ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING AMONG SELECTED ONLINE BUSINESSES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study sought to analyse the use of social media advertising among selected online businesses in Nigeria. It studies the frequency of use of SMA/SMM (social media advertising/marketing) among businesses in Nigeria, the most preferred social media platform as well as the benefits and challenges inherent in the adoption of SMA by online businesses in Nigeria. This was done using the Survey method, surveying a total of hundred (100) businesses and the study was hinged on Technological determinism and diffusion of innovation theories. Findings revealed that online businesses in Nigeria have embraced social media advertising. It was also revealed that a number of challenges militate against the adoption of SMA by online businesses in Nigeria, salient among them is Lack of technical know how. Based on the findings, it was recommended that businesses embrace Social media advertising as it has come to stay, furthermore a model "the RIAER" was proposed to serve as a guide in implementing social media ad campaigns.*

KEYWORDS: Advertising, Social Media, Online Businesses, Social Media Advertising.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Globalization, technological advancement and the explosion of web based, internet powered communication have introduced a radical change to how the world works in all spheres. The internet has brought about a shift and dramatic revolution in the way issues concerning human relationships, security, agriculture, economy, business, communication, politics, and health and as a matter of fact every facet of human existence is viewed. This radical change is even more eminent in information and communications advancement shrinking the world to a "global village" as Marshal McLuhan averred. Of the three universal revolutions which man has witnessed, namely agricultural, industrial and information, information has the most numerous and distinguishing features; it is mercuric, dynamic, diverse, pervasive, sensitive, invasive, intrusive, indispensable, octopus and massive (Aliede, 2005). Of all communication activities that surround man, advertising is perhaps the most pervasive of them all. We are consistently exposed to advertising messages every second of every minute in every hour of every day. Anywhere and everywhere, every part, every facet of human life is bombarded with advertising messages, whether we like it or not; on our street walls, clothes, kitchen utensils(mugs , plates, trays),our books, magazines, newspapers, television, social media, on the radio etc. All mediums available are employed for advertising products, ideas, persons and everything in between. The advertising industry is not a trifling or passé venture. As a matter of fact advertising has become the multi naira or is it multi-billion dollar business, worldwide, (Nworgu, 2011). The consumerist tendencies, industrial growth and technological innovations, powered by rapid developments, in information and communication technologies, gave impetus to the speedy and creative growth witnessed in advertising industry (Nworgu, 2011).

Among the many objectives of setting up a business is the need to solve problems and creating customer satisfaction. However customer/consumer satisfaction can only be achieved when the society (that eventually makes up your client base) is aware of the existence of such enterprise and is convinced to buy into your brand and vision. This scenario will remain wishful thinking unless the creative, purposeful techniques of advertising are employed; however the employment of traditional media (television, radio, magazines and news papers) in advertising can be an uphill, onerous and financially Herculean task. Brick and mortar businesses as well as their online counterparts are challenged at reconciling the huge investment requirements of traditional media advertising and their profit margins. This has prompted the need for charting new courses and the constancy in the lookout for emerging cost effective and result oriented platforms for advertising. Odii (2013, p.161) states that "communication has remained the live wire of the society; but the apparatus and styles of communication keep changing" and this is true even in the field of advertising. Advertisers and advertising practitioners alike are constantly on the lookout for new mediums to perform the all important task of advertising. With technological progress, web 2.0 was birthed and since its advent, businesses have been employing innovative strategies on platforms that emanate from it to further their businesses (Olotewo, 2016). One of such platforms is Social media. The manifestation of social media in almost all facets of life and the attendant attention it has garnered for itself by the masses and scholars alike is nothing short of mind boggling. Advertising is one of such fields where social media has permeated and its employment for advertising goods, services, persons, ideas, movements etc. is no longer an anomaly. Nyekwere, Terna& Nyekwere, (2013, p.175) state that the advertising landscape has dramatically changed in recent years, and nowhere is this more visible than online; the advertising medium is experiencing, perhaps the most dynamic revolution and technological developments made possible by the growth of communication through interactive media (social media).

Social media by way of definition is any website which allows users to share their content, opinions, views and encourages interaction and community building. Examples are facebook, youtube, twitter, digg, myspace, delicious, scribd, flickr etc, (Sisira, 2011). These (social media) are elements of the new media (internet) that function and are based on the ideologies of web 2.0. This means that they are platforms that encourage and empower user generated content (UGC). In these platforms users are no longer just consumers, they are producers as well; they are as Odii (2013) puts it "prosumers". They are internet-based platforms through which people can create and exchange information in a participatory manner on a real-time basis, (Odii, 2013). Social networks are platforms through which individuals express their opinions, wants, needs, values, and organizations thus leverage on such platforms to understand their customers and seek innovative ways to meet these need; Information on price, product, and place are being communicated by brands to their customers through online platforms that have the largest target audience. It is this feature (large audience) of social media pulling an incredible crowd that makes it such a viable medium as well as amass medium suitable for advertising. This salient feature can be credited with the wave of social media advertising that is bombarding our lives daily, every sphere in the online community has been heavily employed for the art of advertising from websites, blogs, content creation and sharing sites, to games, applications and social networking sites all now carry advertising for various products and services. Thirushen (2013) citing Needleman (2011) states that popular websites such as facebook, twitter and youtube have close to five million visitors daily and thus have to be considered as very important hubs for marketing; promoting a business via these sites serves as a very attractive business proposition due to the vast amount of steady traffic every day. It is only superfluous to say that businesses have taken note and more businesses are taking the

hint and venturing into social media advertising from multinational giants like coca-cola and telecommunications providers (MTN, GLO etc) to SMEs (coffee shops, restaurants, information curators etc) now employ social media for engaging with their customers through interaction and advertising. Notwithstanding however, the realm of social media advertising is relatively new and its adoption by businesses, brick and mortar or online cannot be generalized as swooping, hence the need to analyze the use of this medium of advertising among online businesses in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

There has a been a paradigm shift and the traditional means of advertising (that is television, radio, newspapers and magazines) do not suffice on their own anymore, given the abundance of loop holes inherent in advertising via these mediums especially in the aspect of feedback, online/social media advertising has gained grounds. Recent studies indicate that traditional mass media audiences are increasingly and to a great extent turning toward the new media for information and gratification of certain communication needs, (Rudloff & Fray; 2010, O'Toole cited in Otuogo et al, 2015). Olotewo (2016) corroborates thus; traditional marketing communicates with customers through dedicated media channels like television, radio, newspapers, magazines; but the failure of traditional marketing channels to yield significant returns on investment is attributed to many reasons including lack of interactive engagement between the customers and the brand; social media appeared as the solution to the let down of traditional marketing. Social media advertising is no longer considered passé given this era of collaborative, interactive and collective information sharing where one-directional communication is now ineffective and the audience is no more just a passive consumer but an active participator in the communication process. Online businesses world over have taken the initiative and are taking advantage of numerous benefits of social media advertising and Nigerian businesses are not left out. In Nigeria and parts of Africa, the diffusion of new digital technologies and their use are increasing by the day (Otuogo et al, 2015). Olotewo (2016) asserts that in emerging economies like Nigeria, social media marketing is gaining traction …however another force which undercuts emerging economies the benefit of social media marketing is the slow adoption of social media marketing in such countries. It is based on this premise that an analysis of the use of social media advertising by online business in Nigeria is necessitated.

Objectives of the Study

This study broadly aims to analyze the implementation of social media as an advertising platform amongst online businesses in Nigeria. Broken down, the following research objectives will guide the researcher for this study:

1. To examine the frequency at which online businesses in Nigeria use social media advertising.

2. To determine the most preferred platform for social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria.

3. To establish the benefits online businesses in Nigeria accrue from the useof social media advertising.

4. To determine the challenges hampering the efficient use of social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions;

1. To what extent do online businesses in Nigeria use social media advertising?

2. Which is the most preferred social media advertising platform for online businesses in Nigeria?

3. Why do online businesses in Nigeria use social media advertising?

4. What are the challenges of using social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria?

Scope of Study

This study covers online businesses in Nigeria. However since there is no known parameter of knowing exactly how many online businesses there are in Nigeria, a selected number of businesses will suffice. In the same vein, social media platforms are legion and studying them all will be Herculean, hence this study will be limited to four popular social networking sites viz Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. These platforms will serve as representatives to other social media platforms. Hence the present study is limited to the selected businesses and the four social media sites outlined above.

Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the following terms will be operationalized; social media, social media advertising, online businesses.

Social Media: in this work social media refers to social networking sites like watsapp, face book, Instagram, line, twitter etc.

Social Media Advertising: in this work, social media advertising is interchangeable with social media marketing as they both refer to creating awareness and promoting the use/sales of products and services via social media products.

Online Businesses: economic ventures embarked on for profit purposes that are in the formal as well as the informal economy that are fully based online(on the internet) or conduct their operations online as well as off.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Clarifications

The Platforms

The focus of this paper is social networking sites also known as SNSs. These sites are called Social Networking Sites because they are sites for social communication. The site applications allow the Internet users to create personal profiles, invite others to join the site, access the profiles of other users, share information (text, pictures, videos, and other links from the other sites), and send emails as well as instant messages to each other(Dao; 2015, p.86). Muni, Kadir,

Arshah, majid & Mohammed (n.d) state that: to get to know about SNS, Alay Patel (2011) has two definitions of SNS which are SNS is 'a personal profile on a site which keeps you in network with your friends' and the other one is, 'a website within a bounded system to articulate among the list of friends of their own as well as of others'. A social networking site creates network communication among the user community (Jothi, Neelamalar & Prasad; 2011, p.235).

The following are examples of SNSs; facebook, watsapp, QQ, Wechat, Qzone, Tumblr, Instagram, Twitter, Google+, Baidu Tieba, Skype, Viber, Sina Weibo, Line, Snapchat, Y.Y.com, Vkontakte, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Telegram, Reddit, Taringa, Foursquare, Renren, Tagged, Badoo, Myspace, Stumble upon, The dots, Kiwi box, Skyrock, Snap fish, Reverbnation, Flixster, Care2, Cafemom, Ravelry, Nextdoor, Wayn, Cellufun, Vine, Classmate, My heritage, Viadeo, Xing, xanga, we heart it, Buzznet, Flickr, etc (makeawebsite.com). However of this legion, four SNSs will form the crux of this discourse, for their global popularity and availability of marketing avenues on them; these are LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Social Media Advertising

Advertising is the planned process of creating awareness and reinforcing customer loyalty to a product, person or idea via persuasive communication through media channels by an identified or identifiable sponsor; social media advertising is just doing this using social media platforms such as facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. Social media advertising is also known as social media marketing; it is the promotion of goods and services through social media platforms (Olotewo, 2016). Tuten (2008, p.19) captures it thus: social media marketing is a form of online advertising that uses the cultural context of social communities, including social networks (e.g YouTube, MySpace, and Facebook), virtual worlds (e.g second life, there and kaneva), social news sites (e.g Diggs and Del.icio.us) and social opinion-sharing sites (e.g Epinions), to meet branding and communication objectives.

Social media marketing involves the creation of appealing content on different social media sites to create awareness and gain new and existing customer's attention; it is marketing through online communities and social networks as opposed to traditional marketing channels like television, radio and print media (Olotewo, 2016)

Benefits of Social Media Advertising

The benefits inherent in using social media advertising for businesses can be summarized under the following points;

Cost Effective: unlike traditional media that cost almost an arm and a leg to advertise with, social media provides a platform for businesses to advertise at any budget, even free. According to Okoro, Adibe and Chibuwe(2013), the advent of social media has added great impetus to human communication; this is because the technology is participatory, interactive and cost-effective. Nadaraja & Yazdanifard (n.d. p.4) state that the financial barriers to social media marketing are quite low compared to others.

Strong Customer Relationship:

Social media also gives you an opportunity to gain valuable information about what your customers are interested in and how they behave, via social listening. For example, you can

monitor user comments to see what people think of your business directly (DeMers; 2014). Social media is a place where brands can act like people do and this is important because people like doing business with other people; not with companies (DeMers; 2014). It helps brands build "Know, Like and Trust" factor.

Highly Targeted: Advertising on traditional media is not as targeted when compared to social media advertising, on social media like Face book, you create your audience specifics for instance their age, interests, income level/occupation, religious affinity, gender, relationship status and even location and Face book mirrors these criteria and matches your adverts to people that meet the criteria. Advertisements on sites such as Facebook are "geo-targeted" according to specific criteria, to reach the correct audience (Nadaraja & Yazdanifard (n.d.).

Wider Reach: Social media advertising can help businesses reach a wider array of audience locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. The business bound on social media has no walls. Social media advertising can strategically position a business to reach audience anywhere and everywhere in the world. Because the internet has made the world a "global village" fulfilling the McLuhanian prophesy.

Challenges of Social Media Advertising

There are always two sides to a coin, with its many benefits and credits and potentials for businesses, there lay some challenges for businesses in the medium, however these challenges are not insurmountable. These challenges include; as stated by Nadaraja & Yazdanifard (n.d.)

Time intensive

As the name implies, social media is interactive, and successful, two-way exchanges take commitment. The nature of marketing changes in social networks, with the focus placed on establishing long-term relationships that can turn into more sales. Somebody has to be responsible to monitor each network, respond to comments, answer questions and post product information the customer deems valuable (Barefoot & Szabo, 2010). Businesses without a service to manage these social networks will find it difficult to compete. **Trademark and Copyright Issues**

According to Steinman and Hawkins (2010), it is of the utmost importance for companies to protect their own trademarks and copyrights when using social media to promote their brands and products. A company's brands and other intellectual property are often nearly as valuable as the products or services that they offer. Social media's capacity to facilitate informal and impromptu communication often on a real-time basis can aid companies in promoting their brands and disseminating copyrighted material, but it can also facilitate third-party abuse of a business" trademarks and copyrights(Steinman & Hawkins, 2010). When using social media, whether via a third-party outlet or a company's own social media platforms, marketers should regularly monitor the use of their trademarks and copyrights.

Trust, Privacy and Security Issues

Using social media to promote one's brand, products, or services can also implicate trust, privacy and data security issues. It is important for companies to be aware of these issues and take appropriate measures to minimize their exposure to liability related to personal data collection, use, and maintenance.

Negative Feedbacks

One aspect of social networking that is especially damaging to marketing campaigns is negative post responses. Unhappy customers or industry competitors are able to post disparaging or offensive pictures, posts or videos and there is not much a marketer can do to prevent these occurrences (Cheung, Lee, &Thadani 2009). Still, negative or other non-constructive feedback cannot be ignored. Social networks must be managed efficiently enough to immediately respond and neutralize harmful posts, which takes more time.

How Social Media Advertising Works

Creating a social media ad campaign is in no way a Herculean task. It basically requires registration with platform of choice, the proper devices and a plan of action to prevent being overwhelmed by the process. The following are the steps to creating ad campaigns on social media citing four SNSs;

FACEBOOK	TWITTER	LINKEDIN	INSTAGRAM
1. Create a facebook page	Create a twitter page	Create a LinkedIn profile	Create an Instagram page
2. Log into facebook ad manager	Log into twitterads.com	Log into linkedin.com/ads	
3. Click on create campaign/ad	Select ad campaign type e.g promoted tweet.	Click the ad creation button	Connect your facebook page with Instagram
4. Set objective (choose from the various options what best suits your intention)	Name ad campaign; to differentiate it from past or future campaigns	Select campaign type e.g sponsorship	While in placement on facebook select Instagram.
5. Create audience (here you target your audience based on demographics and other variables)	Choose funding source (how you intend to pay, credit card or third party options)	Name campaign	Instagram has basically same Ad set as facebook especially since its acquisition by facebook
6. Budgeting and Schedule(set the amount you want to pay, the bid you wish to be charged per action, the total budget for a campaign, how long you wish it to last, the start and stop dates.	Schedule campaign (start and stop time)	Image and copy	The Ad set is made up of three main categories; goal, audience and spend.

7.	Creating images/videos and copy	Audience targeting based on certain variables as keywords, devices, platforms, following and followers etc.	Audience targeting	
8.	Placement (where you want and how your want your campaign to appear e.g PC or/and mobile, newsfeed, left hand corner or both.	Creating images/copy	Budgeting and bidding	
9.	Place order.	Budgeting/ bidding	submit	
10.		Place order.		

Source: Goliger (2014), Buckaroo (2015), Spitfire (2016), Wang (n.d) and Social insight (2016).

Empirical Review

In a study titled "Social media advertising/marketing: A study of awareness, attitude and responsiveness by Nigerian youths" by Otugo, Uzuegbunam and Obikeze (2015); it is noted that the advent of social media has introduced a paradigmatic shift in the way advertisers/marketers promote their goods and services. The study posits that the realm of social media advertising is still in its developmental stages. Facebook is also identified as the most popular platform among users and advertisers alike. The study found that the level of awareness of social media advertising (facebook in particular) among youths is high; It also concludes that some challenges exist as it pertains to the attention an engagement with the products via the ads. It recommends that social media advertisers make their ads more assertive, eye-catchy, detailed, brief and concise, more visible and more properly positioned.

Nyekwere, Nnanyelugo and Azubuike (2014) in their study "An Assessment of the use of social media as advertising vehicles in Nigeria: A study of facebook and twitter" assert that social media sites such as facebook and twitter are potent tools in modern communication and marketing. The study revealed that 70% of business organizations in Nigeria are embracing social media to communicate with their customers. 35% of businesses surveyed acknowledged success with the use of social media advertising. They recommended that more Nigerian organizations should embrace social media advertising since it has the potential of reaching their target audience.

Thirushen (2013) in the study "The effectiveness of advertising through social media in Gauteng" asserted social media advertising has become a norm for most companies through various sites such as youtube, facebook, twitter, etc. Social media marketing is gaining more prominence among companies as it enables brand engagement on a more personal level with the customer. The researcher surveyed 189 respondents and found out that brand engagement,

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brand attitude, brand image, and consumer engagement contribute to the effectiveness of social media marketing particularly on Facebook.

A study by Adegbuyi, Akinyele and Akinyele (2015) on the "Effects of Social Media Marketing on Small scale business performance in Ota-metropolis, Nigeria", it is revealed that social media provides businesses the opportunity to engage their audience on many different levels including personal. It also states that in the beginning (of social media marketing efforts by businesses), it is important for a business to focus on creating relationships with consumers.

In his study "social media marketing in emerging markets" Olotewo (2016) credited the boom in social media marketing to its numerous roles of reaching more customers. Employing survey method, the researcher found that social media activity positively affects brand success in emerging economies. Also facebook is a prominent social media platform employed by organizations in emerging economies; but the rate of adoption is still low considering the percentage of organizations that have social media departments/teams. It is also concluded that social media advertising is gaining traction in emerging economies.

Theoretical Framework

Every substantial phenomena, is bound to have logical and empirical explanations. It is in such situations that theories prove their utmost value, especially in scholarly endeavors. This study does not exist in a vacuum, it is underpinned by two plausible theories viz the diffusion of innovation theory and the technological determinism theory.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory

As the name implies, this theory concerns itself with the rate at which recent/new innovations are diffused (adopted) within a given human community. The theory was propounded by Everett Rogers in 1962; however researchers have earlier on worked on the concept of diffusion of innovation.

The theory postulates that when new technological innovations are introduced, they will move across a series of stages before they are generally adopted, (Wogu, 2013). The theory, as Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwan-Uwaoma (2017, p. 109) explain, "traces the process by which a new idea or practice is communicated through certain channels over time among members of a social system. He further notes that the theory describes the factors that influence people's thoughts and actions and the process of adopting a new technology or idea. The diffusion of innovations involves both mass media and interpersonal communication channels.

Rogers in Baran and Davis (2009, p.271) further asserts that when new technological innovations are introduced, they pass through a series of stages before being widely accepted.

The implication of this theory for social media advertising is that as a new form of technology, social media advertising has come to be known as an innovation, the early or late adoption of this new technology is of major importance to this study to ascertain the rate of adoption of this new technology for advertising purposes. Since this study attempts to measure how far and well Nigerian businesses have adopted social media as a viable advertising platform and marketing tool for growing their businesses, the theory becomes more relevant in that it underpins the rate at which online advertising (particularly social media advertising) has diffused in the Nigerian online business sphere.

Technological Determinism theory.

The technological determinism theory was pronounced a full fledge theory in 1964 through the works of the Canadian media scholar, Marshal McLuhan, (Asemah et al, 2017).

The theory states that there is a long and still active tradition of searching for links between the dominant communication technology of an age and key features of society – with a common element of media centeredness, (McQuail, 2010). The thrust of this theory is the fact that everything that happens in the society has been revolutionized by the introduction and adoption of new media technologies. It further goes to say that the technologies of the day determine the behavior of societal members and society by extension.

Going from the above explanation about technologies becoming the major determinants of lifestyles and patterns in the society, the theory is relevant to this study in that social media is part of the recent technological developments that has come to stay and its presence has changed the way things work in the society. Advertising has now moved on from the traditional media to the new media (social media). Thus this theory explains the existence and the extent to which new technologies (social media in this case) have changed the way things work in the society as against the usual norm of advertising in traditional media. And this goes a long way in understanding the level of adoption of these technologies by online business professionals in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The survey research method is used in this study. This method best suits the study as it is a viable means of unbiased, objective and authentic information gathering; given that the subject under study involves eliciting information from online businesses in Nigeria as to how social media advertising is employed by online businesses in Nigeria. The study is descriptive as well as analytical, as it attempts to explain what exists and why it exists.

Population

The population of this study is made up of online businesses in Nigeria. There is however no formalized documentation of the exact number of such businesses, given that they exist in both the formal and informal economy.

Sample size

As established earlier, the exact number of the population of study is unknown; hence a random sample of a hundred (100) businesses is employed to suffice as a sufficient sample for this study, with a business representing a single unit.

Sampling technique

The simple random sampling technique is employed, giving each member of the population an equal chance. A total of 100 questionnaires are accidentally distributed to the respondents based on the criteria of having an online business, operating in Nigeria.

Research Instrument

The research instrument for this study, is a well structured, two part questionnaire. The first section elicits demographic data; while the second section elicits data based on subject matter of research, seeking to answer matters of inquiry in this study. It is divided into four clusters based on the research questions and measured on a four point scale of strongly agree, Agree, Disagree and strongly disagree.

Validity of Instrument

The research instrument was presented to experts in the department of mass communication in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka; who validated it. Suggestions and corrections were taken cognizance of and effected before the administration of the instrument to respondents.

Method of Data Collection

Using the questionnaire, data is collected by online distribution of the instrument to the respondents, via mail/social networks using Google forms as a survey tool.

Method of Data Analysis

Data elicited based on research questions are presented using the Rensis Likert scale and analyzed using the SPSS statistical tool. Responses are either accepted or rejected based on the value of the weighted mean for each response. A mean of 2.50 and above is accepted while below 2.50 is rejected.

Data presentation and Analysis

Table1. Frequency at which online businesses in Nigeria use social media advertising

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	SD	Decision
1	Weekly	71	17	12		100	3.59	0.70	Accepted
2	Monthly	35	55	2	5	100	3.26	0.73	Accepted
3	Forth nightly	12	48	22	18	100	2.54	0.93	Accepted
4	Quarterly	14	33	28	25	100	2.36	1.01	Rejected

Source: Field work, 2017

This table indicates that Online businesses in Nigeria use social media advertising frequently at least once in every month with the weekly frequency having the highest weighted mean. The quarterly frequency is rejected indicating that businesses use social media advertising more frequently than once a quarter.

Table2. Most preferred social media platform for advertising by online businesses in Nigeria

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	SD	Decision
1	Facebook	82	18			100	3.82	0.39	Accepted
2	Twitter	22	65	7	6	100	3.03	0.73	Accepted
3	LinkedIn	10	55	35		100	2.75	0.63	Accepted
4	Instagram	78	16	6		100	3.72	0.57	Accepted

Source: Field work, 2017

This table implies that all social media platforms researched in this study are employed for advertising by online businesses in Nigeria.

Table3. Why do online businesses in Nigeria use social media advertising?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	SD	Decision
1	It has a wider reach	86	14			**100**	3.86	0.35	Accepted
2	It is in expensive	51	30	19		**100**	3.32	0.78	Accepted
3	High return on investment(ROI)	25	54	21		**100**	3.04	0.68	Accepted
4	To establish brand authority	29	64	7		**100**	3.22	0.56	Accepted

Source: Field work, 2017

This implies that online businesses in Nigeria benefit a lot from the use of social media advertising including reaching a wider audience, low cost advertising when compared to traditional advertising, establishing brand authority etc.

Table4. Challenges of using social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	X	SD	Decision
1	Lack of technical know how	35	46	15	4	**100**	3.12	0.80	Accepted
2	Inimical government policies	14	38	31	17	**100**	2.49	0.94	Rejected
3	Bad reputation due to fraudsters	30	54	16		**100**	3.14	0.67	Accepted
4	Too much time investment	26	61	9	4	**100**	3.09	0.71	Accepted
5	Too many competing platforms	33	54	13		**100**	3.20	0.65	Accepted

Source: Field work, 2017

This indicates that a lot of challenges hamper the application of social media advertising in Nigeria; however government policies are not one of them as this item is rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

At the end of this study, the following findings are made;

As regards the frequency at which online businesses employ social media advertising, it was discovered based on data collated from respondents that social media advertising is frequently used by online businesses in Nigeria, with the weekly frequency having the highest weighted mean of 3.59 followed in close succession by the monthly frequency having a weighted mean of 3.26 (see table 1), implying that businesses agree to advertising on social media at least once a week or at most once a month. This gives credence to Olotewo's (2016) assertion that social media marketing in emerging markets like Nigeria, is gaining traction. More and more businesses are subscribing to the medium, however it is agreed as Otugo et al (2015) posit that social media marketing in Nigeria is still in the developmental stages. However, it has clearly been established that online businesses in Nigeria have utilized social media more than just a

tool for interacting with friends and family but for the advancement of business ventures through advertising and publicity.

The second research question inquired the preferred platform for advertising by online businesses in Nigeria and it is found that businesses use facebook, twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn for advertising on social media. However, from the weighted mean scores, it is clear that businesses subscribe more to the use of facebook and Instagram for social media advertising. This could imply that most online businesses using social media advertising in Nigeria are targeting generalized audience rather than specialized audience, in the sense that facebook and Instagram users are more eclectic in nature when compared to LinkedIn users for instance who are basically comprised of professionals looking to connect with other professionals. It was also discovered that most advertisers prefer to advertise on facebook or Instagram simply because they are more popular as Otugo et al (2015) corroborates, regardless of these media being appropriate or not for the product to be advertised.

When it comes to the reasons for using social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria, the four items provided were accepted based on data collated. This finding establishes the fact that businesses subscribe to social media advertising because it has a wider reach, given that social media transcends such barriers as language, geography and physical restrictions. With social media, advertisers can be specific and advertise to as many or as few audience members as desired. Social media advertising is also appealing to online businesses in Nigeria because it is inexpensive, when compared to traditional media advertising. Social media advertising also helps businesses to establish brand authority, that is, it positions the business as experts or go-to persons in their area of expertise. It helps consumers to create an image of the business as an authority in its field and increases customer confidence in the brand which in the long run translates into sales/use/endorsement which is the aim of advertising in the first place. Kaushik (2012) corroborates this finding thus, the level of brand recognition, engagement and bonding created by organizations through social media marketing has the potential of generating more sales leads for the organizations as well as improve brand loyalty among the customers. Through social media marketing, organizations generate inbound traffic to their website, which in a way creates brand awareness and ultimately influence the purchase intention of the customers (cited in Olotewo, 2016).

The study also inquired into the challenges militating against the use of social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria. Of all the challenges militating against the adoption of social media advertising, inimical government policies is not one of them. This is really refreshing development given that it has become an unwritten code and norm to blame the government or its policies for challenges faced in virtually all ramifications of life especially in our climes. This however also indicates the lack of policies guiding the actions and activities of Nigerians in general online/on social media; this in itself breeds the challenge of security, privacy and copy right issues as pointed out by Nadaraja & Yazdanifard (n.d). It is revealed that lack of technical knowhow poses a serious challenge to the adoption of online advertising by online businesses in Nigeria, even though the steps may seem direct and unambiguous, some technicalities still come to bare in areas of copy writing, graphic designing, photo editing, page layout and other issues for instance payment in the case of Nigerian online businesses. It is also found that businesses shy away from online advertising because of immense time investment and too many competing platforms. **Conclusions**

This study focused on analyzing the use of social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria and based on the findings, the following conclusions are made:

a. Social media advertising is being adopted by online businesses in Nigeria. Though the percentage of adoption ought to be higher given the inherent benefits in the medium, the grounds covered is quite remarkable given that Olotewo (2016) described the clime as being slow to adoption of new technology.

b. Facebook and Instagram are the preferred media for social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria, regardless of their area of enterprise. This should not be the case as each medium has its own strengths.

c. There are challenges that are militating against the use of social media advertising by online businesses in Nigeria, but these challenges are not insurmountable and are worth the climb considering the immense benefits inherent in the medium especially when compared to the financial investments and unpredictability of the traditional media of advertising.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made; as it regards to online businesses in Nigeria and social media advertising;

a. Businesses should fully embrace social media advertising as social media has come to stay and advertising via the media is becoming a "global best practice". They will not only reap the benefits of advertising via social media but also be at par with their counterparts in Diaspora.

b. Media practitioners especially advertising practitioners, should see the gap created by lack of professionals in the field of social media advertising and act proactively by co-opting the trend and adding it to their arson so as to remain valuable in this changing times.

c. In same vein social media advertising should be introduced to the curriculum of institutions training media and advertising practitioners, so as to ensure the production of solid personnel not half baked, quacks or charlatans.

d. It is also recommended that businesses see social media advertising for what it is; an opportunity to be taken, nurtured and benefited from and not a one hit wonder that will solve all their marketing problems in one fell swoop.

It is in light of this that the researcher recommends that businesses adopt a model created as a result of this study as a guide to carrying out social media advertising campaign. The model is aptly tagged the "RIAER" model of social media advertising, where R- Research

I-Identify

A-Action

E-Evaluate

R-Repeat

This means that in planning a social media advertising campaign, the advertiser should first of all Research- this include figuring out the goal of the ad, the audience you have in mind, what others are doing and all necessary elements to make campaign smooth sailing. Then Identify- the target audiences, best platform for intended goal, best ad type etc. then Action- go ahead and put the pegs gathered in previous steps in appropriate holes and run the ad campaign. After this comes Evaluation- track you ad numbers, track engagement, see what works , see what doesn't, assess if intended goal is achieved or surpassed and finally Repeat- repeat this process implementing lessons learnt previously as for advertising to achieve set goals it must be continuous.

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