



10.5281/zenodo.7408519

Vol. 05 Issue 11 Nov - 2022

Manuscript ID: #0753

E-MARKETING AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: A STUDY OF SELECTED PORT HARCOURT CITY HOTELS IN RIVERS STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined E-Marketing and Organizational Performance in the Hospitality Industry in selected Port Harcourt city hotels. Two (2) hypotheses were tested in the study which adopted the descriptive survey as the working design. The population of this study consisted of selected hotels operating in Port Harcourt city. A size of 161 was determined by using Taro Yamane, (1970) sample size determination technique, while 126 out of the 161 questionnaires were retrieved and used for the study. The Pearson Product Moment Coefficient was used for the hypotheses testing at a significance level of 0.05. Findings from the study showed that there is a positive relationship between E-mail Marketing and Organizational Performance. However, the result showed a strong positive relationship of 0.792. The findings also revealed that there is a significant relationship between Social Media and Organizational Performance. However, the result showed a strong positive relationship of 0.852. The study concluded that those in the service sector especially hotels should embrace E-marketing as an organizational tool for enhancing organizational performance.

KEYWORDS

Organizational Performance, E-marketing, Social Media, Hospitality Industry, Service sector.



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Introduction

The environment within which organizations operate is characterized by uncertainties and dynamism. This calls for development of appropriate strategies, including e-marketing practices, which can assure the organizations of success. The interest of management is in the development of strategies that guarantee organizational competitiveness and performance. Adoption of e-marketing practices results into better performance in sales, distribution and customer acquisition (Hossinpour, Hasanzade, & Feizi, 2014; Brodie, Winklhofer, Coviello, & Johnston, 2007). Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty (2012) considered e-marketing practices the 'latest type of marketing' with valuable potential in contributing to organizations' marketing activities. Appreciating the influence of organizational strategies and specifically the adoption of e-marketing practices on organizational performance becomes vital to managers.

Hospitality industry in Nigeria is growing rapidly thereby making great impact to the economy. The industry is made up of companies that fall under three main categories thus: International chain hotels, and many other franchised hospitality establishments. The industry recently has witnessed a massive investment by both private investors and government as well and this brought about the heightened competition, technological advancements and globalization (Letangule & Letting, 2012). The competitive environment calls for players who are innovative, customer-driven and able to target their customers effectively in order to cut an edge in the industry (Lwiza & Nwankwo, 2002).

The environment within which organizations operate is constantly changing and this requires management to develop strategies that assure them of sustainability. Adoption of e-marketing practices translates into organizational performance through improved sales, distribution and reach (Hossinpour et al., 2014). Moreover, organizations that have adopted e-marketing practices are also able to navigate the turbulent and dynamic business environments for success (Trainor, Rapp, Beitelspacher, & Schillewaert 2011). The dynamic competitive environments within which organizations operate also influence their performance by presenting opportunities for growth, development, value, wealth creation and threats that organizations must address in order to survive (Njeru, 2013).

Accommodation businesses are developing innovative strategies including e-marketing practices that assure them of competitiveness (Letangule & Leting, 2012). E-marketing practices influence performance when the organization is able to develop mechanisms and strategies that enable integration and adaptation to the competitive environment (Egan, Yang, & Bartlett 2004).

Studies have tested the relationship between e-marketing practices and organizational performance; however, differences in concepts, direction and magnitude of the relationship between the variables are evident. Harridge-March (2004) used the 7 Ps of marketing in his study and demonstrated that electronic marketing should be considered the 'New Kid on the Block' and a modern marketing strategy being adopted globally. He however did not consider the specific elements that constitute e-marketing and how the elements can be aligned to the 7ps for competitiveness. Hossinpour et al. (2014) in seeking to establish the effect of e-marketing on sales of Life and Investment Insurance focused on internet marketing but failed to consider the effects of other e-marketing elements on their study. Brodie et al. (2007) established the fast rate at which organizations are adopting e-marketing practices and the contribution of e-marketing to organizations' efficiency and effectiveness but failed to demonstrate any financial gains through adoption of e-marketing practices. Gaps have also been noted on studies linking e-marketing practices and performance of Telecommunications companies in Kenya. Brodie, Winklhofer, Coviello, and Johnston (2007) conducted studies among service firms in USA; Hossinpour et al. (2014) studied Life and Investment companies in Germany while Tsiotsou and Vlachopolous (2011) considered the Travel and Tourism companies in Greece. On their part, Salem et al. (2013) conducted their study on Hotels in Egypt while Asikhia (2009) studied service firms in Nigerian. These indicate that the relationship between e-marketing practices and Telecommunications companies has not been adequately researched.

This purpose of this study is to determine the effect of E-marketing on organization performance. The followings are the sub-goals:

1. To estimating the capability of the marketing variables in corresponding to PH/city hotels
2. To reach a framework for the collaboration between E-marketing variables concerning organizational performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Electronic Marketing Practices

E-marketing practices entail application of marketing principles in communicating a company's offerings through the internet (Kotler, 2003; Harridge-March, 2004). Banerjee and Dash (2011) contend that e-marketing practices use the internet as a platform that allows firms to adapt to the needs of customers, reduces transaction costs, and allows customers to move from time-and location-based behaviors toward non-temporal and non-locational behavior. Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty (2012) add that e-marketing practices do not only relate to the use of internet technology but also interactive activities in facilitating interaction with organization's customers. E-marketing practices therefore make use of electronic communications technology that entail online and off-line networks; including digital platforms, electronic mails, websites and telecommunications technology for the achievement of marketing objectives (Baker & Sinkula, 2005).

Dann and Dann (2011) posit that e-marketing practices are marketing activities and approaches that require a level of interactivity for their application. This means that e-marketing practices depend on some form of technology including electronic, interactivity and marketing for execution. E-marketing practices therefore go beyond the internet and use of corporate website in communicating an organization's offerings while at the same time managing customer relationships. E-marketing is therefore a modern and evolving business practice that involves marketing of products, services, ideas and information through the internet and other forms of electronic media (El-Gohary, 2010).

The Importance of Marketing

The most important thing in digital transformation is developing a roadmap to improve digital capabilities and skills, and at the same time, integrating digital marketing activities "always-on" with brand and product marketing in businesses.

Lamarque, (2004) says that Marketing helps transfer products and services from companies to customers via retailers or in an indirect way, it also provides good feedback for these companies about the customers' needs or requirements, that leads companies to make a specific change in the product design or provided services to apply these needs and requirements to achieve the customer satisfaction, marketing also plays role in the standard living of community, by classifying the customers into categories according to customers' requirements or the price they can pay to get any service, this means that newly discovered marketing process is a good way to earn money and achieving profits as revenue to the products or services that companies provide."

On the other hand, to complete the process of marketing, companies need to employ qualified people or buy equipment's, which means that marketing creates job opportunities for people such as Engineers, Software Adapters, Sellers, Buyers, Technicians, or any job title that the company needs to complete the marketing process in the general form, this means that marketing process takes a role in the economic development, and when the economy is developed, a new idea is created, changes of peoples' thoughts happened, and a reasonable decision taken by businessmen, company managers, or even countries governments."

Email Marketing: Yang, Min, and Garza-Baker (2018) revealed that email marketing campaigns reflect on organizational performance and are critically reflected in areas like user registration form design and database quality as well as industrial areas. This study demonstrates the benefits and impacts of email promotion and will reinforce structured findings to recognize the endless limits of mail marketing and digital advertising use.

Also, Honda & Martin (2002) mentioned that Email addresses of the target audience can be directly acquired from the customers as marketing- permission or it Can be taken up and rented or purchased from the email address vendors (Honda & Martin, 2002). Carlton (2009) and Blakeman (2014) "Illustrated two-path

communication among marketers and customers without intruding on their privacy, the first way is Opt-in which is known as permission-based. this way used by the users who give the permission to add them to the email list, to receive any information, advertisements and promotions regarding the interesting products for their email, other way called Opt-out; which is used by the users who allow you to send email to them unless they tell you to stop. And they mentioned another way among marketers and customers with intruding their privacy which is called Spam which the recipient never asked for it” (Carlton, 2009 & Blakeman 2013).

Social Media Marketing: Dan Zerrella (2009) explains social media marketing (SMM) as the most important component of digital marketing. He uses social media networks and various mediums to produce advertised content that attracts attention and encourages users to share it with their social networks. It becomes a great opportunity to create a social media strategy. It is now more popular with the massive proliferation of websites such as Google+, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Users can also share multimedia materials online on content community sites such as YouTube and Flickr.

As DAV Evans (2010) explained that shared content reaches new customers and increases rapidly through these sites, so a social media strategy can be implemented by carrying out a content-based on the type of content and website that should be used.

Lastly, Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi (2012) explained the relationship between blogs and social media marketing as both allow users to share their content and opinions with people. Blogs facilitate the communication between clients, employees, and companies, so Companies use these blogs to advertise their products and reach to consumers to increase market share figures. LinkedIn is the most famous example of blogs.

Organizational Performance

Organizational performance refers to competencies in terms of resource use in addition to achieving goals (Firer & William, 2003). Performance measures indicate the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization. All decisions taken in the organization have to do with its performance. Most measures of organizational performance are historical and how the organization's performance is measured and presented is often determined by the stakeholders. Organizations design key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate their success in achieving their strategic goals and these also determine their overall performance. ”

“While measures of organizational performance are varied as the traditional measures include profitability, productivity, and market evaluation (Firer & William, 2003). The Financial performance indicators include return on investment, return on assets, and return on equity. On the other hand, operating performance indicators include market share, products. New, product quality, market or sector effectiveness, manufacturing value addition, technological efficiency, and survival over time (Wekesa, 2016).”

Lebens and Euske (2006) defined organizational performance as the idea of measuring the results or the return of a particular procedure or method, then modifying the procedure or system to increase the output, increase the efficiency, or increase the validity of the procedure or strategy. It also contains the return or outcomes. The organization's real value as assessed against its planned returns or targets, which includes financial and non-financial indicators that provide evidence of the level of achievement of the organization's goal” (Lebens & Euske, 2006).

Theoretical Review

Managerial perception of the environment within which an organization operates can influence the choice of marketing strategies adopted by the organization that enable it achieve greater performance. The study is anchored on Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) which tries to describe adoption of e-marketing practices in a competitive environment that telecommunications companies operate in.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory

Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) explains the process by which innovations are adopted by users. According to Rogers (1995), diffusion is the process by which new ideas are communicated to members of a social system over a period of time through different channels. Schiffman and Kanuk (2010) posit that innovations do not always have equal potential for consumer acceptance; some innovations are readily accepted, others take longer while yet still some are rejected altogether thus have no chance of adoption.

Diffusion process introduces five characteristics that help in consumer approval of innovations including relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability (Rogers, 1995; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010; Armstrong & Kotler, 2003). Relative advantage relates to how prospective customers feel an innovation is outstanding compared to alternatives. Compatibility relates to how prospective consumers recognize an innovation as coherent with their desires, beliefs and principles. Complexity is how an innovation is difficult to understand or use. Trialability relates to how innovation can be tested in small bits while observability is the easiness with which a product's values and characteristics can be perceived, visualized or expressed to prospective consumers. Adopter categories outlined by the DIT provide useful framework capable of guiding management in understanding the likely rate of adoption of the systems and practices implemented by an organization. Consequently, the diffusion process becomes most appropriate in implementation of strategies that enable effective scanning of the environment for competitiveness.

The DIT is applicable to the study considering the relative novelty of e-marketing (Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty (2012) as a marketing strategy. The theory guides organizations in understanding how adoption of e-marketing practices alongside new systems, innovations and ideas is guided by characteristics depicted by the theory. Moreover, not all employees are likely to adopt the innovations, systems and e-marketing practices at the same time but at different stages based on their evaluation of the innovations.

Empirical Review

E-Marketing and Organizational Performance

Omar Mobydeen, (2021) did a thesis on the impact of digital marketing practices on the organizational performance in the mobile phone companies in Jordan. This study aims to explore the impact of digital marketing practices on the organizational performance in the mobile phone companies in Jordan. The researcher used Descriptive and quantitative analysis methods. Whereas, the data collected by using a well-structured questionnaire regarding the impact of digital marketing practices among organizational performance by applying it to a random sample of telecom companies in Jordan, which consisted of five sub-dimensions (Email Marketing, Social Network Marketing, Mobile Phone Marketing, Website, and Organizational performance) and (40) questions based on the systematic variation of the study variables. Whereas, the selected sample size consists of (178) employees who worked as Managers, team leaders, supervisors, in the telecom companies in Jordan. While the **results** showed that the total of the digital marketing in all of its forms influence the performance of the telecommunication company (as the main dimension) was perceived by the study sample to be present with a mean of 3.652 (SD=0.7224) at a moderate degree. The most important result was that the performance of all telecommunications companies in Jordan is showing a great positive movement in the last five years, which means that the impact of digital marketing in these companies' performance was even very good or excellent.

Folasade, Ogunrinade and Samuel (2018) investigated E-Marketing and Organizational Performance: A Study of Five Manufacturing Companies in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study examined the effect of E-marketing on the performance of the selected business organizations in Oyo State, Nigeria. The purposive method was used to select five manufacturing companies operating in Oyo State while the simple random sampling technique was used to select fifty respondents for the study. Data collected through structured questionnaire was analyzed with the aid of Mean and Regression Analysis. Results of the analysis showed that e-marketing has a significant impact on organizational performance measured by effective decision making, customer satisfaction and sales volume. The study also confirmed that unstable power supply, lack of government support, low level of

education of the owners/managers of business organizations and Security of documents through e-commerce are major threats to the success of e-marking adoption

Adede, Kibera, and Owino (2017) conducted a study on electronic marketing practices and performance of telecommunications companies in Kenya.

The objective of the study was to establish the influence of e-marketing practices on the performance of telecommunications companies in Kenya. The population of the study comprised all telecommunications companies licensed by the Communications Authority of Kenya. Primary data were collected from managers using a semi-structured questionnaire while secondary data were obtained from industry performance reports. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, factor analysis and regression analysis. The results revealed statistically significant relationship between e-marketing practices and organizational performance. Organizations that are able to adopt novel strategies that include e-marketing practices are capable of reporting better performance.

Bar Wise and Farley's (2005) posited that organizations are increasingly embracing e-marketing and integrating it with other marketing practices to improve customer engagement and feedback. Thus, the success of e-marketing comes from enhancing and supporting current business practices.

Day and Bens (2005) hypothesize that organizations that are Adopted digital marketing often perform better by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of network marketing practices and databases. Adopting e-marketing enables companies to increase their intensity and enrich their interactions with partners and suppliers. Important planning and inventory information is shared regularly or even in real-time, which leads to more productive relationships (Siegel, 2003).

Methodology

This study followed a descriptive research method, and it adopted the quasi-experimental research design which is most appropriate for administrative and social sciences research. This research design is used because the researcher has no control over study variables, subjects and study setting. The cross-sectional survey which is a snap shot of the situation was equally used because standardized information is collected from a representative of the group or population. The target population for this study consists of hotels operating with Port Harcourt Metropolis. The researcher adopted the Taro Yamane’s sample size determination technique to select respondents from the 10 selected hotels in P/H city. The sample size used in this study was 161 which was determined mathematically using the Taro Yamane’s formula.

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

Primary source of data was utilized in this study. The primary data was obtained through the administration of questionnaires to the respondents. The questionnaire was structured on four (4) points Likert scale with weights assigned as follows:

Strongly Agreed=5, Agree=4, Undecided=3, Disagree=2, Strongly disagree=1

It was designed in this manner in order to enable the researcher answer the research questions and test the hypotheses.

The simple percentages, tables and frequencies are used in the study to analyze the research questions while the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient was used for the hypotheses testing. Data were measured at the Ordinal scale.

Results and Discussion of Findings

Questionnaire Response Rate

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Number Administered	161	100
Number Retrieved	139	87%

Invalid	13	8.07%
Number used	126	78.3%

A total of one hundred and Sixty-one (161) copies of the research questionnaire were distributed by the researcher. Of the one hundred and sixty-one (161) copies of distributed questionnaire, one hundred and thirty-nine (139) copies which amount to, 87% were completely retrieved by the researcher while twenty one (21) copies were not retrievable. One hundred and twenty-six copies (126) were accurately completed, representing a response rate of 78.3%, these one hundred and twenty-six (126) copies constituted the data for this study. Thirteen (13) of the retrieved copies of the research questionnaire were not accurately completed and thus were not used in the analysis.

H₀:1: There is no significant relationship between E-marketing and Organizational Performance

Decision rule: reject the null hypothesis if the p-value or “r” calculated is less than the level of significance or “r” tabulated

Correlations

Source: SPSS Computation Output 2022

		E-mail Marketing	Organizational Performance
E-mail Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.792*
	Sig. (2tailed)	.	.003
	N	126	126
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	.792*	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.
	N	126	126

E-mail Marketing and Organizational Performance

Rho = 0.792

P-value = 0.003 (p<0.05)

Where * illustrates significance at 0.05 and **illustrates significance at 0.001.

Interpretation Based On Decision Rule

Since the p-value or “r” calculated (0.003) is less than the level of significance or “r” tabulated (0.05), we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative thereby concluding that there is a significant relationship between E-mail Marketing and Organizational Performance. However, the result showed a strong positive relationship of 0.792.

With r² value of 0.792 explained that 62% of organizational performance can be determined through E-mail Marketing, thus this study asserts that there is a significant relationship between EM and OP. This finding is in line with the findings of Adede et al (2017) whose results revealed statistically significant relationship between e-marketing practices and organizational performance. Furthermore the study agreed with the findings of Bar Wise and Farley (2005) who posited that organizations are increasingly embracing e-marketing and integrating it with other marketing practices to improve customer engagement and feedback which enhances organizational performance.

Test of Hypothesis Two

H₀:2: There is no significant relationship between Social Media and Organizational Performance

Decision rule: reject the null hypothesis if the p-value or “r” calculated is less than the level of significance or “r” tabulated.

Correlations

		Social Media	Organizational Performance
Social Media	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.857**
	Sig. (2tailed)	.	.001
	N	126	126
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	.857**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
	N	126	126

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Computation Output 2022

Social Media and Organizational Performance

Rho = 0.857

P-value = 0.001 (p<0.05)

Where * illustrates significance at 0.05 and **illustrates significance at 0.001.

Interpretation Based on Decision Rule

Since the p-value or “r” calculated (0.001) is less than the level of significance or “r” tabulated (0.05), we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative thereby concluding that there is a significant relationship between Social Media and Organizational Performance. However, the result showed a strong positive relationship of 0.852.

With r² value of 0.852 it depicts that 72% of OP can be associated with SMM, hence this study accepts that there is a strong positive relationship between EM and OP. this finding is in agreement with the findings of Folasade, and Ogunrinade who found in their study that e-marketing has a significant impact on organizational performance measured by effective decision making, customer satisfaction and sales volume.

Implication and Conclusion

The implication of the findings of this study is that the adoption of e-marketing strategies should be at the front burner of every business organization whose goals is to attain positive performance in terms of sales revenue, market share, efficient and effective operation, relevance in the industry of their choice. Having the full knowledge that this generation (generation X) are more inclined with modern ways of operation and given their vast sophistication as it concerns technology, hotels will be more advantaged in terms of competition if they apply E-marketing strategies properly. To this end the researcher concludes by advising those in the service sector especially hotels, to embrace E-marketing as an organizational tool of enhancing organizational performance.

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