

The impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



A study on the impact of social media marketing on consumer behavior.

The proposed studies will not only make major theoretical contribution in the field of marketing in this digital era, but it will also have some practical implication to marketers. The proposed study aims to investigate the relationship between social media marketing and consumers' behaviour.

Its results will therefore contribute theoretically to our understanding of the relationship between social media and consumers' behaviour. On the other hand, the result of the proposed study will help marketers understand how consumers respond to communication done through social platform. This will help marketers understand how to develop more effective social media advertisement campaign in the wake of so many campaigns seeking the attention of the same audiences.

Background

Today, no one can deny the importance of online marketing. Though, this new trend in marketing has provided equal opportunities to businesses irrespective of size, and it has also increased the challenge and complexity of landscape in which companies operate. One of the formidable technology developments in recent years has been the emergence of social media. Social media is a term used to describe online platform that allow users to share idea, messages pictures and other sort of information. Some of the most common social media include Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp among others. Social media has changed the ways people interact with each.

The emerging of social media has drastically changed the ways company advertise their products and services. Social media give companies the platform to reach wide number of audiences in a cost effective manner. Other than the cost aspect side of it, Social media also allows the advertisers to engage and establish relationship with their customers through instant feedback.

Moreover, there are quite a lot of information that are generated in the social media by user themselves that help advertisers/marketers understand their consumer behaviour hence creating content based on this information.

Social media advertisement

Social media is a term used to describe internet tools that allows opinion, perspectives and information to be shared among people in social circle (Nair, 2011). Basically, social media allows people to create profile from which they are able to create and share information with other people in the same platform.

This concept has created a large pool of people, which has attracted advertisers to come on board. Social media advertisement can be described as a form of advertisement done online specifically through social networkingsites. In the current era, majority of people around the globe spend most of their time online. According to Gottfried and Shearer (2016) most of the time spend online is spend on social media platform including twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram among others.

This has made social media sites a very viable ground for advertising services and products. In fact, almost all the social media platforms have commercialized their platforms to make it possible for marketers to advertise their wares or services in a more focused and targeted manner (Stoica & Jonas, 2014).

Recent research has shown that more than ever before, more marketers/advertisers are promoting products and services on social media platforms more than they do on traditional media such as television, radio, and newspaper (Gottfreid and Shearer 2016). It is therefore undeniable that social media advertising has become an important marketing function in the current world.

Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Consumer purchasing behavior is defined by Solomon (2012) as the process in which consumers search, select, and make a decision when purchasing a product. There are two most important elements of consumers' behavior: the intention to purchase and the actual purchase. Intention to purchase can be described as an individual's conscious plan to purchase a product or service. On the other hand, when an individual purchases a product or service, it is termed as an actual purchase.

Empirical evidence has established a strong relationship between intention to purchase and actual purchase. A study by Wee (2014) found that individuals who have an intention to buy a product end up buying it. This relationship will be assumed in this study as true. Therefore, the study will use purchase intention to

represented consumer behavior at large.

Social media advertisement and consumers behavior

Social media advertisement is now widely used by companies to market their products. However, not all advertisement made on social media arouse the interest of the consumers. As mentioned by Baltas (2003), the characteristic of any online advertisement go along ways in determining it effectiveness. This statement is supported by a numbers of other empirical studies including those done by Kumar (2008), Mohammed et al (2015) and Harshini (2015). Some of the characteristic of Online marketing and Advertisement found to have a n influences on consumers behaviour are;

- Attitude toward the Advertisement:

In basic term, attitude means the feeling one has toward somebody or something. The feeling can be positive or negative. Some of the previous empirical studies have found out that the attitude people have towards an advertisement do affects how they react to the advert (Mohamed, Busen, Mustaffa, & Bahtiar, 2016; Mohammed & Alkubise, 2012; Wu, 2008).

The study by Wu (2008) concluded that when a person is exposed to an advertisement, they quickly scan it and form an attitude toward it which eventually affects their decision to buy or not buy the products or services being advertised. Positive attitude toward an advertisement have been linked toward increased chances of buying the products or services being advertised. On the other hand, negative attitude toward an advertisement does not generate any interest in buying the advertised products.

- Perceived credibility of an advertisement:

By basic definition credibility can be defined as the trustworthy or the extent in which people can believe in something. Perceived advertisement credibility is described by Zha, Li and Yan (2015) as the degree in which the consumers trust the advertised products as well the degree in which they trust the content of the advertisement. In advertising world, credibility of the advert has been cited as one of the key element that has influences on consumer behaviour.

A study by Baltas (2003) Indicates that the extent to which people believes the advert to be to true is directly related to their intention to purchase the product. The more they believe the advert to be true, the more likely they are to buy the product or services being advertised. The study by Mohamed and Alkubise, 2012) indicated that, the perceived credibility of an online advertisement affects people attitudes toward the advert as well as toward the products being advertised which then affects their decision to buy or not to buy the product.

Mohamed and Alkubise (2012) concluded that when the people see an advert as trust worth, they develop very positive attitude toward the products being advertised which then influences them to buy it. On the other when the audiences perceived an advert as untrustworthy, they develop bad attitude toward the products being advertised which later influences them not buy the products.

- Interactivity of the advertisement:

The traditional advertisement media have been one-way communication. Conversely, the social media advertisement is two-ways communication allowing consumer to interact with advertisers in real time. This interactivity has been mentioned by a numbers of commentator and practitioners in the marketing industry as key element that influences consumers purchase intention.

According to Harshini (2015), the interactive nature of social media advertisement make the audiences feel synchronised with the communication since distance barrier is eliminated. As result, the audience become more involved in the communication process which if well handled b y advertiser lead to formation of positive attitude toward products hence influencing the purchase decision.

Harshini (2015 however pointed out that despite the interactivity characteristic of social media advertisement having some positive influence on consumers' purchase decision; it also has some down side. The interactivity features of the internet allow consumers to have greater control of the information presented to them. They can decide what information they want to see, when to see and for how long. In other word, the interactivity nature gives the audiences the option of blocking or ignoring online advertisement that they do not want to see.

Research methodology

This study will be conducted using quantitative design. As stated earlier, the aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between social media

advertisement and consumers behavior. The best way to explain a relationship between two or more variables is through quantitative techniques and that the reason why this approach was chosen since the proposed study will be testing relationship between several variables.

Sample

This research targets to study consumer behaviour of social media users. The target population is therefore very large and it will impossible given time and financial constraint to gathered data from each and every social media user. Therefore, a sample will be drawn from this population to aid this study.

The sample will be recruited using random sampling techniques. This technique is deemed appropriate for the study due to the facts that it gives each individual in a population equal chance of being selected. This therefore eliminated any form of biasness that may affect the finding of the study

Data collection

The process of data gathering will be done using an online questionnaire. An online questionnaire is one created, distributed and filled over the Internet. The choice of online questionnaire was informed by the needs to reach the social media audiences who are the target of social media advertisement and there is no better way to reach them other than using the online platform.

Data analysis

The information gathered will be quantified to make it easier to analyze them statistically. Once the questionnaire are filled, they be coded, filtered and entered into MS excel where statistical techniques will be used to analyze them.