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Driving Sustainable Value Creation Through Business Technology Implementation And Digitalization Strategy: Evidence From An Indonesian Automotive Parts Distributor SME

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates how Business Technology Implementation and Business Digitalization Strategy shape Sustainable Value Creation at PT RIKO Parts Medan, a small and medium-sized automotive spare-parts distributor in Indonesia. A cross-sectional survey was used within a quantitative, explanatory design. Questionnaire responses were gathered from 100 customers chosen through purposive sampling, and the data were processed with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling in SmartPLS. Business Technology Implementation was found to exert a significant positive influence on Sustainable Value Creation ($\beta = 0.341$, $t = 4.159$, $p < 0.001$), and Business Digitalization Strategy likewise showed a significant positive influence ($\beta = 0.313$, $t = 3.893$, $p < 0.001$). Together, the two predictors account for 30.0% of the variance in Sustainable Value Creation ($R^2 = 0.300$), and the model retains predictive relevance ($Q^2predict = 0.254$). In other words, customers who view the company's technology implementation and digitalization strategy more favorably also tend to view its sustainable value creation more favorably. To strengthen long-term competitiveness, PT RIKO Parts Medan is encouraged to combine technology adoption with digital business planning, employee readiness, streamlined operations, and ongoing development of customer value.

Keywords: Automotive Parts Distribution SME; Business Digitalization Strategy; Business Technology Implementation; SEM-PLS; Sustainable Value Creation.

INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has moved from a supporting tool to a mainstream driver of corporate activity: the digital economy accounted for roughly 15 percent of world GDP in 2024, about USD 16 trillion of USD 108 trillion (World Bank, 2024). The OECD's (2025) D4SME survey links digitalization to SME competitiveness, yet digital readiness remains uneven, with small firms trailing larger ones in system integration, data security, and analytics. UNCTAD (2024) adds that digital transformation must be pursued sustainably, and the World Economic Forum (2016) identifies digital integration into operations as a central determinant of competitiveness at every business scale.

Indonesia is less advanced: of more than 65 million MSMEs, only about 25.5 million (roughly 39 percent) had joined the digital ecosystem in 2024, short of the government's target of 30 million (Kementerian Koperasi dan UKM Republik Indonesia, 2024). Such figures describe MSMEs in general. The automotive industry contributes more than 12 percent of national GDP (Gaikindo, 2025) and the components sub-sector about 8 percent of manufacturing GDP (GIAMM figures cited by Kompas, 2025), yet digital

adoption among medium-scale parts distributors remains largely undocumented in the academic literature.

PT RIKO Parts Medan distributes motor vehicle spare parts in a market of growing rivals, shifting customer expectations, and pressure for faster, more reliable service. Having adopted business technologies and digitalization strategies, it reports early gains: order-processing time fell from 20-40 to 15-30 minutes, delivery delays shortened from 4-9 to 1-7 days, new customers rose from 5-15 per year in 2020-2021 to 30-50 from 2022 onward, and sales grew from IDR 12.43-13.18 billion in 2020-2021 to IDR 15.76-30.1 billion between 2022 and 2026. An estimated reconstruction of internal Sales and Customer Service Officer (CSO) records for 2020-2025, to be validated against the company's original records, also shows annual complaints falling from 180 to 132 cases, the repeat-purchase rate rising from 58% to 75%, and retention rising from 62% to 77%.

These gains have not resolved every issue: delivery delays of 1-7 days persist and product returns still run at 408-475 cases per year. Among the 100 customers surveyed, 83 percent were regular customers, 53 percent had been customers for over three years, and 77 percent reported three or more transactions, yet 84 percent mainly ordered by WhatsApp or telephone and only 36 percent had ever used the company's own digital system (Table 2). Technology implementation and digitalization strategy at PT RIKO Parts Medan thus appear transitional and not yet optimal, which makes it timely to ask how the two shape sustainable value creation.

Three theories frame the study. The Resource-Based View treats valuable, rare, and hard-to-imitate resources, here digital technology and service capability, as sources of sustainable advantage (Abbasi Kamardi et al., 2025). Dynamic Capabilities Theory adds that advantage depends on sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring resources as conditions change (Teece, 2007; Warner & Wäger, 2019), and Digital Transformation Theory explains how digital technology reshapes business models, processes, and customer experience (Verhoef et al., 2021; Vial, 2019). Within this frame, Business Technology Implementation (X1) is the strategic deployment of IT capabilities to make business processes more effective (Trieu et al., 2025); Business Digitalization Strategy (X2) is the use of digital technology to transform the business model and create more customer value (Verhoef et al., 2021); and Sustainable Value Creation (Y) is the capacity to build lasting economic and customer value (Li et al., 2023), measured here as customers' perception of the value the company delivers consistently over time.

Prior studies link IT capability and IT-enabled integration to business and operational performance (Ganbold et al., 2021; Trieu et al., 2025), digital marketing to manufacturing SMEs' sustainable performance (AlKoliby et al., 2024), and digital transformation to sustainability outcomes (Martínez-Peláez et al., 2023; Valdez-Juárez et al., 2024; Wang & Zhang, 2025). Several use other outcome variables, and most centre on large enterprises, manufacturing, or mixed-sector SMEs. Table 1 synthesizes this work and maps the research gap.

Table 1.
Synthesis of Previous Studies and Research Gap Mapping

Researcher (Year)	Country	Variables	Method	Main Findings	Limitations	Gap
Trieu et al. (2025)	Vietnam	IT capability, agility, performance	Survey, SEM	Improves performance via organizational agility	Large firms; sustainable value not tested	Technology-sustainable value link untested
Ganbold et al. (2021)	Japan	IT-based supply chain integration, operational performance	Survey, SEM-PLS	Integration improves operational performance	Developed country; large firms	Distributor SMEs in developing countries untested
Wang & Zhang (2025)	Not specified	Digital transformation, sustainable innovation, performance	Survey (261 firms), PLS-SEM, fsQCA	Improves performance via sustainable innovation	Firm-level; not parts distribution	X1 and X2 not tested separately
Valdez-Juárez et al. (2024)	Mexico	Digital transformation, innovation, financial performance	Survey (4,121 SMEs), PLS-SEM	Drives innovation and financial performance; direct effect small	Financial outcome; mixed sectors	Customer-view sustainable value untested
Verhoef et al. (2021)	Global (conceptual)	Digital transformation, customer value	Literature review	Changes business models and customer value	No empirical test	Not tested on parts distributors
AlKoliby et al. (2024)	Malaysia	Digital marketing, sustainable SME performance	Survey, SEM	Improves manufacturing SME performance	Manufacturing, not distribution	Digitalization strategy untested on distributors
Li et al. (2023)	China	Shared value, corporate sustainability	Survey, SEM	Shared value improves sustainability	Large firms	Not linked to technology at SME scale
Martínez-Peláez et al. (2023)	Mexico	Digital transformation, sustainability, stakeholders	Survey, SEM	Digital transformation mediates sustainability	No industry-specific indicators	No parts-distributor indicators

Source: Authors' synthesis (2026)

Table 1 shows four gaps. The context gap: existing work sits mainly in large enterprises, supply chains, or manufacturing (AlKoliby et al., 2024; Ganbold et al., 2021; Trieu et al., 2025), and SME studies (Valdez-Juárez et al., 2024; Wang & Zhang, 2025) do not focus on parts distribution. The theoretical gap: prior studies typically rely on a single theory

rather than combining the three used here. The empirical gap: Verhoef et al. (2021) is conceptual, and Li et al. (2023) and Martínez-Peláez et al. (2023) were not examined in a parts-distribution setting. The knowledge gap: no study has combined technology implementation and digitalization strategy as complementary capabilities explaining sustainable value creation among medium-scale automotive distributors.

This study therefore analyzes the effect of (1) Business Technology Implementation and (2) Business Digitalization Strategy on Sustainable Value Creation at PT RIKO Parts Medan. It contributes theoretically by combining the three theories in one framework, empirically through evidence from Indonesian automotive parts distributor MSMEs, and practically through a Digital Business Transformation Blueprint offered as a managerial recommendation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View holds that competitive advantage grows out of valuable, rare, hard-to-imitate resources without ready substitutes. Abbasi Kamardi et al. (2025) show that digital resources and service capabilities drive sustainable advantage across economic, social, and operational dimensions, so PT RIKO Parts Medan's digital technology and service capability can be treated as strategic resources.

Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece, 2007) adds that advantage also depends on sensing opportunities, seizing them, and reconfiguring resources as the environment changes. Warner & Wäger (2019) apply this to digital settings through digital sensing, seizing, and transforming. PT RIKO Parts Medan's adaptation to customer preferences and new technology is expressed through its technology implementation and digitalization strategy.

Digital Transformation Theory

Digital Transformation Theory (Verhoef et al., 2021; Vial, 2019) explains how digital technology changes a firm's business model, operational processes, and customer experience, treating transformation as a strategic process rather than tool adoption. The three theories form one thread: RBV identifies the resources, Dynamic Capabilities Theory explains how they are reconfigured, and Digital Transformation Theory shows how this is realized through technology implementation and digitalization strategy, ultimately producing Sustainable Value Creation.

Business Technology Implementation (X1)

Trieu et al. (2025) define business technology implementation as the strategic deployment of IT capabilities to make business processes and firm performance more effective. Jam et al. (2025) link digital technology adoption in supply chain and distribution management to gains in innovation and operational performance, in line with Ganbold et al. (2021), who find that IT-based supply chain integration improves operational performance. For distributors, it means a deliberate effort to adopt and integrate IT, such as digital inventory management and electronic transaction recording. Panigrahi et al. (2024), Hussain et al. (2022), and Garmaki et al. (2023) likewise connect inventory practices, e-commerce use, and data analytics capability to SME and firm performance.

Because respondents are customers, four indicators are worded from the customer's point of view: ease of system use (Davis, 1989); information accuracy and transaction speed, which correspond to the information-quality and system-quality dimensions of DeLone & McLean (2003); and operational integration (Wixom & Todd, 2005), consistent with the IT-enabled integration examined by Ganbold et al. (2021).

Business Digitalization Strategy (X2)
Verhoef et al. (2021) describe business digitalization strategy as transforming the business model through comprehensive use of digital technology to create more customer value. Yang et al. (2021) show that in distribution and supply chain firms, digitalization changes processes from marketing and ordering to customer service, widening market reach and speeding responses. For parts distributors, it means using digital platforms, social media, and online marketplaces to widen reach and deepen engagement (Sinaga & Harja, 2025; Sinaga & Moktar, 2025). AlKoliby et al. (2024), Apasrawirote et al. (2022), and Sofiati et al. (2023) link digital marketing to SME performance, competitive advantage, and customer satisfaction, and Michael & Rezeki (2024)relate e-commerce and digital marketing to customers' purchasing decisions at a firm in Kisaran, North Sumatra.

Digitalization strategy is measured through digital marketing, marketplace use, online responsiveness, and digital customer engagement, operationalizing the digital transformation strategy dimensions of Matt et al. (2015). The indicators draw on Apasrawirote et al. (2022) and Hussain et al. (2022) for digital marketing and e-commerce channels, Parasuraman et al. (2005) for responsiveness, and Brodie et al. (2011) for engagement, here tied to customers' digital interactions with CSOs: product consultation, real-time stock checks, warranty claims, and after-sales service.

Sustainable Value Creation (Y)
Li et al. (2023) frame shared value as a firm's capacity to generate economic, social, and environmental benefits for stakeholders through how it manages its resources, and Martínez-Peláez et al. (2023) show digital transformation mediating business sustainability through stronger capabilities and stakeholder engagement. Gao et al. (2022), Alathamneh & Al-Hawary (2023), and Wang & Zhang (2025) likewise link digital capability and transformation to sustainable business models and performance, and Alsufyani & Gill (2022) argue that digitalization success should be measured systematically. This study therefore defines Sustainable Value Creation as customers' perception of PT RIKO Parts Medan's ability to deliver consistent, lasting value through better service quality, easier processes, and durable relationships, centering on value customers can directly observe rather than internal performance indicators.

It is captured through four customer-perceived indicators: customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, operational effectiveness, and enhanced customer value. Enhanced customer value draws on Zeithaml (1988) and Lepak et al. (2007); satisfaction and loyalty follow Cronin et al. (2000) and Oliver (1999); and operational effectiveness follows Porter (1996), assessed through the accuracy, speed, and consistency of service. The company's value-added services (warranty, CSO consultation, pickup and replacement, loyalty discounts) form the service backdrop for these judgments rather than a separate construct. Sani et al. (2024), cited only for the satisfaction loyalty link, treat service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty as separate constructs, so modeling the four facets as reflective indicators of one perceived-value construct is acknowledged as a limitation.

Relationships between Variables and Hypotheses
When implemented effectively, business technology lets distributors manage inventory better, speed up transactions, and improve information accuracy, which feed into the value customers experience as sustainable. This is echoed by Trieu et al. (2025), Jam et al. (2025), Ganbold et al. (2021), Panigrahi et al. (2024), Hussain et al. (2022), Wang & Zhang (2025), and Valdez-Juárez et al. (2024), though none has tested it among medium-scale automotive parts distributors.

H1: Business Technology Implementation has a positive effect on Sustainable Value Creation at PT RIKO Parts Medan.

Digital strategy and online customer engagement play a comparable role in widening market reach and building customer loyalty (AlKoliby et al., 2024; Apasrawirote et al., 2022; Gao et al., 2022; Sofiati et al., 2023; Verhoef et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2021).

H2: Business Digitalization Strategy has a positive effect on Sustainable Value Creation at PT RIKO Parts Medan.

Applied together, the two factors give parts distributors a stronger chance of comprehensive sustainable value (Alathamneh & Al-Hawary, 2023; Li et al., 2023; Martínez-Peláez et al., 2023).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study's conceptual framework depicts the partial (direct) relationships of Business Technology Implementation (X1) and Business Digitalization Strategy (X2) with Sustainable Value Creation (Y), corresponding to H1 and H2 (Figure 1).

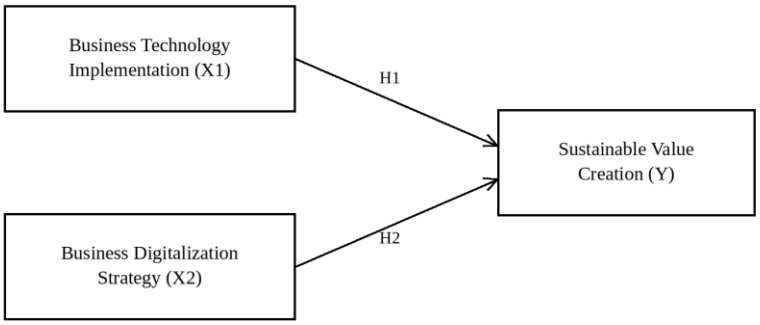


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design
This study takes a quantitative, explanatory approach, aimed at explaining causal relationships among variables through hypothesis testing (Sugiyono, 2022).

Research Location
The research was carried out at PT RIKO Parts Medan, a motorcycle parts distributor located at Jl. Tirtosari, SBC Warehouse Complex No. 8M, Medan City, North Sumatra.

Population
The population comprises all active PT RIKO Parts Medan customers who transacted regularly for parts within the past year, through digital or conventional channels.

Sample
The sample consisted of 100 respondents selected through purposive sampling (Sugiyono, 2022). Respondents had transacted with PT RIKO Parts Medan at least twice in the past year and used digital or value-added services (warranty, CSO, or loyalty programs). The instrument covered three constructs, Business Technology Implementation, Business Digitalization Strategy, and Sustainable Value Creation, in 24 statement items. Given the model's complexity and PLS-SEM power requirements (Hair et al., 2021), 100 respondents were deemed sufficient for this relatively simple model.

Data Collection Technique
Data came from questionnaires, observation, and documentation. Only the questionnaire responses of the 100 customers entered the SEM-PLS analysis; observation of digitalization activities and customer service supplied interpretive context, and documentation supplied the company's secondary operational and sales figures.

Data Analysis Technique
The data were analyzed with PLS-SEM in SmartPLS in two stages. The measurement model was evaluated through convergent validity (outer loadings above 0.7; AVE above 0.5), discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion; HTMT below 0.90), and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability above 0.7) (Hair et al., 2021). The structural model was evaluated through R^2, Q^2predict (PLSpredict, benchmarked against a Linear Model), effect size (f^2), and inner VIF, and H1 and H2 were tested by bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples (t-statistic above 1.96 or p-value below 0.05).

RESULTS

This section reports the measurement and structural model results for the 100 PT RIKO Parts Medan customer respondents, all of whom met the study's criteria and passed checks for completeness, duplication, straight-lining, and unusual completion time. Table 2 summarizes their characteristics.

Table 2.
Respondent Characteristics

Category	n	%
Age		
25-35 years	26	26%
36-45 years	54	54%
> 45 years	18	18%
< 25 years	2	2%
Gender		
Male	82	82%
Female	18	18%
Customer Type		
Workshop/store	76	76%
Individual/end user	14	14%
Reseller/other distributor	10	10%
Customer Status		
Regular customer	83	83%
New customer	17	17%
Length of Being a Customer		
> 3 years	53	53%
1-3 years	29	29%
< 1 year	18	18%
Transaction Frequency		
3-5 times	39	39%
> 5 times	38	38%
1-2 times	23	23%
Most Frequently Used Ordering Channel		
WhatsApp/phone	84	84%
Direct visit	13	13%
Social media	3	3%
Digital Channels Ever Used[1]		
WhatsApp/phone	96	96%
Company digital system/application	36	36%
Social media	13	13%
Marketplace	12	12%
Other	6	6%

Source: Primary data, processed (2026). [1] This item is a multiple-response item (respondents could select more than one channel), so the total percentage exceeds 100%.

Convergent Validity
All 24 indicators exceeded the 0.70 outer-loading threshold (Hair et al., 2021) and were retained (Table 3); individual loadings are available in a supplementary file.

Table 3.
Results of Convergent Validity Testing (Outer Loading)

Construct	Number of Indicators	Outer Loading Range	Decision
Business Technology Implementation	8	0.772-0.859	Valid
Business Digitalization Strategy	7	0.763-0.853	Valid
Sustainable Value Creation	9	0.770-0.879	Valid

Source: Primary data, processed with SmartPLS (2026)

Construct Reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Table 4 reports reliability and AVE against thresholds of 0.70 and 0.50 (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 4.
Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Values

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_a / rho_c	AVE
X1	0.927	0.933 / 0.940	0.662
X2	0.925	0.939 / 0.939	0.689
Y	0.942	0.948 / 0.951	0.683

Source: Primary data, processed (2026)

All constructs exceeded both thresholds, indicating adequate internal consistency and convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity
Discriminant validity was checked through HTMT (below 0.90) and the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5.
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Values

Construct	X1	X2	Y
X1	-	-	-
X2	0.418	-	-
Y	0.484	0.461	-

Source: Primary data, processed (2026)

Table 6.
Fornell-Larcker Criterion Values

Construct	X1	X2	Y
X1	0.814	-	-
X2	0.402	0.830	-
Y	0.467	0.450	0.826

Source: Primary data, processed (2026)

All HTMT values were below 0.90, and each construct's square-root AVE (X1 = 0.814; X2 = 0.830; Y = 0.826) exceeded its correlations with the other constructs, confirming discriminant validity.

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)
Table 7 reports R^2, Q^2predict, f^2, and inner VIF.

Table 7.
Summary of Structural Model Evaluation (R^2, Q^2predict, and f^2)

Indicator	Value
R-square (Y)	0.300
R-square adjusted (Y)	0.285
Q^2predict (Y)	0.254
RMSE (Y)	0.880
MAE (Y)	0.725
f^2 (X1 → Y)	0.139
f^2 (X2 → Y)	0.117
Inner VIF (X1 → Y)	1.193
Inner VIF (X2 → Y)	1.193

Source: Primary data, processed (2026)

Business Technology Implementation and Business Digitalization Strategy together account for 30.0% of the variance in customers' perceived Sustainable Value Creation (R^2 = 0.300; adjusted R^2 = 0.285), leaving 70.0% unexplained. Inner VIF values of 1.193 are well under 5.00 (Hair et al., 2021), so collinearity is unlikely to bias the path coefficients. A Q^2predict of 0.254 indicates predictive relevance, although firmer conclusions would require comparing RMSE and MAE against a Linear Model benchmark. The f^2 values (0.139 and 0.117) classify both predictors as small effects, so despite statistical significance each predictor's individual contribution remains modest.

Hypothesis Testing
H1 and H2 were tested by bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples (Table 8).

Table 8.
Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-statistic	p-value	95% CI	Decision
H1	Business Technology Implementation → Sustainable Value Creation	0.341	4.159	<0.001	0.181-0.500	Supported
H2	Business Digitalization Strategy → Sustainable Value Creation	0.313	3.893	<0.001	0.159-0.477	Supported

Source: Primary data, processed with SmartPLS (2026)

Both paths were positive and significant: X1 → Y (β = 0.341; t = 4.159; p < 0.001; 95% CI 0.181-0.500) supports H1, and X2 → Y (β = 0.313; t = 3.893; p < 0.001; 95% CI 0.159-0.477) supports H2.

DISCUSSION

Business Technology Implementation and Sustainable Value Creation

This positive relationship suggests that customers who rate the company's technology-supported services more favorably also tend to perceive greater long-term value likely experienced through more accurate product information, smoother transactions, and more responsive communication. The study, however, does not directly test the company's internal inventory efficiency or employee readiness.

Business Digitalization Strategy and Sustainable Value Creation

Business Digitalization Strategy's positive, significant effect suggests that sustainable value depends not only on whether technology is available but on the strategic direction guiding its use: a clear strategy helps a company set priorities, allocate resources, and align technology investment with customer and operational needs. This is consistent with Alathamneh & Al-Hawary (2023) and AlKoliby et al. (2024).

Both predictors relate positively and significantly to customers' perceived value, and the small gap between their path coefficients is not grounds for ranking their relative importance.

With 30.0% of the variance explained, technology implementation and digitalization strategy clearly matter, but much remains open to other factors such as employee digital competence, organizational culture, leadership commitment, innovation capability, and supply-chain integration. The findings are best read as evidence for two important determinants, not a full account of what drives Sustainable Value Creation.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that, from customers' point of view, digital capability and sustainable value go together at PT RIKO Parts Medan. Customers who experience technology-supported ordering, stock checking, and transactions favorably, and who see the company engaging them digitally through marketing, marketplaces, and responsive CSO contact, also judge the company as delivering more lasting value in satisfaction, loyalty, service effectiveness, and overall worth. Both factors matter, neither clearly outweighs the other, and each contributes only modestly on its own; these are associations rather than proven causal effects.

For businesses implementing a digital strategy, three implications follow. First, technology and strategy work as complements: systems without a strategy, or digital marketing without reliable systems behind it, leave value unrealized, so the two should be planned together. Second, because value is judged by customers, it appears to be formed at the points where they touch the business, namely the speed, accuracy, and responsiveness of ordering and service, so digital investment should be assessed by what customers experience rather than by the number of tools installed. Third, digitalization is necessary but not sufficient: most of customers' perceived value lies outside these two factors, so digital initiatives belong inside a wider value-creation effort that includes service quality, people, and organizational capability.

RECOMMENDATION

The 30% result gives managers a clear message: digital investment is worth pursuing, but it explains less than a third of customers' perceived value and cannot carry that value alone. The Digital Business Transformation Blueprint translates this into four steps. First, run a digital readiness assessment of systems, staff skills, and data before committing further funds. Second, roll out technology and digitalization strategy together in phases (inventory and customer relationship management systems, digital ordering, online

customer engagement), with employee training and integration of customer and operational data alongside. Third, close the adoption gap: only 36% of surveyed customers had used the company's own digital system and 84% still order mainly by WhatsApp or telephone, so value will not reach customers until they use the digital channels. Fourth, because roughly 70% of perceived value lies elsewhere, invest equally in what technology cannot replace, such as delivery reliability, accurate fulfilment, warranty handling, and CSO responsiveness, and track satisfaction, repeat purchase, retention, complaints, returns, and delivery delays on a sustainability dashboard so each investment is judged by its effect on customer value. The blueprint is a managerial recommendation drawn from the findings, not an intervention the study has tested.

The study is limited by its focus on a single automotive parts distributor, purposive sampling, a cross-sectional design, reliance on customer perception data, and the treatment of four value facets as one construct. Future research could cover multiple distributors and firm sizes, model the facets separately, and add variables such as employee readiness, organizational culture, innovation capability, supply-chain integration, and leadership commitment.

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