

Influence of E-Marketing on the Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State

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Abstract

The study set out to find out the influence of E-Marketing on the Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The objectives are to determine how Social Media Marketing influenced Competitiveness of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt, evaluate the effect of digital Billboard on the Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt and examine the relationship between SMS and the Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt. A Cross-Sectional Quasi-experimental design was adopted for the study. The sample of this study was seventy-six, (76) Managers and Supervisors of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt. A designed instrument, (Questionnaire) structured on a four-point Likert Scale was used for data collection. The draft of the Questionnaire was validated by our senior colleagues in the Dept. of Hospitality Management and Tourism. The reliability of the instrument was tested using test-retest reliability to determine the internal consistency of the Questionnaire and correlated with Cronbach Alpha and a reliability index was high enough showing that the instrument was reliable. Mean and Standard Deviation was used in answering the Research Questions; while, Pearson Correlation Co-Efficient to test the Null Hypotheses. The Study concluded that Social Media Marketing had the greatest influence on the Competitiveness and Tourist Loyalty. This means that the Management of Travel Agencies should endeavour to make use of the Social Media Marketing to enhance competitiveness and Tourist Loyalty. Recommendation was that, Management of Travel Agencies should offer on the job training for employees on E-Marketing to equip them with skills to help in their mandates, and assist the firms' human resource efficiently and increase productivity thus increase the firms' competitiveness.

Keywords: E-Marketing, Marketing Performance, Travel Agencies, Firm Performance, Organizational Advertisements, Communication Network.

Introduction

The fast-pace in technology growth has allowed the development of internet and creation of convenience for users. The use of Internet has gained popularity in organizations globally and created a new concept in marketing called "E-Marketing". E-Marketing has the philosophy of providing customers' needs and creating values in development of communication network between companies and individuals, (Procter, 2013).

Organizational performance of Travel Agencies involves actual output as measured against intended outputs (Joe, 2013). It has the ability of fulfilling missions through sound management, strong governance and persistent rededication in achieving results, (Charles, 2012). Effective non-profit organizations would be driven; and adaptable for customer-

focused, entrepreneurial, outcome oriented and sustainable, (James, 2011). Organizational performance encompasses accumulated results of organization's work processes and activities. Performance measures could be financial or non-financial. Both measures could be used for competitiveness for the firms' dynamic business environment, (Joe, 2013).

Organizational performance of any organization could be the livelihood of the business; as, continual patronage of the organization's products and services could offer sources of revenue, profits and sustainability, (Marshal, 2016). Marketing literature suggests that Tourist Loyalty would be competitive environment functioning as electronic marketing. According to Ibojo, (2013), business performance has become very important area of interest to both business managers and researchers.

The growing status of business performance as derived from the premise of E-Marketing has made tourists to remain Loyal and spreading positive Word-of-Mouth to Travel Organization; which in turn led to the growth of the tourism industry in particular and the economy in general. In this regard, business performance is critical to organizational success in any sector of the Nigerian economy, (Marshal, 2014).

Electronic Marketing could be an area where investors in Travel Agencies secure competitive advantages as E-Marketing could be crucial aspect of Performance. Couclelis, (2014) has posited that E-Marketing companies could use the worldwide web to offer wider variety of products to large audience at lower prices as compared with products found in the physical setting. E-Marketing affects the traditional marketing; it increases efficiency and effectiveness in traditional marketing functions and transforms the traditional marketing strategies.

As a result, many travel companies in cities across Nigeria are springing up to provide leisure needs for travellers. Apart from social media marketing, Electronic Marketing has expressed provision of digital billboards, websites and emails. The purpose of E-Marketing practice could be creating awareness and providing information for tourists concerning travels on the Social -Media, Digital billboards and Websites, (Clark, 2012). The influence of E-Marketing on Tourist Behaviours has supported several studies. Eke, (2010) indicated positive correlation between Electronic Marketing and Sales Revenue and Tourist Loyalty to shopping centres. However, with regards to the influence of E-Marketing and Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt, knowledge in Literature was lacking.

Statement of the Problem

Achieving and sustaining organizational performance have been the challenge of Travel Agencies in Nigeria, (Banjo, 2012). The use of digital platforms such as E-Marketing could be used in performing marketing promotional activities to aid many companies in excelling in different dimensions. Business performance challenges cut across every sector of the tourism industry, including travel firms, which has not been empirically validated in Port Harcourt. Hence, this Study was designed to find out the relationship between E-Marketing and Travel Agencies Performance in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Conceptual Framework

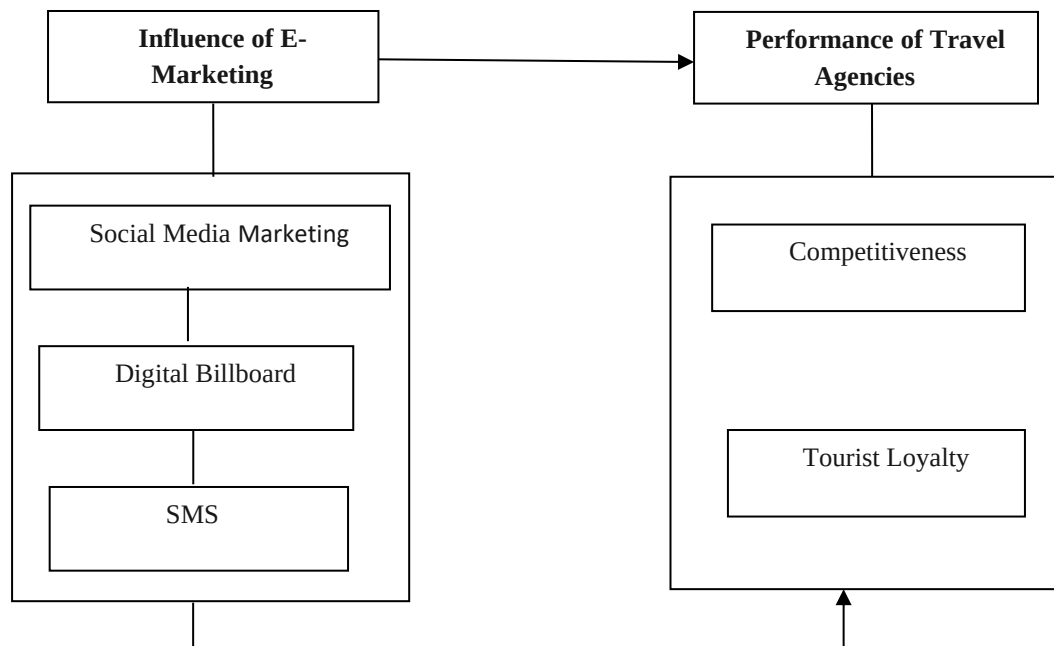


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Influence of E-Marketing on the Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.

Source: Pestek, Almir, Cicic and Muris, (2010). Practical Aspects of E-Marketing Application in Tourism Development.

Purpose of the Study

The Purpose of this Study is to find out the Influence of E-Marketing on the Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, with the specific Objectives as:

1. Determine how Social Media Marketing Influence Competitiveness of the Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.
2. Evaluate how Digital Billboard Influence the Performance of the Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.
3. Examine the Influence of SMS on the Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.

Research Questions

1. How does Social Media Marketing Influence Performance of Competitiveness of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt?
2. What is the Influence of Social Media Marketing on the Performance of Tourist Loyalty of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt?
3. Does Digital Billboard Influence Performance Competitiveness of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt?
4. What is the Influence of Digital Billboard on the Performance of Tourist Loyalty of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt?

5. How does SMS Influence Performance Competitiveness of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt?
6. What is the Influence of SMS on the Performance of Tourist Loyalty of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt?

Research Hypotheses

- Ho₁: Social Media Marketing has no Influence on the Performance Competitiveness in the Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₂: Social Media Marketing has no Influence on the Performance of Tourist Loyalty in the Performance of Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₃: Digital Billboard has no Influence on the Performance on Competitiveness in the Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₄: Digital Billboard has no Influence on the Performance on Tourist Loyalty in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₅: SMS has no Influence on the Performance on Competitiveness in the Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₆: SMS has no Influence on the Performance on Tourist Loyalty in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.

Theoretical Framework

Social Penetration Theory

Social exchange theory states that human beings form close relationships through self-disclosure.

Using an analogy of peeling of the layers in an onion, one must disclose him or herself through the continuing process of exposing one's inner self and identity. Similar to social exchange theory, social penetration theory explains how human exchange forms relationships, (Altman and Taylor 2000). However, the latter focuses more on the individual and dyadic levels while the former explains behaviour of aggregated and organizational levels.

It starts with public, visible, and superficial information, such as gender, clothing preferences, and ethnicity; slowly, as the relationship progresses, one starts to share his or her feelings; in the deepest level, and expose his or her goals, ambition, and beliefs, (Altman, 2000).

In the social world online, we could design social networks to separate different layers of information to determine the levels of relationships through frequencies on communications, tracking them on online through Social-Media.

Constantly being in touch with consumers through digital channel would have positive impact on brand attitudes, purchases and loyalty, Reinartz and Kumar, (2003).

In the social world online, we may be able to design social networks in a way to separate these different layers of information. By default, certain information will be disclosed to the

public, while private and semi-private information could be confidential; There might be ways to determine the levels of relationships from the mode and frequencies of communication, which could be all tracked online easily through online Social-Media /sites. A recent privacy lawsuit against Facebook highlighted the importance following the layered rules of social penetration in order, (Gaudin 2010).

Network Theory

Network theory involves relationships of all sorts; whether between people, animals or things. Social network analysis is an overlapping tool for learning about patterns that develop within social networks and how they influence behaviours.

The Theory proposes that there are often more than two parties in a buyer/seller relationship. This exchange take place through interaction between individual actors within firms and in many cases among different firms, (Merisavo and Raulas, 2004).

The Concept of E-Marketing

Digitalization and high sophistication in information technology has led individuals and corporations to adoption of digital channels to perform transactions online. According to Afrina, (2015), E-Marketing is the use of digital channels to promote products and services to reach consumers on individual or group basis.

According to Chaffey, (2012), E-Marketing is the application of digital technologies – online channels (web, e-mail, databases, including mobile/wireless and digital TV) to contribute to marketing activities which focuses on achieving profit acquisition and consumer retention (with a multi-channel buying process and consumer life cycle) by the improvement of consumer knowledge (of their profiles, behaviour, value and loyalty drives) and further delivering of integrated or seamless communications and online services that match consumers' individual needs. The uses of information communication technology have great number of advantages to the company which ranges from employee efficiency, consumer convenience, richer and participative information sharing, and broader selection of products, cost reduction, and product diversity, (Bayo and Lera, 2007). Accordingly, the idea of transfer of goods and services is fast shifting in marketing, that it borders more on interactivity, connectivity and qualitative consumers' long-term relationships, (Vergo and Lusch, 2004). This shift is facilitated through technological innovations, new channels and dynamic media environment, (Bhattacharya and Bolton, 2000).

Firms should regularly appraise the rate at which they connect, interact and maintain their communication link with their consumers. Cost efficiency and interactivity of digital channel has enhanced dialogue (relationship in essences) between firms and their consumers, (Deighton and Barwise, 2000, Peppers and Rogers, 2004).

Digital Billboard

Digital Billboard has great impact on the reach and awareness creation. OOH, (2015) stated

that, Billboard advertisement has been and remained a top medium through which brands can be communicated to consumers. Alexa, (2015) stated that roadside digital billboards has remained relevant and impactful in the rate of reach since the inception of land transportation.

The Concept of Business Performance

Performance is behaviour evaluated in terms of its contribution to goals of the organization, (Dalrymple, 2004). Clark, (2010) opined that sales volume and profitability are among the most frequently used marketing performance measures. Research has shown that large organizations rely on output performance measures which include sales volume, sales growth, profitability and market share, (Sullivan and Abela, 2007).

Web marketing strategy could result in increased efficiency within established marketing functions, (Goldsmith and Lafferty, 2002). The technology of E-Marketing has transformed many marketing strategies resulting in new business models and adding customers' value and increasing companies' profitability.

Electronic Marketing could be one of the avenues for organizational performance, (Oladele, 2011). Kumar and Malik, (2013) viewed E-Marketing as the application of marketing principles and techniques via Electronic Media; specifically, the Internet. Ollor and Akamu, (2018); Smith and Chaffey (2005) viewed E-Marketing as a modern business practice involving marketing of goods, services, information and ideas via the Internet. Ollor and Akamu, (2018), further stressed that when E-marketing is properly utilized, detailed product information would improve services and attract patronage. This could be possible as e-marketing uses all facets of internet advertising to generate responses from prospective and existing customers. The internet technologies have advanced and businesses have adopted internet as sales and marketing medium. E-Marketing could be used by businesses to reduce transaction costs associated with conducting businesses such as, providing information about products and services.

Tourist Loyalty

Tourist Loyalty refers to Tourist behaviour characterized by positive patronage pattern during an extended period and driven by a positive attitude towards the company's products or services. With competitive retail environment and decreasing Tourist switching cost, Tourist Loyalty has become a major theme in Marketing research and a critical goal for organizations, (Bodet, 2008).

Universally, Tourist Loyalty is recognized as a valuable asset in competitive markets, (Drivastava, Shervani & Fahey, 2010).

Empirical Review on E-Marketing and Performance

Social Media Marketing and Performance:

Giggin, (2011) conducted a study on the effect of Social Media Marketing on Performance

of Travel Companies in Lagos State. Four objectives and four corresponding hypotheses were used for this study. The research design adopted was cross sectional design. A population of 350 respondents was used for the study and 200 were selected using simple random sampling technique. Mean and standard deviation and Spearman rank order were used to analyse data. The instrument for the study was questionnaire. The study used a descriptive design and it was found that strong positive relationship exists between Social Media Marketing and Performance of Travel Companies in Lagos State.

Albatta, (2020) emphasized that marketing in Travel Agency has positive relationship in increasing sales' packages. The author further stated that Travel Agencies who use Online Marketing frequently receive more correspondence. Ollor and Harry, (2018) stressed that Time management could also contribute to organizational performance. A firm understanding of the factors driving business performance could be crucial to designing strategies to deliver customer expectations. Consequently, various strategies such as product, price, processes and technologies have been adopted by firms across industries to achieve customer satisfaction. This could be evident in studies conducted by Kaura and Charles (2012). The authors provided insights into the phenomenon of business performance in products and service-oriented organizations. Their findings suggested that business performance could equally be important to the Travel Sector of the Tourism Industry, especially in the area of E-Marketing.

Digital Billboard and Performance:

Afrina, (2015) investigated the effect of Digital Billboard on Performance of Travel Agencies in South Africa. Data used in the analysis was collected from 150 small travel agencies and tour operators using a structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics and factor scores. The result indicated that lack of time to sustain Digital Billboard Marketing activities and a lack of skills in using Digital Billboard Marketing were identified as the major challenges faced by travel agencies in South Africa.

Methodology

Research Design

Research design is a framework used as a guide in collecting and analysing data for a study. The study adopted cross-sectional type of quasi-experimental design. This design was adopted because the study elements are not under our control.

Population of the Study

A population is the totality of element in a given location of interest. The population of this study consisted of managers and supervisors of seven (7) Travel Agencies operating in Port Harcourt. This study adopted the census technique which allows for the adoption of the entire population size as the sample size. Hence, sampling may not be required in this study.

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution

S/No	Travel Agencies	No. of Managers /Supervisors
1	Travel Sound Travels	15
2	VersionOne Travels	14
3	Donspira Travels Nig. Ltd.	16
4	UgoFly Travels	11
5	De Empress Travels	13
6	Queen's Errand Services	18
7	Igony Travel Agency	29
	Total	

Source: Field work 2022

Data Collection Method

This study used Questionnaire to get the primary data. The Questionnaire were administered to Managers/Supervisors of Travel Agencies operating in Port Harcourt. The secondary data were from Books, Journals, and Internet.

Data Analysis Technique

In analysing the data, Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while Pearson Correlation Co-efficient was used to test the Null Hypotheses with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0. Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to find the relationship between the Independent Variables (E-Marketing) and the Dependent Variables (Performance).

Analysis of Questionnaire

Table 2: Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percent
Distributed	76	100%
Not retrieved	21	10.9%
Retrieved	55	89.1%
Useful response	55	89.1%
Not used	-	-

Source: Survey Data 2022

The Table 2 above, shows the distribution of questionnaire to respondents and retrieval.

Table 3: Demographic profile of respondents

S/No	Demographic variables	No	Percent
1	Gender		
	Male	30	61.2
	Female	25	38.8
	Total	55	100
2	Age		
	< 20 years	6	6.1
	20 – 29 years	28	62.2
	30 – 39 years	16	26.5
	> 40years	5	5.2
	Total	55	100
3	Education		
	M.Sc/MBA	14	21.4
	B.Sc/HND	28	55.1
	SSCE	10	20.4
	Ph.D	3	3.1
	FSLC	-	-
	Total	55	100
4	No of years worked in the organization		
	<2 yrs	10	10.2
	2 – 4 yrs	27	56.1
	5 – 8 years	14	29.6
	9yrs & above	4	4.1
	Total	55	100

Source: Survey Data 2022 with IBM SPSS version 21.0

Section 1 of Table 3 above, shows the information on gender as shown above.

The information on age brackets of the respondents in section 2 of Table 3 as shown above.

Univariate Analyses

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Items of Social Media Marketing

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social media platform has assisted your company interaction with her consumers?	55	4.6327	.50539
It has prompted quick dialogue between us and our consumer?	55	4.6531	.49953

This has increased your company's consumer traffic?	55	4.7143	.45408
There is a great deal of relationship between my firm and our consumers?	55	4.7143	.45408

Source: Survey Data 2022

Table 4 above, shows the result of Descriptive Statistics on items of Social Media Marketing with the use of IBM SPSS Statistics version 20.0 output. The Mean Scores on all items of Social Media Marketing were greater than the threshold of 3.9. This shows an appreciable agreement by the respondents on the fact that the Social Media Marketing promotes information sharing and create relationship with consumers.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on Items of Digital Billboard

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The use of this has actually impacted on our firm's success?	55	4.6939	.46325
This has given us great opportunity to reach larger chunk of our target consumers?	55	4.8265	.38060
The use of this platform has helped us to continuously showcase our offering on a long-term basis?	55	4.8163	.41485
This ad medium helps to capture the attention of our target audience on transit (great number of them)?	55	4.7959	.40510

Source: Survey Data 2022

From the Table 5 above, shows the result of descriptive statistics on items of Digital Billboard with the use of IBM SPSS Statistics version 20.0 output. The Mean Scores on all items of reliability were greater than the threshold of 3.9. The Grand Mean of 3.9>3.0 on five-point Likert Scale is considered appropriate as regards acceptability. This shows an appreciable agreement by the respondents on the fact that the Digital Billboard help Travel Agencies to reach larger target Tourists.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics on Items of SMS Advertising

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
This has really increased the rate at which your company reaches her consumers?	55	4.6633	.47502

The use of SMS in advertising our products has helped us communicate with our consumers effectively?	55	4.7143	.45408
It helps us to minimize cost of promotion?	55	4.6633	.49625

Source: Survey Data 2022

The result of descriptive statistics on items of SMS Advertising with the use of IBM SPSS Statistics version 20.0 output is represented on Table 6 above. The mean scores on all items of customer service in the context of organizational communication in fast food restaurants in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, were greater than the threshold of 3.9. The Grand Mean of 3.9>3.0 on five- point Likert Scale is considered appropriate as regards acceptability.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics on items of Competitiveness

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The kind of memorable service rendered in this firm enable us to be outstanding.	55	4.5510	.52016
We take proper care of our potential customers by offering them quality services	55	4.6327	.50539
The kind of service rendered in this firm shows that the staff are properly trained to gain competitive advantage.	55	4.6633	.47502

Source: Survey Data 2022

The result of Descriptive Statistics on Items of Competitiveness with the use of IBM SPSS Statistics version 20.0 output is represented on Table 7 above. The Mean Scores on all Items of Competitiveness were greater than the threshold of 3.9. This shows an appreciable agreement by the respondents on the fact that E-Marketing enable Travel Agencies to gain Competitive Advantage over others.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics on Items of Tourist Loyalty

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I will always patronize this company any time I want to travel	55	4.6939	.46325
I am loyal to service offering in this company	55	4.7143	.45408
I will keep patronizing this company even if there are changes in their prices.	55	4.7143	.45408

Source: Survey Data 2022

The result of descriptive statistics on items of Tourist Loyalty with the use of IBM SPSS Statistics version 20.0 output is represented on Table 8 above. The mean scores on all items of Tourist Loyalty were greater than the threshold of 3.9 This shows appreciable agreement by the respondents on the fact that service offering compel them to keep patronizing the company.

Bivariate Analysis

Test of Hypotheses

DECISION RULE

If $PV < 0.05$ = Reject H_0
 If $PV > 0.05$ = Accept H_0

H_{01} : There is no Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Competitiveness of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt

Table 9: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Competitiveness of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.

Correlations

		Social Media Marketing	Competitiveness
Social Media Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.939**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	55	55
Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	.939**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	55	55

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Test of Hypothesis 2

H_{02} : There is no relationship between Social Media Marketing and Tourist Loyalty of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt

Table 10: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Tourist Loyalty

Correlations

		Social Media Marketing	Tourist Loyalty

Social Media Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.856**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	55	55
Tourist Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.856**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	55	55

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Test of Hypothesis 3

HO₃: There is no relationship between Digital Billboard and Competitiveness of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt.

Table 11: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between Digital Billboard and Competitiveness of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt

Correlations

		Digital Billboard	Competitiveness
Digital Billboard	Pearson Correlation	1	.880**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	55	55
Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	.880**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	55	55

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Test of Hypothesis 4

Ho₄: There is no relationship between Digital Billboard and Tourist Loyalty of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt

Table 12: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between Digital Billboard and Tourist Loyalty of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt

Correlations

		Digital Billboard	Tourist Loyalty
Digital Billboard	Pearson Correlation	1	.658**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	55	55
Tourist Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.658**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	55	55

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Test of Hypothesis 5

Ho₅: There is no relationship between SMS and Competitiveness of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt

Table 13: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between SMS Advertising and Competitiveness.

Correlations

		SMS Advertising	Competitiveness
SMS	Pearson Correlation	1	.585**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	55	55
Competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	.585**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	55	55

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Test of Hypothesis 6

HO₆: There is no relationship between SMS and Tourist Loyalty of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt

Table 14: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between SMS and Tourist Loyalty of Performance in Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt

Correlations

		SMS	Tourist Loyalty
SMS	Pearson Correlation	1	.705**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	55	55
Tourist Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.705**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	55	55

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Discussion of Findings

Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Competitiveness

With Pearson Correlation Analysis, (Table 9), Social Media Marketing was significantly correlated with Competitiveness ($r=0.939$; $p=.000$). Thus, the Null Hypothesis was rejected

and the alternative hypothesis was accepted as there was significant positive relationship between Social Media Marketing and Competitiveness. This finding was consistent with Maria (2014) who stated that Social Network encourages user participation. It would be ideal for Marketers to promote their Services through social media. Social Media accords Marketers the opportunity of connecting their brands with prospective buyers.

Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Tourist Loyalty

From the Pearson Correlation Analysis, (Table 10), Social Media Marketing was significantly correlated with Tourist Loyalty ($r=0.856$; $p=.000$). Thus, the Null Hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was accepted as there was significant positive relationship Social Media Marketing and Tourist Loyalty. This finding was consistent with Watson (2002) who argued that social media helps companies to increase the rate of reach at reduced costs. This serves as one of the main benefits of Social Media adoption in advertising. The findings showed that the respondents agreed that Social Media Marketing has a strong correlation with Tourist Loyalty. This is consistent with the observation of Afrina, (2015) opined that through Social Media channels, companies adhere to guidelines and make presentations, communicate and promote their products and services.

Relationship between Digital Billboard and Competitiveness

With Pearson Correlation Analysis, (Table 11), Digital Billboard significantly correlated with Competitiveness ($r=0.880$; $p=.000$). Thus, Null Hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was accepted as there was positive relationship between Digital Billboard and Competitiveness. This finding was consistent with Alexa (2015) who stated that Billboard advertising medium has the capability of getting to the target audience as they go about their daily activities. Consumers spend great number of their time on the road, billboard advertising would capture their attention whether on the highway or street provided billboards are available.

Relationship between Digital Billboard and Tourist Loyalty

With Pearson Correlation Analysis, (Table 12), Digital Billboards were significantly correlated with Tourist Loyalty ($r=0.658$; $p=.000$). Thus, the Null Hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted as there was significant positive relationship between Digital Billboards and Tourist Loyalty. This finding was consistent with Baker (2007) who observed that billboards have capacity to reach diverse urban populations whose movements through the city overlap even if their reading/listening/viewing habits do not. This finding buttressed the fact that for Tourist to be Loyal, they must read the content of Digital Billboard and would decide to visit and have service experience with the company.

Relationship between SMS Advertising and Competitiveness

From Pearson Correlation Analysis, (Table 13), SMS Advertising is significantly correlated

with Competitiveness ($r=0.585$; $p=.000$). Thus, the Null Hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted as there was significant positive relationship between SMS and Competitiveness. This finding was consistent with Kavassalis, (2003) who supported providing consumers with time, location and sensitive information to promote goods, services and ideas; thereby generating value for all stakeholders. The use of SMS for advertising were found effective, cost effective, and reaching more audience than the traditional advertising. The use of mobile SMS would enhance the opportunities to companies directly and adequately communicating with consumers; which goes beyond the limit of boundaries and time. This finding was further supported by (Roozen and Mirbagheri, 2010).

Relationship between SMS and Tourist Loyalty

From Pearson Correlation Analysis, (Table 14), SMS is significantly correlated with Tourist Loyalty ($r=0.705$; $p=.000$). Thus, the Null Hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was accepted as there was significant positive relationship between SMS and Tourist Loyalty. This finding was consistent with Mohammed, (2014) who asserted that the use of SMS to carry out advertising campaign could bring benefits to firms. Such benefits could be summarized as follows: Immediate, persona, customized, direct, reliable and automated. The most relevance advertising through SMS was embedded in its high-rate reach ratio.

Conclusion

This study set out to determine the relationship between E-Marketing and Performance of the Travel Agencies in Port Harcourt. The study fulfilled the objectives; by determining the relationship between three dimensions of E-Marketing with two dimensions of performance. After testing the hypothesized relationships with Pearson Correlation Analysis, the result showed that the three dimensions of E-Marketing had positive relationship with competitiveness and Tourist Loyalty. We therefore conclude that Social Media Marketing influenced Competitiveness and Tourist Loyalty.

Recommendations

1. The management of Travel Agencies should concentrate on digital marketing and adopt SMS and Billboard online communication strategies. This would help them appeal to the tourists' emotions and influence levels of patronage.
2. Management of Travel Agencies should offer on the job training to the employees on E-Marketing to equip them with skills that will help them in their mandates. This will assist the firms' human resource to work more efficiently and increase productivity thus, increase the firms' competitiveness.
3. The Management should adopt SMS advertising strategies. This will help them to get in touch with potential tourists through instant messaging about current product offering.

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