



Volume: 1, Issue: 2, 161-166
July 2014
www.allsubjectjournal.com
e-ISSN: 2349-4182
p-ISSN: 2349-5979
Impact Factor: 3.762

Adegbite, Tajudeen Adejare
Department of Management
and Accounting, Ladoke
Akintola University of
Technology, Ogbomoso,
Oyo State, Nigeria.

Anene, E. C
Ph.D, Department Of
Management and
Accounting, Ladoke Akintola
University of Technology,
Ogbomoso. Oyo State,
Nigeria.

Correspondence:
Adegbite, Tajudeen Adejare
Department of Management
and Accounting, Ladoke
Akintola University of
Technology, Ogbomoso,
Oyo State, Nigeria.

Analysis of the Impact of Internet Advertising on Productivity of Telecommunication Industry in Nigeria: MTN Nigeria Outlook

Adegbite, Tajudeen Adejare and Anene, E. C

Abstract

This study analysed impact of internet advertising on productivity of telecommunication industry in Nigeria. Data were gathered from 70 respondents of randomly selected customers and staff of MTN with the aid of structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as tables and percentages while Chi-square analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypothesis formulated through STATA 11 version. Findings revealed that there is positive significant impact of internet advertising on productivity of telecommunication industry in Nigeria. It was concluded that internet advertising is therefore necessary in stimulating the customer market and guaranteeing desired sales performance. It is therefore recommended that organisations should improve on the level of their internet advertising in order to create more customers' patronage, and this will increase their sales performance and in turn maximize their profits.

Keywords: Internet; Advertising; Nigeria; Productivity; Telecommunication industry;

1. Introduction

A number of countries have adopted the Global System of Mobile telecommunication (GSM), which has boosted the overall available telephone lines. For instance, in Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Uganda, governments have licensed a number of GSM Operators. The impact of the moves have been quite dramatic in number of cases; for example the GSM in Nigeria before August 2001 were just about 500,000 mobile and fixed telephone lines in all. Today, the country has over 36 million mobile lines and a little over one million fixed lines for a population of over 50million, tele-density as at June 2007 stood at 28.42 (Internet Download 2007). The fact that internet is a measure of interconnectivity and inter-relation of millions of computers all over the world for the basic purpose of information exchange in which each computer so connected maintains its own position of the internet, have made transaction easy. All the computers are 'built in an internet, to operate common language or prototype as standard in order that a free flow communication (between sender and receiver) is enhanced, the difference in hardware or software notwithstanding (Usman, 2011).

Nigerian internet initiative started with the effort of the Nigerian internet group by late 1994. During this period the only access to the internet was through Nigeria Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) leased acts which were then very expensive. Pressure was therefore put on NITEL to build the infrastructural backbone to make this service more accessible and relatively cheaper to make the effort and awareness drive worthwhile (Usman 2011).

The internet came with an evolution that cannot be compared with existing technologies that were before it. Durkin (2004) remarked that the television revolution took 13years to reach 50million viewers, and the internet achieved this mark in only 4 years (Durkin, 2004). There is no doubt that the rate of deployment of new technologies in developing countries is low, especially those of sub-saharan Africa. This is particularly noticeable in the areas of telecommunication and computing infrastructure, which has led to increase through Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN), Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) and even through their mobile phones. African Governments in their Information and Communication Technology (ICT) reform programs have made efforts to liberalize the market and privatize the sole carrier (Usman 2011).

The benefits of an internet to all disciplines according to Adeola (2006) are in it being a facilitator of globalization process. Thus, internet advertising in particular and marketing in general is the gateway to effective buying and selling globally, considering the intensive

knowledge and opportunity it provides. Internet therefore educates, persuades and guides an advertiser to effective decisions relative to limited available resources and dispersed customers of a product or services. Igbinsosa (2003) asserted that effective internet usage in marketing (especially advert) is a necessity to overcoming competition and ultimately arriving at a success. He however, added that internet usage in advertising a product or services should be exercised with caution as a result of variety of risks surrounding networking for its performance and security in data.

Similarly, Diniz et al (2005) opined that if benefits are to be derived in internet by customers especially advertising/marketing, training of resources (human) in selected programme in the determination of customer attitude. This is because a broad knowledge of this programme will strategically position advertiser to accessing customers data (behaviour in the purchase of goods and services) and exchange of information. It will also assist in making advertising and online sales forecasting, budgeting and other services more interesting, attractive and less cumbersome. The fact that advertising are forms of sponsored telecommunication activities associated with personal selling, using internet advertising is therefore necessary in stimulating the customer market and guarantee desired sales performance (Okpara,1999).

Problem Statement

Nigeria is a growing economy. With over 140 million people, coupled with the low level of infrastructure like roads and rails, there is great need for the adoptions of a faster and more reliable means of exchange in order to drive commerce. Despite the numerous advantages in internet advertising and online sales over other forms of commerce, many Nigerians are yet to adopt this technology in their daily buying and selling activities. A number of factors have been given for this, which include lack of proper record keeping on customer perception and attitude which impedes the determination of the true position of activities of anytime in any place, absence of periodic review of communication system policies and programmes with a view of taking appropriate purchase decision. Inadequate and inexperienced staff (personnel) to use communication system in data processing for effective internet advertising and online sales, are also part of the problems.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to analyse the impact of internet advertising on productivity of telecommunication industry in Nigeria. Specific objectives were:

- i To identify the internet Marketing Strategies.
- ii To examine the effect of internet advertising on sales volume in Nigeria
- iii To investigate the impact of Advertising on Telecommunication Industry

Research Hypothesis

Ho₁: Internet advertising has no significant impact on sales volume in MTN Nigeria

Literature Review

Historical Development of Internet Advertising

Internet marketing has grown quickly since its inception. The e-commerce website, viewed as a marketing toy in the early days of the Internet, became an integrated part of the overall business plan and in some cases grow to a bigger business

than the existing offline business. According to one report, the total sales amount generated through affiliate networks in 2006 was \$2.16 billion in the United Kingdom alone. The estimates were \$1.35 billion in sales in 2005 (Affiliate Marketing Networks Buyer's Guide, 2006). Marketing Sherpa's research team estimated that, in 2006, affiliates worldwide earned US\$6.5 billion in bounty and commissions from a variety of sources in retail, personal finance, gaming and gambling, travel, telecom, education, publishing and forms of lead generation other than contextual advertising programs (Annew et al 2001).

Currently the most active sectors for affiliate marketing are the adult, gambling, and retail industries (Internet Statistics Compendium 2007). The three sectors expected to experience the greatest growth are the mobile phone, finance, and travel sectors (Internet Statistics Compendium 2007). Soon after these sectors, came the entertainment (particularly gaming) and Internet-related services (particularly broadband) sectors. Also several of the affiliate solution providers expect to see increased interest from business to business marketers and advertisers in using affiliate marketing as part of their mix (Internet Statistics Compendium 2007).

Internet Marketing

According to Wikipedia, Internet can be referred to as online marketing, Internet advertising e-Marketing (or e-Marketing). Thus, it is the marketing of products or services on the Internet. When it applies to be subset of website based placement it is commonly referred to as Web advertising (Web advertising), and/or Web Marketing. The internet has brought many unique benefits to marketing including low cost in distributing information and media to a global audience. The interactive nature of internet marketing, both in terms of instant response and in eliciting response are unique qualities of the medium. Internet marketing ties together creative and technical aspects of the internet, including design, development, advertising and sales. Internet marketing methods and strategies encompass a wide range of services such as search optimization (SEM) and pay per click (PPC), display advertising, text-based advertising, behavioural marketing, software-based ads, e-mail marketing, newsletter marketing, customer Relationship Management Marketing, affiliate marketing, web press releases, interactive advertising, online reputation management (ORM), online marketing research and also Social Media Marketing Methods such as blog marketing, multivariate testing or optimization and viral marketing.

Internet marketing is the process of promoting an organization using online media, typically with the goals of increasing sales and boosting profits. Internet marketing does not simply mean building or promoting a website nor does it simply mean building or promoting a website, nor does it mean simply putting a banner ad up on another website. Effective internet marketing requires a comprehensive strategy that synergizes a given company's business model and sales go with their website function & appearance, focusing on their target market through proper choice of advertising type, media and design.

Internet Marketing Strategies

The first approach to developing Internet Marketing Strategies is to "Brand" your product or services online. In the article "How to Realise Marketing on the internet" published by 'Business Innovator Group Resource (BIRG) Magazine' (2002), branding of products/services online starts with

registering a domain name even if you are not ready to use the domain name immediately. By this you have reserved your name in the registry of all domain names on the internet. Names ending with biz, .com, .info, .name, .net, or .org can be registered through many different competing registrars for a one off token fee. In addition, many portals, search engines, and on line Directories offer services for domain name registration. The registrars submit the contact information to a central directory, or registry, which provides other computers on the internet with the information necessary to send e-mail or to find Website. Wilson (2006) identified a number of strategies that could be employed to increase traffic to someone E-commerce site. He categorized the strategies in the following sub-headings.

- Search Engine Strategy
- Linking Strategy
- Traditional Strategy
- E-Mail Strategy
- Miscellaneous Strategy
- Paid Advert Strategy.

Impact of the Advertising on Telecommunication Industry

Advertising is the most conspicuous of all marketing activities. According to American Marketing Association (1960), marketing is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by identified sponsor. In order words, advertising may not necessarily involve a marketer or the representative appearing to take delivery of sales or services. Contributing, Usman (2011) argued that advertising is controlled, identifiable information and presentation by means of mass communication media. The key distinguishing features of advertising as opposed to other promotional tools such as personal selling, sales promotion and publicity, could be found in its definitions

- (i) Unlike publicity, advertising is paid for. The medium (Television, Radio, Newspaper etc) through which the advertisement is transmitted or in which it is published is paid for
- (ii) Advertising, unlike the use of salesman, is non-personal in the sense that the objective of an advertisement is usually on idea, goods or services although it is also possible to advertise events (like trade fairs, Christian crusade meetings and obituaries and organizations like companies, churches, clubs and political parties),
- (iii) The contents, timing and direction of an advertisement message are controlled by the advertiser.
- (iv) The channel used for transmission of the advertisement message is a mass medium, which could reach many people simultaneously.

Uses of advertisements are;

- i Informing the potential customers about news product being introduced into the market.
- ii To inform of the price of the product
- iii To let the customers be aware of where the product can be obtained
- iv Advertisement is used to draw attention of customers to the benefit of the product, particularly its hidden qualities as per second billings and coverage.
- v To as well counter the advertisement of competitors in the same industry
- vi To correct wrong or negative impressions or rumors about the company or its products or simply foster goodwill.

- vii Assist middle men to sell their products as well as support the efforts of salesmen by helping them to pre- inform prospects
- viii It is used to draw attention to changes in product features in order to stimulate customers to buy or try the products,
- ix Advertisement is used to reassure customers of the product that they are buying

Electronic Advertising

Advertising could also be channeled through the use; of electronic media such as the radio, television, home video and cinema. These different forms of electronic advertising are referred to as radio advertising, television advertising and cinema advertising respectively.

According to Kotler (1980) advertising is a strategy whereby potential customer is persuaded by convincing that a product or service is capable of satisfying the immediate and future wants. In so doing awareness is created and knowledge acquired through information on the features of a product or service. More so, advertising improves the brand value of a product or service and creates favourable attitude on customer's choice, taste and habit. However, the effectiveness of advertising is predicated upon message content medium use,

Product or service perception and policies or regulatory controls of government and her agencies. It need be emphasized here that the effect of advertising telecommunication industry varies from one firm to another. However, a general opinion is that advertising stimulates sales and purchases. Advertising has a considerable level improved product or service quality delivery in the telecommunication. It has improved the rate of competitive of all firms in the telecommunication industry. Following from this, it could be inferred that advertising provides and protect firms in the telecommunication industry to operate within the confinement of laws. Advertising provides firms with data necessary in considering cost benefit relationship of any activity (potential and existing) they might engage in advertising invariably serves as a measuring tool for firm and product acceptance telecommunication industry. On the contrary, a wrongly coded advertising message to consumer of products or services in the telecommunication industry could be a setback to maximizing profits or breakeven. In addition advertising of some services in the telecommunication industry have been accepting low valued services for their scarce resources.

Consumer Behaviour

Today's business firms must understand group characteristics are they affect consumer behavior. Very few manufacturers have the resources to sell to whole nation like Nigeria. The market is simply too vast for one firm. Even if the firm has the resource, everyone cannot simply desire its products(s). it is advisable and more profitable for a firm to specialize - to appeal to one group or at most a few groups. This is only possible if the firms know the categories of buyers, what interest them and how they can be influenced to buy. These will naturally enable firms to segment the markets. Consumer behavior studies arm markets with such facts as the basic needs, the psychological needs, motivation, perception, attitudes, personality, and learning among others. Many psychologists have examined needs from different dimension. But the most popular is Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. Maslow's need hierarchy is the order in which human needs arise. He believed that when one need is at least partially satisfied, the need at the next highest level arises: The needs

can be classified into primary (needs which are fundamental to human existence) and secondary (needs that can be avoided)

- i Primary needs includes
- ii The psychotically (hunger, thirst, sleep)
- iii The safety needs (security, order and stability)
- iv Secondary needs includes
- v The belongingness and love needs (affection and identification.)
- vi The esteem needs (prestige, success and self-respect)
- vii The needs for self-actualization

Usman (2011) explains that the need hierarchy is not rigid as may be implied by previous discussion. He recognizes the fact that while most people feels the needs is about the order indicated, there may be exception in individual cases.

Consumer Behaviour and Segmentation

Lavidge and Steiner (1961) developed one model that identifies the "following stages through which advertising seeks to move the audience.

- Awareness of the existence of the product
- Liking for the product
- Preference for the product
- Conviction to act or purpose the product
- Actual purchase of the product

But on his part, Strang (1925) developed similar model, which forms the bass for the model, and advertising objective of probably moving prospects from one stage of the process to another, examples of such telecommunication effects that advertising objectives could be

- To ensure that the percentage of target audience that is aware of the existence of the product rises.
- To increase the percentage of these who know the distinct feature of the product to rise from lower percentage of higher percentage in the new few months
- To raise the percentage of the target audience who prefer one brand to others from few percent within one year.
- To increase the percentage of these who know the distinct features of the product to rise from lower percentage to higher percentage in next few months.
- To raise the percentage of the target audience who prefer one brand to others from few percent to a higher percentage with one year.

Corporate Profile of MTN

MTN, one of Nigeria’s leading telecommunication companies has reaffirmed its commitment to playing a role in driving socio-economic growth and development in Nigeria. The key objectives; when MTN launched their operation in 2001 were to use, telecommunications as a platform to unleash Nigeria's strong potential for development. In providing telecommunications services to over 25million active subscribers' he said ' the MTN operation has registered an impact that clearly underscores the wide-ranging economic multiplier nature of investment in telecommunications. The multidimensional impact of our over \$5billion investment in our network rollout includes job creation and the empowerment of thousands of small and medium business. In

addition to over 5000 base stations; MTN have put in place a 5,411 kilometer fiber optic transmission backbone, which is the longest private infrastructure of its kind in Africa. The fibre optics 'super highway' is the catalyst for an IGT revolution which will impact the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. In recognition of customers demand in the busiest commercial hubs of the country, MTN is also erecting metropolitan 'self-healing' fibred rings across major cities like Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt, Kano and Ibadan. The effect of the metropolitan network would be dramatic improvement in the quality of service and increase robustness of the network in those areas.

Quality of service; In 2008 the company achieved an average monthly build rate of 120 base stations, a feat that has remained unsurpassed in Nigeria and indeed the rest of Africa. 'MTN will continuously redouble their efforts to ensure that the growing needs of our country, for quality voice and data services are met in a most satisfactory manner. The company plans to invest over N180 billion on its network rollout in 2009. In 2008m it invest approximately NI37 billion representing more than 30% of the CAPEX budget allocation for the entire MTN Group which has a footprint 21 countries in Africa and the Middle East. The company would continue to make the necessary investment in telecommunications infrastructure as well as in all levels of government through the payment of tax. The importance that the company attaches to timely payment of its taxes is in order to discharge its own civic responsibilities and to ensure that government receives the necessary resources to meet their own statutory obligations for the common good of all. MTN paid approximately 5 Billion in VAT and other levies to various agencies of Government during the period of its pioneer status from 2001-6

Methodology

Survey research was employed for the study and data were gathered from 70 respondents of randomly selected customers and staff of MTN with the aid of structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as tables and percentages while Chi-square analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the hypothesis formulated through STATA 11 version.

The formulae for chi-square used is

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{(O_i - \ell_i)^2}{\ell_i}$$

Where i =1...k, O_i = observed frequency, ℓ_i = expected frequency.

The degree of freedom= (r-1) (k-1)

Where

r = no. of rows, K = no. of columns

Presentation and Analysis of Data

The hypothesis was analyzed with the use of chi-square (χ²) is a significant test, which makes use of data in the form of observation frequencies or co-units.

Table 1: Distribution of responses on the impact of internet advertising on sales volume in MTN Nigeria

S/N	QUESTIONS	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
1	Internet advertising informs the potential customers about news product being introduced into the market by MTN	22 (31.43)	19 (27.14)	8 (11.43)	10 (14.29)	11 (15.17)	70 (100)
2	The rapid growth experienced in MTN industry is due to internet advertising by information technology. Internet advertising messages on products or services enhances maximum profits for MTN	24 (34.29)	20 (28.5)	0 (0.00)	14 (20.00)	12 (17.14)	70 (100)
3	Internet advertising improve the brand value of a product or service and creates favourable attitude on customer's choice, taste and habit	25 (35.71)	17 (24.29)	6 (8.57)	11 (15.71)	11 (15.71)	70 (100)
4	Internet advertising is used to draw attention to changes in product features in order to stimulate customers to buy or try the products,	19 (27.14)	18 (25.71)	12 (17.14)	13 (18.57)	8 (11.43)	70 (100)
5	Public enlightenment programmes and Trade transactions on Information Technology makes for easy access and understanding of new MTN products	21 (30.00)	17 (24.29)	10 (14.29)	13 (18.57)	9 (12.86)	70 (100)

Note: - The bracket figures indicate the percentage and figures not bracketed indicate frequency. Source: Field Survey 2013

The analysis on table 1 shows that 31.43% of the respondents strongly agreed that Internet advertising informs the potential customers about news product being introduced into the market by MTN, 27.14% agreed, 11.43% were not sure, 14.29% disagreed, and 15.17 strongly disagreed. This indicates that Internet advertising informs the potential customers about news product being introduced into the market by MTN.

Also, 34.29% of the respondents strongly agreed that the rapid growth experienced in MTN industry is due to internet advertising by information technology. Internet advertising messages on products or services enhance maximum profits for MTN, 28.5% agreed, 0% were not sure, 20.00% disagreed and 17.14% strongly disagreed. This indicates that the rapid growth experienced in MTN industry is due to internet advertising by information technology. Internet advertising messages on products or services enhance maximum profits for MTN.

Furthermore, 35.71% of the respondents strongly agreed that Internet advertising improve the brand value of a product or service and creates favourable attitude on customer's choice, taste and habit, 24.29% agreed 8.57% not sure, 15.71% disagreed and 15.71% strongly disagreed. This indicates that

Internet advertising improves the brand value of a product or service and creates favourable attitude on customer's choice, taste and habit.

More so, 27.14% of the respondents strongly agreed that Internet advertising is used to draw attention to changes in product features in order to stimulate customers to buy or try the products, 25.71% agreed, 17.14% were not sure, 18.57% disagreed and 11.43% strongly disagreed. This implies that Internet advertising is used to draw attention to changes in product features in order to stimulate customers to buy or try the products.

Lastly, 30.00% of the respondents strongly agreed that Public enlightenment programmes and Trade transactions on Information Technology makes for easy access and understanding of new MTN products, 24.29% agreed, 14.29% were not sure, 12.86% disagreed and 12.86% strongly disagreed. This implies that Public enlightenment programmes and Trade transactions on Information Technology make for easy access and understanding of new MTN products

Testing of Hypothesis

Table 2: Analysis of the significant impact of Internet advertising on sales volume in MTN Nigeria

S/N	Relationship	Pearson chi-square	Pr(value)	Remark
1	Q1 vs Q2	82.9008	0.000	Significant
2	Q1 vs Q3	71.1174	0.000	Significant
3	Q1 vs Q4	91.5881	0.000	Significant
4	Q1 vs Q5	41.8650	0.000	Significant
5	Q2 vs Q3	104.7088	0.000	Significant
6	Q2 vs Q4	124.6842	0.000	Significant
7	Q2 vs Q5	118.6606	0.000	Significant
8	Q3 vs Q4	119.3698	0.000	Significant
9	Q3 vs Q5	127.8515	0.000	Significant
10	Q4 vs Q5	57.9507	0.000	Significant

Source: Computations and output of STATA 11 based on authors' field survey (2013).

Decision: Since the chi – square calculated ($\chi^2 - cal$) is greater than chi – square tabulated ($\chi^2 - tab$) which makes all the figures to be highly significant with probability of F equal to 0.000. Collectively, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore,

the alternative hypothesis is accepted; that is, there is significant impact of Internet advertising on sales volume in selected organisation in Nigeria.

Table 3: The effect of Internet advertising on sales volume in MTN Nigeria by ANOVA

Source	Partial SS	Df	MS	F	Prob>F
Model	38.5294118	17	2.26643599	5.10	0.0000
sales volume	38.5294118	17	2.26643599	5.10	0.0000
Residual	22.2352941	50	.444705882	Number of obs = 68	
Total	60.7647059	67	.906935909		
R-squared = 0.6341		Adj R-squared = 0.5097		Root MSE = .666863	

Dependent variable: Internet advertising

Source: Computations and output of STATA 11 based on authors' field survey (2013).

To confirm the significant impact of Internet advertising on sales volume in the selected organisation in Nigeria, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also employed. Table 3 above shows that there is a positive relationship between sales volume and Internet advertising. 1% increase in the level of Internet advertising will result to 38.5% increase in the sales volume. Given the coefficient of determination (R^2) as 63.4%, the relationship is significant.

Given the adjusted R^2 as 51%, it signifies that the independent variables in this model have been able to determine the positive effect of internet advertising on sales volume to 51%. The F and probability statistics also confirmed the significance of this model.

Conclusion

This study analysed the impact of internet advertising on productivity of telecommunication industry in Nigeria. Findings revealed that there is positive significant impact of internet advertising on productivity of telecommunication industry in Nigeria. It therefore concluded that internet advertising is necessary in stimulating the customer market and, to guarantee desired sales performance. Investment in internet advertising is a prerequisite for market share in telecommunication industry.

It is therefore recommended that organisations should improve on the level of their internet advertising in order to create more customers' patronage, and this will increase their sales performance and in turn maximize their profits.

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