the faculty of Business Management. I also declare that this thesis or any part of it has not been submitted and presented for any other degree or research paper in any other university or institution. (25/11/2021)

Raneem HERETANI



PREFACE

First, I would like to thank almighty God for guiding me through all my way. And then I would like to forward my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for my advisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Ahmet ERKASAP for his suggestion, assistance, and invaluable advice. My great thanks and special gratitude are also addressed to all Marketing & Sales managers of real estate companies for their kind cooperation and providing me their precious time and valuable information about their company's experience during the analysis.

Thank you all again!

December 2021

Raneem HERETANI

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ANALYSIS OF REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES MARKETING STRATEGY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

ABSTRACT

The first part of this thesis provides a general description of marketing and its importance for a business. It takes a deeper look into real estate and construction in terms of marketing application. It evaluates current situation on the real estate and construction market. Its purpose is to search for marketing tools which can be applied to construction industry. It also analyses which competitive factors are crucial for a construction company and which are not. The second part analyses performance of a selected construction company. For this purpose, a major player in Middle East construction and real estate market, has been chosen. It contains internal and external analysis of the company competitiveness. It suggests possible corrections for its marketing strategy to improve competitive position. The output of this part is a marketing strategy, which is, from the author's point of view, the most effective for the given company. The importance of real estate and construction sector in general be of greater importance than in organizations that provide tangible products. Particularly, real estate which are categorized as unsought service need the effective communication in terms of creating awareness, persuading as well as reminding the importance of real estate firm services products as customers are hardly motivated to purchase such service or products by themselves. A presentation of the research process, data collection (questionnaire) and analysis will also be discussed. The research is aimed in analysing the marketing strategy being used in the Middle East countries by the real estate and construction companies on the performance of businesses operating in the market. For the study under consideration, the total population is the current employees of the companies which are 1,363 (as of January 2021). However, given the nature of investigation of the study, only those which are professional and involved with the operational activities of the real estate and construction companies are considered as the target population. The findings shows that a unit increases in advertising activate would lead to an increase in organizational performance and marketing effectiveness. This is particularly in line with the fact that advertising activities can directly result in an increase in sales, cross selling, hence profitability. Direct and digital marketing activities are also highly effective in the short run-on raising performance of the real estate and construction companies as most of them are important in raising the service offered by the company.

Keywords: Analysis, Real Estate, Marketing, Construction Companies.

ORTADOĐU GAYRİMENKUL VE İNŐAAT ŐİRKETLERİ PAZARLAMA STRATEJİSİ ANALİZİ

ÖZET

Bu tezin ilk bölümü, pazarlamanın genel bir tanımını ve bir işletme için önemini sunmaktadır. Pazarlama uygulaması açısından gayrimenkul ve inőaat konusuna daha derin bir bakış atıyor. Gayrimenkul ve inőaat piyasasındaki mevcut durumu değerlendirir. Amacı, inőaat sektörüne uygulanabilecek pazarlama araçlarını araőtırmaktır. Ayrıca bir inőaat Őirketi için hangi rekabet faktörlerinin önemli olduğunu ve hangilerinin olmadığını analiz eder. İkinci kısım, seçilen bir inőaat Őirketinin performansını analiz eder. Bu amaçla Orta Dođu inőaat ve emlak piyasasında önemli bir oyuncu seçilmiőtir. Őirketin rekabet gücünün iç ve dıő analizini içerir. Rekabetçi konumunu iyileőtirmek için pazarlama stratejisi için olası düzeltmeleri önerir. Bu bölümün çıktısı, yazarın bakış açısından verilen Őirket için en etkili olan bir pazarlama stratejisidir. Gayrimenkul ve inőaat sektörünün genel olarak önemi, somut ürünler sađlayan kuruluşlardan daha büyük olacaktır. Özellikle aranmayan hizmet kategorisine giren gayrimenkuller, müőterilerin bu tür hizmet veya ürünleri satın almaya pek hevesli olmadıkları için farkındalık yaratmak, ikna etmek ve gayrimenkul firması hizmet ürünlerinin önemini hatırlatmak açısından etkin iletişime ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Araőtırma sürecinin sunumu, veri toplama (anket) ve analiz de tartıőılacaktır. Araőtırma, gayrimenkul ve inőaat Őirketlerinin Ortadođu ülkelerinde kullandıkları pazarlama stratejisinin piyasada faaliyet gösteren işletmelerin performansları üzerine analiz edilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Söz konusu çalışma için toplam nüfus, 1.363 (Ocak 2021 itibariyle) Őirketlerin mevcut çalışanlarıdır. Ancak, araőtırmanın dođası geređi, sadece gayrimenkul ve inőaat Őirketlerinin işletme faaliyetleri ile ilgilenen profesyonel kişiler hedef kitle olarak kabul edilmiőtir. Bulgular, reklam etkinliđindeki bir birim artıőın, organizasyonel performansta ve pazarlama etkinliđinde bir artıőa yol açacađını göstermektedir. Bu, özellikle reklam faaliyetlerinin dođrudan satıőlarda, çapraz satıőlarda ve dolayısıyla karlılıkta artıőa neden olabileceđi gerçeđiyle uyumludur. Dođrudan ve dijital pazarlama faaliyetleri, çođu Őirketin sunduđu hizmetin yükseltilmesinde önemli olduđu için gayrimenkul ve inőaat Őirketlerinin kısa vadedeki yükselme performanslarında da oldukça etkilidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Analiz, Emlak, Pazarlama, İnőaat Firmaları.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Real estate and construction industry are one of the most crucial components of the economy in developed countries. The impact of construction industry goes beyond the creation of buildings or infrastructure. Construction industry is a complex field where a lot of factors and elements come into play. They all contribute to the way business is conducted. This industry is quite specific in its nature says Al-Nahdi T.S., (2015). There is enough work around for companies in the Middle East to get desired bids and to make a good profit. However, with a change in the supply and demand balance between contractors and their clients, construction industry these days is mostly dominated by the latter. Moreover, contractors, nowadays, are put under pressure on high quality, meeting deadlines and great customer service more than ever. In addition, due to globalisation, companies, trying to penetrate foreign markets, must deal with specific local factors of the area, such as, for example, poor infrastructure and cultural barriers Al-Sabah, R., Menassa, C. C., & Hanna, A. (2014). It goes without saying that in today's reality a successful company has no choice but to constantly monitor situation on the market, its main competitors, grasping trends and changes and being able to respond quickly and effectively.

It takes a deeper look into real estate and construction in terms of marketing application. It evaluates current situation on the real estate and construction market. Its purpose is to search for marketing tools which can be applied to construction industry. It also analyses which competitive factors are crucial for a construction company and which are not. For this purpose, a major player in Middle East construction and real estate market, has been chosen. It contains internal and external analysis of the company competitiveness. It suggests possible corrections for its marketing strategy to improve competitive position. The output of this part is a marketing strategy, which is, from the author's point of view, the most effective for the given company. Marketing is an integral part of our lives. Today to be successful means to be constantly monitoring market changes and keeping up with the latest trends and technologies Bothma, M. (2015).

The importance of real estate and construction sector in general is of greater importance than in organizations that provide tangible products. Particularly, real estate which are categorized as unsought service need the effective communication in terms of creating awareness, persuading as well as reminding the importance of real estate firm services products as customers are hardly motivated to purchase such service or products by themselves. Furthermore, the fact that most real estate and construction products or service are generic and identical in nature creates more challenge to persuade customers to choose one's service over competitors. These and other factors of the industry create hurdles for real estate and construction companies in their effort to achieve organizational objectives in terms of corporate performance and reliable market strategy.

1.1 Background of the Study

One of the specific features of real estate and construction sector are its dependence on the development of global economy, along with political situation since there is a large percentage of state investments Bidgoli, S. J., Aran., A. A. S., & Bidgoli, F. O. (2014). Moreover, it is hard to foresee trends in construction, as the industry is constantly changing. Another important feature is high exposure to risks. Construction companies are inevitably exposed to risk. Risks can be internal or external. A construction company is bound with financial relationship with an investor and subcontractors. It is important that investor pays in time, however a construction company, in turn, must pay subcontractors in time to ensure a smooth flow of project works and meeting the deadlines set by the investor. A construction company, as a general contractor, must manage quality of products and services it gets from subcontractors Bothma, M. (2015).

Concerns for the environment have also changed the way construction industry is heading for over the last decades. Being environmentally conscious nowadays is not only a matter of course, but a rather strong competitive advantage. Concern for the environment is reaching the point where companies may have no choice but to respond Chen Yi. (2015). We will deal with two types of marketing in the real estate and construction sector in the Middle East. There are two basic types of marketing in construction. The first one is *product marketing* which is related to production of building materials, construction machinery, separate built-in units and other products

which are, in one way or another, essential for construction process. The second type is *services marketing* where construction companies are trying to get a contract for project works from the owners. The focus is therefore placed on a project since its success is a key to success of the company Chen Yi. (2015).

Construction and real estate market, as well as any other market, can be analysed with relation to microeconomics and macroeconomics. As for macroeconomic effect, there are five environmental forces, which influence the market. These are social, economic, technological, competitive, and regulatory. These forces are displayed on Figure 1.1.

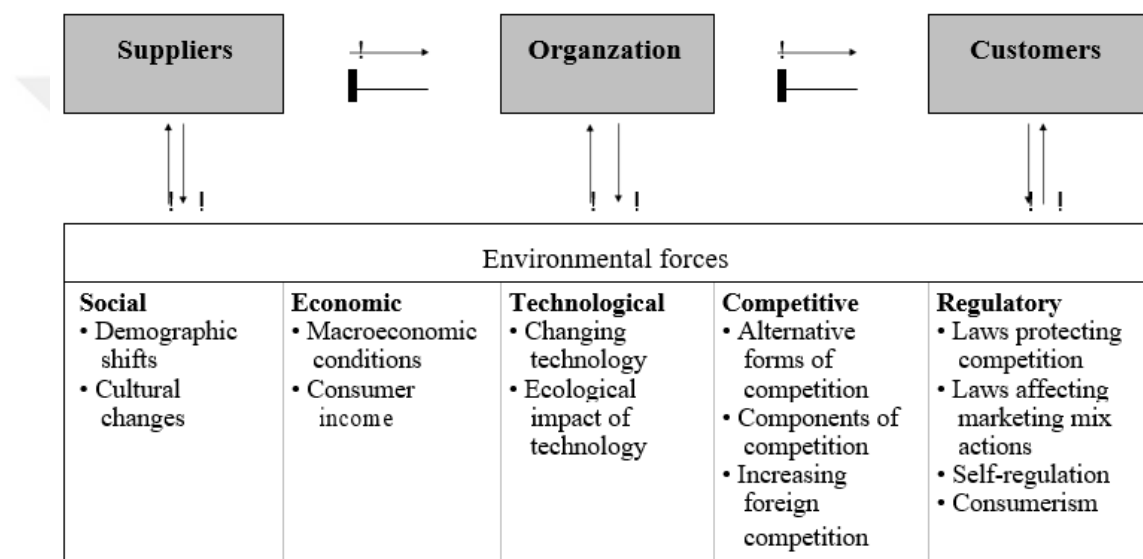


Figure 1.1: The environmental forces effect on the marketing of real estate and construction sector

Source: Sabina Žróbek, (2015).

The efforts of new marketing strategies can be applied to four markets in the Middle East. Market strategies have become a significant function of success in today's competitive business environment for any sales-based business company. The meaning of market is not only selling the product; it also encompasses company's orientation on customers need. Real estate and construction market are divided into four basic segments Al Mousli, M.; El-Sayegh, S. (2016):

- Construction projects implementation market
- Construction services market
- Building materials market
- Real estate market

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite the promising growth, the construction and the real estate sector is facing challenges and discontents are raised from the stakeholders i.e., customers, real estate developers and concerned construction companies says Eshete, Z.S. and Teshome, K.W., (2015). Extremely long delivery times, poor quality, high price and lack of infrastructures and no brand awareness are problems of the current real estate and construction sector in some of the Middle East developing countries regardless of the developed ones.

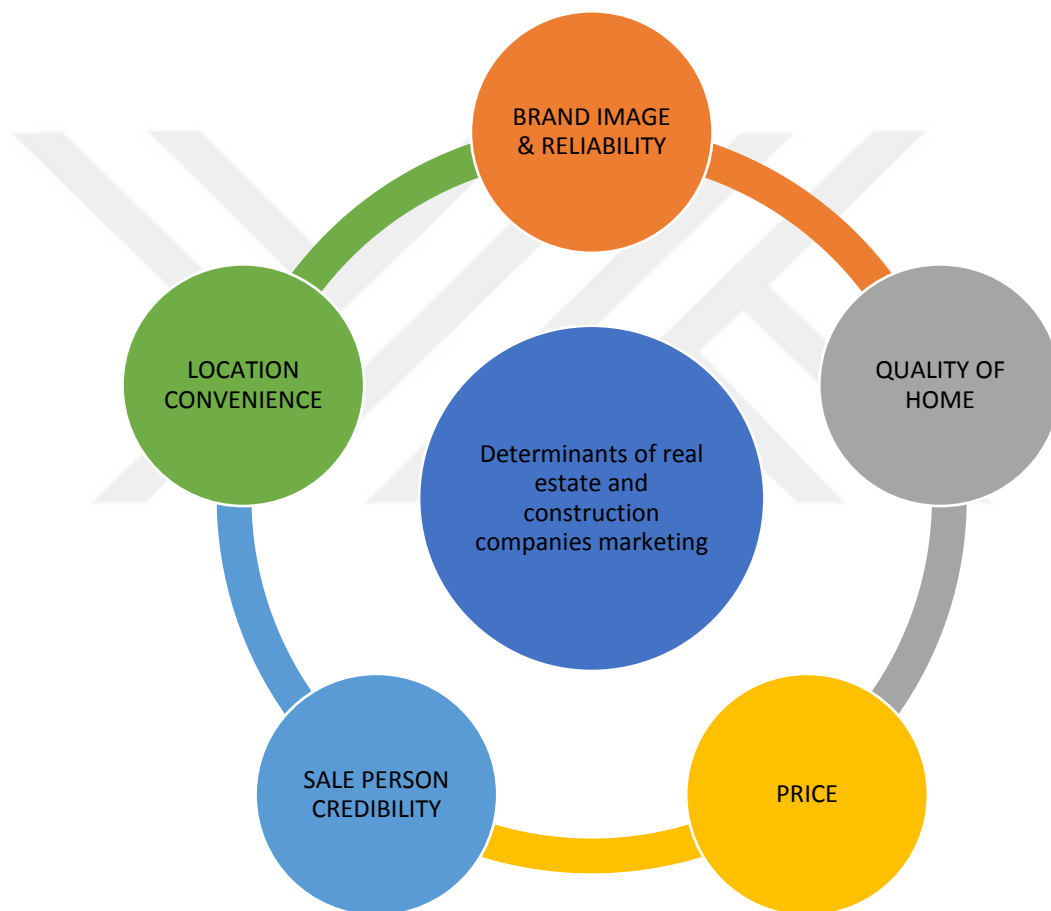


Figure 1.2: Specific factor that need to be determined to analyse the marketing strategy in the Middle East

Source: Gu Zhonghua, (2017).

This day's real estate home buyers are highly dissatisfied and losing confidence and trust with most of the Middle East real estate developers. In general, the real estate and construction sector in Middle East seems showing red light and encounters various draw backs which are hindering its growth and resulting in developing country of Middle East to suffer from the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the

sector since many resources, energy and time is invested in it. In Middle East, greater part of the nations is under creating in term of the economy, similar to Cyprus, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Iran and so forth where the created nations like Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arab, Bahrain, and Turkey don't require extensive marketing and strategic efforts when contrasted with the other under developing nations. The motive of this research is to identify the gaps in both of the industries and to overcome the gaps through the marketing strategic efforts. Thus, the marketing strategy of the construction and real estate's sector revolves around these specific factors which are giving below:

1.3 Aim of the Study

The target of this dissertation is to come up with a logical, efficient, and solid strategy to foresee the problems that arises in the Middle East construction and real estate markets. The purpose of this dissertation is to find out some problems existing in the current marketing strategy of the construction companies and real estate enterprise.

The construction companies and real estate marketing strategy in the background of the new era is mainly analysed. Firstly, the contents, such as the research background and the research status in domestic and foreign, etc., are expounded to clarify the research theme of this dissertation. After that, the status quo of real estate marketing under the background of the new era is analysed, mainly taking construction companies and real estate enterprise. Finally, the marketing problems existing in enterprises are analysed and the targeted solutions are proposed to improve the marketing level enterprise.

The objectives of the research are:

To come up with an appropriate marketing framework for the Middle East

To examine the current marketing efforts and situation of the Middle East

To find out some problems existing in the current marketing strategy of the construction companies and real estate companies

To discover other gaps, exist within the industry related with performance of the companies.

To create and conduct market strategies on specific factor needed in the Middle East real estate and construction market.

1.4 Research Approach

For the research approach, the quantitative method will be used. Using this method provided this research with the necessary statistics needed, as well as adding reliable and accurate responses from the census gathered. Quantitative research is based on the quantity of a certain number of people surveyed, and thus the numbers of measurement come first. A quantitative approach results in a more in-depth look into the statistics, which would include gathering opinions and reasons from who are surveying. In the case of this research, this method complements and provide us with valuable content. The quantitative approach assisted with comprehending the needs, wants real estate and construction from the perspective of the customer.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The researcher believes that the research will have the following importance for different stakes: To the researcher: it will enable to acquire & enhance knowledge regarding the concept of real estate and construction companies marketing besides partial fulfilment of M.A Degree. To readers & other interested groups: it will create awareness and provide a clear picture regarding the real estate market in Middle East. For companies & practitioners: it will provide direction & suggest improvements as per the findings about the key factors that contribute to marketing effectiveness real estate companies operating in Middle East. For new real estate companies, who are going to join the sector: It will give enough insight about the business. For the government policy makers and the business society: It will help serving as an input for policy decisions about the sector. To other researchers: it will encourage & motivate to go for further studies on similar topics serving as a reference. It will also have some importance in narrowing the unfilled gap in the existing literature.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

For a complete judgment of the business all the real estate and construction companies operating in the country ought to have been considered and it needs a full investigation of demand and supply that requires too much time and resources above the researcher's capacity. However, to make this paper manageable, the researcher restricts in real estate and construction companies operating in the Middle East. This geographical scope limitation is not only chosen because of time, access, and cost restriction. About data collection even though there are over 5,000 licensed real estate companies in Middle East, Kaplan, R. S. W. (2017). And the research will only cover the private residential real estate companies operating in Middle East.

The prominent limitations in the research are firstly, conceptual Limitation which are not enough research done about the issue. Secondly, methodological Limitation are when sample selected the researcher only select aged & successful companies. This may not consider the situation of newly emerging companies. Thirdly, the geographical Limitation which are to make this paper manageable, the researcher restricts in a few numbers of major real estate companies operating in the Middle East.

1.7 Structure of the Study

This thesis will be part of five chapters:

Chapter one deals with generalities about the research. Chapter two defines the literature review from multiple authors about the relevant research topic. Chapter three gives the empirical theoretical study and the methodology the study. Chapter four incurs the data analysis part which gives us the finding of the relevant topic. Chapter five covers the overall discussion and conclusion of the whole thesis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with theoretical & empirical reviews and contains concepts & theories regarding the real estate and construction industry marketing to provide relevant literature in the field and to come up with a suitable conceptual framework. The theoretical framework of this study focuses on the concept of construction and real estate market. And the empirical review section covers research findings and articles previously done on the area. Based on theoretical & literature review and the relationship between research variables, conceptual framework and model developed at the last part of literature review.

2.1 Characteristics of Real Estate and Construction Companies

Middle East's construction and real estate industry is growing at a fast pace and is getting huge number of foreign investments. The industry has implemented the best approaches, policies, framework, methodologies, and techniques to ensure desired outcome and high standing in the world. UAE is known with its ambitious construction projects, one of them being Burj Khalifa, the tallest building on Earth. This chapter focuses on identifying the way construction industry is working in the current times so that the lacunae can be identified, and future needs be determined. Construction industry contributes significantly to the GDP of Middle East and thus is considered by the government of all the countries in the gulf while formulating policies and laws says Jemaiyo, B. (2013).

The construction and real estate industry were expected to grow around 9.5% as a compound annual growth rate, as per the reports from analysis done by RNCOS Bothma, M. (2015). During the beginning of the year 2019, a total of USD 1.8 trillion worth projects were ongoing in the sectors of infrastructure, real estate, development sector Jemaiyo, B. (2013). The main leaders in the construction industry companies are selected because of their indulgence in the marketing efforts to lift up the real estate and construction industries like include Arabtec Construction, Giga Group, Danube Group, Emaar, Drake & Scull International, Dubai Contracting

Company, Al Habtoor Leighton Group, Dubai Holding, Nakheel Properties, etc. These leaders have been capable of bringing the best projects in the UAE and significantly contribute towards the growth and development of construction industry in Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arab as well. Many of these players now have become international companies after ensuring success in the Middle East Jurene, S., & Jureniene, V. (2017).

There are many challenges that have become hurdles in the way of growth and development. One such challenge is that most of the projects are mega projects and the companies are not realizing the value and benefits of marketing strategies of those small or big project to make companies more profitable. However, Dubai being the hub of construction projects in the Middle East has seen continuous growth and expansion of the construction projects. Working construction projects in Dubai include Business Bay and Downtown Dubai projects Jurene, S., & Jureniene, V. (2017). Middle East has been on high rise and is accredited in the global market due to its ambitious construction projects. The tallest building of the world stands in Dubai and further its major project showcase creativity and innovation. Construction and real estate sector of UAE have guided the world and brought drastic changes in the methods and techniques of construction used all around the globe. This industry is still growing and can serve extended needs of the people living.

Real estate and construction companies need to adopt full-fledged approach for building a strong city branding. Employees in these companies need to exhibit high levels of motivation and commitment to the city brand to deliver the brand's promise effortlessly. When employees are committed to the brand, they can easily be aligned to brand vision and identity, which they can "live up" to. There is a growing demand of tourism in developing cities Hergret et al. (2015) seeing cities being more sophisticated with improvement in their infrastructure, offerings and services. Through these sophisticated services, offerings and infrastructure developments, cities are now continuously striving to grasp the attention of potential tourists (Hergret et al.2015). Real estate's ability to grasp the attention of tourists means that they are able to get the consumers buy in of their brands, seeing an improvement in the development of the cities' economy. A number of elements may contribute to building a city brand. Anholt (2006) developed a real estate brand hexagon, which constitutes of various dimensions of a city brand. Six elements are identified in the

real estate brand hexagon namely; presence, pulse; potential; place; people and prerequisites. These six elements are used to rank a city and measure its performance in comparison to other cities.

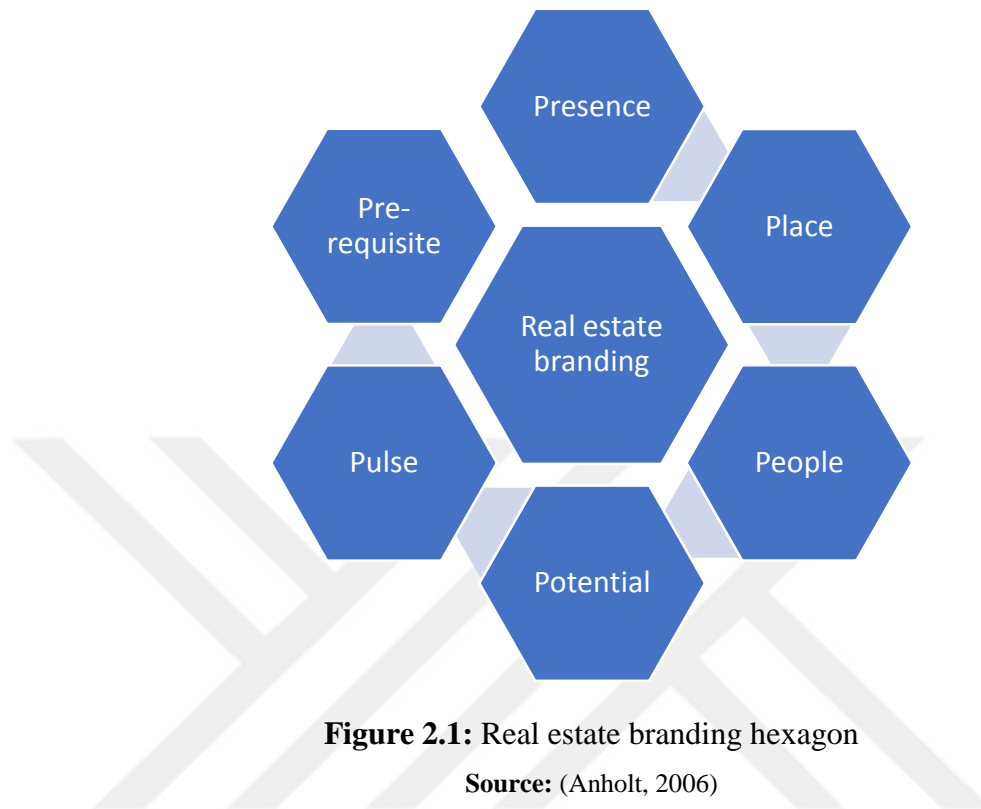


Figure 2.1: Real estate branding hexagon

Source: (Anholt, 2006)

2.1.1 Types of projects in the middle east

It is pertinent to identify the type of construction project at first so that planning can be done accordingly. Methods of procuring professional services, financing the constructed facilities, and awarding construction contracts depend upon the type of construction project selected and these differ in each style. The projects under construction are many and can be classified based on various factors, however mentioned below are the four major categories in construction and all of these are identified with their integral characteristics.

Construction of Residential Housing:

This type of construction includes projects of *high-rise apartments or residential buildings*. While such projects are developed and constructed, the developers are generally made to serve as surrogate owners to take charge and make necessary contractual arrangement for arranging finances, finalizing designs and construction facilities, and undertaking the sale of the structure when completed. The market of

residential house gets highly affected by the domestic market conditions. Even a slight increase in the overall demand increases the investment in the construction sector. The market for this type of construction project is highly competitive as it is relatively easier for builders and constructors to enter the domains of residential construction Gu Zhonghua. (2017).

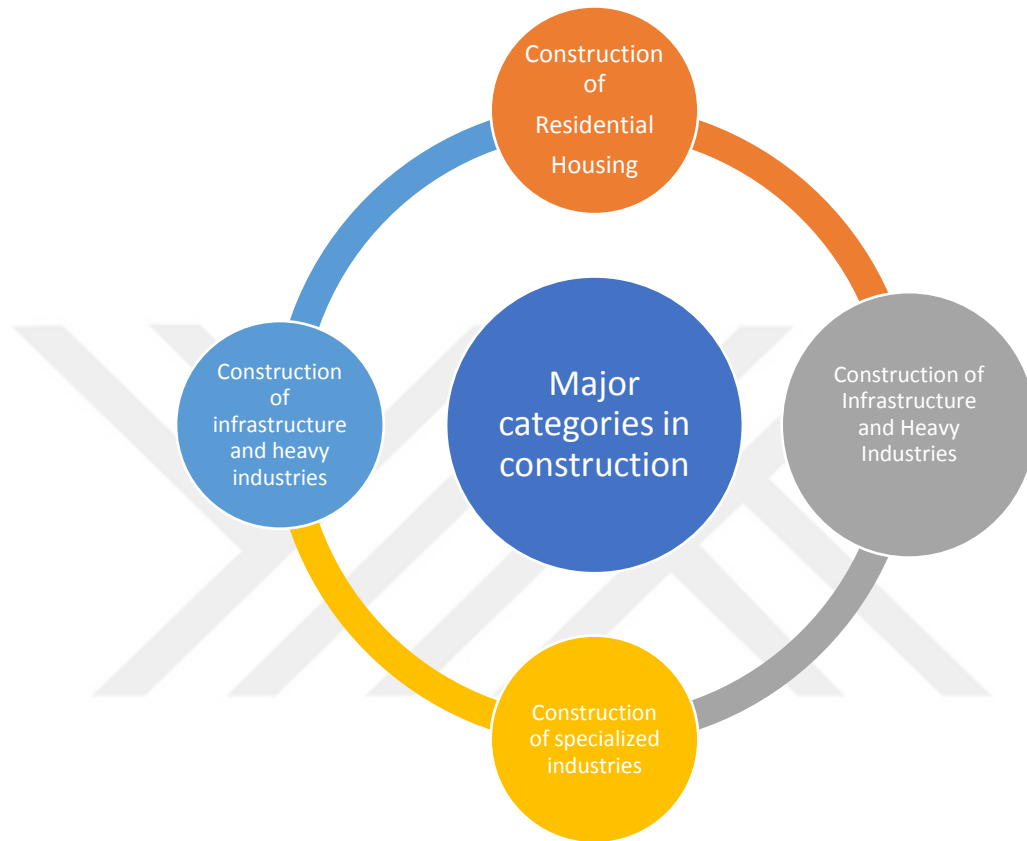


Figure 2.2: Major categories of construction in Middle East

Construction of Institutional and Commercial Buildings

This type includes a vast variety of sub types of projects in various sizes. Institutional and commercial buildings include construction of medical centres, hospitals, universities and schools, shopping centres, sports facilities, skyscrapers for hotels and offices, light manufacturing plants and warehouses. Such buildings do not have knowledge of construction and the prevalent industry practices and thus they select competent consultants and professionals for construction by arranging for finances at their own level. To design a specific type of building, specialty architects and engineers are appointed. There are high restrictions of entry and exit in this project type as it involves greater sophistication and higher costs. There are only few competitors to the industry giants in this type of construction. Further, the demand

for these constructions is less sensitive to the general domestic and economic conditions as it takes a long process in building and these projects last several years before they can be acquired by the end users Gu Zhonghua. (2017).

Construction of Specialized Industries

This type of construction usually involves projects of large scale that have a high degree of complexity in technological matters. These projects include oil refineries, chemical processing units, steel mills, nuclear power plants and coal fired. Here owners are deeply involved in the day-to-day activities and development of the project and preferably work with builders and designers so that the time for completion of the project can be reduced and profits in the projects can be ensured. Further, in these projects, the owner generally prefers to work with such builders and designers with whom they have had good business relations during the near past. Such projects impact the overall economic conditions and are mostly aimed to ensure social development and safeguard the nation from economic crises. These projects require investment of huge capital amounts and proper planning and long time for construction activities to complete. Government of every country has a huge impact in the decision-making criteria for these projects, especially the owners must see to ensure that all environmental obligations are met before the project begins Jurene, S., & Jureniene, V. (2017).

Construction of Infrastructure and Heavy Industries

This type of construction usually is based on the basic structure of social and living needs. These projects include highways, bridges, tunnels, pipelines, sewage treatment and drainage systems. For these projects, highly specialized, mastered, and experienced builders and engineers are appointed because construction of every segment under this project requires utmost excellence and thus the builders and engineers must have command over these Jurene, S., & Jureniene, V. (2017). This type of construction is mostly performed by the government contractors.

The growth and development aspects in the Middle East have risen drastically with the introduction and implementation of policies promoting limited private ownership of land and demonstration as a hospital, revenue, and safe investment area. This new growth is important to support the objectives and mission of the government, but at the same time it must be ensured that the growth is managed in a sustainable and

well-coordinated manner.

Market strategies have become a significant function of success in today's competitive business environment for any sales-based business company like real estate sector says Naeem, et al (2013). The meaning of market is not only selling the product; it also encompasses company's orientation on customers need. Real estate sector is developing day by day and correspondingly the profitability of the sector is rising therefore, it is critical to improve real estate market strategies. In the developing countries of Middle East, managing change has not been facilitated with the implementation of bureaucratic model of managing development in construction and real estate sector. Thus, the project management model has been relied widely by developing countries so that projects can be implemented, and objectives be achieved timely at national as well as local levels says Naeem, et al (2013).

2.1.2 Construction and real estate industry in the Middle East

The Middle East construction and real estate sector will continue to be affected by the economic conditions and the government policies. However, the growth in the service sector, government and the institutions will increase the demand of the office space as soon as the market matures. The demand of retail space will grow because of the increased population and increased tourism. The graphs below show the projection in the asset under management in the construction sector till 2025. The projections show that the tourist market will grow at a fast pace in comparison of the residential market Nour, S.M., (2013). However, there will be a significant increase in the both the markets. The graphs also show the projections in the supply of residential, office, retail, and hotel supply. All the units show an upward trend, but the office supply shows a downward trend in the year 2020. The industrial sector of Middle East will also grow with the relocation and expansion of the port area combined with development of different industrial zones that are close to the new port. In addition, there is a growth in the leisure and business guests leading to a growth in the construction sector of Middle East Nour, S.M., (2013).

Middle East's construction sector began to recover in the year 2017 after the global oil prices reached to their pain point in 2016, after the OPEC deal, the prices began to rise. After the oil prices stabilized, the government was able to reduce the spending cuts along with keeping the long-term outlook of the industry positive

OPEC, (2015). Construction industry is achieving laurels in the world scenario but there are various elements that are still required to be considered so that effective performance in the construction projects is achieved. The real estate and construction companies in Middle East are growing at a rapid rate and recently has emerged as a smart nation of the world. The construction industry of Middle East is also flourishing and some of the landmark projects include:

Table 2.1: Famous landmark projects

Country	Year Completion
Khalifa City, UAE	2009
Abraj Al bait tower, KSA	2012
Centre point Riyadh, KSA	2002
Al Hamra Tower, Kuwait	2011
Burj Khalifa, UAE	2009
Doha Tower, QATAR	2012
Grand city, UAE	2007

Source: OPEC, (2015)

These above famous building has been constructed by efficient construction and real estate companies of Middle East. The significance of organized projects in construction industry of Middle East is comparatively extremely high. The contractors, sub-contractors, financial institutions, construction companies and all the other stakeholders work together to achieve the common objectives. The coordination among stakeholders is one of the factors which have led to growth of construction industry in Middle East under the study of OPEC, (2015). The private real estate asset valuation from 2010 to 2025 is worth of billions as shown in the graph below:

Private real estate assets under management and forecast, 2010–25

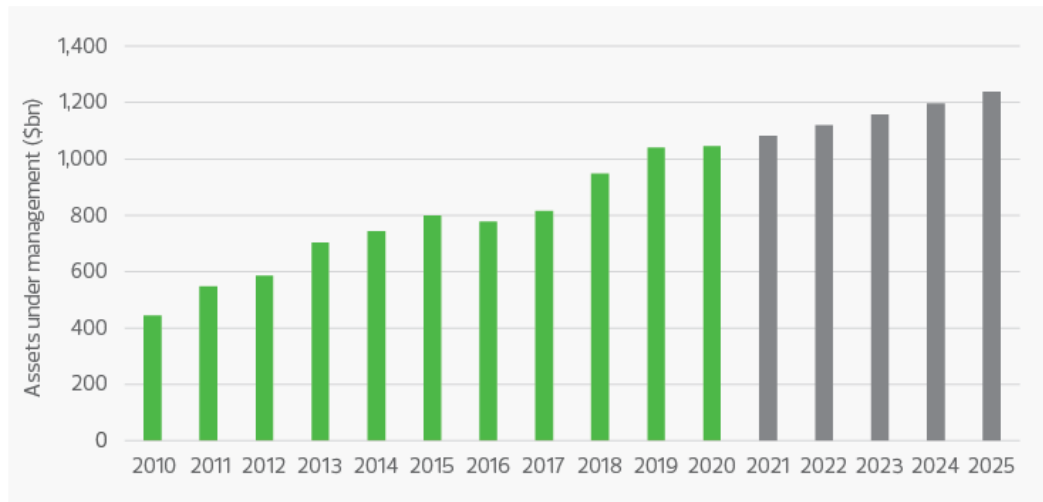


Figure 2.3: Asset under management and their value (2010-2025)

The residential, industrial, retail and hospitality construction projects are witnessing a stimulating demand as we can see from the above graph. One of the reasons of this growth is due to the development of the Middle East as an important trading and financial hub. The real estate and construction companies of Middle East have to face number of challenges in terms of selecting the best techniques of project management from the great variety of techniques and simultaneously maintain relationships with different categories of stakeholders World Bank (2019).

Countries like UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, KSA have placed great importance on environment while promoting real estate and construction industry. The authorities of Middle East have extended a supportive hand towards development of the industry whereby ensuring that the environment and basics of the people are not taken away while focusing on development World Bank (2019).

2.2 Theoretical Review

What is marketing?

Marketing refers to the process of promoting the buying or selling of a product or service. Marketing typically begins with research that identifies consumer's needs, wants, and demands. Once that information is ascertained, a company can design products and/or services with an eye towards satisfying the "unmet needs" of consumers. Once a product or service has been developed or delivered, marketing

efforts typically focus on gathering information from consumers on how a product or service can be improved. Marketing research can also provide information on how individual consumers come to discover a particular product or service and/or how these consumers made the decision to finally pick up the phone and buy something or hire someone. This sort of marketing intelligence makes advertising much more effective. Marketing is about experimenting with different ideas and channels to achieve your campaign goals. It's always good to have a lot of data to analyse and improvise your experiments/campaigns.

A market is the arrangement of real and expected purchasers of an item. These purchasers share a specific need or need that can be fulfilled through trade connections. Marketing is a social and administrative cycle by which people and associations get what they need and need through making and trading an incentive with others. In a smaller business setting, marketing includes building productive, esteem loaded trade associations with clients. Thus, marketing is characterized as the cycle by which organizations make an incentive for client and assemble solid connections to catch an incentive from clients consequently.

Market strategies have become a significant function of success in today's competitive business environment for any sales-based business company Verghese, A. K. (2017). The meaning of market is not only selling the product; it also encompasses company's orientation on customers need. Real estate and construction sector in global sector is developing day by day and correspondingly the profitability of the sector is rising therefore, it is critical to improve real estate market strategies Verghese, A. K. (2017). Regarding to the real estate developers the objective of those engaged in the real estate industry is to create value by developing land or land with attached structures to sell or to lease or by marketing real estate parcels and interests. Marketing effectiveness in real estate and construction companies is related to performance in terms of market share growth, profit ratio, sales growth, or customer satisfaction Zarantonello, L., (2014).

2.2.1 Characteristics of real estate and construction companies

The characteristics of real estate and construction companies are evaluated by some factors Firstly. conversion which is real estate involves development or redevelopment of land or land use. It is a land in its developed form. It is a land and

all permanent improvements on it, including building. Secondly, durability which is real estate and construction companies are solid since the structures can keep going for a long time while the land it remains on is indestructible. Land is central for land business. Without sufficient land save, a land engineer will lose openings and its business may must be suspended. Accessible land in metropolitan zones is getting progressively scant and costly. Thirdly, resource incentive as real estate is asset concentrated. Money is the most basic component of effective property advancement. The finances required for the improvement of a land project are impressive and are utilized mostly for land securing and development. Fourthly, expensiveness which is when a real estate is a costly movement; as a rule, it requires getting reserves. Land designers could begin their activity by getting crude land or may purchase an all-around adjusted land from land masters. Contingent upon the circumstance, the expense of improvement may incorporate land cost, land advancement cost (studying, readiness of sub-divisions plan, endorsement, overhauling), real structure development cost, removal costs (agent charge), and cost of acquired cash. It follows from this that the presence of a productive advance money framework is basic for land improvement. Lengthy and involved process: Real estate and construction companies' development includes long authoritative cycle with various members from different business areas. The creation interaction in land includes number of long exercises, for example, site procurement, site overview and development, getting arranging assent, mastermind financing, plan development and promoting. Risk is changes in administrative strategies, changes in loan fees and changes in the market climate will surface. Complicated process is another factor which is to prevail in real estate and construction development, much arrangement is required including getting a profound comprehension of significant public strategy, actual arranging, civil guidelines, economic situations, site examination, monetary assessment, monetary necessities, authoritative systems, building plan, development procedure and market methodologies. Also, proficient way to deal with project the executives is important to facilitate plan, quality, and cost.

2.3 Marketing Strategies available for Real Estate and Construction Companies

The real estate and the construction companies can be advertised through communication to develop a company's identity, which is attractive to the targeted

audience Subramanyan, H., Sawant, P.H. & Bhatt, V., (2012). The question therefore is: how can this company's identity be communicated? Shares five marketing strategies to develop a company's identity before the client namely,

- i. Advertising, and marketing communications,
- ii. Direct marketing
- iii. Architecture and events.
- iv. Mobile marketing and digital marketing.

i. Advertising and marketing communications

Advertising & Marketing communications is wide in scope and can send impactful and consistent messaging to targeted stakeholders. It includes a range of techniques, such as electronic and print advertising. Marketing communications is a vehicle for delivering a company's/brand's strategic intent to its targeted consumers. "Communications is the hammer of marketers". Some of the tools that advertising uses includes online activities, event participation, billboard, sonic screen and wall branding, flyers, policy brochures, leaflets, TV advertisements, radio advertisements, print media advertisements etc. Advertising is also a great tool for promoting awareness within the real estate and construction companies says Todor, R. D., (2014).

ii. Architecture and events

Architecture and events do represent a huge difference in the real estate and construction sector such as location, design, brand image, reliability and quality of the architecture. Building iconic world-class architectural structures and hosting some of the world's biggest events such as the Olympics or the FIFA World Cup is said to be a strategic tool for marketing places. Several buildings and other architectural features across the world are tourist attractions and can be associated with their cities. For example, the iconic Doha Tower can immediately be associated with Qatar, the Blue Mosque with Turkey, the Burj Khalifa, known as the tallest building in the world. These architectural structures are an effective and immediate technique for real estate and construction companies marketing because of the associations made to the cities where they are located. This is effortless and eternal branding for the real estate and construction companies. As long as the structures remain in place, they will forever be tourist attractions, which are part of the cities'

distinctive features. The FIFA world cup 2022 in Qatar will bring lots of opportunities for the real estate and construction companies for their marketing Kaplan, R. S. W. (2017).

iii. Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is important element in marketing communication as it allows companies to communicate directly with customers using numerous channels. According to its emphasis on trackable, measurable responses from customers regardless of the medium of communication used. The message in direct marketing seeks to call customers to specification. Practiced by organizations of all size, direct marketing uses direct mail, telemarketing, direct selling, text messages, emails, interactive consumer websites, fliers, promotional letters, and outdoor advertising as mediums among other channels says Todor, R. D., (2014).

It is an especially important element as it can be measured easily and can affect the bottom-line operation of an organization/company with an immediate impact on performance. In real estate and construction companies, one approach to this would-be selling products and services directly to the consumer without going through the agents and brokers. Over and above the above channels, most of the countries in Middle East does this by seeking audience with key decision makers in key potential customers through its marketing professionals as well as branch and district managers. Real estate and constructions companies are leaning more towards this method of sales due to challenges posed by indirect sales methods such as increased cost of sales commission, loss of ownership of policyholders and the fact that brokers have the license to work with competitors leading companies to go to war based on price. It also satisfies organization needs for understanding and control of sales performance elements Kaplan, R. S. W. (2017).

iv. Mobile and Digital Marketing

Digital marketing includes a range of marketing tools such as SMS marketing, Facebook, Instagram, Web analysis, SEO's, email marketing, mobile websites (websites designed specifically for mobile devices) and web applications, which facilitate the booking procedure for accommodation, activities, and other activities. The use of such marketing strategy has transformed into a professional activity by DMOs (destination marketing organisations). The DMOs who have their own

websites gain a presence on the internet. In their study on the use of mobile applications for destination marketing organisations, the authors suggest that the changes, which have been introduced in the tourism sector by the popularisation of communication technologies are related to the operations in the sector. These include the sectors' offerings and the level of interactions amongst the entities in the real estate and construction marketing sector Khan, A., (2014).

Digital marketing added to change of advertising Khan, A., (2014). Clients have more data about the items, likewise they can contrast the cost of the item and another store just with a single tick. These cost comparators assist clients with tracking down their ideal item at a superior cost or inside better conditions, store nearer to them or free transportation and so forth On the Internet, there are among different locales where clients can impart their insights, assess the items, and get them. Web advertising is in certain territories considerably more significant than traditional marketing.

2.4 Determinants of Real Estate and Construction Companies Marketing

By 2050, 75% of the world's population will live in cities says Chen Yi. (2015). The residents of these cities will become the main target of city branding strategies because the local economic development will be stirred by the cities' competitors. As such, advocate a strategic management system when promoting the creativity of cities and their public spaces. The increasing competition amongst cities in the Middle East has led to cities intensifying their marketing approaches in order to develop the right strategies to brand the city successfully by echoing a city's vision and mission.

A strategy towards marketing a real estate and construction companies should have clear objectives. Because real estate are also product or corporate brands, they use symbols and logos as image building devices to distinguish themselves. A real estate and construction companies marketing strategy should provide a blueprint of how the marketing can be competitive in the distinct offerings and experiences it sells to its target audience says Chen Yi. (2015). Additionally, the notion of competitiveness in the strategy is based on the city's ability to attract and retain talent, business, and institutions, and to leverage regional entrepreneurial capability, regional higher education, research and development, regional heritage, and cultural assets Keller, K.

L. (2015). In general, the real estate and construction sector in Middle East seems showing red light and encounters various draw backs which are hindering its growth and resulting in the country to suffer from the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the sector since many resources, energy and time is invested in it. In Middle East, majority of the countries are under developing in term of the economy, like Cyprus, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Iran etc. where the developed countries like Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arab, Bahrain, and Turkey do not need extensive marketing and strategic efforts as compared to the other under developing countries. Thus, the marketing strategy of the construction and real estate's sector revolves around these specific factors which are giving below:

A. Quality & features of homes

Product quality is a critical element for consumer decision making. Consumers always compare the quality of alternatives regarding price within a category. According to Shaw, E.H., (2012), perceived quality is causally related to the reputation of the firm that manufactures the product. Perceived quality is also regarded as the degree to which a product provides key customer requirements and how reliably these requirements are delivered. Product quality is conformance to requirements encompassing the features and characteristics of a product that satisfy stated needs.

Construction quality relates with usage of strong construction materials, construction equipment and up to date technological facilities and it also includes quality of sanitary, electrical, and finishing works. Construction quality, design and features of real estate homes become one of the main competing factors among real estate companies to win customer intention and it is the main reason for customers to choose a real estate company. Thus, quality is from the major factors that influence marketing effectiveness says Keller, K. L. (2015).

B. Price fairness of real estate

The price of real estate homes is even beginning to match or exceed the levels seen in Middle East countries with much higher income than Africa. Even it doubled and tripled in a span of few years. If the home price be fair enough and affordable by the households, it will help to get better number of potential buyers from the residents and this will have led to effective marketing Motaleb, O.H. & Kishk, M., (2015).

Thus, marketers are expected to offer homes for customers with affordable price that can make their company profitable and assure marketing strategy. Besides the price of the homes, payment schedule and trustworthiness to pay the down payment are also reasons for customers to choose a real estate company. Therefore, Price has been one of the most hypothesized, tested and confirmed influencing variable of buying behaviour and thus affects marketing strategy says Motaleb, O.H. & Kishk, M., 2015.

C. Brand Image & Reliability

Researchers have also been focusing on brand equity as one of the influential factors of market. For instance, in addition to product quality, brand awareness is also the most important factor in buying behaviour. Brand awareness is said to precede all other steps in the buying process Musa, M.M., (2015).

Brand image on the Middle East real estate business is especially related to delivery reliability of homes. Most of the real estate firms who secured land for real estate development are not operating in full capacity in which some put the bare land without any construction not even a fence, some started construction only for the sake of securing the land and some other even transferred the land illegally to third party Shaw, E.H., (2012).

The problem of long construction time by companies is further aggravated by the long construction periods and this in turn led to extremely long delivery time (sometimes as long as 6 years). Due to such failures to deliver homes as per the contract this day's real estate buyers are highly dissatisfied and losing confidence and trust on most of the Middle East real estate and developers. Now most of the Middle East real estate companies are trying to restore their lost trust from potential buyers and begun delivering finished houses. Since brand image & reliability is one of the reasons among home buyers in choosing a real estate and construction company it has a direct influence on marketing strategy Musa, M.M., (2015).

D. Location convenience

Availability at convenient locations is vital for choice of a brand. The convenience of a brand has a significant impact on consumers' brand choice of any product. Location convenience is one element of marketing mix that will help to attract customers and influence their decision of buying a product. It is not only about

where the product to sell is located? Rather it includes:

Availability of infrastructure,

Convenience for transport,

Availability of facilities like health centre, shopping area, recreational places, and other social services,

On top of these, the researcher believes that location convenience is one of the reasons for customers to choose a real estate company and contribute for marketing strategy attributes that must be used when marketing Musa, M.M., (2015).

E. Sales personnel's credibility

Credibility is all about keeping the promise made by the sales personnel during personal selling. Personal selling is a form of person-to-person communication in which a seller attempts to assist and/or persuade prospective buyers to purchase the company's product or service or to act upon an idea. While considering personal selling it is important to underline on sales skills which has a significant impact on the sales performance says Khan, A., (2014).

Thus, sales personnel of the company shall be well trained and skilled enough to convince customers, collect customer feedback on a continuous basis to know about customer feelings and shall keep the promise made for their customers. Since customers take sales personnel's credibility as one of the reasons to choose a real estate and construction company, it is related with and affects marketing strategy Khan, A., (2014).

In general, even though the five variables listed above are the major factors that will influence marketing effectiveness of the industry the supply and cost of land, shortage of finance, availability and cost of construction materials, lack of supporting infrastructure, shortage of skilled man power, high labour turn over, narrow target group of customers, lack of experience with in the sector, lack of support from the government side, negative image of the sector due to the poor delivery promises, etc. are also affecting the marketing effectiveness of Middle East real estate and construction companies Khan, A., (2014).

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual model shows how one theorizes the relationships among several elements identified as important to the research questions based on the theoretical and empirical literature available. With this under consideration, a conceptual and hypothetical model has been developed for this case at hand based on the reviews of previous knowledge to discuss the interrelationships among the tools of marketing strategy and the reliable marketing strategy of real estate and construction companies in terms of various variables. The performance and marketing effectiveness are based on profitability, market share, goal achievement, firm integrity says Gu Zhonghua. (2017). The framework has been developed considering similar empirical studies and the theoretical illustrations on the above sections of the literature. The framework below shows the variables of the study:

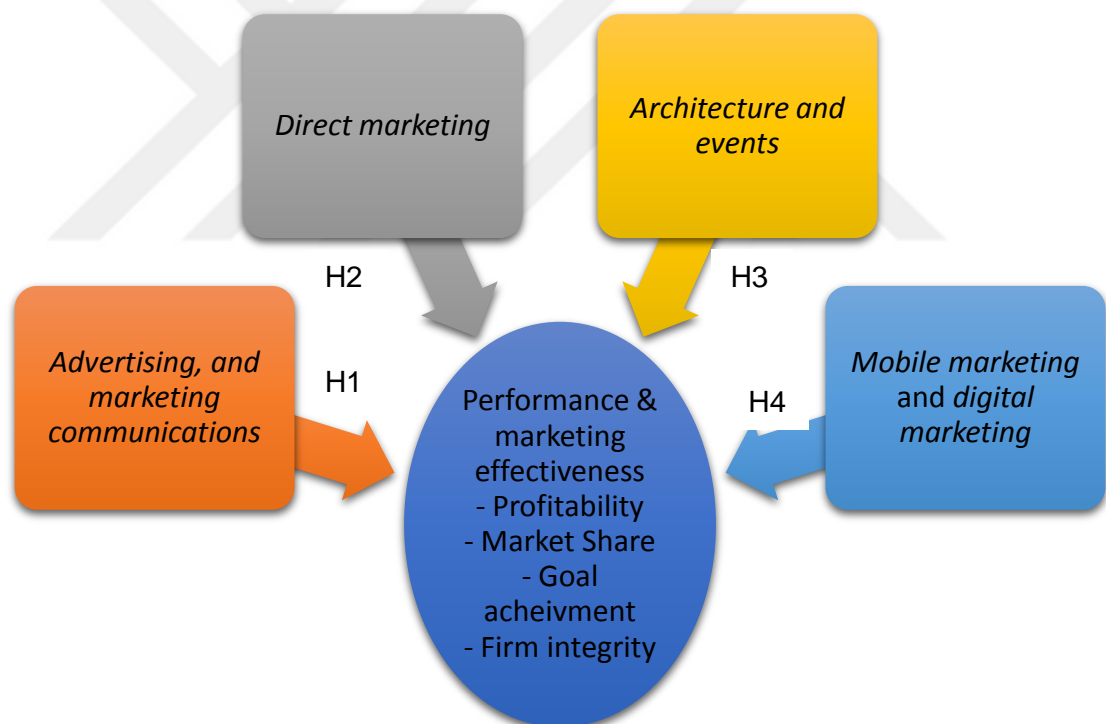


Figure 2.4: Conceptual and hypothetical framework (by the researcher 2021)

For this research, the hypothesis plays a dominant role in delimiting the different areas of study. Reviewing the prevailing literature conceptual framework of the study is as determined by the hypothesis Zikmund & et.al (2010).

H1: *Advertising, and marketing communications have a significant effect on*

marketing performance and marketing effectiveness of real estate and construction companies.

H2: The extents of direct marketing have a substantial effect on marketing effectiveness & performance of real estate and construction companies.

H3: Architecture and events by real estate and construction companies do effect the marketing effectiveness & performance.

H4: Mobile marketing and digital marketing have an effect on the marketing effectiveness & performance.



3. THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF STUDY

In this part of the research paper, there will be more elaborate formulations of the research problem. All the different research approaches will be discussed, including the questionnaire. A presentation of the research process, data collection and analysis will also be discussed. The research is aimed in analysing the marketing strategy being used in the Middle East countries by the real estate and construction companies on the performance of businesses operating in the market. Hence, the investigation tries to explain how the various marketing strategy tools taken as independent variable contribute to the performance of real estate and construction companies in the Middle East.

3.1 Research Approach

As the tools are promotional mixes such as advertising and marketing communication, direct marketing, architecture & events, and digital marketing the research approach will be to use qualitative analysis. Survey instrument will be used to undertake this empirical study which will try to explain an existing phenomenon. However, there are several secondary data including those showing the performance indicators over the years are included.

In the previous chapter, the literature study has been described, which was used to identify correlations between variables towards the marketing strategy of real estate and construction companies marketing, and to develop hypotheses. This approach resulted in the model depicted in Figure 2.4. This chapter will focus on the design of the conducted experiment, which was used to test the model. Furthermore, this chapter will discuss the reasons for this methodology, the sample selection, the instruments used for data collection and the contextual boundaries of this study. The main reason to design a questionnaire and apply this methodology is that the goal is to study causal relationships. To study whether the motive of a marketing strategies influence the real estate and construction companies to cater more clients and the buying intentions of its customers it is necessary to have groups for both motives.

3.2 Research Method

For the research approach, both quantitative methods were used. Using both methods provided this research with the necessary statistics needed, as well as adding reliable and accurate responses from the census gathered. Quantitative research is based on the quantity of a certain number of people surveyed, and thus the numbers of your measurement come first.

3.2.1 Procedure of data collection

The data is collected in form of questionnaire surveys and the results has been analysed in relation to the hypothesis and trying to find correlation between the different variables supported by tables, charts, and pictures. The most appropriate way of gathering data from respondents was discovered to be the electronic *questionnaire* technique (e-mails and WhatsApp) using the Google form. Due to the nature of this study, its field of application, type of data aim to obtain, test the research hypotheses and achieve the research goals, a questionnaire tool has been constructed for this purpose according to Likert Scale. So, the sample of the study gives their opinion by selecting one of the selections (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree). Therefore, we constructed electronic questionnaire on Google Form to obtain the primary data of this study. As we mentioned that the questionnaire is constructed on Google Form and electronic invitations were sent to participate in this questionnaire by using Email and social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp to collect the primary data of this study.

3.2.2 Online survey

Online survey is considered a valuable tool for data collection because of its advantages as a higher response speed and low error from respondent Zikmund & et.al (2010). As well as online survey provides many benefits to researchers where it allows researchers to access wide range of participants with less time and efforts. Google Forms is used as a tool to develop this online survey Zikmund & et.al (2010). Shortly, develop a questionnaire includes the following steps:

3.2.3 Hypothesis

For this research, the hypothesis plays a dominant role in delimiting the different areas of study. Reviewing the prevailing literature conceptual framework of the study is as determined by the hypothesis.

H1: Advertising and marketing communications have a significant influence on marketing performance and marketing effectiveness of real estate and construction companies.

H2: The extents of direct marketing have a substantial effect on marketing effectiveness & performance of real estate and construction companies.

H3: Architecture and events by real estate and construction companies do influence the marketing effectiveness & performance.

H4: Mobile marketing and digital marketing have a moderate effect on the marketing effectiveness & performance.

3.3 Population & Sampling

In scientific research, population is defined as a full set of cases from which a sample is taken. Marczyk, G., (2005). Given constraints in incorporating the whole population in the undertaking of a research, individuals are selected to represent the population and participate in the study to infer the outcome to the population. In some cases, a study might consider a set of all elements belonging to a certain defined group to be studied to which the study outcomes are going to be generalized to and these are referred to as target population. The companies selected for the purpose of survey are selected due to their vast indulgence in the marketing strategies in the construction and real estate industry. The companies are Arabtec Construction, Giga Group, Danube Group, Emaar, Drake & Scull International, Dubai Contracting Company, Al Habtoor Leighton Group, Dubai Holding, Nakheel Properties, etc.

For the study under consideration, the total population is the current employees of the nine companies which are 1,363 (as of January 2021). However, given the nature of investigation of the study, only those which are professional and involved with the operational activities of the real estate and construction companies are considered as the target population. Marczyk, G., (2005). The companies consider an employee as a

professional in its respective field when he/she is at or above job grade level eight. In this regard the target population of the study is 772 employees of the companies. The target population represent all managerial level employees and those employees working in service delivery process as well as those which are support process employees working in areas such as marketing, business development, strategic management and research units' employees undertaking janitorial, messenger and security services and office assistants are excluded since they did not perform professional services Han Yujun. (2015).

A stratified sampling is chosen as the target population comprises of two strata, managerial staff and non- managerial staff and their contribution and attitude towards the real estate and construction companies operating in the Middle East who programs, and practices differs considerably, and hence fair representation of each strata is vital. These sub populations do not overlap because an employee is either a management member or non-managerial staff but not both Jonker, J. & Pinnink, P. (2010).

The desired sample size is 264. This is calculated using the following sample size determination formula suggested by <http://prudencexd.weebly.com>

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2) \quad \text{Where}$$

$$\text{Accordingly,} \quad n = 772 / (1 + 772(0.05)^2) = 264$$

N = Number of target population

n = Sample size to be determined

e = level of confidence = 0.05

Given confidence level of 95% and precision rate of ±5 percent.

From the target population of 772, the number of managerial staff (strata one) is 260 while the non-managerial staff (strata two) is 512. To have appropriate and equal representation, the 264-sample size is distributed using the following formula: -

$$N_s = (D_1 / N) * n$$

Where

N_s = sample size for each strata

N = Total Number of populations

D_1 = Population size of the strata

$n = \text{sample size}$

Accordingly, total number of samples from managerial staff $N_s = (260/772) * 264 = 89$

$N_s = \text{sample size for each strata}$

$$N_2 = (D_1 / N) * n$$

Where

$N = \text{Total Number of populations}$

$D_2 = \text{Population size of the strata}$

$n = \text{sample size}$

Accordingly, total number of samples from non-managerial staff $N_s = (512/772) * 264 = 175$

To have a comprehensive view of the case at hand, the research used both primary and secondary data <http://prudencexd.weebly.com>.

3.3.1 Primary data

Primary data, those collected for the first time on the regarding issue is original in nature. On the other hand, the secondary sources are those which are made available to the researcher or have been collected and analysed beforehand for other purposes. Since most of the questions demand the level of agreement which is shown in the questionnaire.

As sources of primary data, questionnaires are distributed and used to collect data from the selected 264 samples of the two strata. Questionnaire, defined as all techniques used for data collection in which every respondent is asked identical set of questions in a predetermined order. It is useful as it is can be administered to many respondents at a lower cost, reach respondents who are not easily approachable otherwise, give adequate time for respondents to give responses which are well thought of and easier to analyse and code responses by allowing only answers which fit into categories that have been established in advance by the researcher.

3.3.2 Secondary data

As to the secondary data collected and used in this project, extensive use of various reports OPEC, 2015, research and documents were under consideration. This is because it is vital to incorporate previous works of the companies as they are of great use in gaining what has been done and is still under progress regarding the marketing

strategy and practice of the real estate and construction companies' businesses. In this regard corporate strategies and subsequently cascaded ones for the strategic periods 2010/2011 to 2014/2015 and 2015/16 to 2019/20 will be examined along with their monitoring and evaluation progress reports Jonker, J. & Pinnink, P. (2010).

3.4 Validity of Instruments

Validity, which refers to the study's conceptual and scientific soundness, is an important element and the primary aim of a scientific research is to generate a valid conclusion says Cronk, B. (2008). A scientific research will ensure validity of from start to end to increase the accuracy and usefulness of findings by controlling for or eliminating as many confounding variables as possible. The instrument designed for collection of data is questionnaire which is common modalities to undertake research of such nature. As the questions are designed using a standardized format and have been used to assess such phenomenon in an empirical study Cronk, B. (2008).

Furthermore, one of the forms in which validity is assured is by ensuring content validity. Content validity, according to Creswell, J. W. (2009), is a measure of the extent to which a measuring instrument/s provides adequate coverage of the topic under investigation and how well it provides adequate coverage of the topic under study. Hence a research is having a content validity a representative sample is incorporated in the instrument Jonker, J. & Pinnink, P. (2010). As a result, one can say that this study has content validity as its sample represents those employees of the real estate and construction companies that are integrally involved in the customer related and operational service delivery of the companies which gives them insight to understanding the effect of marketing communication and strategy on various performance indicators of the companies.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethics is one of the basic foundations for which society is built up on. In research where the researchers are looking for data that is reliable and indicate the fact on the ground, it is important to ensure that ethical considerations are kept intact. Regarding the research participants a research must respect persons, be kind to participants, have an informed consent of the participants as well as have a fair selection of

participants Creswell, J. W. (2009). Furthermore, it is also critical that one should be aware of and abide by the general agreements of the scientific community on what is acceptable and what is not in the process of conducting scientific research. During the collection of data various participants both management members and concerned employees were approached and their cooperation was vital and hence keeping ethical considerations was not underestimated at any point of the study.



4. RESULTS & ANALYSIS

This chapter includes the statistical methods used and followed to analyse the data of study and these statistical methods includes correlation and multiple linear regression analysis between the variables. This chapter will significantly shed light upon the analysis of marketing communication strategies respective to the real estate and construction companies in the Middle East market. This chapter will also show demographics of the respondents and reliability of measurement for the sake of analysis.

4.1 Reliability of Measurement

Reliability, which relates to the dependability and consistency of measuring instruments, is another important consideration in scientific investigation. In this regard, the study used the cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is one of the tests used to check for reliability of an instrument in hence to relay on the outcome of the instrument applied. The reliability test conducted by sample questionnaire to evaluate the internal reliability of the instrument as well as in each variable is presented. In table 4.1, we applied the Cronbach alpha test to test the validity and reliability of our questionnaire variables. Whenever the values of Cronbach alpha are close to one, the internal consistency of the questionnaire variables are considered high and vice versa. Due to the restrictions of Cronbach alpha test, Cronk, B. (2008) suggested that the value of Cronbach alpha must be larger than (0.70) and we can see from the results in Table 4.1 that all the variables' values are more than the condition determined by Bhattacharjee A. (2012). To evaluate the reliability of the instrument used in this survey, the researcher conducted as pilot study by taking 10% of the total sample 26 and testing the questionnaire. Accordingly, the reliability test has been conducted for the general instrument, each of the available market strategies as well as on the performance measures outlined in the questionnaire.

Table 4.1: Reliability test (Cronbach's alpha test)

No.	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Direct marketing	0.855
2	Advertising	0.794
3	Architecture and events	0.819
4	Digital marketing	0.840
5	Performance	0.791
	Overall	0.805

The researcher conducted reliability test to make sure the instrument used in the study is reliable. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the general instrument is found to be 0.805 which is more than the acceptable range 7.0.

4.2 Demographics of the Respondents

Some demographic elements of respondents that affect the level of response given to the questions have been under consideration. These elements affect both the understanding of questions as well as the current level of the effect of the variables identified on the real estate and construction companies in the Middle East. As a result, a brief presentation of the demographic statistics has been presented as follows:

4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

The Table 4.2 below represents the gender demographics of the sample.

Table 4.2: Gender of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	146	55.3	55.3
Female	118	44.7	100.0
Total	264	100.0	

As shown in the table above, male respondents contribute 55.3 percent or 146 in number while the rest 118 respondents or 44.7 percent are female employees of the multiple companies. This demonstrates that there is a fair gender distribution of the respondents which can be inferred to concluding that the companies give equal

opportunity to gender on a professional level.

4.2.2 Job position of the respondents

Table 4.3: Job designations of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Officer	106	40.2	40.2
Senior Officer	69	26.1	66.3
Principal Officer	58	22.0	88.3
Team Leader	24	9.1	97.3
Director	5	1.9	99.2
D CEO	2	.8	100.0
Total	264	100.0	

As the table illustrates above, 66.3% (175) of the respondents are non-managerial operational employees of the multiple's companies comprising grade 8 officers as well as grade 9 senior officers. On the other hand, first line managers (principal officers), middle level managers (team leaders and Directors) and top-level managers (Deputy Chief Executive Officers) employees constitute 22%, 11% and 0.8% of the respondents, respectively. Hence the total number of managerial respondents is 89 taking a total of 33.7% of the respondents. This figure is exactly the amount and composition identified in the sampling process of this survey.

4.2.3 Education level of respondents

As shown in the table below, 92.8% of the respondent's possess graduate or postgraduate degrees while the rest 7.2% of the respondents have the educational level of acquiring a certificate or diploma. This is important as the respondents are expected to have the basic understanding of illustrating the relationship between the independent variables and performance of the companies.

Table 4.4: Education level

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Certificate	4	1.5	1.5
Diploma	15	5.7	7.2
BA/BSC	220	83.3	90.5
MA/MSc	25	9.5	100.0
Total	264	100.0	

4.2.4 Experience of the respondents

Table 4.5: Respondent's experience

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 3 years	28	10.6	10.6
3 to 6 Years	85	32.2	42.8
6 to 8 years	33	12.5	55.3
8 to 10 years	41	15.5	70.8
Above 10 years	77	29.2	100.0
Total	264	100.0	

Out of the total 264 respondents in the survey, 89.4% of the respondents have been working in the real estate and construction companies in the Middle East for more than 3 years. Out of these employees 57.2% has been in Middle East long enough to have the minimum experience requirements of a senior expert by the company's definition which is expected to enable them to understand and the market at a higher level. On the other hand, 10.6% of the respondents which have been working in the real estate and construction companies for less than three years are expected to have a fresh look at the elements in the survey. Given the fact that all the respondents are educated as well as stayed for a relatively longer period, one can use the respondents educated and experience-based opinion on past trends and on inferring the relationships of variables. This of course will be triangulated with secondary data.

4.3 Effects of Marketing Strategies on Performance & Marketing Effectiveness of Real Estate and Construction Companies

Considering the descriptive statistics of the available Marketing Strategies are important to generally observe the respondent's attitude towards the effect of each tool on the performance of the real estate and construction companies. In this regard, the table below illustrates the average importance of each strategy for the performance of companies based on responses of the survey.

Table 4.6: Mean Score on effect of marketing tools

	N		Mean	Std. Deviation
Direct marketing		264	3.5819	.49532
Advertising		264	3.5758	.40154
Digital Marketing		264	3.6660	.52130
Architecture & events		264	3.3504	.45871
N (listwise)		264		

The above table describes the mean score of each strategic tool in terms of affecting the performance of real estate and construction companies in the Middle East. Respondents have the highest expectation for direct marketing to affect performance with a mean score of 3.666 followed by Advertising (3.581) Sales Promotion (3.575) and Personal Selling (3.350). The research used a Likert scale for the measurement of respondent answers, one can clearly see that Direct Marketing, Advertising and Digital Marketing are expected to affect performance and marketing effectiveness to a great level while Architecture & events moderately affects performance of real estate and construction business.

4.3.1 Direct marketing

Direct marketing is one of the major marketing strategies in order to acquire or retain customers to the business. Regardless of the medium, direct marketing put emphasis on those measurable and trackable activities those customers respond to. Marketing using various channels that directly provide products to customers, information exchange and prompt response to inquiries, business to business communications. The study sought to find out the extent that direct marketing influenced the company performance and marketing effectiveness.

Table 4.7: Extent of effect of direct marketing activities for real estate and construction companies

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at All	23	8.7	8.7
Low extent	21	8.0	16.7
Valid Moderate Extent	113	42.8	69.5
Great Extent	107	40.5	100.0
Total	264	100.0	

Accordingly, the survey found out that direct marketing activities are believed to affect the performance of real estate and construction companies to a moderate and great extent. From the total respondents, 42.8% consider direct marketing activities such as direct selling, working with brokers and agents, giving prompt response to customer enquire, business to business marketing as well as response to corporate clients affect performance to a moderate level Bothma, M. (2015). On the other hand, 40.5% are believed these attributes of direct marketing affect real estate and construction company performance to great extent. This also goes in line with the literature which suggest that relationship marketing and availing information through various forms of direct marketing activities affect the performance of businesses in a competitive and dynamic environment.

Table 4.8: Extent of effect of various forms of direct marketing

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Direct Selling	264	3.24	.486	2
Working with intermediaries (agents)	264	3.54	.313	1
Working with intermediates (Brokers)	264	3.19	.457	3
Response to Customer Enquiries	264	2.31	.695	6
Business to Business marketing	264	2.93	.526	4
Response to Corporate Clients	264	2.78	.645	5

The effect of each direct marketing activity identified on the performance of the real estate and construction company.

4.3.2 Advertising

It includes a range of techniques, such as electronic and print advertising. Marketing communications is a vehicle for delivering a company's/brand's strategic intent to its targeted consumers. "Communications is the hammer of marketers". Advertising is also a great tool for promoting awareness within the real estate and construction companies. The metropolitan cities of Middle East widely advertise its offerings in print media. The study sought to find out the extent that advertising of institutions services/products influenced the real estate and construction company marketing performance.

Table 4.9: Extent of effect of advertising on performance

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Low extent	9	3.4	3.4
Moderate Extent	67	25.4	28.8
Great Extent	156	59.1	87.9
Very Great Extent	32	12.1	100.0
Total	264	100.0	

According to the table above, only 3.4% of the respondents believe that the importance of advertising for performance of real estate and construction companies is low Bothma, M. (2015). While the large part of the respondents, 71.2% consider the importance of advertising on the performance of real estate and construction companies at a high and extremely high level. As the importance of advertising is critical in terms of reducing perceived risk and create clear idea on the products of companies Eshete, Z.S. and Teshome, K.W., (2015), its importance is supported by the theoretical foundation. Furthermore, an empirical study conducted by Creswell, J. W. (2009) was concluded by a similar outcome. According to that finding, the importance of advertng has been instrumental for performance of real estate and construction companies. On top of these 40.9% of the respondents believe that the companies are not undertaking enough advertisement activities while 49.2% of the respondents believe that the advertisement activities undertaken by most of the Middle Eastern firms are fair enough. Only 9.8% of the respondents believe advertisement activities are more than enough.

Table 4.10: Extent of Effect of various forms of advertising

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Online Activities	264	3.40	.793	7
Event Participation	264	4.06	.743	1
Billboard, Sonic Screen and Wall Branding	264	3.51	.604	5
Flyers, policy brochures, leaflets	264	3.73	.624	2
TV Advertisements	264	3.52	.760	4
Radio Advertisements	264	3.30	.711	8
Print media Advertisements	264	3.51	.664	6
Interactive media relation activities	264	3.63	.662	3

Above are the tools that come under advertising and marketing communication which are mentioned above in the literature chapter 2. Looking at the various forms of advertising and their effect on the company's performance, as outlined in the table above, it is evident that all have important contribution. The respondents consider all forms of advertising to affect performance from moderate to great extent. Particularly, event participation of the company such as trade fairs and exhibitions are considered to affect performance to a great extent. The mean 4.06 out of a 5-scale response indicates that this form of advertising is considered vital. Only 38 of the respondents (14.4%) believe that the contribution of event participation to performance is exceptionally low, while those who believe that its contribution to be a moderate or great extent is 34.1 and 48.1% respectively. This also goes in line with the literature as participation in events is a great way to create awareness about real estate as well as institutional advertisements that induce action on customers which in turn affects performance.

Other forms that have high level of influence are advertisement through flyers, policy brochures, leaflets, and Interactive media relation activities with a mean score of 3.7 and 3.6, respectively. These results also go in line with the literature as the forms are important in giving detailed explanation of products and the company for both first time customers. On the other hand, those who scored relatively lower mean, but still are more than average level of contribution, are those who do not provide the privilege to demonstrate a lot about the importance of real estate in depth compared

to the above forms of advertising.

4.3.3 Digital marketing

Customers have more data and choice now about the products or services, likewise they can contrast the cost of the item and another store just with a single tick. These cost comparators assist clients with tracking down their ideal item at a superior cost or inside better conditions, store nearer to them or free transportation and so forth on the Internet, there are among different locales where clients can impart their insights, assess the items, and get them. Web advertising is in certain territories considerably more significant than traditional marketing. The study sought to find out the extent that digital practiced by real estate and construction firms in Middle East influenced its performance and marketing effectiveness.

Table 4.11: Extent of effect of digital marketing

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Low extent	5	1.9	1.9
Moderate Extent	36	13.6	15.5
Great Extent	181	68.6	84.1
Very Great Extent	42	15.9	100.0
Total	264	100.0	

Responding to the question from the questionnaire “in your opinion, to what extent does sales promotion activates affect the performance and marketing effectiveness of real estate and construction companies?” 68.2% of the respondents believed that the role of digital marketing activities on the performance of real estate and construction companies is to great extent while 15.9% believe that it affects performance to a very great extent. Only 5 respondents (1.9%) believe that digital marketing activities affect the performance of real estate and construction companies to a low extent. On the other hand, the rest of the respondents 13.6% think that the effect is moderate.

Looking at more closely about the contribution of each digital marketing elements in the survey, the following table illustrates the responses provided.

Table 4.12: Extent of effect of various forms of digital marketing

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Social Media	264	4.42	.592	1
SEO's	264	3.41	.591	5
Emails	264	3.57	.587	4
CRM	264	3.89	.612	2
Website	264	3.60	.651	3

Source: SPSS Survey Output (2021)

It is evident that all forms of digital marketing tools affect performance and marketing effectiveness in the real estate and construction companies marketing to moderate and great extent level. Particularly social media, Websites to clients affect performance of the Corporation to a great extent. Because the real estate and construction sector have identical services, price is one of the key differentiation elements for competitors. Given the price-based competition that prevails in the industry, the effort to attract and retain customers through websites and social media affects the marketing effectiveness of real estate companies.

4.3.4 Architecture and events

These architectural structures are an effective and immediate technique for real estate and construction companies marketing because of the associations made to the cities where they are located.

Table 4.13: Extent of effect of architecture & events

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at All	18	6.8	6.8
Low extent	17	6.4	13.2
Moderate Extent	56	21.2	34.4
Great Extent	172	65.2	99.6
Very Great Extent	1	.4	100.0

The overall response of the survey demonstrates that Architecture & Events is believed to have an extraordinarily strong impact on the performance of real estate and construction companies in the Middle East. 65.2% of the respondents consider the architecture and events sponsored by the real estate and construction companies

to affect marketing and performance of companies to a great extent. On top of that 21.2% of the respondents consider its effect to be moderate. Only 6.8% of the respondents believe that it does not have effect on the performance of real estate and construction companies.

Among architecture and events considered for investigation, location or design appeal is considered to affect marketing to great extent with a mean score of 3.95. Furthermore, brand image & reliability for service delivery or real estate firm, quality of architecture & event attracts the clients as well as level of attention given to them are affecting the performance and marketing efforts of the real estate and construction company in the Middle East to a significant level.

Table 4.14: Extent of effect of various forms of architecture and event

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Location	264	3.48	.475	3
Design	264	3.32	.798	4
Brand Image & Reliability	264	3.95	.502	1
Quality	264	3.78	.645	2

4.3.5 Performance and marketing effectiveness

Now the extents of performance and marketing efforts by the real estate and construction firms will be evaluated.

Table 4.15: Indicators on major performance indicators over the past five years

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Profitability	264	3.75	.638
Market Share	264	2.70	.521
Goal Achievement		3.14	.593
Firm Integrity	264	3.58	.611

The above indicators are mention in the conceptual framework literature in the chapter 2. Accordingly, the findings show that market share and policy firm integrity rate of the companies has been dropping for the past five years. This is no different to the statistical data of the companies which states that the average market share of the Corporation stood at 41.6% for the past five years indicating an average deterioration by 2.45% every year Motaleb, O.H. & Kishk, M., (2015). Except for the 2011/12

fiscal year, the market share of the companies has been declining relative to its previous year's performance (Middle East Real Estate Annual Reports, compiled by the researcher). On the other hand, the profitability has been rising in the past five years with an average growth rate of 33.4%. This also has been confirmed with the survey showing an improvement level with the mean of 3.75 in the past five years.

4.4 Correlation

Correlation, Pearson correlation in this case, is important to understand the strength of the linear relationship between variables. The correlation coefficient r , ranging from -1.0 to +1.0, shows the level of strength of the relationship. Accordingly, if the coefficient is close to +1.0 or -1.0, the relationship is said to be strong while a result close to 0 is an indication of weak relationship between the variables. According to Zikmund & et.al (2010), a correlation coefficient above 0.7 on both sides is strong, 0.3-0.7 as moderate and below 0.3 and closing to 0 on both sides as weak relationship.

Table 4.16: Pearson correlation between the variables

		Advertising	Digital Marketing	Direct Marketing	Architecture & Events	Performance & Marketing effectiveness
	Pearson Correlation	1	.794**	.602**	.677**	.556**
Advertising	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	Pearson Correlation	.794**	1	.520**	.466**	.762**
Digital Marketing	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	Pearson Correlation	.602**	.520**	1	.496**	.507**
Direct Marketing	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	Pearson Correlation	.677**	.466**	.496**	1	.734**
Architecture & Events	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	Pearson Correlation	.556**	.762**	.507**	.734**	1
Performance & marketing Effectiveness	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	264	264	264	264	264
**.	Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

A strong positive correlation and significant linear relationships are obtained

between all the marketing performances of the Corporation. The correlation coefficients for all variables range from 0.507 to 0.762, which show a moderate and high correlation. The most correlated dimension with performance among the marketing strategic tools is Digital marketing ($r(264) = 0.762$) followed by Architecture & Events ($r(264) = 0.734$), Advertising ($r(264) = 0.556$), and Direct Marketing ($r(264) = 0.507$).

The correlation between the marketing strategic tools themselves shows that there is a higher correlation between digital marketing and advertising with a correlation of ($r(264) = 0.794$). The second highly correlated items are architecture & events and advertising ($r(264) = 0.677$) with a moderate level of correlation. On the other side of the table, the two least correlated items falling into the medium correlation range are direct Marketing with Architecture & events ($r(264) = 0.496$) and architecture & events with digital marketing ($r(264) = 0.466$) respectively.

4.5 Multiple Linear Regressions Analysis (MLRA)

Multiple regressions are a statistical model through which researchers analyse the relationship between the dependent variable and a set of independent or predictor variables. Kaya Uyanık, Gülten & Güler, Neşe. (2013), it is a frequently used a statistical technique to achieve three main objectives. Additionally, it is used to sort the best prediction equation for a set of variables (i.e., to answer questions like, given X and Y as predictors, what is Z (the dependent variable?). It is also important to find structural relationships and provide illustrations for what seems to be a complex relationship.

One of the SPSS outputs of the regression analysis is the model summary that includes the R square and the standard of the error term for the model. A significant test that is region of intrigued is the ANOVA rundown table. For the present, the significant number is the importance in the furthest right section. If that value is less than .05, to have a significant linear regression. If it is larger than 0.05, it is not. The final section of output is the table of coefficients and is where the actual prediction equation is illustrated.

Table 4.17: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.484 ^a	.580	.566	.40732	.680	54.669	4	263	.000

Predictors: (Constant), Architecture &Event, Digital Marketing, Advertising, Direct Marketing

The result in the table above indicates the correlation between independent variables (Architecture &Event, Digital Marketing, Advertising and Direct Marketing) with Performance & marketing effectiveness of the companies is 0.484. This implies 48.4% of the variation the performance on the attributes identified can be explained by variation in undertaking various marketing tools available. The other 51.6% of the variations are the effect of other variables out of this scope

Table 4.18: ANOVA^a analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	3.762	4	.940	5.669	.000 ^b
1	Residual	42.971	259	.166		
	Total	46.733	263			

Dependent Variable: Per

b. Predictors: (Constant), Architecture &Event, Digital Marketing, Advertising, Direct Marketing

The ANOVA summary table for the regression analysis is observed that the significance level is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) that illustrate there is significant linear regression. This implies that various marketing tools have a significant effect on the overall performance and marketing effectiveness of the real estate and construction companies in the Middle East.

Table 4.19: Multiple regression result for marketing tools*Coefficients^a*

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.	Collinearity	
	Coefficients		Coefficients			Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	3.116	.420		7.416	.000		
Advertising	+.083	.065	+.098	1.289	.199	.617	1.620
Digital Marketing	+.071	.063	+.067	1.124	.262	.985	1.016
Direct Marketing	+.165	.070	+.204	2.368	.019	.479	2.089
Architecture & Events	+.296	.064	+.322	4.617	.000	.730	1.370

The last output in the analysis of the multiple regression models represents the output for the beta coefficients of each marketing communication tools. The regression equation for this research is presented below Kaya Uyanık, Gül den & Güler, Neşe. (2013).

$$PER = B_0 + (B_1) ADV + (B_2) DM + (B_3) DM + (B_4) A\&E + e$$

Where, PER= Performance, ADV= Advertisement, SP= Digital Marketing, DM=Direct Marketing, A&E=Architecture & Events, B₀= Constant, B₁ to B₄= beta coefficients, and e=the error term

Substituting the results in the model gives:

$$PER = 3.116 + 0.083ADV + 0.071DM + 0.165 DM + 0.296A\&E + e$$

Prior to interpretation of the model and its beta coefficients, it is important to evaluate it in terms of multicollinearity issue. According to Kaya Uyanık, Gül den & Güler, Neşe. (2013), multicollinearity refers to the situation in which the independent/predictor variables are highly correlated. When independent variables are multicollinear, there is “overlap” or sharing of predictive power. This may lead to the paradoxical effect, whereby the regression model fits the data well; but none of the predictor variables has a significant impact in predicting the dependent variable. This is because when the predictor variables are highly correlated, they share essentially the same information. Thus, together, they may explain a great deal of the dependent variable but may not individually contribute significantly to the model.

This can be checked by looking into the output of variance inflation factor (VIF) and the tolerance level for the model Kaya Uyanik, Gül den & Güler, Neşe. (2013). The results in the table shows Architecture & Events (B=0.296), Advertising (B=0.083), Direct Marketing (B=0.165) and Digital Marketing (B=0.071) all have positive relationship with performance. The regression equation above also established that taking all factors into account (advertising, digital marketing, architecture & events, and direct marketing) constant at zero organizational performance will be 3.116.

This is particularly in line with the fact that advertising activities can directly result in an increase in sales, cross selling, hence profitability. As the literature above suggests, this immediate effect of marketing tools activities make it a critical element in raising the performance and marketing of real estate and construction companies in both short and long terms time horizon. Direct marketing activities are also highly effective in the short run-on raising performance of the real estate and construction companies as most of them are important in raising the service offered by the company. This in turn will result in an increase in the profit of the corporation.

On the other hand, though the advertisement activities are important in creating awareness in general and institutional promotion in particular, the literature suggests that there must be aggressive, consistent, and effective advertisement efforts for a relatively longer period to persuade customers to buy unsought goods. The positive relationship shows that the effect is on the right direction but fails to register significant effect. This is because, as the literature suggest, it is difficult for creating awareness in real estate and construction companies especially in developing economies in the Middle East and might in the short run even affect profitability adversely through huge advertisement expenses with extraordinarily little returns. As the effect of advertising in this case is a long-term issue, it is important for the Real Estate and Construction companies to continue to spend on such activities in a careful and designed way for a long-term objective as well as devise ways to increase its effect on short terms basis via selecting segments of the market that are having higher awareness level for real estate and construction companies. The effect of Digital Marketing activities such as social media, websites, emails as well as CRM week and trainings are mixed on performance and marketing effectiveness for the companies now. For instance, given the high level of price war in the industry as identified in earlier. Discounts and ex gratia treatments.

5. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This study aimed to enhance the literature and fill the gap of prior associated studies which seek to analyze the marketing strategy adopted by real estate and construction companies in the Middle East. This study analyzed the regional perspective adopted by the firms for long period in term of marketing communication. The study has guided and answered the research questions mentioned in the beginning chapter regarding the marketing strategy. Descriptive and causal research designs were used this study. The target population was of 772 staff in different managerial and non-managerial levels. This population was chosen since the people have day to day contact with one or more of the marketing strategic tools and can observe its impact on the performance and marketing effectiveness indicators identified. Stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Stratification aimed to reduce standard error by providing some control over variance. Accordingly, respondents comprising of 264 were selected from the two stratum with 89 from managerial positions and 175 from non-managerial professionals. The researcher used primary data for this study and collected using questionnaires. The quantitative data in this research was analysed by descriptive statistics using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics includes mean, frequency, standard deviation and percentages to profile sample characteristics and major patterns emerging from the data. A multivariate regression model was applied to determine the relative importance of each of the four variables with respect to performance and marketing effectiveness of the Real estate and construction companies in the Middle East.

The study found that architecture & events activities conducted by the companies affect its performance and marketing effectiveness significantly in a positive manner. This goes in line with the literature as well as the conceptual framework of the study. The study concluded that digital marketing activities influenced its marketing effectiveness to a great extent. The regression analysis shows an increase in a unit of architecture & events activities by the real estate and construction firms will increase

overall performance and marketing efforts by 0.296 units. All the mentioned activities of marketing identified in the study affect the performance of real estate and construction business to a great extent. This leads to the conclusion that efforts made on these activities have a positive and immediate effect and is where the company should focus on for maximum return in the short run.

Furthermore, direct marketing efforts such as direct selling, working with intermediaries, response to customer enquiries and corporate clients as well as business to business marketing affect performance to a significant and positive manner. Particularly, working with agents, direct selling and working with brokers have a great impact on the overall performance. On the other hand, the effect of business-to-business marketing, response to corporate clients and response to customer enquiries are considered to have moderate effect on the performance of real estate and construction firms. The regression analysis shows an increase in a unit of direct marketing activities will increase overall performance. Direct marketing activities are effective in the short run-on raising performance of the real estate and construction companies. This in turn will result in an increase in the profit of the corporation. So, these activities are important to focus on as their return is higher and immediate.

On the other hand, though the advertisement activities are important in creating real estate and construction companies' awareness in general and institutional promotion in particular, the literature suggests that there must be aggressive, consistent, and effective advertisement efforts for a relatively longer period of time to persuade customers to buy unsought goods. The positive relationship shows that the effect is on the right direction but fails to register significant effect. As it is difficult for creating awareness in real estate especially in developing economies and might in the short run even affect profitability adversely through huge advertisement expenses with extraordinarily little returns. As the effect of advertising in this particular case is a long-term issue, it is important for the company to continue to spend on such activities in a careful and designed way for a long-term objective as well as devise ways to increase its effect on short terms basis via selecting particular segments of the market that are having higher awareness level for real estate and construction.

The effect of digital marketing activities such as CRM, social media marketing, emails as well as website SEO are mixed on performance and marketing

effectiveness for the businesses. For instance, given the high level of marketing in the industry as identified in earlier, the intense emails might result in negative contribution to performance. On the other hand, the effect of social media marketing to performance might take a relatively longer time while CRM have a relatively shorter period to kick in for customers and hence affect performance positively much better. As a result, it is important for the company to focus more on the later activities of digital marketing in depth while trying to have a professionally designed and careful approach for the real estate and construction companies in the Middle East.

The findings obtained by this study has an important implication for developing countries especially which need to benefit from the services. The results of this study are considered as a corner stone for comprehensive studies in terms of the effect of marketing strategy on the clients of the companies.

5.1 Recommendation

Generally speaking, real estate and construction companies are an integral component of corporation's and an appropriate marketing strategy must be adopted to achieve the company's business objectives. This is because the marketing tools can explain 48.4% of the variation in performance and marketing effectiveness of the companies. However, the approach to each marketing tool and its components must be carefully designed and strategically vary. For its short turn return and immediate impact on performance it is important for the corporation to focus on direct marketing activities which affect sales almost instantly. Furthermore, the effect is positive and significant as shown in the regression analysis.

However, the study was able to demonstrate that there is a positive relationship between advertisement and corporate marketing effectiveness. Furthermore, respondents believe that the importance of advertising on the performance of real estate and construction companies are overly critical in theory and this is supported by the literature in previous sections. So, it is important to consider for the corporation further examination of as to how this effect can be raised to a significant level as to how to pass consistent, effective, and persuading messages on both the importance of real estate and construction companies and organizational level advertisements in all forms. It is also important for the real es to channel its

advertisement activities to specific segments to identify its long- and short-term effect based on the level of response to a particular advertisement by each customer segments.

5.2 Recommendations for Further Studies

This study has explored the effect of marketing communication tools on real estate and construction businesses performance in the Middle East. The overall effect of marketing communication tools can therefore not be ignored at any cost. There is therefore needed to put in place the marketing communication tools. This study has recommended adoption of various reforms in the real estate and construction industry and other organizations to ensure maximum business performance and marketing effectiveness in the Middle East. The study further recommends that another study needs to be done with an aim of investigating the effectiveness of marketing communication tools in relative to investment of such activities and also the industry performance considering the private real estate and construction companies as well.

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