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The transformation from traditional markets to digital markets

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Abstract---This article examines how rapid technological advances have profoundly transformed behaviour and business models. Digital models have supplanted traditional market structures, relying on technology and data as the primary sources of value and competitive advantage. Meta illustrates this transformation: thanks to platform-based, data-driven business models, the company has become a dominant global digital player. While this transformation promotes efficiency, personalisation and strategic decision-making, it also raises significant challenges related to market monopolies, transparency and user rights, highlighting the need for updated regulatory frameworks.

Keywords---Digital Transformation, Traditional Markets, Digital Markets, Meta.

Résumé---Cet article examine comment les progrès technologiques rapides ont profondément transformé les marchés à l'ère numérique, redéfinissant la concurrence, le comportement des consommateurs et les modèles économiques. Les modèles numériques ont supplanté les structures de marché traditionnelles, s'appuyant sur la technologie et les données comme principales sources de valeur et d'avantage concurrentiel. Meta illustre cette transformation : grâce à des modèles économiques basés sur des plateformes et pilotés par les données, l'entreprise est devenue un acteur numérique mondial dominant. Si cette transformation favorise l'efficacité, la personnalisation et la prise de décision stratégique, elle soulève également d'importants défis liés aux monopoles de marché, à la transparence et aux droits des utilisateurs, soulignant la nécessité d'une mise à jour des cadres réglementaires.

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Introduction

The market is undergoing a radical transformation as a result of rapid technological advances, which have led to the emergence of new tools and platforms. These have redefined the very concept of the market and consumer behavior. This transformation is reflected in the shift from traditional to digital models, which are primarily focused on data analysis and innovation in marketing strategies and customer interaction methods. Understanding these profound changes is essential to analyzing the impact of digital transformation on different economic sectors. Digital interactions have led to changes in user behavior, increased demand for personalized experiences and global expansion, thereby reshaping the competitive landscape. It has therefore become imperative for organizations to keep pace with these changes and adapt to them in order to ensure their longevity and sustainable growth.

Meta is a prime example of a company that has played a decisive role in digital transformation thanks to its suite of platforms, including WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram, which have become indispensable for billions of users around the world. Meta has invested heavily in developing its digital infrastructure, which has strengthened the efficiency of its digital business model and profoundly reshaped the competitive landscape. This transformation raises fundamental questions about the ability of companies to adapt to these rapid changes in order to ensure their sustainability and success in a new competitive environment.

Traditional organizations are facing increasing challenges in keeping pace with technological innovation, as well as legal and ethical issues related to data protection and cybersecurity in the digital environment. Faced with accelerating change, there is an urgent need to adopt flexible strategies and develop advanced technological solutions, which requires organizations to strike the right balance between innovation and maintaining consumer confidence.

This transformation reflects a new market landscape characterized by increased competition and the emergence of new rules of the game, requiring in-depth studies to understand these emerging dynamics and exploit them effectively in order to gain sustainable competitive advantages. It also requires a rigorous assessment of the challenges and opportunities presented by this digital transformation, enabling companies to develop their strategies based on sound scientific principles and clear methodologies.
In light of the above, we ask the following problematic:
How does the transition from traditional markets to digital markets affect market dynamics, given ongoing technological developments?

To study and analyze this problematic, we asked the following questions:
1. What is meant by digital transformation?
2. What is required for digital transformation to take place?
3. What is a digital market and how does it differ from a traditional market?
4. What are Meta's Company most significant impacts on the digital market?

I. The impact of digital transformation on market dynamics and consumer behavior

Today's global market is undergoing radical changes as a result of rapid technological advances, and digital transformation has become a key driver of change in working practices, marketing methods and consumer behavior. Adopting technology is no longer an option but a necessity, as this new reality is forcing companies to adopt flexible and innovative business models to ensure their survival in a competitive environment.

I.1. Definition of digitization

Digitalization refers to the development and implementation of ICT systems and concomitant organizational change, it involves the transformation of socio-technical structures formerly mediated by non-digital artifacts', into ones mediated by digitized artifacts (Gebre-Mariam & Bygstad, 2019). Therefore, Digitalization means transformation of all information types (text, sound, visuals, video and other data from various sources) into the digital language (Machekhina, 2017). Digitalization of products and services shortens distances between people and things. It increases mobility. It makes network effects decisive. It allows the use of specific data to such an extent that it permits the satisfaction of individual customer needs – be it consumers or businesses. It opens up ample opportunities for innovation, investment, and the creation of new businesses and jobs. Going forward it will be one of the main drivers of sustainable growth (Reis, Amorim, Melao, Cohen, & Rodrigues, 2020).

I.2. Meaning of digital transformation.

It is important here to distinguish the terms digitization, digitalization, and digital transformation, which are often used interchangeably. While digitization is the conversion of analogue data and processes into a machine-readable format, digitalization is the use of digital technologies and data as well as interconnection that results in new or changes to existing activities. Digital transformation, on the other hand, refers to the economic and societal effects of digitization and digitalization (OECD, 2019).(Figure 1).

Figure N°1: Digital Transformation
Source: (E.Shoikova, 2019)

Faced with the explosion of digital data and information, it has become essential to find effective mechanisms for exploiting this data in order to improve operational efficiency and workflows. This trend has fostered the emergence of the concept of digital transformation, now considered a pillar of workplace modernization and the achievement of sustainable development in various sectors. Digital transformation is defined as "integrating digital technologies across all areas of business and operations to enhance efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness in the digital era" (Wahdaniyah, Numandi, &

Younus, 2025). This definition is essential to understanding the essence of digital transformation, which is not limited to the use of technological tools or software, but constitutes a profound and systemic change affecting the very core of how organizations operate. Integrating digital technologies into fundamental functions and strategies involves rethinking the way the business is run, from day-to-day operational processes to decision-making models and strategic planning.

Digital transformation is also defined as "the integration of digital technology into all areas of a business, fundamentally changing how you operate and deliver value to customers. It's also a cultural change that requires organizations to continually challenge the status quo, experiment, and get comfortable with failure" (E.Shoikova, 2019). This definition differs from the first in that it incorporates digital technology at both the internal and external levels, whereas the first was limited to the internal level. It also emphasizes the need to establish a culture of change to enable the organization to adapt to the challenges of modernization.

At the macro level, it is defined as: "The transition to a digital economy, i.e., an economy based on digital data and using digital technologies." (Arab Monetary Fund, 2020). This definition addresses digital transformation as a comprehensive economic transformation, based primarily on digitization technologies as an engine for growth and competitiveness. It differs from the first and second definitions, which focus on the scope of the organization.

This demonstrates that digital transformation involves integrating digital technologies into an organization's operational activities and strategies in order to improve its efficiency and ability to offer added value to consumers. This transformation requires promoting a culture of innovation and continuous change in order to keep pace with the times. Furthermore, this concept extends beyond the organization to encompass the market as a whole, reshaping the competitive landscape, developing economic models and opening up new growth opportunities. At a macroeconomic level, digital transformation is a crucial step towards building a data-driven and technologically advanced digital economy, which has become an essential driver of economic activity and the strengthening of sustainable competitiveness.

Digital transformation encompasses three main aspects: technological, organizational and social. The technological aspect involves introducing technologies and innovations aimed at significantly improving quality, efficiency and revenue. The organizational aspect aims to optimize and develop existing processes and transform them into intelligent processes. The social aspect concerns new networks, communication methods and innovative communication channels (Aydin, 2020).

But if we try to find a brief and practical definition, it is to define the digital transformation is an ongoing process that the enterprises undertake to adapt to the changing requirements of its customers and employees by taking advantage of the digital capabilities to build (RMG, 2025): (Figure N°2)

Figure N°2: Digital Transformation
Source: (RMG, 2025)

I.3. Significance of digital transformation.

Digital transformation is a strategic necessity, not just a technological option. It represents a fundamental change in the way organizations operate and interact with their customers and markets, leveraging modern technologies such as artificial intelligence, data analytics and the Internet of Things to improve operational efficiency and drive innovation. The importance of digital transformation lies in: (Sina, 2023)

Competitive advantage: In a highly competitive global marketplace, embracing digital technologies can provide a significant edge. Companies that excel in Digital Transformation often lead their industries.

Customer expectations: Customers now expect seamless digital experiences. Organizations must meet these expectations to stay relevant.

Efficiency and cost reduction: Automation and digitization can streamline operations, reduce errors, and cut operational costs.

Data-driven insights: Harnessing data can uncover valuable insights that guide strategy and decision-making.

Business agility: Digital Transformation enables organizations to respond quickly to market changes and disruptions.

I.4. Digital transformation requirements

Digital transformation requires advanced infrastructure, a skilled workforce and effective investment in technology, as well as the ability to adapt to market changes driven by consumer trends and needs. It also requires an innovative and unique strategy that provides a competitive advantage and ensures business continuity. There are six fundamental pillars to achieve a successful digital transformation, which are: (EVC, 2025)

Strategic Vision: Achieving digital transformation requires a clear strategic vision that sets the goals and the path to be followed. This vision should be based on a thorough market study and future technology trends.

Infrastructure and Technology: The digital infrastructure must be in place and ready to support the digital transformation. This includes the current infrastructure of internet networks, hardware, and software, which need to be updated and improved to meet the needs of digital transformation.

Human Resources: Competent human resources to implement and manage the digital transformation are one of the most important requirements. Proper training and development should be provided to the workforce to enhance their knowledge and technical skills.

Customer Experience: Improving the customer experience is one of the priorities of digital transformation. The technology should be directed towards enhancing interactions with customers and providing a distinctive and convenient experience.
Security and Privacy: Digital security and protecting data from breaches and threats are priorities in the digital transformation. Sufficient protection for the data and information handled by the institution must be provided.
Data Analysis: Effective data analysis and utilization contribute to making accurate decisions and moving towards successful initiatives. The organization must have the ability to extract key insights from data and utilize them to improve performance and achieve continuous improvement.

II. Transition from traditional to digital market

Rapid technological advances and growing dependence on the internet have profoundly transformed market structures and the nature of economic transactions, rendering traditional models unsuited to ever-changing consumer expectations. In this context, the digital market has emerged as a more efficient and flexible solution, offering rapid access, wide distribution and adaptability to current requirements. Consequently, the transition to the digital market has become a necessity, rather than a mere option, dictated by the imperative to remain competitive and ensure sustainable growth.

II.1. Definition of traditional market

The traditional market is defined as a place where sellers and buyers meet to exchange goods and services at fixed prices, with an emphasis on direct communication. It generates and distributes economic output and stimulates the labor system (Aliyah, Setioko, & Pradoto, 2016). This definition highlights the traditional market as a fixed physical location where buyers and sellers meet to exchange goods or services at fixed prices, relying on direct communication. This reflects the nature of transactions in this type of market, which are based on personal interaction and promote mutual trust. Direct communication allows for price adjustments and product quality assessments. This term also highlights the importance of the traditional market in the creation and distribution of economic products, thereby improving production and consumption flows within the local community.

II.2. Definition of digital market

Digital platforms or ecosystems enable the online purchase and sale of products and services, whether physical or digital (Ozili, 2025). As the definition shows, a digital market is an online marketplace or digital ecosystem where digital and physical products and services can be bought and sold. This highlights the virtual nature of the market and its broad scope, encompassing both tangible and intangible products and services. The definition also highlights the key role of technology in this marketplace, making digital infrastructure essential to its functioning.

Digital marketplaces can be defined as a network connecting providers of products and services with those who need them, whether physical or digital, via the internet. These marketplaces are characterized by: (Aliyah, Setioko, & Pradoto, 2016)
- The presence of market participants on a digital platform;
- A fully digital marketplace infrastructure;
- Prices being determined on fully digitally enabled transaction platforms.

II.3. Digital market components

The components of a digital marketplace are the essential elements that define how it works and its dynamics. They represent the very structure of the marketplace and directly influence the behavior of its participants. Among these components, the most important are: (Ozili, 2025)
1. **Digital Transaction Platform:** This is the underlying infrastructure, such as a website or application that allows buyers and sellers to exchange products and services, and to make payments and receive payments.

2. **Sellers and Buyers:** Sellers are individuals who offer their products or services through digital platforms, whether they are institutions, individuals, or companies. Buyers are individuals who search for and purchase products and services online.
3. **Digital Device**: This is a reliable means of accessing digital markets, such as a computer, mobile phone, or any other network device.
4. **Payment Services:** These are the terminals used by buyers and sellers to conduct financial transactions, such as electronic payment cards, e-wallets, etc.
5. **Communication Technology Infrastructure**: This is the infrastructure that receives and transmits information and transaction data.
6. **Digital Data:** The platform is linked to the information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure to enable the sending and receiving of information and transaction details, such as payment processing, purchases, invoicing, etc.
7. **Additional Services:** These are products or services offered to consumers as an after-sales option, such as insurance or loans.
8. **Public Infrastructure:** This is essential for the smooth operation of digital marketplaces, such as digital identity systems used to verify buyer and seller profiles.
9. **Regulation:** Ensures that all parties, especially sellers, act fairly and ethically, and that consumers are not exploited, for example, the European Union's Digital Markets Act.
10. **Internet connection:** This is essential for the operation of digital markets. It involves connecting to the internet via a computer, mobile phone, or any other network device. Without an internet connection, markets cannot exist.

II.4. Difference between the traditional market and the digital market

The shift from the traditional market to the digital market represents a qualitative leap in the nature and mechanisms of trade. There are multiple differences in the main aspects of the business process. The traditional market is a geographically limited physical environment where the interaction between buyers and sellers takes place directly at a specific time and place (Aliyah, Setioko, & Pradoto, 2016). This environment requires the physical presence of the parties involved in the transaction and depends on geographical location as a key factor for success, with the use of traditional payment methods such as cash. In contrast, the digital market is a virtual market where business transactions take place over the internet, allowing buyers and sellers to interact without geographical or time restrictions (Ozili, 2025). This market operates around the clock and provides multiple electronic payment options and accessibility from anywhere.

A clear difference emerges in the cost structure. In the traditional market, fixed and operating costs are high, including store rents, employee salaries, distribution expenses, and visual and print advertising, etc (Aliyah, Setioko, & Pradoto, 2016). In contrast, fixed costs are relatively lower in the digital market (Netseva-Porcheva, 2022), giving the organization greater scalability with minimal expenses. Regarding the consumer experience, the traditional market offers a complete sensory experience, where the consumer can directly examine the product and purchase it immediately. The digital market, on the other hand, relies on a visual and auditory experience that can be customized based on data and reviews, providing a quick comparison of products (Gobbilla & Sai Kiran, 2025).

The differences are also evident in information and data management, as the traditional market relies on traditional marketing research techniques such as surveys, which are limited in collecting and analyzing consumer data (Netseva-Porcheva, 2022). In contrast, the digital market allows for the collection and analysis of data about consumer behavior in real time (Gobbilla & Sai Kiran, 2025), enabling organizations to predict their behavior and offer them customized deals. Promotion channels also differ significantly. While the traditional market tends to rely on expensive traditional advertising methods, the digital market provides a variety of channels (Gobbilla & Sai Kiran, 2025), such as social media. The nature of competition is also different, as competition in the traditional market is local and regional with high barriers to entry, while competition in the digital market is global, with relatively low barriers to entry, which increases the number of potential competitors.

III. Case study of Meta Company

Meta is one of the most prominent technology companies in the global digital arena, having evolved from a simple social networking platform into a fully integrated digital company with billions of users across Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. The company has played a pivotal role in accelerating the digital transformation of markets, institutions, and individuals by creating new business models based on targeted advertising and e-commerce.

III.1. History and development of Meta Company

Meta is a digital services provider best known for its flagship social media platform, Facebook, which boasts over two billion active users. Founded by Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook began as a networking site for Harvard students but rapidly expanded to include all individuals over the age of thirteen. In 2021, the company rebranded to Meta, signaling a shift in focus towards creating a virtual reality environment known as the metaverse, where users can interact in immersive digital spaces. Alongside Facebook, Meta owns other popular platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp (Biscontini, 2022). During its early period, the company obtained significant investments from venture capital, which enabled it to expand its service and develop its infrastructure. It began expanding in the digital market through a series of acquisitions, the first of which was its acquisition of Instagram in 2012, benefiting from its user base, even though it was not profitable at the time. This decision enabled the company to strengthen its presence in the field of visual content and digital advertising, as the rapid growth of Instagram's user base contributed to the significant expansion of Facebook's digital platforms. In 2014, the company continued this policy by acquiring WhatsApp, in a move aimed at controlling the instant messaging market and benefiting from the increasing demand for mobile phone services, as well as closing off to potential competitors. In the same year, the company strengthened its leading position by acquiring Oculus, opening the way for its entry into the world of virtual spaces and the development of the digital environment project. Through these successive acquisitions, Facebook was able to build an integrated digital system that combines social networking, instant messaging, and digital technologies, which gave it great competitive power and consolidated its dominance in the digital market (Kraus, Kanbach, Krysta, Steinholf, & Tomini, 2022).

III.2. Impact of Meta Company on the digital market

The company is one of the most influential technology companies in the global digital market. Since its founding, it has built multi-platform digital conglomerates including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Oculus, making it a pivotal player in shaping the future of digital engagement and advertising. Some of the company's impacts on the digital market include:

1. **Expanding the Digital Market**: By integrating platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, Meta has gained control over a significant portion of global digital interaction. The company achieved annual revenues of $164.5 billion in 2024, representing a 22% increase compared to 2023. This continued growth demonstrates the strength of the company's business model (Meta platrorms, 2025).
2. **The Power of Digital Platforms and Building a Digital Community:** Meta maintains a large user base across all platforms. Despite fierce competition in the digital market, the number of daily active users reached 3.35 billion in 2024, making it a vital tool for advertising and brands trying to reach their target audience, and strengthening the structure of the global digital community, creating wide-ranging social and economic impacts (Meta platrorms, 2025).
3. **Supporting the digital economy:** Meta contributed to supporting the digital economy by enhancing growth and innovation opportunities through its digital communication and marketing tools, especially for small and medium enterprises, by facilitating marketing and access to targeted consumers at low costs, enabling them to use advanced digital tools to manage their presence, in addition to supporting innovation through artificial intelligence technologies, which

opened up opportunities for them to grow and compete in the markets (Machucho & Ortiz, 2025).

4. **Stimulating digital innovation:** Through investment in artificial intelligence technologies, they have opened new horizons for the digital market beyond traditional advertising.
5. **Changing the business model**: By gradually shifting from advertising-based reliance to a transaction-driven model, they are reshaping the dynamics of the digital market.
6. **Escalating competition:** By expanding their digital services and increasing switching costs, they have created competitive pressures, making them dominant players in the market (Kraus, Kanbach, Krysta, Steinholf, & Tomini, 2022).

III.3. The negative effects of Meta Company on the digital market

With the massive expansion of Meta's platforms in the digital world, they have a significant impact on user behavior and business practices. However, this expansion is accompanied by a range of challenges affecting competition, data privacy, and business growth, among others.

1. **Monopoly Issues and Legal Challenges:** Meta is facing immense regulatory pressure, particularly in Europe, regarding its privacy practices and digital market monopoly. This could expose the company to fines and a change in its business model. This regulatory action highlights the growing concern about the impact of these platforms and how they affect market competition (Xynogalas & Leiser, 2024).
2. **Privacy and Data Use:** Many European human rights bodies agree that Meta's model is fundamentally based on what is known as "personal surveillance." It collects and analyzes users' personal data to target advertising and generate profits, often using mechanisms that violate data protection rules, such as the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Cantaragin, Michalas, Frimpong, & Bakas, 2022).
3. **Meta's weak policy in dealing with harmful content:** Many European human rights bodies agree on the weakness of Meta's policies regarding the removal of harmful content and the protection of children, and criticisms have intensified regarding the company's leniency in dealing with disinformation campaigns (The European consumer organisation, 2024).

There are also obstacles related to digital transformation in the digital market, in addition to the challenges posed by corporate market dominance. These can be summarized as follows:

- **Risks related to technological infrastructure:** This infrastructure continues to hinder the adoption of digital transformation, especially in underserved areas. Despite significant improvements in mobile phone penetration and digital awareness, the quality and reliability of internet access, as well as costs, still impede meaningful engagement with digital tools.
- **Risks related to resource constraints:** Human capital, digital skills, and an organization's ability to adopt and integrate digital technology are obstacles to digital transformation (Wahdaniyah, Numandi, & Younus, A meta-analysis of the relationship between digital maturity and digital transformation, 2025).
- **Consumer risks:** Users of digital platforms may encounter common problems, particularly during initial use, such as a lack of information about products and services, or purchasing harmful products.
- **Risks related to digital technology:** These arise from service outages, data loss, and other issues.
- **Operational risks:** These are risks to which a digital transaction platform may malfunction, leading to a frustrating user experience for both customers and sellers. For example, a prolonged platform outage can result in financial losses for the seller.
- **Financial crime risks:** These include identity theft or card fraud, which can lead to financial losses.
- **Cybersecurity risks:** These are the risks of cyber attacks on digital transaction platforms, data breaches, or violations of the privacy of buyers or sellers (Madiega, 2022).

Conclusion

In the modern era, digital transformation has become an imperative, not merely an option to be ignored. It represents a dynamic and ongoing process that is reshaping the global economy. Digitalization has led to fundamental changes in business models, consumer behavior, and the patterns of interaction between institutions and their audiences. Major technology companies, such as Meta, are among the leading players in driving this transformation through their innovations in technology and social media platforms. This study yielded several findings, some of which we will discuss below:

- Increased and fierce competition in the digital market has made the market structure more vulnerable to collapse;
- Data has become a crucial resource in the digital age, used to understand consumers, improve products, make decisions, and access information continuously;
- Meta's experience shows that a long-term strategic vision and a comprehensive understanding of users are essential elements for successful digital transformation that transcends technological dominance. Through this strategy, the company has been able to transform digital social interaction into a benchmark for platform success;
- Meta's dominance in the digital market hinders the entry of new competitors, posing significant challenges for emerging organizations due to the unequal competitive environment;
- Meta faces challenges in balancing growth and innovation on the one hand, and regulatory compliance and social responsibility on the other.

Recommendations:

Based on the preceding findings, we propose the following recommendations:

- Organizations should view digital transformation as an integrated business strategy that goes beyond simply adopting technology. It includes restructuring processes, changing organizational culture, and developing employee skills.
- Collaborating with major platforms enables organizations to leverage their widespread reach, such as Meta, to access broader consumers and enter new markets.
- Reassessing technological readiness and rebuilding a cost-effective, flexible, and regionally inclusive digital infrastructure is essential for enabling organizations to participate in the digital economy.
- Adaptation strategies require organizations to adopt innovative business models, invest in digital infrastructure, and cultivate a culture of learning and development.
- Organizations should adopt a proactive approach to digital transformation to ensure their competitiveness in the digital market.
- Governments should strengthen public-private partnerships and encourage digital literacy alongside investment.
- Companies should enhance transparency and accountability in data processing and decision-making processes, and collaborate with governments to develop a balanced regulatory framework.
- Companies must invest in platform security and protect users from digital risks. Consumers must also develop digital awareness to ensure their data is protected, misinformation is reduced, and digital services are used responsibly.

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