



## Advertising motivations of church advertising in Nigeria

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### Abstract

This exploratory study sought to ascertain the motive for which church denominations in Nigeria deploy marketing advertising strategy to their church efforts. Specifically, it sought to ascertain the extent to which advertising helps the churches to attract new members, and identify the effective advertising media/channel options they use. 321 clergies from different church denominations in Anambra State, Nigeria were sampled. A 5-point Likert rating scale questionnaire was administered to the respondents under the condition of anonymity with a view to obtaining frank and revealing responses. The descriptive analysis revealed that image building and membership retention are to small extent significantly perceived evangelical motive for the advertising, while attract of new of new members, reactivation of dormant members and increase in membership are perceived to a large extent and also significant. Competition was found to be small extent and not significant enough reason. Spiritual growth was found significantly very low a motive for church advertising whereas; finance is indicated to be significantly very large extent. The study indicated that use of TV/radio, signboards, billboards, posters, crusades and conventions and house-to- house visitations are not significant as well. Funerals/wedding activities is found the predominantly utilized media, yet it is not significantly effective means for evangelizing. Some churches in study area use special clothing as a means for advertising and image making but which study showed is not perceived effective advertising media for majority of the churches. For the few who adopt the means, it has become a significant means for targeting and sustaining parishioners for the churches. The use of town-criers for announcement of billed programs has no effect on targeting the audience; uses of flyers, preaching in transit buses, stickers and 'morning-cry' are lowly effective, yet significant persuasive means. It was thus concluded that advertising in Nigeria churches is motivated more by secular issues including achievement of material goals, vis-à-vis spiritual. It was recommended that the churches should be wary of the attitude of its publics towards the medium since not all types of advertising are viewed positively by church members and the public, even though they are found favourably disposed to the tool in the circle. Further researches on church marketing activities, marketing motives of and church shoppers in Nigeria were also recommended.

**Keywords:** church marketing, advertising, motivations, media options, Nigeria

### Introduction

The hitherto negative perception of marketing (McDaniel, 1989) <sup>[25]</sup> has changed to recognize marketing as a veritable tool available for any type of organization to effect satisfying exchange relationships (Pride and Ferrell, 1987) <sup>[36]</sup>. American Marketing Association (AMA) (2013) definition which sees marketing as "the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large", reflects this global applicability of marketing to human endeavors and, not any longer exclusive to only economic activities.

Uses of traditional marketing techniques and principles by various types of organizations including the nonprofit sector have also been observed by McDaniel (1986) <sup>[24]</sup> and, Perrault and McCarthy (1999 & 2000) <sup>[31]</sup>. Dauner (1983) <sup>[13]</sup> was emphatic about the indispensability of marketing to nonprofit organizations: "if ever there was a group with a need for understanding and implementing sound marketing programs, it is the nonprofit organization". McDaniel (1989) <sup>[25]</sup> and Vokurka and McDaniel (2004) <sup>[43]</sup> recognized the church as one of the nonprofit organizations to which marketing strategies are imperative. Onwuka (2010) <sup>[27]</sup> also have

observed the large scale attraction of the religious sector to marketing, especially advertising: "The religious sector has become a major stake-holder in advertising...putting advertising and publicity to good use in disseminating their messages".

The above observation is not isolated. Reports of church marketing generally and advertising in particular are found in journal articles, empirical literatures and several other published materials (e.g. Reising, 2006; Ashley, 2010; Vorkuka & McDaniel, 2004; Angheluta *et al.*, 2009; Baker, 2012) <sup>[37, 4, 43, 3]</sup>. In addition to the above, also can be found are quantum observable physical advertising activities run on a daily basis by the ubiquitous neighbourhood churches not only in Nigeria but also in the entire Christian world. In fact, advertising in the church world is reportedly well over a century old and still growing in intensity and scope. A growing number of churches, more than word-of-mouth (preaching), appear to favour and rely so much on marketing promotion and, advertising in particular, for the same purpose in order to attain their objective. Instances of excessive circular indulgencies of the church can be gleaned with ease from far and wide. The Spokesman-Review (1994) <sup>[42]</sup> reported an evangelical church even resorted to giving cash

money to prospective parishioners. Given that no specific explanation has been advanced for this penchant for advertising in the mass media by our churches and the attendant significant increase in its usage, the church publics would like to learn about the particular reason why churches choose to advertise their services.

The church is all the followers of Christianity religion. Pew Forum (2012) in its report found Christianity the most populous religion in the world. The report also show that Christians constitute 2.2 billion (32%) of the world's population. First called Christians in Antioch in Syria (Acts 11:26), the Bible (Acts 6:7) attributes the spread of the faith first, to the haunting and hounding of Christ followers after his death and later, the killing of Stephen. The Apostles continued to preach (by word-of-mouth) everywhere and at all times (suscopts.org, 2013), to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is important to stress at this point however, that the study is very mindful of the sensitiveness of religious and church issues which, according to Angheluta *et al.*, (2009)<sup>[3]</sup> has both supporters and critics in its fold and members of the general public. Therefore the study is not intent at vilifying the church system; instead it takes a positive stand that churches can apply advertising usefully to achieve their goal, and obtain better result.

### Problem Definition

The secularization thesis of Berger (1967)<sup>[8]</sup> long argued that advertising is a secular issue and that churches should not engage in it, yet the clergy world-wide have found the tool very useful in the industry. This is obvious indication of faded reservations towards the strategy within the religious circle (Pfadenhauer, 2010)<sup>[35]</sup>. Thus the churches find it profitable to advertise their services effectively each week through mass communications sources such as the television, newspapers, radio broadcast, computerized highways among a plethora of other conventional and unconventional means (Dauner (1983)<sup>[13]</sup>. The reason may not be far-fetched. Mission and objectives of the church are getting increasingly difficult to accomplish due largely to the secularization of the today's society (Angheluta *et al.*, 2009)<sup>[3]</sup>.

The few accessible literatures of studies on church marketing have shown that religious organizations are so attracted to marketing promotion more than any other marketing tool. Webb *et al.* (1998)<sup>[46]</sup> indicate that the attraction clearly has particularly been in advertising. In Nigeria, the act of church advertising appears to have reached all heights at frenzied level. This complemented in large by unique forms of guerrilla marketing developed steadily by these churches. These activities received further boost from the deregulation of the satellite television industry in the country. The current unresolved issue especially in Nigeria, which this study seeks to address is why advertising is, implicitly and explicitly used in the church environment.

This study therefore hopes to contribute to existing knowledge, benefit different church denominations, religious organizations, advertising agencies, and members of the public. Dauner (1983)<sup>[13]</sup> confirmed that results of studies such as this will further benefit not only the church but also many other organizations in the nonprofit sector. Academically, there is obvious dearth of researched

information dealing on church advertising in the Nigeria context, so this study is exploratory in nature, possibly providing a basis and justification for further investigation as well adding to the literature on the area of church advertising in particular and nonprofit marketing in general. The church institution may find the outcome of the study useful in the search for better solution to its visibility problem. It may help to stem, diminish or dispel inherent prejudice the religious community holds against the church and the marketing of its religious services.

Churches experiencing steady decline in overall attendance cum patronage may find the lead to reversing the trend, attract new members, increase their members, and maintain their parishioners. The study may inspire advertising practitioners and multimedia houses to, probably, choose to alter their perception, view and consider the church as viable prospect and consequently profitable client.

### Review of Related Literature

#### Church Advertising Motivations

Charles Dana, in a discussion 'Should Churches Advertise?' at a meeting of the Methodist Social Union in 1895, appeared to set in motion church advertising when he advised the church to advertise, not just in-house but "in the newspapers that reached and were read by the great mass of the people" (The New York Times, 1895)<sup>[41]</sup>. McDaniel (1986)<sup>[24]</sup> noted that the church still lags in the use of advertising because the religious community has some reservations against the use of such strategy. Even though this observed inherent prejudice has continued, church use of marketing practices has continued (Angheluta *et al.*, 2009)<sup>[3]</sup>.

Opinions not yet validated through research expressed in the few existing relevant literature (e.g. Vokurka and McDaniel, 2004; Garrison, 1996)<sup>[43, 44]</sup> indicate that advertising helps the church in image building by increasing public perception of the church. Other common motivations found are to attract new members, retain current members, reactivate dormant members (Joseph and Webb, 2000; Considine, 2000)<sup>[20, 11]</sup>; increase in finances (Iheanacho, 2013; Eze, 2011; Dauner, 1983)<sup>[19, 13]</sup>; competition (McDaniel, 1989)<sup>[25]</sup> and; increase in the numerical size of membership, spiritual growth (Pfadenhauer, 2010; Newman and Benchener 2008; Vokurka and McDaniel, 2004)<sup>[35, 24, 43]</sup>. Though, Maudlin *et al.* (1994)<sup>[23]</sup> seem to contend the spirituality claim of churches for advertising when they argue, quoting John MacArthur, that "... one cannot follow a market-driven strategy and remain faithful to Scripture".

Although all these views are plausible, the views of Joseph and Webb (2000)<sup>[20]</sup> and Considine (2000)<sup>[11]</sup> appear more logical considering the type of the campaign targets identified by McDaniel (1989)<sup>[25]</sup> which include non-members of the church, visitors to the church, and the church members. Within these targets however, Bulik (2009)<sup>[9]</sup> singled out the youthful segment as the most viable. Possible explanation for the viability of the youth is found in the report of Pew Forum (2011)<sup>[33]</sup> that, at the youth stage of the individual, his/her religious affiliation becomes considerably fixed and, not likely to change.

Most of these possible motivations are inversely tied to one another that the attainment of one automatically achieves the

other. Overall, attracting new members is central to increasing church membership.

### Media Channel of Church Advertising

Against the claims of Barna (2013)<sup>[6]</sup> that the confidence of people in the integrity of the print and broadcast channels of advertising has waned, a host of print and electronic mass communication options still dominate the avenues through which churches publicize their services and programs to the target publics. Considerable work has been done in this area. Available sources are unanimous about TV, radio, newspaper, billboard, door-to-door (or word-of-mouth) but differ in variants of newspaper and other print listings as widely used in church and churching campaigns. For example, Hines (1996)<sup>[17]</sup> surveyed 100 Southern Baptist Convention churches on practices and perceptions of church advertising. The study was centered on the variety and effectiveness of certain ad media in use such as billboard, direct mail (to non-members), door-to-door (fliers), newspaper church page listing, newspaper display adverts, radio, television, transit, yellow page display adverts, and yellow page listing in marketing of their churches.

In their study of strategies churches adopt to retain and attract members, Webb, *et al.* (1998)<sup>[46]</sup> pointed personal contact through referrals, direct mail, monthly and weekly newsletters, bulletins, radio, yellow page advertisements, television, community cable access, and door-to-door canvassing. Magazines, events (crusades and conferences), building more parishes, tag adverts, stickers, banners, posters, envelopes, invitation cards, Internet, church service, signboard (with weekly programs) were pointed by some other sources.

Literatures of church advertising studies (Hines, 1996; Webb, *et al.*, 1998; McDaniel, 1986; 1989; Vokurka and McDaniel, 2004; Vokurka *et al.*, 2002; Newman and Benchener, 2008)<sup>[17, 46, 24, 25, 44, 26]</sup> give insight into the effectiveness of church advertising channels. Hines (1996)<sup>[17]</sup> studied the variety, amount and the perceived effectiveness of the advertising media used by the churches. Ranked according to the magnitude of their use by the churches, and their perceived effectiveness, the billboards, direct mail (to non-members), door-to-door, fliers, newspaper church page listing, newspaper display adverts, radio, television, transit, yellow page display adverts, and yellow page listing efficient were according found to be commonly used.

Vokurka *et al.* (2002)<sup>[44]</sup>, studied the use and perceived effectiveness of twenty-five marketing communication methods among 247 Southern Baptist Convention churches and found in-house visits and telephone calls to people who visited the church most frequently used, and the most perceived effective. Their findings also show that marketing communication methods are more important to growing a church than any other method.

Webb, *et al.* (1998)<sup>[46]</sup>, studied the perception of the clergy about the effectiveness of different advert media to attract new members and, to retain members. The results are ranked in the order of degree of their effectiveness (i.e. from most to least) in the desired area as shown in the figure below:

From the results indicate that television/cable access, weekly newsletter, door-to-door, daily newspaper, weekly newspaper/monthly newsletter, radio, personal referral are

more effective in attracting new members. Similarly, the TV/cable access, yellow page ad, newspapers yellow page listing, door-to-door, telemarketing, radio, brochure, personal referral, etc. are found to be effective for retaining members. Hines and Webb, agree with door-to-door and slightly, the radio but differ on TV.

A further and later survey of United States Protestant church leaders to ascertain how effective their marketing efforts at building and retaining church membership by Webb (2012)<sup>[45]</sup> showed that monthly newsletter and Internet webcast ministries are the effective media tools for attracting members while, Internet search engine are suited to retaining the members. Pastor's publications is the effect tool to persuade visitors to become members. Another interesting findings of the study is that for a church leader to be able to attract members, retain members or persuade nonmembers to become one, he must be financially strong. Financial strength can be viewed from the standpoint of the organization's capability to hire and engage those marketing technologies.

McDaniel (1986)<sup>[24]</sup> studied the perception of the clergy and the public towards church advertising. He found the clergy more favourably disposed to church use of advertising media than the latter. The two groups however, adjudged signs on the church premises and yellow-page advertising to be the most appropriate types of church advertising. A related study three years later (McDaniel, 1989)<sup>[25]</sup>, found yellow-page advertising most common among the churches. The study also found positive relationship between church growth and church service broadcast on television and radio. Other channels are very lowly rated. In either case, TV/cable, door-to-door, and newspaper are found to be most significantly effective. The radio is considerably more effective in membership retention than attracting new members.

Taking results from the experience of a single church, Baker (2012) listed various church advertising techniques that could help in growing a church. One-on-one visitation, word-of-mouth (personal endorsement by a trusted friend or relative), publishing a newspaper, are (hierarchically) considered effective. Flyers rated better than radio adverts. Curiously, the TV is not mentioned, while newspaper adverts are rated very low.

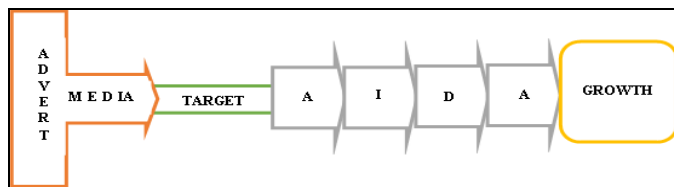
### Theoretical Framework

This study represents an interesting further step not only in extending general social marketing literature to the context of church advertising, but also to contribute to our current knowledge of the use of advertising as a persuasive marketing instrument to favourably alter the attitude of the target audience of the church. Attitude is a person's favourable or unfavourable and consistently long-lasting response tendencies towards a given object, idea, product, services, programs etc. (Hawkins *et al.*, 2004; Kotler, 2004; Petty *et al.*, 1997)<sup>[16, 21, 32]</sup>. Literatures show that attitude has three components – cognitive (information/belief system), affect (emotion/feelings) and conation (behavioural/action).

The theory of attitude change and its linkage model, Hierarchy of effect effectively explicates the anticipated effects of church advertising on the attitudes of church targets. Some effect models such as AIDA developed by E. St. Elmo Lewis (Barry & Howard, 1990)<sup>[7]</sup>, and Model Stage and Model

Order by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) [21] describe in a think-feel-do fashion persuasive advertising effects on the attitudes of consumers. By AIDA, the ad attracts the attention of a prospect, holds his interest, arouses his desire, and pushes him to action, i.e. purchase/not purchase a product or builds the intention to purchase when the need arise or when the resources permit. Model Stage and Model Order on its part postulates that persuasive advertising creates awareness and knowledge which occur at cognition stage, liking and preference occur affective stage and, conviction and purchase result at conative stage, sequentially.

The church is a religion. The message of the church advert is information about heaven and hell. Noting that increase in membership central to motivations for church advertising in this study is a function of attitude, this information is intended to appeal to the cognitive, affect and conative components of the attitude of the target audience. The target in this case include but not exclusive to such target audience as dormant members, visitors and church shoppers or non-members. If the audience believes the advertising message content, favourable emotional feeling will develop resulting in behavioural response action to join the church and become members. The bottom line is that more people are attracted and joined the church, the membership size will grow and with it come other growth derivatives such as financial and material resources. The modified AIDA model below illustrates:



Modified AIDA model  
 Source: Researcher’s conception

Fig 1

The model shows church advertising carried by the media (TV/cable, word-of-mouth, newspapers, flyers etc.) gets the attention and appeals the cognition of the target consumers (church shoppers, visitors, dormant members). They, by evaluating the attributes of the attitude object including size of the church, age, message or leadership etc., might or might not develop interest. If the interest is strong enough to provide a conviction or emotional feeling that the church is worth a trial, the desire comes in and, resulting in action (membership or

reactivated member). The overall outcome of more members will be growth - increased numerical size, increased spirituality, enhanced image, and increased finances.

**Methodology**

This paper is an empirical study in which church denominations in Nigeria were surveyed and treated to a theoretical convenience sampling. The convenience sampling allowed fewer numbers of clergy respondents, to minimize sampling error. As Theoretical convenience sampling, according to Glasgow (2005) [15], deliberately selects organizations that possess features upon which a study is focused, this study therefore, selected those churches that appear to dominate the mass media. The population used for the study is the clergies in Anambra State. Out of the population, a sample of 321 was judgementsly drawn.

The instrument used for data collection in this research was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents under the condition of anonymity. The researcher made the questionnaire anonymous by deliberately omitting such sensitive questions, like name of the respondent, because of its usefulness to research. According to Hollander and Blair (1954) [18], the usefulness of anonymity in research rests on the fact that it presents the individual with a relatively unstructured stimulus situation in which respondents may, with equanimity and without being consciously aware of the process, bring forth feelings that might naturally be repressed through social pressures and other forces. This view is supported by Oppenheim (1978) [28] who states that “anonymity is often crucial in obtaining frank and revealing responses”.

To accomplish the first objective of the study, i.e. to ascertain the advertising motive of the churches, the respondents indicated, on a 5-point Likert rating scale, the extent to which they perceive the strength of the listed possible ad motives (literature aided). Webb, *et al.* (1998) [46], applied similar strategy. Objective 2 was treated to the same method. The data were analyzed in descriptive statistics - frequency tables, percentages and chi-square. Items earned their position according to their respective rating scores, beginning with the highest and down to the lowest.

**Results and Interpretation**

The scales used to measure the extent to which church advertising helps in evangelism are tested for the descriptive and frequencies analysis.

**Table 1:** Analysis of the Extent Advertising helps Churches to Target Potential Parishioners

SN	Variables (Ad Motives)	No Extent	Very Small Extent	Small Extent	Large Extent	Very Large Extent	Chi Square & Sig. Value	Decision
1	Church adverts	0	0	48 (15.0%)	231 (72.0%)	42 (13.1%)	53.711 (0.000)	Large extent (significant)
2	Image building	36 (11.2%)	97 (30.2%)	156 (48.6%)	23 (7.2%)	9 (2.8%)	107.952 (0.000)	Small extent (significant)
3	Attract new members	18 (5.6%)	27 (8.4%)	60 (18.7%)	140 (43.6%)	76 (23.7%)	34.185 (0.000)	Large extent (significant)
4	Retain current members	15 (4.7%)	89 (27.7%)	151 (47.0%)	45 (14.0%)	21 (6.5%)	24.153 (0.000)	Small extent (significant)
5	Reactivate dormant members	9 (2.8%)	56 (17.4%)	18 (5.6%)	170 (53.0%)	68 (21.2%)	6.553 (0.000)	Large extent (significant)



6	Competition.	42 (13.1%)	90 (28.0%)	153 (47.7%)	27 (8.4%)	9 (2.8%)	4.056 (0.132)	Small extent (Not significant)
7	Increase the numerical size of membership	18 (5.6%)	22 (6.9%)	69 (21.5%)	136 (42.4%)	76 (23.7%)	31.735 (0.000)	Large extent (significant)
8	Spiritual growth	83 (25.9%)	151 (47.0%)	44 (13.7%)	19 (5.9%)	24 (7.5%)	3.189 (0.203)	Very small extent (Not significant)
9	Finance	18 (5.6%)	22 (6.9%)	69 (21.5%)	76(23.7%)	136 (42.4%)	31.735 (0.000)	Very Large extent (significant)

Source: Computed from survey data, 2016.

The scales used to measure the extent to which church advertising helps in evangelism are tested for the descriptive and frequencies analysis. Table 1 shows extent the advertising helps in enhancing evangelism of churches. From the results, it is indicated that the adverts are used in a small extent for image building (48.6%,  $p < 0.05$ ), retain members (47.0%,  $p < 0.05$ ), reactivate dormant members (53.0%,  $p < 0.05$ ) and in competition (47.7%,  $p > 0.05$ ). The results further indicate that to large extent, churches use adverts to attract new members (43.6%,  $p < 0.05$ ) and to increase the numerical size of membership (42.4%,  $p < 0.05$ ); and contributes in spiritual growth to a very small extent (47.0%,  $p > 0.05$ ). More so,

finances is found to be “very large extent” (42.4%,  $p < 0.05$ ) for targeting potential parishioners. The results imply that adverting significantly plays evangelical roles in image building, membership retention and reactivation, and to increase numerical size of parishioners. Conversely, adverting was not perceived to play significant role in church competition and spiritual growth.

The second objective aimed to identify the perceived effective advertising media/channel options the churches use. The results are presented on Table 2. Thirteen (13) advertising media/channels were scaled on 5-point Likert format.

Table 2: Analysis of the Effective Advertising Media/Channel Options for Churches

SN	Variables	Not effective	Very low effective	Low Effective	High Effective	Very High Effective	Chi Square & Sig.	Decision
1	Airwaves (TV and radio)	4 (1.2%)	20 (6.2%)	88 (27.4%)	190 (59.2%)	19 (5.9%)	81.247 (0.000)	High Effective (significant)
2	Signboards	0	42 (13.1%)	79 (24.6%)	112 (34.9%)	88 (27.4%)	38.946 (0.000)	High Effective (significant)
3	Billboards	0	0	48 (15.0%)	231 (72.0%)	42 (13.1%)	53.711 (0.000)	High Effective (significant)
4	Flyers	36 (11.2%)	91 (28.3%)	167 (52.0%)	21 (6.5%)	6 (1.9%)	57.554 (0.000)	Low Effective (significant)
5	Posters	9 (2.8%)	21 (6.5%)	60 (18.7%)	166 (51.7%)	65 (20.2%)	22.207 (0.000)	High Effective (significant)
6	Stickers	77 (24.0%)	95 (29.6%)	76 (23.7%)	29 (9.0%)	44 (13.7%)	12.086 (0.000)	Very low Effective (significant)
7	Special clothing	190 (59.2%)	85 (26.5%)	26 (8.1%)	20 (6.2%)	0	25.130 (0.000)	Not Effective (significant)
8	Advertising-intent preaching in transit buses	55 (17.1%)	56 (17.4%)	148 (46.1%)	62 (19.3%)	0	4.653 (0.000)	Low Effective (significant)
9	Crusades & conventions	0	20 (6.2%)	61 (19.0%)	198 (61.7%)	42 (13.1%)	60.794 (0.000)	High Effective (significant)
10	Funerals and weddings	8 (2.5%)	29 (9.0%)	71 (22.1%)	110 (34.3%)	103 (32.1%)	4.051 (0.132)	High Effective (Not significant)
11	Morning-cry	30 (9.3%)	168 (52.3%)	57 (17.8%)	56 (17.4%)	10 (3.1%)	99.780 (0.000)	Very Low Effective (significant)
12	Announcement of billed programs through town-criers	158 (49.2%)	100 (31.2%)	48 (15.0%)	11 (3.4%)	4 (1.2%)	85.948 (0.000)	Not Effective (significant)
13	House-to-house visitation	18 (5.6%)	18 (5.6%)	59 (18.4%)	205 (63.9%)	21 (6.5%)	67.819 (0.000)	High Effective (significant)

Source: Computed from survey data, 2016.

The results as show in the above table indicate that eight (8) of the media/channels are perceived highly effective. These include TV/radio (59.2%,  $p < 0.05$ ), signboards (34.9%,  $p < 0.05$ ), billboards (72.0%,  $p < 0.05$ ), posters (51.7%,  $p < 0.05$ ), crusades and conventions (61.7%,  $p < 0.05$ ), funerals and weddings (34.3%,  $p > 0.05$ ), and House-to-house visitation (63.9%,  $p > 0.05$ ). Among these perceived highly

effective ad channels, only funerals/wedding activities is not a significant means for evangelizing in Nigeria.

Moreover, use of flyers (52.0%,  $p < 0.05$ ) and preaching in transit buses (46.1%,  $p < 0.05$ ) are of low effective while, stickers (29.6%,  $p < 0.05$ ) and ‘morning-cry’ (52.3%,  $p < 0.05$ ) are of very low effective. On the other hand, announcement of billed programs through town-criers are has

no effect (49.2%,  $p < 0.05$ ) on targeting the audience. Nonetheless, the use of special clothing (59.2%,  $p < 0.05$ ) is not effective advertising media, yet the p.value indicates that it is significant means for targeting and sustaining parishioners for the churches.

### Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

This study revealed insightful findings on what advertising does for churches as well as the medium through which that is done. Advertising is shown to significantly play evangelical roles in image building, membership retention and reactivation, and increase in numerical size.

The study also revealed that adverts did not play significant role in church competition and spiritual growth. Although this may be true according to their opinion, the drive to maintain followership, reactivate dormant members in addition to grow more members indicates that there is a competition. The use of certain channels some of which very environmentally unfriendly in attempt to out-do the other smacks of keen competition. After all one does not need, for example, public address system mount on roof-top or hired public announcers to tell someone to come to a place and receive Jesus Christ, or to receive miracle.

Also, the study indicated that the use of TV/radio, signboards, billboards, posters, crusades and conventions and house-to-house visitations are significantly high effective means/channels for church advertising. The study found that funerals/wedding activities are predominant utilized media platform for church advertising, yet it is not significantly effective means for evangelizing.

Some churches in Anambra State, Nigeria use special clothing as a means for advertising and image making. The findings from this study showed that it is not effective advertising media for majority of the churches, yet for the few who adopt the means, it has become a significant means for targeting and sustaining parishioners for the churches. The use of town-criers for announcement of billed programs has no effect on targeting the audience. However, the use of flyers, preaching in transit buses, stickers and 'morning-cry' are of low effective media, yet it is significant for evangelizing.

This study thus conclude that advertising in church circles have come a very long way. Both the clergy and the public have favourable perception toward it. The tool plays the role of changing the attitude of the church target consumers and has been successful to the church in attracting new members and consequent growth in membership size, increasing their finances, and building their image. While many channel options could be used to pursue this agenda, the Television/cable TV access, word-of-mouth and the newspaper are found to be most effective to attract new members. The radio is best for attitude reinforcement aimed at retaining parishioners. Against this backdrop, the study is recommending:

1. Further development of church advertising to enhance efficient and broader applicability.
2. The church should, above all other motives, be more spiritually inclined, devote more energy at spreading the message of Jesus Christ and winning people to the Kingdom.
3. Further empirical studies on church marketing and,

marketing motives of the clergy, particularly in Nigeria.

4. That the church should be careful advertising in the media because according to Alan (2000) <sup>[1]</sup> not all types of advertising are viewed positively by the members of the church and the public.
5. An advertising niche should be designed by advertising agencies to accommodate the church and other religious groups.

This study as well as most others before it has investigated the issue of church advertising more from the standpoint of the church and the clergy. There is therefore the need to investigate the motivations of those who join or attend a church because of marketing stimuli or messages received from the mass media. This may possibly contribute to knowledge at developing church typologies based on types of church shoppers and, commercial churches. It appears that this is a neglected area which, when researched would help to separate the sheep from the wolves (those who truly seek the kingdom of God and, those who pursue mundane agenda), categorize the church accordingly and save the image of the Christendom.

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