

Social Media Marketing and Customer's Buying Behaviour of Electronic Products in Akwa Ibom State.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of social media marketing on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. The study objectives were to determine the influence of independent variables (customer's engagement, quality content and brand reputation) on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. The study employed a survey research design to collect data from a sample size of 384 respondents, determined using the Cochran (1977) formula since the population was infinite and respondents were selected using convenience sampling technique. Data were collected through online survey questionnaire (Google form) through WhatsApp, Facebook different groups since a lot of people are using electronic products and analyzed using tables and simple percentages. Hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis with the help of SPSS 25 version at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that customer's engagement, quality content and brand reputation had positive and significant influence on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products. It was concluded that customer's engagement, quality content and brand reputation were positive and significant predictors of customer's buying behaviour of electronic products. Hence, it was therefore recommended that business firms should have more engaging content that matches with their target audience, while at the same time providing quality content that educates customers about the benefits and features of electronic products by using high-quality visuals that reflect the culture and lifestyle of the people.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing, Customer's engagement, Quality content, Brand reputation, Customer, Buying Behaviour, Electronic products, Akwa Ibom State.*

INTRODUCTION

The rise of social media has changed the traditional method of marketing communications. Muskan et al. (2022) opined that customers now have more ways to communicate with the internet courtesy of the social media. Customers utilize social media to create contents and interact with other users. The analysis of social media can also uncover the benefits for businesses. Many companies around the world have formed special teams to oversee their online activities; many of these companies have also established a social media department that collaborates with the other departments for growth and profitability.

Social media has become an essential part of many people's daily lives. Social media has evolved from a communication tool to a marketing platform for firms seeking to expand into new markets. Approximately 85% of businesses conduct social media marketing (Statista, 2023); 74% of consumers search for and share

information, and engage with service providers, via social media as well (Statista, 2023). These social media networks include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp. The primary goal of many businesses is customer satisfaction and continuous ways of improving their experiences and relationships (Akpan et al 2024).

Organizations are now leveraging on social media platforms to develop customer-business relationships and ensure customer experience (Hanaysha, 2021). Working adults are increasingly engaged on social media platforms since purchasing and getting pertinent information about electronic products is more convenient than previous ways (Lenhart et al., 2020).

Statement of the Problem.

Social media marketing is growing more and more interesting, not only because of its great power of communication, but also because it can be used to build strong and long-term relationship between customers and businesses. This possibility allows organisations/companies to expand their operations, retain and attract the customers the companies need to create memorable experiences that live up to the customers' expectations (Jami Pour et al., 2021).

Despite the benefits of social media marketing, companies often lack information and understanding on how to delight and satisfy their customers and get effective results. (Jacobson et al., 2020). This study aims to fill the gap in literature by analyzing how social media marketing variables of customer engagement, quality content and brand reputation affect customer experience of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between social media marketing and customers' experience of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

While the specific objectives were to:

- i. determine the influence of customer's engagement on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- ii. ascertain the influence of quality content on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- iii. investigate the influence of brand reputation on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

- H0₁: There is no significant influence of customer's engagement on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- H0₂: There is no significant influence of quality content on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- H0₃: There is no significant influence of brand reputation on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Nigeria

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Social Media Marketing

According to Ballabh (2024) social media marketing refers to the promotion, communication, engagement, content sharing, and collaboration. It is used by individuals to connect with friends, family, and communities, as well as businesses to market their products and services. Individuals and organizations of all kinds now rely heavily on social media channels for marketing.

Uford and Akpan (2024) observed that marketers are shifting from traditional social media marketing to embracing AI technologies which are seamlessly integrated into major social media platforms to promote functionality and user experience. Each platform leverages AI in different ways to cater to their unique user bases and business objectives.

Wibowo et al. (2020) assert that social media marketing involves an organization's integrated activities that leverage social media networks and interactions to achieve marketing goals. Benefits of social media marketing includes promotion of engagement between buyers and customers, helping firms reach a diverse group of clients and providing a quick and convenient way to communicate with current clients, potential customers, and the general public (Ballabh, 2024). Dimensions of social media marketing under consideration in this study are customer engagement, content quality and brand reputation.

Customers' Engagement

Hollebeek et al. (2019) defined customers' engagement as a psychological readiness to interact with specific engagement objects. Brodie et al. (2011) also define customer engagement as a complex psychological state resulting from interactions with service providers.

Mollen and Wilson (2010) described engagement in social media as "cognitive and affective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website or other computer-mediated entities designed to communicate brand value".

Quality Content

Jafarova and Tolon (2022) stated that content marketing is a strategic marketing method that entails developing and distributing relevant, quality information via digital platforms in order to attract and retain the attention of a well-defined target audience. It is one of the most dependable ways to expand the consumer base and boost the value of the brand and product.

Quality content is a collection of thoughts, thematic information, and messages presented in textual, visual, or audio form, intended for consumption and onward distribution via the internet. Companies need good tales to connect with their customers, capture their attention, and convert them into listeners. However, delivering a good tale is not always enough. It is critical to remember that these stories are what the intended audience wants to hear, and possibly even need (Gedick,2022).

Brand Reputation

According to Fombrun and Shanley (2019), a brand's reputation is formed by the aggregation of images held by both internal and external stakeholders over time, resulting in an overall evaluation of a company. This suggests that an individual's emotional association with an organization can influence the image they form of it. Elements influencing brand reputation include past customers experience, word of mouth, social media coverage, and business public relations.

Brand reputation refers to how people perceive and evaluate a brand based on their experiences, interactions, and external cues (Fombrun & Shanley, 2019). This dynamic force influences both initial purchasing decisions and post-buy behaviors. According to Erdem and Swait (2018), a brand's reputation is based on consumers' perceptions of its reliability, credibility, and market status.

Customer's Buying Behaviour

Customer buying behaviour according to Godovykh and Tasci, (2020) refers to the cognitive, emotive, sensory, and behavioral responses of customers at all phases of the consuming process, including pre-purchase, consumption, and post-purchase. In other words, customer buying behaviour especially in a service context is created not only by elements that the service provider can control such as service interface, atmosphere, assortment, and price but also by elements outside of their control, such as other customer's

influence (Shankar et al., 2020; Beck, 2020).

Hansemark and Albinson (2022) in Uford et al., (2022) stated that customer buying behaviour is defined as the overall customer perspective towards the service provider, or it is the psychological reaction of customers towards the difference between their anticipation and things they obtain, which relates to the needs and goals accomplished. Attih (2021) described consumer buying behaviour as behaviour exhibited by consumer to search, buy, and use goods and service to satisfy his/her needs and wants. The study of consumer buying behaviour is based on the fact that behind the visible act of purchasing a product is a decision process (Mfon & Uford, 2022).

Theoretical Framework

Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980/ 1997)

According to Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (EDT), the difference between expected and actual performance determines consumer satisfaction. Customers feel validated and satisfied when a product or service exceeds their expectations. In contrast, if performance falls short, clients feel dissatisfied and disappointed. The implication of this theory to social media marketing and the customer's buying behavior of electronic products is that it would help companies to effectively manage customers' expectations, address disconfirmation, promote customer satisfaction, fostering brand loyalty, and improve their overall reputation in the marketplace.

Empirical Review

Pereira et al., (2020) investigated the relationship between the reputation of the retail brand and customer loyalty in the retail pharmacy sector in Brazil. To achieve the objective of the study, exploratory factor analysis and linear multiple regression were used as the analysis techniques. A survey was carried out to collect data from 469 retail pharmacy customers in a municipality of Santa Catarina, located in the South Region of Brazil. The results suggest that popularity, level of knowledge, and familiarity significantly and positively affect loyalty to the most frequented brands. These findings reveal different perceptions regarding the most frequented and the least frequented pharmacies. However, the most relevant aspects remain the same regardless of how frequented the retail pharmacy is.

Chiyem et al., (2022) examined social media advertising and patronage of electronic products of universities in South-South Nigeria. The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the influence of predictor variables (sociability, usability, dependability, involvement) on patronage. Structured questionnaire was design to collect data from the respondents. Sample size of 383 users of social media was determined which using Kothari formula. Factor analysis was used to test the reliability of the research instrument. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using mediation analysis to test the hypotheses in SPSS version 25. Findings revealed among others that there is a positive relationship between sociability, dependability, involvement and patronage of electronic products in South- South Universities in Nigeria. It was equally discovered that usability of social media had no relationship with patronage. It was recommended among others that business organizations who use social media as a means of advertising should concentrate on social media platforms that enhance community and connectedness.

Gitaine, (2021) conducted a study on the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies for beauty accounts on Instagram. The main reason for this study was to determine how the effectiveness of content strategies should be adequately studied so that we can have a better understanding of which strategies are successful and which ones are not. This study identifies effective social media content strategies, with a focus on brand reputation and customer-centric strategies. After a content analysis of 251 Instagram posts from Huda Beauty and Glossier's accounts, the hypotheses stating that brand-centric strategies will be more effective, and all the strategies will be a useful way to determine the outcome of future Instagram posts are partially supported. This research contributes to best practices in social media marketing in order to understand the effectiveness behind content strategies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional survey method was adopted as the research design for the study. This method employed online survey questionnaire (Google form) as instrument for data collection. The population of this study consisted of all customers of electronic products (telephones and computers) in Akwa Ibom State.

The sample size of 384 respondents was calculated using the Cochran (1977) formula. The convenience sampling technique which is a non- probability sampling design was used to collect data from the respondents. This procedure was useful because it allows a researcher to reach out to accessible number of people.

Data were collected using online questionnaire (Google Forms) carefully designed to march with the study's objectives. The instrument comprised close-ended items measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument was subjected to expert validation and pilot-tested for reliability before full deployment. The results of Cronbach coefficients for each item were 0.8 above, showing the reliability, or internal consistency, of the tested items.

Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive statistics (frequency and simple percentages) and inferential statistics, including multiple regression analysis, to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

The presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected from 384 respondents who bought computers and telephones in the last one year in Akwa Ibom State. The purpose was to assess the influence of social media marketing indicators namely engagement, quality content and brand reputation on customer's buying behaviour using multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

Table 4.1: Summary of multiple regression analysis for the joined influence of engagement, quality content and brand reputation on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State.

	B ₁	SE	B ₂	t-value	Significant (2 tailed)
Constant	0.666	0.211		2.949	0.002
Customer's engagement	0.690	0.073	0.785	19.338	0.000
Quality content	0.650	0.022	0.062	1.768	0.003
Brand reputation	0.550	0.029	0.258	7.945	0.000
Dependent Variable: Buying behaviour					
R =	0.851				
R ² =	0.801				
Adjusted R-Square =	0.800				
Std. Error of estimate =	0.71936				
F-statistics =	606.611				
Probability (Significant p-value) =	0.000 ^b				

**significantly related at 5% (p<0.05). B₁= unstandardized beta, B₂= standardized beta, SE= standard error.*

Source: The Researcher's Compilation (2025).

The regression coefficient (R²) = 801 in table 4.1, meaning that customer's engagement, quality content and brand reputation jointly explained 80% change in customer's buying behaviour of electronic products. An indication that customer's engagement, quality content and brand reputation jointly accountable for 80% of the changes in customer's buying behaviour of electronic products, while 20% of the changes in customer's buying behaviour could be attributed to factors that cannot be accounted for.

The joint influence of the independent variables in the model and the dependent variable was very strong at $R = 0.851$. The regression model of this study is said to have a very strong explanatory power of the dependent variable, since the coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.801$ and the adjusted coefficient of determination; adjusted $R^2 = 0.800$.

In addition, the F-ratio = 606.611 and p-value < 0.000 on the ANOVA revealing that the results of the regression model could not have occurred by chance and that customer's engagement, quality content and brand reputation significantly predicted the customer's buying behaviour of electronic products.

The regression results show that customer's engagement, quality content and brand reputation all significantly affect customer's buying behaviour of electronic products

Discussion of Findings

From the findings of the study, results revealed a significant influence on each of the three variables of social media marketing namely customers' engagement, quality contents, brand reputation on customers' buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom state. From the first hypothesis, result shows that customer engagement had a significant influence on customers' buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. This result is supported by Chiyem et al., (2022) who found out there is a positive relationship between sociability, engagement and patronage of electronic products in South- South Universities in Nigeria.

The result of the second hypothesis shows that since the calculated probability (Sig.) of 0.000 was less than the p-value of 0.05, we concluded that there is a significant influence of quality contents on customers' buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom state. This finding is in corroboration with Gitaine (2021) whose study revealed that quality content helps to drive patronage.

The third hypothesis reveals the calculated probability (Sig.) of 0.000 was also less than the p-value of 0.05 from table 4.1, which shows that there is a significant influence of brand reputation on customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom state. This result is in line with that Pereira et al., (2020) who found that there is a significant positive relationship between brand reputation and customers' loyalty.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Summary of the Findings

This study was carried out to examine the influence of social media marketing and customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. Data were collected from 384 respondents of electronic products. Social media marketing variables investigated were customer's engagement, quality content and brand reputation. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the data. The results of the study revealed is a positive significant influence of social media marketing on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State. The results also indicated that customers with high scored in engagement, quality contents and brand reputation had good experience using electronic products.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were made based on the findings:

- (1) There is a significant influence of customer's engagement on customer buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State.
- (2) There is a significant influence of quality content on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State.
- (3) There is a significant influence of brand reputation on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. Business firms who use social media as a means of marketing should have engaging content that resonates with their target audience, which can foster stronger connections and encourage participation.
2. It is also recommended that marketers of electronic products in Akwa Ibom State should provide quality content that educates customers about the benefits and features of electronic products- using high-quality visuals that reflect the culture and lifestyle of the people.
3. Organizations/businesses marketing electronic products should be actively involved in local events, both online and offline, to show their brand's presence and also sponsor/ support local initiatives to promote their brand reputation.

Suggestion For Further Research

1. Since the study sample was limited to only customers in Akwa Ibom State, future research should obtain responses from a sample size drawn from other states or countries, using larger data to enhance generalization.
2. Using the same variables, a similar study should be conducted in other sectors of the economy to further evaluate the effectiveness social media marketing as well.

Contribution To Knowledge

This study has made the following contributions to the existing body of knowledge:

1. It provides empirical evidence on the significant influence of search engine marketing on customer's buying behaviour of electronic products. This adds to existing literature by validating these digital strategies in a developing country context.
2. It enhances the understanding of which social media marketing strategies are most effective in influencing customer decisions, thereby helping marketers and electronic product retailers make informed decisions.

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