



E-Mail Communication as a Tool for Marketing New Products in Enugu Metropolis

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Abstract: The study examined E-mail communication as a tool for marketing new products in Enugu metropolis. The following objectives were formulated: to find out if Enugu users patronise goods and services advertised on social media. Determine whether the use of E-mail in advertising new products has been successful for business organisations/entrepreneurs in Enugu, Find out the factors that hamper effective application of E-mail in marketing. The source of data were from primary and secondary sources of data. The questionnaire formed the main instrument for data collection in this study. The study were anchored on theory of theory of reasoned action by Engel, Kotler, Blackwell. As a survey research design, a structured instrument (questionnaire) were developed by the researcher to source information from the target population The population of the study is 3, 267,837. A sample size of 400 respondents were drawn from the population using Topman's formula of which 377, copies of questionnaires were duly completed and returned showing 93% response rate. Research hypotheses were tested using chi-square method. Findings from the study show that users do patronize goods/ services advertised on social media. Secondly, it was also found from the analyzed data that the use of e-mail in advertising has been successful for business organization in Enugu. Finally, it was also found that there are no factors that significantly hamper the effective use of e-mail in advertising. In view of the findings, the study recommended that Organizations should see the platforms as good avenues to market their products, counter negative perception about their products/services and attend to their customers and potential customers online. Intending advertisers should formulate their social media strategies; appoint social media managers to manage their customers online before carrying out a social media campaign and invest the quality time required in social media advertising to be more successful.

Keywords: E-mail communication, social media, social media campaign, advertising new products

INTRODUCTION

The new media have introduced new dimensions to human communication. One of such dimensions is the introduction of the social media. Social media are media for social interaction. They are sites that are based on user participation that allow individuals or groups to generate content and engage in conversations and exchange of contents (Wikipedia). Social media are

also online media that promote participation, openness, conversation, community, connectedness, interactivity, collaboration and information sharing (Efthymios & Stagno, 2011), Social media build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows for collaboration, creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan and Haenlein 2016). Arens, Weigold and Arens (2011) remark that "these sites are called social, primarily, for their ability to connect like-individuals in a manner that have never been seen before". Social media allow people to exchange personal comments, political views, business ideas and commercial messages using various online platforms such as blogs, micro blogs and social networks.

The increasing rate of growth of these social media has made it impossible for them to be ignored by individuals and business organizations (Omeruo 2010). Giving credence to the above, Osae-Brown & Emelike (2011) notes that social media are changing the way some business people communicate with their customers; the same way that consumers are using the social media to take charge of their shopping experience and connect with others. They explain that these social media have become an instantaneous marketing tool used by ambitious marketers to create awareness for their products and services and build strong online presence and community.

The attraction to social media by business organisations/entrepreneurs is that barriers are broken as they can relate to customers on a one-on-one basis. Prior to now advertisers hardly hear what consumers are saying about their products unless they embark on research but "social media, blogs and micro blogs have made it possible for consumers to express their opinions and experiences about a product" (Arens, Weigold and Arens, 2011). These possibilities stem from social media highly interactive in nature. Sometimes, friends would have to draw the attention of their friends to some services or products they have seen or used on social platforms.

Email communication has gained popularity among retailers and firms while it can be easily employed with low cost. Based on studies email-communication offers twice return on investment compared to other forms of online marketing (Okonkwo, Eyisi and Ololo, 2019). The study of (Okonkwo & Moguluwa, 2018) also admitted the effectiveness of advertising emails in daily business operations. Although many literatures explored effectiveness of advertising email itself, role of customers' manner for effective advertising email still remains vague. The majority of literatures focus on online marketing and advertising today. Email, in fact, is targeted as one of the communication tools to advertise products and services.

The study (Andreas, 2015). stated that internet offers new technology such as email, which has considered as one of the main communication tools among individuals. Thus, email advertising becomes a main study field in firms marketing division to promote their product and service. Moreover, the study (Asemah, & Edegoh, 2012). argued that since email, communication is very cost-effective and save a lot of time, so it can be a channel for marketers to directly communicate with customers. Referring to past studies and investigations, it seems the majority of them much focused on marketing through email than attention to consumers'

attention for email based marketing. This study tries to define the most influential elements which affect customers' attention towards email advertising and not just only on marketing but through email.

Objectives of Study

The objectives of this study include to:

1. Find out if Enugu users patronise goods and services advertised on social media.
2. Determine whether the use of E-mail in advertising new products has been successful for business organisations/entrepreneurs in Enugu

Research hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will guide this study

1. Users do not patronise goods/services advertised on social media
2. The use of E-mail in advertising has not been successful for business organisations/entrepreneurs in Enugu

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual review

E-mail has gain dominance in the field of business through internet and through this cost is reduced. Because of this as an advantage many marketing practitioners has decided to adopt the use of internet (Nwokah, and Ngirika, 2018). E-mail is targeted to specific group of customers in order to satisfy their personal needs (Allard, Van, and Veronica, 2001). E-mail is used to reach large number of customer with a high rate of response (Rodgers, S. and Chen, Q. (2002)). Companies profit are increasing, they were gaining more attention and awareness through the use of e-mail (Philips Consulting (2016)). E-mail marketing is a way of reaching consumers directly through electronic mail to deliver messages or as a means of communicating for commercial purposes (Philips Consulting, 2014). Corporation value good e-mail messages. Owners of business are using e-mail in their marketing activities so as to enhance effective performance, increase return of investment (ROI), gain access by consumers and reduced cost that will be incurred by traditional means (Raad, M., et al. 2010). Benefit of e-mail marketing is that it builds excellent relationship among marketers and their consumers. It builds quality communication to customers and good feedback to organization (Raad, M., et al. (2010)). E-mail marketing to have a direct marketing with their customers through e-mail. Marketers also gain a better knowledge of their customer's needs and wants . According to (Philips Consulting (2014)), e-mail is said to be a direct means to online marketing that

increases benefit of the firm. Allard, Van, and Veronica, 2001 state the following benefits which are as follows: -Reduction of promotional cost; conversation among firms and customers are increased; facilitation online transactions; immediate feedback are gotten from customers; helps create awareness about the product and service; and increases traffic.

Theoretical Review

Theory of reasoned action

Created by Marti Fishbein and leek Ajzen in the late 1960's the theory of reasoned action centers its analysis on the importance of pre-existing attitude in the decision making process. The core of the theory posits that consumers act on a behavior based on their intention to create or receive a particular outcome in this analysis; consumers are rational actors who choose to act in their best interests. According to the theory, specificity is critical in the decision making process. A consumer only takes a specific action when there is an equally specific result expected. From the time the consumer decides to act to the time the action is completed, the consumer retains the ability to change his or her mind and decide on a different course of action. Marketers can learn several lessons from the theory of reasoned action. First when marketing a product to consumers, marketers must associate a purchase with a positive result, and that result must be specific. Axe body spray used the concept very effectively by linking its products to desirability with women. Second, the theory highlights the importance of moving consumers through the sales pipeline, marketers must understand that long lags between initial intention and the completion of the action allows consumer plenty of time to talk themselves out of a purchase or question the outcome of the purchase.

Empirical Review

Nyekwere (2012) The study explored the usage level of social media by consumers and advertisers in Port Harcourt and the effect such use has on them, especially in terms of improved patronage for business organisations and change indecision making process, particularly the buying behaviour of consumers . In order to generate data for this study, the survey research method was employed and the questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The study revealed that 70% of businesses organisations in Port Harcourt are embracing social media to advertise and communicate with their customers, 30%are yet to see the promises that these new media hold. The study also found out that the use of social media in advertising has been successful for 35% of business organizations using them to place advertisement. Others (65%) leverage on their social media presence to get their fans/followers informed about their products/services. It was also revealed that 19.5% of the consumers patronize goods/services advertised on social media predominantly.

Kur, & Nyekwere, (2018) This study examined social media sites, particularly Facebook, to ascertain how users in Port Harcourt, Rivers State perceive their adoption as advertising media, if consumers patronise products advertised on them and how they make buying decisions on these social platforms. The survey research design was used to elicit information from a sample

of 300 users in Port Harcourt Metropolis, which formed the study population. The findings showed that social media are good media for advertising, despite the challenges inherent in their use. It was also revealed that consumers patronise products/services advertised on social media predominantly based on recommendations/referrals from trusted sources - their friends, and that their need for such products necessitated their patronage. It is recommended that social media users should take advantage of the marketing opportunities present on social platforms and see them beyond mere social networking sites that help them stay in touch with friends and family members.

Akpan, Nwankpa, & Agu, (2017) The study investigated the influence of Facebook advertisement on young people's buying behaviour. In doing this, it focused on the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria, since the Facebook is a veritable platform for advertising youth-oriented products given its popularity among young people. It was aimed at ascertaining whether these young people access advertisements on Facebook and see them as being targeted at the youths as well as to find out whether the advertisements influence them to patronize the product. The survey method was adopted while four research questions guided this study. Questionnaire and personal interview were the instruments for data collection while stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 396 respondents from the population using the Taro Yamene statistical sampling method. For clarity purposes, data obtained was reported using simple percentages and frequencies. Results of the analysis indicated that a majority of the respondents access advertisements on Facebook and see them as being targeted at the youths. The findings also reveal that there was no significant margin between those who patronize the products advertised on Facebook and those who do not, with 54.8% patronizing and 45.2% not patronizing.

George (2010) studied was to determine the extent to which advertising influences the sale of shopping goods in Bayelsa-state. The study answered four research questions and tested four hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study consisted of 145 proprietors of shopping goods in Bayelsa state. The instrument was face-validated by three experts, two from university of Nigeria Nsukka while the other was from University of Nigeria, Enugu campus. Crombach Alpha method of establishing reliability was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument and this yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.75. A total of 145 copies of the questionnaire was distributed to respondents by the researcher and two research assistants. The data collected were analyzed using mean score while t- test statistic was used to test the four null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance .The findings of the study revealed that the use of various advertising media and display of shopping goods in strategic areas in the shop influences consumers to buy.

Rotich, & Mukhongo, (2015). studied the effects of internet marketing on sales at TELKOM Kenya in Eldoret; identifying Challenges of internet marketing, establishing the Internet Marketing Environment at TELKOM Kenya in Eldoret and identifying the Product Characteristics of TELKOM Kenya in Eldoret.. The study used a descriptive study design which was considered

ideal due to its indebt and holistic approach of effects of internet marketing. It targeted a population of 171 It used stratified sampling technique to sample a sample size of 57 which is 30% of the targeted population. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used to collect data from the respondents. The research had a response rate of 100% with the demographic information of the respondent being stable in administration workforce. The study also focused on analyzing the challenges faced by marketing strategies. Data collection was done using questionnaires which was then captured on excel worksheet for tabulation and presentation. Descriptive statistics approach was adopted in analyzing and presentation of the data collected. The findings were then presented using charts, percentage and frequency tables. Frequency tables and percentage were used in presenting open ended questionnaires as it conveyed meaning to the data.

Morteza, Navid & Roozbeh (2012) studied of Email-Based Advertisement and its Influence on Consumers' Attitude. E-commerce becomes a cornerstone for many businesses over the recent years. Align with e-commerce activities, the marketing communication through online media plays a major role in achieving competitive advantageous. E-mail advertising in this context offers a cost effective, direct and reciprocal means for businesses overcoming time and geographical barriers. As so, this study discussed the advertising e-mail characteristics and its influences on customers' attitude about email based advertisement. According to the research findings, entertainment and in formativeness of advertising email content is strongly and positively affect customers' attitude about email-based advertisement. On the other hand, the privacy of advertising e-mail is strongly, yet negatively influences the customers' attitude towards email-based advertisement.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The survey research method was used for this study. This method was considered appropriate because surveys are useful in the measurement of public opinion, attitudes and orientation which are dominant among a large population at a particular period Okoro (2001). It is also a method structured for collecting data for the purpose of describing a population too large to be observed directly (Babbie, 2010).

Population of the Study

The population of this research work comprises all users of social media (E-mail) including advertisers and consumers on these social platforms in Nigeria. Since it will be impossible to study all social media users in Nigeria, consumers and advertisers in Enugu state formed the population of this study. Consumers, as used in this study, include individuals, workers, businessmen/traders, , civil servants and other users of social media (E-mail) in Enugu state while advertisers include any individual, entrepreneur, group, corporate organization and other business organisations in Enugu state who are using E-mail communication to promote their

businesses. The highly specialized nature of the subject matter of this study necessitated the need to seek the opinions of these special categories of persons.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 400 was used for this study. The sample was drawn from the 10 local government out of 17 local government from Enugu state which Enugu state was divided into. Taro Yamane (1967:886) simplified formula to calculate sample size was used to determine the sample size. The equation is expressed as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size, N is the population size, l is constant and e is the error margin of 0.05

Therefore when this formula is applied with the combined population figure of Enugu state which is 3, 267,837 we get the following:

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{3,267,837}{1 + 3,267,837(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{3,267,837}{1 + 0.0025}$$

$$= \frac{3,267,837}{0.0025}$$

$$= 1,307,134.8$$

$$n = 400$$

Sources of Data

1. Primary sources of data – There were used by the researcher to generate data directly from respondents without relying on pre-existing data sources. The primary source of data used in this study was generated mainly with the aid of a structured questionnaire administered to respondents.

2. Secondary sources of data - This involves the collection of already existing data or historical data. Examples include; government gazettes, government edicts, annual statistics, historical archives, extracts, periodicals, journals, newspapers, magazines, legal directives, official press-release, radio and television extracts, etc.

Instrument for data Collection

The questionnaire formed the main instrument for data collection in this study. This is because the questionnaire is a vital instrument for gathering information from people about their opinions, attitudes, behaviour and perceptions on a given phenomenon.

Method of Data Analysis

The Chi-Square will be used to test the hypothesis raised in the first chapter of this work. As established an empirical relationship between entrepreneurship education and unemployment reduction in the state.

The Chi-square (χ^2) process is stated as this

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum C \times ER}{N}$$

Where:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(OF - EF)^2}{EF}$$

Where:

$\sum C$ = Summation o columns

$\sum R$ = Summation of rows

OF = Observation frequencies

EF = Expected frequencies

N = Total number of observation

\sum = Summation

Decision Rule: If the χ^2 calculated is greater than χ^2 tabulated, will reject the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter presents the data obtained from the respondents through the administered questionnaires. Four hundred (400) were administered; however, three hundred and seventy-seven (377) questioners were retrieved. Therefore the analysis and interpretation of data is based on the returned questionnaires.

Bio-data Analysis of Respondents

Table 4.1 Gender Distribution of the respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	157	41.6%
Female	220	58.4%
Total	377	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The above table reveals that the 41.6% of the respondents which represents one hundred and seventy-seven (177) persons were male respondents, while two hundred and twenty-two (220) respondents which represent 58.4% were female respondents. By implication, female respondents were more than male respondents by 16.8% in our selected population sample for this study. The implication of this study is to enables us to know the number of female and male that successfully returned their questionnaires.

Table 4.2 Marital status of the respondents

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	147	39%
Married	230	61%
Total	377	100%

Source: Field Survey 2021

In the table above, out of the three hundred and seventy-seven (377) respondents, one hundred and forty-seven of the respondents (147), representing 39% are single while two hundred and thirty (230) respondents which represent 61% are married. It is therefore glaring that the majority of the respondents are married as at the time of this study. Thus marital

status tables help us to know the number of single and married, that answered the distributed questionnaire.

Table 4.3 Age distribution of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-30 yrs	127	33.7%
31-40 yrs	111	29.4%
41-50 yrs	73	19.4%
51-60 yrs	47	12.5%
61yrs and above	19	5.0%
Total	377	100%

Source: Field Survey 2021

The table above shows that respondents whose age bracket falls between 20-30 yrs were one hundred and twenty-seven (127) which represents 33.7%. This is followed by those with age bracket of 31-40 years with one hundred and eleven (111) which represents 29.4%. Also those within age bracket of 41-50 yrs were seventy-three(73) which represents 19.4%. Those within 51-60 were forty-seven which represents 12.5 %. Lastly, those within the age bracket 61 yrs and above were nineteen (19), which represents 5% . The implication of this age distribution is to enables to check if the questionnaire was directed to the right age group.

Table 4.4 Education qualification of the respondents

Edu Qual	Frequency	Percentage
FSLC	-	-
WAEC/SSCE/NECO	23	6.1%
NCE/ND	129	34.2%
HND/BA/BSC	187	49.6%
M.Sc/M.A/Phd	38	10.1%
Total	377	100%

Source: field survey 2021

The table above indicates that twenty-three (23) respondents which representing 6.1% percent maintain to acquired WAEC OR NECO while 34.2% percent of the respondents which represents one hundred and twenty-nine (129) have NCE/ND. However one hundred and eighty-seven respondents which represent 49.6 percent either have HND or B.sc. the respondents that have MSC/MA/PHD are thirty-eight in number which represent 10.1%. This is the one of demographic item, help us to identify the education qualification of the respondents.

Table 4.5 Occupational Qualification Of The Respondents

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Business men/ traders	9	2.4%
Civil servant	93	24.6%
Military/ Paramilitary	27	7.2%
Blue Chip companies	248	65.8%
total	377	100%

Source: field survey 2021

The table above shows that nine (9) respondents which representing 2.4% of the respondents are business men/ traders, while ninety-three (93) which represents 24.6% of the respondents are civil servant. Twenty-seven (27) which represent 7.2% are in the military/ paramilitary, while two hundred and forty-eight (248) which represents 65.8% work in blue chip companies. This is the one of demographic items that helps us to identify the occupational qualification of the respondents.

Hypotheses Testing

The stated hypotheses for this study are hereby tested using Chi-Square tool for inferential statistical analysis. Here, the criteria for decision as regards the acceptance or otherwise of the hypothesis is that if the calculated value of the chi-square is significance ($\alpha = 0.05$), the null hypothesis will be rejected while the alternative hypothesis will be accepted.

Hypotheses one

H₀: Users do not patronize goods/ services advertised on social media

This hypothesis is tested using responses to questions (4) as shown in table 4.5

From the table, the chi-square contingency table can be constructed as depicted below and chi-square formula stated below

Chi-square formula

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

O = Observed frequency in each category

\sum = expected frequency in corresponding category

df = degree of frequency

χ^2 = chi-square

Table 4.11 Hypotheses one contingency table

Options	frequency	Expected frq
Yes	299	126
No	59	126
Not sure	19	126
Total	377	377

In the table of chi-square contingency table, expected frequency is:

$$E = \frac{\text{total observed frequency}}{\text{Number of options}}$$

$$\text{That is } \frac{377}{3} = 126$$

Each of the cells has equal expected frequency applying chi-square (χ^2) formula to the table above we have:

$$\chi^2 = \text{chi-square}$$

O_i = observed frequency

E_i = expected frequency

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum (O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

$$\frac{\chi^2}{126} = \frac{(299-126)^2}{126} + \frac{(59-126)^2}{126} + \frac{(19-126)^2}{126}$$

$$= 273.5 + 35.6 + 90.8 = 399.4$$

$$\chi^2 = 399.4$$

$$\chi^2 \text{ cal.} = 399.4$$

The degree of freedom (DF) = (r-1)(c-1)

Where r = number of rows

C = number of columns

$$DF = (3-1)(3-1) = 4$$

At 5 percent level of significance, the tabulated value of significance, the tabulated value of chi-square χ^2 tab is 9.488. Decision rule states that since the observed value of the chi-square (χ^2 cal greater than criterion of table value, χ^2 tabs). The null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. By implication, users do patronize goods advertised on social media.

Hypothesis Two

H₁: The use of e-mail in advertising has not been successful for business organization/entrepreneurs in Enugu.

This hypotheses is tested by responses of question 6 shown in table 4.6

Table 4.12 Hypotheses two

Options	frequency	Expected frequency
Yes	315	126
No	53	126
Not sure	9	126
Total	377	377

In the table of chi-square contingency table, expected frequency is:

$$E = \frac{\text{total observed frequency}}{\text{Number of options}}$$

Number of options

$$\text{That is } \frac{377}{3} = 126$$

Each of the cells has equal expected frequency applying chi-square (χ^2) formula to the table above we have:

$$\chi^2 = \text{chi-square}$$

$$O_i = \text{observed frequency}$$

$$E_i = \text{expected frequency}$$

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum (O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(315-126)^2}{126} + \frac{(53-126)^2}{126} + \frac{(9-126)^2}{126}$$

$$= 238.5 + 42.3 + 108.6 = 389.4$$

$$\chi^2 = 389.4$$

$$\chi^2 \text{ cal.} = 389.4$$

$$\text{The degree of freedom (DF)} = (r-1)(c-1)$$

Where r = number of rows

C = number of columns

$$DF = (3-1)(3-1) = 4$$

At 5% level of significance, using $df = 2$, the table of critical value of chi-square is 9.488, here, since $\chi^2 \text{ cal} > \chi^2 \text{ tab}$ ($315 > 9.488$) the null hypotheses is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that the use of e-mail for advertising has been successful for business in Enugu.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

From this study, it is clear that social media advertising is a relatively new field and just at the evolving stage in Nigeria. There is evidence however, that an increasing number of commercial organisations in Enugu are registering their presence on social platforms such as E-mail. Those already exploring these platforms as advertising vehicles are reaching a huge commercial advantage as they are not only vehicles to use in reaching millions of users at the click of the mouse but also encourage instantaneous feedback which is very important in making important marketing decision. Business organizations exploring social media create presence for themselves on these sites and their customers can speak to them and they speak back thus, bringing their brand closer to the consumer. Although while more of the organisations have registered their presence on e-mail, very few of them place adverts on these media but leverage on their social presence to keep their fans/followers informed about their products and services and also attract more fans/followers.

It is no longer a question of whether a business organisation/entrepreneur should have a marketing presence on social media but a dedicated e-mail account, Facebook and Twitter presence is expedient for them to leverage on the advantages these social media provide for both ordinary users and those using them for marketing purposes. Thus, business organisations that want to remain relevant in this 21st century should no longer turn deaf ears to this trend but follow their target market online. Whether it is the desire to reconnect with old friends, family members separated by distance, or the need to follow companies of interest, learn about them, buy new products, one thing is sure, social media sites such as (e-mail) are no longer fad. They are realities that cannot be ignored by advertisers whether big or small.

5.3 Recommendations

From the findings of this work, the following recommendations were made:

- Organizations should see the platforms as good avenues to market their products, counter negative perception about their products/services and attend to their customers and potential customers online.
- Intending advertisers should formulate their social media strategies; appoint social media managers to manage their customers online before carrying out a social media campaign and invest the quality time required in social media advertising to be more successful.
- Those business organisations who are yet to register their presence on social media because they are skeptical about the medium should embrace change bearing in mind that every innovation has its own peculiar challenges, thus social media have come to stay.

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