

WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AS TOOLS FOR ACHIEVING MARKETING PERFORMANCE AMONG SELECTED SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES IN A DIGITAL ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how web and social media marketing can be used as tools for achieving marketing performance among selected small and medium scale enterprises in a digital economy, using Abia State in Nigeria as a microcosm. In carrying out the research, multi-stage probability sampling method was adopted for the study. Here the state was divided into three educational zones namely Abia North, Abia Central and Abia South. From each of these zones, 50 respondents were selected which gave us a sample size of 150. From here, 150 copies of questionnaire was designed for collection of primary data for the study. Cronbach Alpha model was computed to determine the reliability of the research instrument. And a result of 0.76 and 0.74 were adopted for reliability of the instrument. After the empirical analysis and statistical research, it was concluded that Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter or X as dimensions of social media web marketing were significant and positively affected marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area. Taking cognizance of the results of the analysis, the research suggests that to enhance and consolidate on the gains of marketing performance via social media and web marketing in a digital economy, SMEs should manage their use of using Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter or X in the modern global cum digital economy, like their counterparts in multinational firms. Such will stimulate market customer traffic and thereby demand for their (SMEs) product in the long-run.

Keywords: *Web and Social Media Marketing, Marketing Performance, Digital Economy.*

Introduction

The World Wide Web has become one of the major tools for globalization. This has led to the acceleration of efforts in making the world a global village. More so, from the marketing perspective, promoting the website has influenced marketing activities through social media and electronic marketing. Most of these social media platforms have their own built-in data analytics tools, which enable companies to track the progress, success, and engagement of ad campaigns. Companies address a range of stakeholders through social media marketing including current and potential customers, current and potential employees and the general public (Bampo, Michael & Dineli, 2008).

On a strategic level, promoting the website through social media marketing includes the management of the implementation of a marketing campaign, setting the scope (e.g. more active or passive use) and the establishment of a firm's desired social media "culture" and "tone". To use social media effectively, firms should learn to allow customers and Internet users to post (e.g., online comments, product reviews, etc.), also known as "earned media", rather

than use marketer-prepared advertising copy. While social media marketing is often associated with companies, as of 2016, a range of not-for-profit and government organizations are engaging in social media marketing of their programs or services (Bourkas, Savvi & Feng, 2008).

Social media itself is a catch-all term for websites that may provide radically different social actions. For instance, Twitter is a social site designed to let people share short messages or "updates" with others. Facebook, in contrast is a full-blown social networking site that allows for sharing updates, photos, joining events and a variety of other activities. Social media often feeds into the discovery of new content such as news stories, and "discovery" is a search activity. Social media as website configuration can also help build links that in turn support SEO efforts. Many people also perform searches at social media sites to find social media content. Social connections may also impact the relevancy of some search results, either within a social media network or at a 'mainstream' search engine (Campell, Leyland & Pierre, 2011).

In the past decade, marketers used the internet as a communication tool but as time passed; they realized the true potential of internet and the idea of e-marketing evolved. It is on this basis that Smith and Chaffey (2005), gave a short and basic definition of E-marketing as "Achieving marketing objectives through the use of electronic communication technology". According to Hoge (2003), e-marketing (EM) "is the transfer of goods and services from sellers to buyers that requires one or more electronic methods or media. Chaffey, (2002), observed that promoting the website enhances the use of internet in e-businesses because of its viral nature. Thus, any communication or message to the customer must be personalized and each buyer must be tested distinctly (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-marketing>, 2006).

Statement of Problem

The realization of the impact of effective adoption of the website through social media and e-marketing is a welcome development. Hence, there is a changing paradigm or focus where new realities make business organization to move from general marketing to social and electronic marketing. Again, some other web designer firms fail to understand the capabilities and resources of different groups as well as their needs, goals and desires. They fail to shape, separate offers, services and messages to individual customers. They fail to understand that they can only achieve wider coverage by building high traffic and focusing on customer lifetime value, if there is effective use of the website. Furthermore, designing and promoting the website which spurs the practice of social media and electronic marketing to enhance one-to-one marketing is not yet prominent in most web vendors. So far, these web vendors have realized the need to deal with the public at a time, as a result of advances in computers, the internet and database marketing software; by that the required investment in information collection hardware, and software many exceed the payoff. This study therefore is used to examine these problems and to find solutions.

Different studies have been carried out in the past by researchers on the concept digital marketing, digital marketing and customer satisfaction, digital marketing impact on firms' performance, and so on. According to a study carried out by Asama 2014 in Mumbai, India, on understanding the ecosystem in promoting the website using digital media marketing. Total of 200 users of digital tool were collected as sample for study; 146 males and 54 females. Online questionnaire was distributed consisting of 21 questions each. It was observed that Indian customers are highly information seekers. The website has high impact for creating purchase

stimulus though only through opinion leaders. It was seen that more than 90% of the samples are noticing ads, among them 35% of the samples notice ads through online media followed by TVC and newspapers. They can search for more information after seeing an ad online which is the only two way communication channel for customers.

Another study on "The importance of website as part of marketing engagement, an exploratory study to find the perception and effectiveness of web marketing amongst the marketing professionals in Pakistan" was by Fawad Khan and Professor Dr. Kamran Sidiqi in 2011. The survey examined the perception towards web marketing for marketing professionals in Pakistan. Although, web marketing tools and concepts are taking over traditional methods of marketing both locally and international, it is still a new field to professionals operating in Pakistan. According to the survey, professionals are sceptical about the usage of and benefits of web marketing and have been classified as sceptical. They do consider it as an important tool for promotion but at the same time concerned about the issues of privacy and misleading of information of web marketing. None of these studies researched on the effect of web and social media marketing on marketing performance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises, not to talk of in the digital economy. It was on this gap that this paper was poised to examine how web promotion through social media, and digital electronic marketing can help in the sales turnover of selected Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in a digital economy, with Abia State in Nigeria as the microcosm.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine how web promotion through social media, and digital electronic marketing can help in the sales turnover of selected Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in a digital economy, using Abia State as the case study.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. Determine the effect of Facebook on marketing performance of selected SMEs in Abia State;
- ii. Analyse the effect of WhatsApp on marketing performance of selected SMEs in Abia State.
- iii. Evaluate the effect of Twitter or X marketing on marketing performance of selected SMEs in Abia State.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

Ho1: Facebook has no significant effect on marketing performance of selected SMEs in Abia State.

Ho2: Twitter has no significant effect on marketing performance of selected SMEs in Abia State.

Ho3: YouTube has no significant on the marketing performance of in selected SMEs in Abia State.

Scope of the Study

The study examined how web and social media marketing as tools for achieving marketing performance among selected small and medium scale enterprises in a digital economy. The study was limited to selected Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs), with in Abia State. As the case study. It covered their resources control and management of areas

covered were the use of twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp as direct and indirect platforms for promoting the website as social media indices. However, sales volume was adopted as marketing performance index.

Review of Related Literature

This covered areas namely conceptual framework, theoretical and empirical review.

Conceptual Framework

These areas are discussed herein.

Definition and Concept of the Website Concept

The World Wide Web has become one of the major tools for globalization. This has led to the acceleration of efforts in making the world a global village. To use the world wide web effectively, web designers' firms should learn to allow customers and Internet users to post user-generated content (e.g., online comments, product reviews, etc.), also known as "earned media", rather than use prepared advertising copy. While web usage is often associated with social media marketing of their programs or services (Cha, 2009).

Strategies for Promoting the Website

There are two basic strategies for promoting the websites marketing tools. They are discussed briefly (Bampo, Micael & Dineli 2008).

Passive approach: Promoting the website as marketing can be done through social media. Here the social media platform can be a useful source of market information and a way to hear customer perspectives. Blogs, content communities, and forums are platforms where individuals share their reviews and recommendations of brands, products, and services. Businesses are able to tap and analyze the customer voices and feedback generated in social media for marketing purposes; in this sense the social media is a relatively inexpensive source of market intelligence which can be used by marketers and managers to track and respond to consumer-identified problems and detect market opportunities. For example, the Internet erupted with videos and pictures of iPhone 6 "bend test" which showed that the coveted phone could be bent by hand pressure (Cha, 2009).

Active approach: Also, promoting the website as marketing tool can be used not only as public relations and direct marketing tools but also as communication channels targeting very specific audiences with social media influencers and social media personalities and as effective engagement tools. Technologies predating social media, such as broadcast TV and newspapers can also provide advertisers with a fairly targeted audience, given that an ad placed during a sports game broadcast or in the sports section of a newspaper is likely to be read by sports fans (Pietro, Loredana & Elenora, 2012).

However, social media websites can target niche markets even more precisely. Using digital tools such as Google Adsense, advertisers can target their ads to very specific demographics, such as people who are interested in social entrepreneurship, political activism associated with a particular political party, or video gaming. Google Adsense does this by looking for keywords.

Using customer influencers (for example popular bloggers) can be a very efficient and cost-effective method to launch new products or services. Narendra Modi, current prime

minister of India ranks only second after President Barack Obama in a number of fans on his official Facebook page at 21.8 million and counting. Modi employed social media platforms to circumvent traditional media channels to reach out to the young and urban population of India which is estimated to be 200 million (Casaló, Luis, Flavián & Miguel, 2008).

Engagement: In the context of the social web, engagement means that customers and stakeholders, such as consumer advocacy groups and groups that criticize companies (e.g., lobby groups or advocacy organizations) are active participants rather than passive viewers. Social media use in a business or political context allows all consumers/citizens to express and share an opinion about a company's products, services or business practices, or a government's actions. Each participating customer or non-customer (or citizen) who is participating online via social media becomes part of the marketing department (or a challenge to the marketing effort), as other customers read their positive or negative comments or reviews. Getting consumers and potential consumers (or citizens) to be engaged online is fundamental to successful social media marketing (Campbell, Colin, Leyland Pitt, Michael & Pierre, 2011).

With the advent of social media marketing, it has become increasingly important to gain customer interest in products and services, which can eventually be translated into buying behavior (or voting or donating behavior in a political context). New online marketing concepts of engagement and loyalty have emerged which aim to build customer participation and brand reputation (Campbell, Colin, Leyland, Michael Parent & Pierre, 2011).

Engagement in social media for the purpose of a social media strategy is divided into two parts. The first is proactive, regular posting of new online content (digital photos, digital videos, text) and conversations, as well as the sharing of content and information from others via weblinks. The second part is reactive conversations with social media users responding to those who reach out to your social media profiles through commenting or messaging. Traditional media such as TV news shows are limited to one-way interaction with customers or 'push and tell' where only specific information is given to the customer with few or limited mechanisms to obtain customer feedback. Traditional media such as paper newspapers, of course, do give readers the option of sending a letter to the editor, but this is a relatively slow process, as the editorial board has to review the letter and decide if it is appropriate for publication (Casal Flavián & Miguel, 2008).

On the other hand, social media is participative and open, as participants are able to instantly share their views on brands, products, and services. Traditional media gave control of message to the marketer, whereas social media shifts the balance to the consumer (or citizen) (Cheong & Margaret, 2008).

Tactics of Promoting the Website: One of the main purposes of employing social media in marketing is as a communications tool that makes the companies accessible to those interested in their product and makes them visible to those who have no knowledge of their products. These companies use social media to create buzz, and learn from and target customers. It's the only form of marketing that can finger consumers at each and every stage of the consumer decision journey. Marketing through social media has other benefits as well. Of the top 10 factors that correlate with a strong Google organic search, seven are social media dependent. This means that if brands are less or non-active on social media, they tend to show up less on Google searches (Casaló, Flavián & Miguel, 2008).

While platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have a larger amount of monthly users, the visual media sharing based mobile platforms, however, garner a higher interaction rate in comparison and have registered the fastest growth and have changed the ways in which consumers engage with brand content. Instagram has an interaction rate of 1.46% with an average of 130 million users monthly as opposed to Twitter which has a .03% interaction rate with an average of 210 million monthly users. Unlike traditional media that are often cost-prohibitive to many companies, a social media strategy does not require astronomical budgeting (Casaló, Flavián & Miguel, 2008).

To this end, companies make use of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram to reach audiences much wider than through the use of traditional print/TV/radio advertisements alone at a fraction of the cost, as most social networking sites can be used at little or no cost (however, some websites charge companies for premium services). This has changed the ways that companies approach to interact with customers, as a substantial percentage of consumer interactions are now being carried out over online platforms with much higher visibility. Customers can now post reviews of products and services, rate customer service, and ask questions or voice concerns directly to companies through social media platforms (Chi, 2011).

Thus, social media marketing is also used by businesses in order to build relationships of trust with consumers. To this aim, companies may also hire personnel to specifically handle these social media interactions, who usually report under the title of Online Community Managers. Handling these interactions in a satisfactory manner can result in an increase of consumer trust. To both this aim and to fix the public's perception of a company, 3 steps are taken in order to address consumer concerns, identifying the extent of the social chatter, engaging the influencers to help, and developing a proportional response (Curran, Kevin, Sarah and Temple, 2011).

Twitter: Twitter allows companies to promote their products in short messages known as tweets limited to 140 characters which appear on followers' Home timelines. Tweets can contain text, Hashtag, photo, video, Animated GIF, Emoji, or links to the product's website and other social media profiles, etc. Twitter is also used by companies to provide customer service. Some companies make support available 24/7 and answer promptly, thus improving brand loyalty and appreciation (Curran, Kevin, Sarah & Temple, 2011).

Facebook: Facebook pages are far more detailed than Twitter accounts. They allow a product to provide videos, photos, and longer descriptions, and testimonials as other followers can comment on the product pages for others to see. Facebook can link back to the product's Twitter page as well as send out event reminders. As of May 2015, 93% of businesses marketers use Facebook to promote their brand. A study from 2011 attributed 84% of "engagement" or clicks to Likes that link back to Facebook advertising. By 2010, Facebook had restricted the content published from businesses' and brands' pages. Adjustments in Facebook algorithms have reduced the audience for non-paying business pages (that have at least 500,000 "Likes") from 16% in 2012 down to 2% in February 2010 (Curran, Kevin, Sarah Graham & Temple, 2011).

LinkedIn: LinkedIn, a professional business-related networking site, allows companies to create professional profiles for themselves as well as their business to network and meet others.

Through the use of widgets, members can promote their various social networking activities, such as Twitter stream or blog entries of their product pages, onto their LinkedIn profile page. LinkedIn provides its members the opportunity to generate sales leads and business partners (Cox, 2010). Members can use "Company Pages" similar to Facebook pages to create an area that will allow business owners to promote their products or services and be able to interact with their customers. Due to spread of spam mail sent to job seeker, leading companies prefer to use LinkedIn for employee's recruitment instead using different a job portal. Additionally, companies have voiced a preference for the amount of information that can be gleaned from a LinkedIn profile, versus a limited email (Cox, 2010).

WhatsApp: WhatsApp was founded by Jan Koun and Brian Action. WhatsApp joined Facebook in 2014, but continues to operate as a separate app with a laser focus on building a messaging service that works fast and reliably anywhere in the world. WhatsApp started as an alternative to SMS. WhatsApp now supports sending and receiving a variety of media including text, photos, videos, documents, and location, as well as voice calls. WhatsApp messages and calls are secured with end-to-end encryption, meaning that no third party including WhatsApp can read or listen to them. WhatsApp has a customer base of 1 billion people in over 180 countries. It is used to send personalised promotional messages to individual customers. It has plenty of advantages over SMS that includes ability to track how Message Broadcast Performs using blue tick option in WhatsApp. It allows sending messages to Do Not Disturb (DND) customers. WhatsApp is also used to send a series of bulk messages to their targeted customers using broadcast option. Companies started using this to a large extent because it is a cost effective promotional option and quick to spread a message. Still, WhatsApp doesn't allow businesses to place ads in their app (Cheong and Morrison, 2008).

Yelp: Yelp consists of a comprehensive online index of business profiles. Businesses are searchable by location, similar to yellow papers. The website is operational in seven different countries, including the United States and Canada. Business account holders are allowed to create, share, and edit business profiles. They may post information such as the business location, contact information, pictures, and service information. The website further allows individuals to write, post reviews about businesses, and rate them on a five-point scale. Messaging and talk features are further made available for general members of the website, serving to guide thoughts and opinions (Cheong and Morrison, 2008).

Foursquare: Foursquare is a location-based social networking website, where users can check into locations via a Swarm app on their smartphones. Foursquare allows businesses to create a page or create a new/claim an existing venue (Cheong & Morrison, 2008).

Instagram: In May 2010, Instagram had over 200 million users. The user engagement rate of Instagram was 15 times higher than of Facebook and 25 times higher than that of Twitter (Curran, Kevin, Graham and Temple. 2011). According to Scott Galloway, the founder of L2 and a professor of marketing at New York University's Stern School of Business, latest studies estimate that 93% of prestige brands have an active presence on Instagram and include it in their marketing mix. When it comes to brands and businesses, Instagram's goal is to help companies to reach their respective audiences through captivating imagery in a rich, visual environment (Curran, Kevin, Graham and Temple. 2011). Moreover, Instagram provides a

platform where user and company can communicate publicly and directly, making itself an ideal platform for companies to connect with their current and potential customers (Curran, Kevin, Graham & Temple, 2011).

YouTube: YouTube is another popular avenue; advertisements are done in a way to suit the target audience. The type of language used in the commercials and the ideas used to promote the product reflect the audience's style and taste. Also, the ads on this platform are usually in sync with the content of the video requested, this is another advantage YouTube brings for advertisers. Certain ads are presented with certain videos since the content is relevant. Promotional opportunities such as sponsoring a video is also possible on YouTube, "for example, a user who searches for a YouTube video on dog training may be presented with a sponsored video from a dog toy company in results along with other videos." YouTube also enable publishers to earn money through its YouTube Partner Programme. Companies can pay YouTube for a special "channel" which promotes the company's products or services (Georgi, Dominik & Moritz, 2012).

Social Bookmarking Sites: Websites such as Delicious, Digg, Slasdot, and Dingo are popular social bookmarking sites used in social media promotion. Each of these sites is dedicated to the collection, curation and organization of links to other websites that users deem to be of good quality. This process is "crowdsourced", allowing amateur social media network members to sort and prioritize links by relevance and general category. Due to the large user bases of these websites, any link from one of them to another, the smaller website may in a flash crowd, a sudden surge of interest in the target website. In addition to user-generated promotion, these sites also offer advertisements within individual user communities and categories. Because ads can be placed in designated communities with a very specific target audience and demographic, they have far greater potential for traffic generation than ads selected simply through cookies and browser history (Ferguson, 2008).

Additionally, some of these websites have also implemented measures to make ads more relevant to users by allowing users to vote on which ones will be shown on pages they frequent (Ferguson, 2008) The ability to redirect large volumes of web traffic and target specific, relevant audiences makes social bookmarking sites a valuable asset for social media marketers. Tumblr: Dating and friendship website Tumblr first launched ad products on May 29, 2012. Rather than relying on simple banner ads, Tumblr requires advertisers to create a Tumblr blog so the content of those blogs can be featured on the site. In one year, four native ad formats were created on web and mobile, and had more than 100 brands advertising on Tumblr with 500 cumulative sponsored posts (Ferguson, 2008).

Blogs: Platforms like LinkedIn create an environment for companies and clients to connect online. Companies that recognize the need for information, originality/ and accessibility employ blogs to make their products popular and unique/ and ultimately reach out to consumers who are privy to social media. Studies from 2009 show that consumers view coverage in the media or from bloggers as being more neutral and credible than print advertisements, which are not thought of as free or independent. Blogs allow a product or company to provide longer descriptions of products or services, can include testimonials and can link to and from other social network and blog pages. Blogs can be updated frequently and are promotional

techniques for keeping customers and also for acquiring followers and subscribers who can then be directed to social network pages. Online communities can enable a business to reach the clients of other businesses using the platform. To allow firms to measure their standing in the corporate world, sites enable employees to place evaluations of their companies. Some businesses opt out of integrating social media platforms into their traditional marketing regimen. There are also specific corporate standards that apply when interacting online (Ferguson, 2008). To maintain an advantage in a business-consumer relationship, businesses have to be aware of four key assets that consumers maintain: information, involvement, community, and control.

Theoretical Model and Framework

There are some theories and model that were adopted in this study. They are discussed herein.

Social Media and E-Marketing Model

Internet marketing is associated with several business models. They include:

- a) **E-Commerce Model:** A model whereby goods and services are sold directly to customers (B2C) business (B2B) or from customers to customers (C2C) using computers connected to a network.
- b) **Lead Based Websites Model:** A strategy whereby an organization generated values by acquiring sales leads from its websites.
- c) **Affiliate Marketing Model:** This is a process wherein a product or service developed by one entity is sold by another active sellers for a share of profit.
- d) **Local Internet Marketing Model:** This is a strategy through which a small company utilizes the internet to find and to nurture relationship that can be used for real world advantages. Local internet marketing's uses-tools such as social media, marketing and local directory listing and targeted online sales promotion.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Fred Davis (1989)

The TAM Model was advanced by Davis (1986) and specifically addresses the determinants of computer acceptance among end users. TAM theorizes that an individual's behavioral intention to use a system is affected by two beliefs: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness is the extent to which a person believes that using the system will improve his or her job performance while perceived ease of use is the extent to which a person believes that using the system will be free from error (Venkatesh & Davis, 2010). TAM posits that both beliefs are of primary relevance to computer acceptance behaviors. The goal of TAM is to provide an explanation of the determinants of computer acceptance that is in general capable of explaining user behavior across a broad range of end-user computing technologies and user populations, while at the same time being both parsimonious and theoretically justified. But because it incorporates findings accumulated from over a decade of IS research, it may be especially well suited for modelling computer acceptance (Welch, & Worthington, 2010).

TAM posits that the intensity of an individual's intention to use a technology can be explained jointly by his or her perception about the technology's usefulness and attitude towards the technology use. Rowley (2011) state that technology should be both easy to learn

and easy to use; this implies that perceived ease of use is expected to have a positive influence on users' perception of credibility and intention of using internet marketing. The TAM Model was adopted since it has a significant contribution on digital marketing framework.

Empirical Review

Different studies have been carried out in the past by researchers on the concept digital marketing, digital marketing and customer satisfaction, digital marketing impact on firms' performance, and so on. According to a study carried out by Asama 2014 in Mumbai, India, on understanding the ecosystem in promoting the website using digital media marketing. Total of 200 users of digital tool were collected as sample for study; 146 males and 54 females. Online questionnaire was distributed consisting of 21 questions each. It was observed that Indian customers are highly information seekers. The website has high impact for creating purchase stimulus though only through opinion leaders. It was seen that more than 90% of the samples are noticing ads, among them 35% of the samples notice ads through online media followed by TVC and newspapers. They can search for more information after seeing an ad online which is the only two way communication channel for customers.

Another study on "The importance of website as part of marketing engagement, an exploratory study to find the perception and effectiveness of web marketing amongst the marketing professionals in Pakistan" was by Fawad Khan and Professor Dr. Kamran Sidiqi in 2011. The survey examined the perception towards web marketing for marketing professionals in Pakistan. Although, web marketing tools and concepts are taking over traditional methods of marketing both locally and international, it is still a new field to professionals operating in Pakistan. According to the survey, professionals are sceptical about the usage of and benefits of web marketing and have been classified as sceptical. They do consider it as an important tool for promotion but at the same time concerned about the issues of privacy and misleading of information of web marketing.

Research Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research. The study was carried out in Abia State. The population of Abia State is 2,833,999 (2006 estimate) (New Dawn Inspiration, 2008). The population of the urban areas are: Aba North 107,488, Aba south 423,852 and Umuahia North 220,660 in total 752,000 (INEC, 2008). Multi-stage probability sampling method was adopted for the study. Here the state was divided into three educational zones namely Abia North, Abia Central and Abia South. From each of these zones, 50 respondents were selected which gave us a sample size of 150. From here, 150 copies of questionnaire was designed for collection of primary data for the study. Cronbach Alpha model was computed to determine the reliability of the research instrument. And a result of 0.76 and 0.74 were adopted for reliability of the instrument.

Validity of Research Instrument

We adopted content validity in this study. A 5-point likert scale questionnaire designed for the study was cross-checked whether the contents correspond to the topic under study. This questionnaire was later handed over to my supervisor. This was to ascertain whether the question items in the questionnaire are in tandem with the study objectives. However, the questionnaire was then vetted by the supervisor and other experienced researchers. And it was

ensured that they were in accordance to the topic, the objectives, the research questions, the hypotheses and the relative designed questions as they are contained in the questionnaire.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

The reliability of the research instrument was done through a test-retest content reliability; focusing on the capacity of the questionnaire to elicit the opinion of the respondents. In the course of this, ten (10) copies of the questionnaire were administered to my colleagues. And correlation model was adopted to test the capacity of the questionnaire to generate data for the study. The test-retest results were presented herein. And the decision was based on Crombach Alpha Model. The formula for the Crombach Alpha Model is stated thus:

$$\alpha = \frac{N * \bar{C}}{\bar{V} + (N - 1) * \bar{C}}$$

Where:

N = Number of Items.

\bar{C} = Average co-variance between pairs.

\bar{V} = Average Variance.

The results of the pre-test and post-test were presented in Tables 1 and 2 respectively.

Table 1: Pre-test results of Crombach Alpha Reliability Test

Crombach Alpha	No. of Items
.74	10

Source: Researcher, 2023.

Table 2: Post-test results of Crombach Alpha Reliability Test

Crombach Alpha	No. of Items
.76	10

At 95 confidence level (5% significant level).

Source: Researcher, 2024.

Table 2 and 3 indicate that the results of our test-retest of 0.74 and 0.76 which were above 0.70 (as the bench mark, criterion). We therefore accepted the research instrument as reliable for data collection for the study. However, using the Crombach Alpha Model adopted, and the result of not less than 0.75, reliability test was judged as accepted for the instrument reliability (Onyedijo, 2016).

Results and Analysis

In this research, we had checked the effect of the research covered the relationship between outsourcing of physical distribution services and cost efficiency in Nigeria Breweries and Chisco Companies. In this section of his research, we had checked that out sourcing of physical distribution services are affecting the cost efficiency of Nigeria Breweries and Chisco Companies.

Linear Regression Test

We use linear regression to check the effect of dependent variables with independent variables. In regression analysis we took cost efficiency measures as dependent variables and

the latent factors of outsourcing of physical distribution services such as transportation, warehousing and distribution as our independent variables of research.

The primary data (survey) from the respondents were analyzed using SPSS VERSION 20 of multiple regression models. The objectives therefore, were analyzed and stated using the regressions model below.

Table 3: Web and Social Media Marketing as Tools for Achieving Sales Turnover among Selected Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in a Digital Economy (in Abia State)

Variables	+Linear function	Exponential Function	Semi-log Function	Double-Log Function
Constant	8.491 (4.031)***	2.323 (3.898)***	2.092 (5.125)	6.101 (1.592)*
X1=Facebook	323.720 (4.358)	188.290 (5.736)	2.047 (2.038)	2.315 (3.119)
X2=WhatsApp/Meta	0.011 (2.750)***	4.976 (2.882)***	2.352 (4.030)***	2.418 (5.420)***
X3=Twitter or X	0.025 (1.827)**	0.007 (2.33)**	0.558 (0.954)	0.252 (1.869)**
R ²	0.810	0.536	0.646	0.781
F-ratio	42.208	2.742***	11.054***	32.554***

Source: Computed from field survey data, 2024.

Figures in parenthesis are t-value

+ = Lead equation, *** = Significant at 1% probability level

** = Significant at 5% probability level, * = Significant at 10% probability level

Discussion of Findings

From table 3, the R² (coefficient of multiple determination) which is 0.700 shows that the model is 81.0% variation in marketing performance are accounted for by the independent variables included in the model and it indicates goodness of fit. About 19% can be attributed to error and omitted variables in the model. However, the linear function was chosen as the lead equation.

Facebook as a dimension of web promotion was significant at 1% level of probability and positively affects marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area. This implies that increase in web promotion via Facebook in the social media leads to increase in web promotion which then leads to marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area.

WhatsApp or Meta as an aspect of social media platform for Web Promotion was significant at 5% level of probability and positively affects marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area. This implies that improvement in WhatsApp as social media platform leads to increase in marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area. This may have been due to how the use of WhatsApp Marketing activities of the selected SMEs influence the advertising and affiliate marketing activities of the SMEs; which may have increased the sales volume of the SMEs, hence increase in marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area.

Twitter or X as an element of social marketing for web promotion of companies was significant at 5% and positively affect marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area. This implies that improvement in size the use of Twitter or X, leads to increase on awareness of the SME firms and their products and services. This leads to marketing performance via sales increase of the selected SMEs in the study area. This implies that improvement in the use of Twitter-Handles or X-Handles, especially by C.E.Os, or via Social Media Influencers for promoting SMEs' websites, leads to increase on market differential of the selected SMEs and their products and services in the study area.

Summary

The study examined how web and social media marketing can be used as tools for achieving marketing performance among selected small and medium scale enterprises in a digital economy) in Abia State. In carrying out the research, the study covered the introduction of the study, literature review, research methodology, data collection and analysis. After the empirical analysis and statistical research, the following conclusions drawn from the research finding.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn from the study: Facebook as a dimension of web promotion was significant and positively affected marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area. WhatsApp or Meta as an aspect of social media platform for Web Promotion was significant and positively affected marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area. Twitter or X as an element of social marketing for web promotion of companies was and positively affected marketing performance of the selected SMEs in the study area. This implies that improvement in the use of social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter, especially by C.E.Os, or via Social Media Influencers for promoting SMEs' websites, leads to increase on market differential of the selected SMEs and their products and services in the study area. This led to increase in sales turnover among the SMEs participating in a digital economy, as Abia State was adopted in our case study in this research.

Recommendations

Taking cognizance of the results of the analysis, the research suggests the following recommendations:

- 1) To enhance and consolidate on the gains of marketing performance via social media and web marketing in a digital economy, sales turnover as our indicator for marketing performance, SMEs should manage their use of using Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter or X in the modern global cum digital economy, like their counterparts in multinational firms.
- 2) There should be improvement in the use web design. Such will stimulate market customer traffic and thereby demand for their (SMEs) product in the long-run.
- 3) Finally, the study recommends that the use of Social Media Influencers by SMEs should be improved periodically, so as to increase indirect and affiliate marketing activities of products. And thereby increase their marketing performance via sales and profitability; especially when there is no effective promotional campaigns.

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