

Use of Digital Marketing Resources for Business Management among Electrical Appliances Dealers in Enugu State

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Abstract

The study investigated the use of digital marketing resources for business management among electrical appliance dealers in Enugu state. Three objectives guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 54 respondents, made up of 36 employees and 18 marketing managers of the electrical appliances in the Enugu and Nsukka metropolis. No sampling was done due to the manageable size of the population. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze data. The findings of the study revealed that Facebook (2.62), WhatsApp (2.62) and Instagram (2.67) were mostly used for marketing their businesses. The electrical appliance dealers do not use newsletter email sales and advertising (1.88), transactional email for business transactions (1.64) and behavioural email for reaching customers (1.73). The study also revealed that the dealers perform all the management tasks listed thus: creating goals and objectives, creating schedules, developing strategies to increase performance, productivity and efficiency, ensuring compliance with company policies and industry regulations, mentoring employees, monitoring budgets, and productivity levels and performance, train staff. Based on the findings, the study recommended that marketers of electrical appliances should be open to exploring more digital marketing resources to reach out to new and existing customers for better management of their businesses

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Business Management, Electrical Appliances, Resources.

Introduction

Digital marketing is the use of electronic devices such as computers and mobile phones for online marketing. Digital marketing is a product or service using digital channels to reach consumers (Ghazie & Dolah, 2018). According to Jeff (2019), some types of digital marketing

are as follows: social media marketing, paid advertising and pay-per-click (PPC), email marketing, marketing analytics and reporting, mobile marketing, marketing automation and user experience design. This study will focus more on social media and email marketing which are mostly used in Nigeria. Social media marketing is a

form of internet marketing that uses social media apps as a marketing tool (Griffin, 2022). Social media platform enables brands to connect with their audience to: build a brand, increase sales and drive traffic to a website. Most people consider social media to be the only platform for posting updates and images on websites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Tiktok (Papasolomou & Melanthiou, 2012). Other types of social media resources include Blog, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Twitter, Snapchat; Reddit; QuoraDigg, Yelp, Zumato, and Pinterest

Email marketing on the other hand is an opportunity to connect with users who are most likely to be new or returning customers through email (Feder,2021). It involves sending promotional or informational content. Email marketing is usually used to create product or brand awareness and generate leads or sales. Tay(2023), highlighted three important types of email marketing that can be used to earn the attention of customers and prospects. According to Tay, the email newsletter is one-off communication that can be used to send promotional messages, important account information, product updates and help build brand recognition and awareness. To the author, in creating an email newsletter, content length, type of information, designs, call to action, and placement of images and text should be considered. Email receipts, invoices, billing statements, and order confirmations are examples of transactional emails. Behavioural emails are targeted messages based on

a user's behaviour. By getting to know customers and creating buyer personas, dealers can tailor emails to be relevant to where customers are in the buying cycle. Digital marketing is an aspect of marketing that is very important in this technological era that electrical appliance dealers in Enugu state should embrace in business management.

Alexander (2019) outlined some of the importance of digital marketing as follows: Digital marketing helps marketers to reach a larger audience than could be reached through traditional methods, and target the prospects that are most likely to buy their products or services. It is more cost-effective than traditional advertising and enables marketers to measure success daily. Digital marketing allows the marketer to identify and target a highly – specific audience and send that audience personalized, high-converting marketing messages. It enables marketers to conduct the research necessary to identify the buyer persona and refine marketing strategy over time to reach prospects most likely to buy. Today hundreds of thousands of businesses engage in digital marketing, as it is found easier and more cost-effective to reach a large number of people this way (Membrillo, 2021). As people spend more time online, businesses must optimize their digital channels to reach potential buyers. This can be possible through the use of advertisements.

Advertising is a process of creating awareness among the customers for the existence of new or old products.

Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor (Kotler, 2019). American Marketing Association (AMA, 2017) asserted that advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services by an identified sponsor. To the author, this definition mainly explains what advertising is and helps in distinguishing advertising from other communication initiatives with which it is often confused. Advertising does not involve only presentation and promotion, but an element of persuasion too. Any advertisement devoid of persuasion is not part of advertising and will only be considered as a communication link disseminating some piece of information to the masses. The role of advertising is to create demand for a product. Eric (2019), viewed advertising from two perspectives namely: Traditional advertising which is media that existed before the rise of the internet- newspapers, magazines, billboards, radio, broadcast television and direct mail. Digital advertising includes online or internet media - online advertising, search engines, social media, video streaming services and websites. To the author, Digital advertising also includes other online and mobile techniques such as geofencing, OTT (over-the-top) long-form video, and Digital OHH (digital out-of-home) such as digital billboards. The evolution of marketing technology has changed the mass media and

advertising agencies over the years and allows companies and brands to take control over their products (Diyana, 2018). The era of marketers looking for local advertising agencies and radios is fading gradually.

According to Jeff (2019), digital marketing is always evolving, so it is crucial to know where to get the latest news and the best digital marketing resources - even the most trusted digital marketing resources can go out of date almost overnight - so the best platforms for marketers are always churning out fresh news and useful assets. Electrical Appliances are among the products that should be managed and marketed with digital marketing.

An electrical appliance is defined as current-using equipment; an electrical or mechanical machine which accomplishes a specific function (Electrical Contractors Association, 2021). Electrical appliances are normally used for domestic, commercial or industrial purposes and are often in three categories: consumer electronics - such as television, audio, IT, data processing, and others; small appliances - such as electric kettles, toasters, hair driers, beverage makers, and others; larger appliances such as refrigeration, cooking gas, laundry equipment and others. Electriveda (2020) asserted that an electrical appliance is a device or apparatus that is used to perform a function in our personal lives, other than industrial, with the help of electrical energy.

Effective digital marketing is an integral part of creating strong brand awareness as well as identifying and establishing a concrete customer base

for business (Numero, 2021). The key to accomplishing all of this is to not only find a target audience but to also define the specifications of the company's offerings and ensure those offerings (products and services) are in line with the needs and wants of the potential customers. In many ways, the brand image business projects serve as a guide for the target audience and preferred consumers to find a marketer rather than the marketer finding them. Consumer perceptions play a large role in determining whether the brand will flourish or fail. Almost everyone is online today. The Internet has become the most important medium for marketing today, especially digital marketing for marketing strategies. Today, digital marketing has become a phenomenon that brings together customization and mass distribution to accomplish marketing goals (Pineiro-Otero & Martinez-Rolan, 2016). For businesses to thrive especially electrical appliances in Enugu state it has to go digital for effective management.

Management is an act of working with and through a group of people to accomplish a desired goal or objective efficiently and effectively (Gulati, et. al 2017). Herrity (2022) asserted that management is the coordination and administration of tasks to achieve a goal. The author buttressed that such administration activities include setting the organization's strategy and coordinating the efforts of the staff objectives through the application of available resources. Electronic appliance dealers in Enugu state need to apply certain management skills in performing their tasks to run their

businesses effectively. Some of these tasks according to Coursera (2023), include: creating goals and objectives, creating schedules, developing strategies to increase performance, productivity and efficiency, ensuring compliance with company policies and industry regulations, mentoring employees, monitoring budgets, and productivity levels and performance, resolve customers problem and train staff. All these tasks help in effective business management. Business management is the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling the activities of a business or organization to achieve its goals and objectives (Lewis, 2022). To the author, it involves overseeing all aspects of a business, from finance and operations to marketing and human resources. Business managers must be skilled in leadership, communication, and problem-solving, and must be able to make strategic decisions that drive the success of the organization. Managers as used in this study may be the owners of the business or employed.

Nigerians are becoming increasingly comfortable with online, living more and more in the digital world, therefore agencies need to wake up to digital marketing. Consumers spend a lot of time now on the Internet. They go online to buy products and compare the prices, and product features, to get information towards online marketing rather than being conscious about the brand, electrical appliances dealers in Enugu state do not need to sit down in their shops waiting for customers while their counterparts from other developed countries and main cities in

Nigeria like Lagos and Abuja have gone far with the use of digital marketing. Therefore, to ensure that a product or service succeeds, awareness level must be managed across the entire product cycle from product launch to its decline. Electrical appliance dealers should embrace digital marketing. Some marketers of shopping products (electrical appliances) in Enugu state with their Android phones and iPads may not be making maximum use of them for online marketing and as such may not be using digital marketing effectively to market their products. Lack of knowledge on the proper use of available digital marketing has hampered the success of their business, hence there is a need to determine the use of digital marketing for business management among electrical appliances dealers in Enugu state which is the major purpose of this study.

Objective of the Study: The objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the social media marketing resources used in the management and advertising of electrical appliances in Enugu state.
2. determine the types of Email marketing resources used in business management by dealers of electrical appliances.
3. determine the management tasks performed by dealers of electrical appliances in business management.

Methodology

Design of the study: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was carried out in Enugu state. Nworgu (2015) defined descriptive survey research design as the one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. Ponto (2015) also noted that descriptive survey research can use quantitative research strategies using questionnaires with numerically-rated items and qualitative research strategies using open-ended questions or both strategies for data collection. Information gathered through descriptive surveys must be generalized to the whole population purposes.

Population of the Study: The population of the study was 54 respondents, made up of 36 employees and 18 marketing managers of the registered electrical appliances marketers with at least two employees. There was no sampling as the entire population was used for the study due to the small size of the population which was accessible and manageable.

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument for data collection was a 24-item structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured into four sections (A, B, C and D) for data collection for the study. Section A of the questionnaire focused on the data collection of personal information of the respondents. Section B was used to collect data on the social media marketing resources used in the management and advertising of

electrical appliances in Enugu state. Section C covered data collection on types of Email marketing resources used in business management by dealers of electrical appliances. and Section D was used to collect data on the management tasks performed by dealers of electrical appliances in business management.

The response options of B, C and D were structured on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), with corresponding values of 4,3,2, and 1 respectively. The scales were in descending order with the highest positive response receiving the highest value of four (4) points and the lowest negative receiving the lowest value of one (1).

Validation and Reliability Test of the Instruments: The instrument used for data collection was validated by three Business Education experts from the Faculty of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The researcher distributed 54 copies of the instrument to the respondents (managers and employees) of registered electrical appliance dealers in Nsukka and the Enugu Metropolitan area of Enugu State. Copies of the questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher on the spot. All the copies of

the administered questionnaire were retrieved representing a 100% return rate. The instrument was subjected to Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis. The result showed a reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

Statistical Analysis: Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 2021 version) was used to analyze the data collected from the respondents. The data were analyzed and interpreted using Means (\bar{x}), and Standard Deviations (SD). The boundary limit of 3.50-4.00 (Strongly Agree), 2.50-3.49 (Agree), 1.50-2.49 (Disagree), and 1.00-1.49 (Strongly disagree) with the cut-off mark of 2.50.

Results

Social Media Resources Used in Management and Advertising Electrical Appliances

The data in Table 1 show the social media marketing resources used in the management and advertising of electrical appliances. From the data, respondents used only Facebook (2.62), WhatsApp (2.62) and Instagram (2.67). The table further showed that the standard deviations (SD) of the items were within the range of 0.70 to 0.85 in all 15 items, indicating that the options of the respondents were not far from each other in their responses to the 15 items.

Table 1: Mean Responses on the Social Media Resources Used in Management and Advertising Electrical Appliances

Item statement	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
YouTube	2.22	0.77	Disagree
Facebook	2.62	0.71	Agree
Blog	2.38	0.71	Disagree
LinkedIn	1.98	0.82	Disagree
WhatsApp	2.62	0.71	Agree
Instagram	2.67	0.71	Agree
Twitter	2.40	0.63	Disagree
Tiktok	2.13	0.85	Disagree
Snapchat	2.26	0.67	Disagree
Reddit	2.38	0.81	Disagree
Quora	2.36	0.84	Disagree
Digg	2.34	0.67	Disagree
Yelp	1.96	0.70	Disagree
Zumato	1.93	0.65	Disagree
Pinterest	2.29	0.81	Disagree

Key: \bar{x} - Mean, SD- Standard Deviation.

Email marketing resources used in business management

Data presented in Table 2 revealed that the respondents did not use newsletter email sales and advertising (1.88), transactional email for business transactions (1.64) and behavioural email for reaching customers (1.73), indicating that the respondents disagreed that all the 3 items on Email

marketing resources were used among electrical appliances dealers in Enugu state. The table also revealed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items was within 0.53 to 0.64 in all the items, indicating that the respondents were not far from each other in their opinions.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores of responses on the Email marketing resources used in business management

Item statement	Mean	Standard deviation	Remarks
Use newsletters email sales and advertising	1.88	0.53	Disagree
Use transactional emails for business transaction	1.64	0.58	Disagree
Use Behavioural email to reach customers	1.73	0.64	Disagree

Business Management Tasks Performed by the Respondents Using Digital Resources

The data in Table 3 show that the respondents agreed that the managers performed all the seven listed management tasks. The tasks include

monitoring budgets (3.67), creating schedules (3.47), developing strategies to increase performance (3.35), training staff (3.17), creating goals and objectives (2.90) and mentoring employees (2.88). The standard deviations ranged from 0.49 to 0.7.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation on the Business Management Tasks Performed by the managers Using Digital Resources

Item statement	(\bar{x})	SD	Remarks
Creating goals and objectives	2.90	0.71	Agree
Develop strategies to increase performance	3.35	0.57	Agree
Mentor employees	2.88	0.59	Agree
Monitor budgets	3.63	0.49	Strongly Agree
Create schedules	3.47	0.59	Agree
Train staff	3.17	0.67	Agree

Key: \bar{x} -Mean, SD-Standard Deviation

Discussion of Findings

The study found that of all the social media resources available, the electrical appliances marketers in Enugu State used three social media resources for marketing their products which are Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. They did not mostly use YouTube, Blog, LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok, Snapchat and other social media marketing resource items for advertising their products. This implies that electrical appliance dealers might not be familiar with the vast social media platforms currently available or their knowledge of using such social media in advertising their products might be low. The finding of this study corroborated that of Nyekwere et al (2014), who assessed the use of social media as advertising vehicles in Nigeria with a focus on Facebook and Twitter and found that the use of social media in advertising by small-scale entrepreneurs has been very low due to their inadequate social media skills. The findings also conformed with that of Nnamani (2013) who investigated the rate of adoption of social media for marketing products and services among small and medium-scale enterprise owners in North-central Nigeria and found that the rate and extent of use of social media for market promotion is still very low due to illiteracy, lack of the required skills and poor

readiness for technology adoption among small scale business operators.

The findings on the opinion of respondents on the types of Email marketing used for business management revealed that email marketing resources are not widely used among electrical appliances dealers. The business owners did not use newsletter email marketing for sales and advertising; they did not use transactional email marketing for business transactions, and they did not also use behavioural email marketing to reach customers. This finding also suggests that their level of knowledge and competence in using email digital marketing is low. The finding is also in line with Iwuchukwu and Uzuagu (2019), who stated that the majority of entrepreneurs do not possess the basic ICT skills and social media skills for the effective running of their businesses online. Also, Iddris (2012), opined that the use of online ICT skills among small-scale business entrepreneurs is relatively low due to a lack of basic skills in e-commerce.

The findings on business management tasks performed by the dealers revealed that managers create goals and objectives for the business, create schedules of work for the employees and develop strategies by which employees’ performances, productivity and efficiency are increased.

The managers also ensured that employees complied with company policies and industry regulations by training and mentoring them, as well as monitoring budgetary incomes and expenditures. The findings indicate that the managers of electrical appliance sales businesses are effective in carrying out their management tasks which will help to advance the business towards more profitability and efficient product delivery. This finding is in line with the statement by Kaehler and Grundeis (2019), that management tasks like motivating, solving conflicts, safeguarding health, and qualifying/developing people are doubtlessly necessary for steering business operations to greater productivity.

Conclusion

The study found that electrical appliance marketers in Enugu State primarily used Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram for product marketing. Email marketing resources such as newsletters, transactional marketing, or behavioural marketing for sales, advertising, or customer outreach are not widely used among electrical appliances indicating a lack of familiarity with other social media platforms or limited knowledge of these platforms. However,

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managers create goals, objectives, and employee schedules, as well as strategies to improve productivity and efficiency. They also ensure compliance with company policies and regulations, train and mentor employees, and monitor budgetary incomes and expenditures. This effective management approach leads to increased profitability and efficient product delivery.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Marketers of electrical appliances should be open to exploring more digital marketing resources as channels to be used to reach out to new and existing customers for better management of their businesses.
2. The state government through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and other relevant agencies should formulate policies that will facilitate the adoption of e-business for increased use of digital marketing among dealers of electrical appliances and other marketers in the state because of its potential in improving business growth and development.

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