

Maximizing Digital Advertising for Effective National Development

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ABSTRACT

Advertising has taken a new form with the digitalization of the world and companies, nations and individuals are making a good use of it. This can be seen in the in the gradual movement from analogue technologies to the digital technologies in almost all sectors of the country. The new media has metamorphosed the use of advertising to becoming a more purposeful element in the International Marketing Communications. This is because with the new media advertising has become more accessible, ubiquitous and very handy and can be easily manipulated to one's use as a consumer. This has further empowered the consumers towards becoming the creators of information while having a variety of information to choose from. The new media has also help advertisers to create awareness for their goods at low costs on investments. This has in turn improved the gross national product of the nation and it is further leading to greater presence in the global world. However this paper avers that the new media is in its growing state in Nigeria but with the availability of adequate power supply, bridging of the digital divide between the urban and the rural dwellers in Nigeria, there is also the need to build a viable and all-encompassing broadband infrastructure round the country. With this and many more, advertising will be maximally utilized for national transformation.

Keywords: Advertising, New Media, National Development, Consumers and Advertisers.

INTRODUCTION

The global village, which was first coined by Marshal McLuhan (1964, 1989), is the world we now live in. A world where Internet has taken over almost every aspect of life be it economic, social, entertainment, political, information and culture. Communication messages are now disseminated worldwide in real time and within the split of a second in contrast to the old media in which the feedback is delayed. In the new media feedback has become instant. The new media has affected all aspects of mass communication, journalism and electronic media. One of the area in which new media has changed the landscape is advertising. Advertising, which, is the creation of awareness for products, services and ideas has gone digital with the advent of the Internet and new media hence the emergence of digital advertising. Digital advertising refers to marketing media that is digitally displayed. Digital advertising, also known as new media advertising or Internet advertising, is essentially using the online opportunity to communicate marketing messages to consumers or visitors via the Internet.

Digital advertising is:

The leverage of Internet technologies or the new media to deliver promotional advertisements and messages delivered through email, social media websites, online advertising on search engines, banner ads on mobile or Web sites and affiliates programs. Digital advertising is the use of electronic, computing, and Internet-based technologies to change traditional revenue models and business designs to the mutual benefit of customers and vendors. Iloka (1999,p.16)

Digital advertising by definition implies the usage of Internet based technologies to create mutual understanding between producers and consumers of products and services. The digitalization and the rapid development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and software with the advent of the Internet not only changed the face of communication but also that of information and communication management for the individual and the society. The Internet is a collection of

computer networks that connect millions of computers around the world and is constantly changing and expanding. Bell (1998, p.11). As the Internet and information and computer technologies developed in geometric progression, their contribution to national development also increases. The time when countries are islands to themselves and what happens within their enclaves is restricted to only their geographical spaces seem to be in antiquity now. Any event or incident is now disseminated live and real time, a good example was that of the whole world watching the planes plummet into the World Trade Centre on September 9th 2001. The ubiquity of the Internet and the ICT in peoples and nations lives has changed the idea of national development.

National development is the transformation of every sector of a particular country from one phase to the other usually from a bad or fairly good one to a better phase. National development is usually reflected in the lives of the people of a nation and also in the progress notched by the nation in all areas such as governance, politics, economics, social, media, cultural and so on. This is seen in growth and development of social infrastructure, physical infrastructure and human capital development. It is also manifested in services, media and in areas like marketing communication and advertising. This transformation can be seen in the gradual movement from analogue technologies to the digital technologies in almost all sectors of the country especially the advertising industry.

Internet, information and communication technologies entrance into Nigerian advertising had metamorphosed the process of marketing products, ideas and services. Agencies and clients are becoming aware of the need and impact of online advertising and are beginning to give advice to their clients on advertising on the online platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Yahoo. Agencies now have the opportunity of educating clients based on their demands on the right platform to use in placing their advertising campaigns and how to use them. Access to the Internet and other mobile applications had changed consumers' behaviour towards the traditional media. They now gravitate more to their smartphones, tablets, I-Pads, virtual platforms, YouTube and the likes because of their ubiquity in present times.

Winer (2008, p.5) avers that with the emergence of the Internet or technological devices such as computers, digital cameras, cell phones etc.,

marketers today are talking of creating "experiences" for their customers in attempts to differentiate their products and services from competitors and this are made easier through the new media. As a result, marketers begin to look for ways to interact more with their customers as well as to allow their customers to interact more with them. Also markets are becoming fragmented with the traditional demographic breakdowns become less and less useful hence marketers are more interested in "behavioural targeting," that is, focusing on developing personalized messages based on what people are doing on the Web for example tracking "clickstreams" or the paths that people take when surfing the Web, or where they are by their personal GPS "system" and the cell phone and not what we want people to do on the web.

These changes have impacted marketers in that the increase in the number of "alternative" media and the increased competition in many markets has fragmented markets, shifted power in the transaction to buyers, and resulted in less TV viewing. These changes in the marketplace are not simply U.S. phenomena. The same trends are occurring in other countries. For example, in India, people of undergraduate age are just as familiar with and use social networking and other similar media just as frequently as their counterparts in Western

Countries and in Asian countries like China, Singapore, Korea, and Japan. However, Nigeria is not left behind as children, adolescents, youths and workers are avid users of the new media for social interaction and identity creation. In consonance to this (Boyd and Heer, 2006, p.518) found out that the presentation of self is determined and given structure by the identities of those with whom one is connected. Hence one's identity can be known by those one identifies with on the new media just like the saying 'show me your friend and I will tell you who you are'.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In its primitive form advertising can be traced back to ancient Egyptian's bricklayers who branded their bricks (Farquhar, 1989) as an advertising medium since bricks were limited at the time. The advent of new printing technologies rise of literacy rates and consumer affluence, and other factors, made possible mass circulation of newspapers, magazines and mass audience radio programmes. Not quite long the first modern advertising agency in the U.S., Walter Thompson was created (Patrick, 1993).

At first the new agency served only as a media buying service, but customers demand dictated expansion into a full line of advertising services. Advertising reached its prime in the 1950s, sparked by the popularity of a small number of major networks, which made delivery of mass audience relatively easy. Mass media created a mass audience for mass-produced products. Popular culture celebrated the advertising executive as the epitome of the post-war marketing executive. However, by 1985, the signs of advertising decline have been inescapable due to advance in technology. The mass media could no longer deliver a mass audience. At the same time, consumers demanded more customization in their products (of which "service" was a major component) or flexibly manufactured hard goods.

In Nigeria the early years heralded the transmission of advertising messages through traditional media like the town crier, gongs and songs. During the colonial pre-independent years, the Europeans in Nigeria handled advertising. Ozoh (1998, p.67) posits that the Europeans advertising offices in Nigeria served as extensions of their multinational companies around West Africa. After independence, the local practitioners took over from their European counterparts as a result of the Indigenization Decree of 1974. Thereafter, the entire advertising business was handled by West African Publicity Limited which later split to Lintas Limited handling the main advertising concerns and Afro Media handling outdoor advertising. However, the improvement of new technologies at home and workplace, made advertising messages to be transmitted on the Internet leading to the fragmentation of the mass media audiences who receive advertising messages through the Internet. This fragmentation resulted into a convergence between a number of industries and technologies: computers (both hardware and software), telecommunications, information services, consumer electronics, and content providers such as entertainment, news, and educational services creating a new media market.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Technological Determinism

This is a theory propounded by Marshal McLuhan in 1964, which means that inventions in technology invariably cause cultural change. He is of the opinion that the medium is the message meaning the way we live is largely a

function of the way we process information. He is saying that we are living in a new age of technology that has never been experienced before and the new media is changing the way people think, act, and feel hence people react to and accommodate technological change. This he said had led to the creation of a new world in societies by advances in information technology called the global village. He sees the medium that is the channels of communication as the primary cause of cultural change, which in this case is the online platform or Internet and posits that the message performs a subordinate role. This means that the new media had created a new platform for information dissemination and had given room for immediacy and interaction between buyers and sellers of information.

Uses and Gratification

This is a theory by Blumler and Katz's, which suggests that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. Users take an active part in the communication process and are goal oriented in their media use. The theorists say that a media user seeks out a media source that best fulfils the needs of the user. Uses and gratifications assume that the user has alternate choices to satisfy their needs. This theory was used for this study to show that the users of online technologies make use of these media as they want and as they like as long as it fulfils their need for information. This is why they seek for information out of the numerous information available to them, the ones they need and also determine how it is to be treated not as the producer of such information did intend it.

PROBLEM

Communication messages had been transferred from one place to the other through the traditional media of newspapers, radio and television and this had led to problems of delayed feedback over the years but with the world becoming digitized comes the emergence of new technologies and media. A new world had been created where the new media calls the shot while the traditional media follows. This paper examines the effect or impact of the new media through digital advertising on national transformation. It then examines the ubiquity of digital advertising, its characteristics, functions and contributions to national development while concluding by exploring the state of such advertising in Nigeria and suggests what needs to be done to actualise and maximise its use in national development.

NEW MEDIA FORMS

New media technologies take on different forms namely Internet forums, web logs, social networks, micro blogging, pictures, videos and so on. In confirmation of this, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p.20) posits that there are six different types of social media namely Collaborative projects e.g. Wikipedia, blogs and micro blogs e.g. Twitter, Content Communities e.g. YouTube, social networking sites e.g. Facebook, Virtual game worlds e.g. world of witchcraft and Virtual social network e.g. Second life. Taking this further, Lon Safko and David K. Brake (2009) categorised new media technologies to include:

- **Social networks**– these sites are used to connect with other people and to share information. Popular tools include Facebook, Friendster, LinkedIn, Ning, Orkut, Bebo, KickApps, MOLI, Fast Pitch! and Plaxo.
- **“Publish”** – These sites disseminate information, for instance, data about your company or products. Publishing sites include TypePad, Blogger, Wikipedia and Joomla.
- **“Photo sharing”** – Popular photo-posting tools include Radar.net, SmugMug, Zoomr, Flickr, Picasa, Photobucket and Twitxr. Flickr lets users share visual content easily.
- **“Audio”** –Some firms communicate with their employees and customers via audio files over the Web hence they use popular tools include iTunes, Rhapsody and Podbean.
- **“Video”** – Popular tools include YouTube, Metacafe, Hulu, Viddler and Google Video. YouTube, an Internet sensation, enables users to share their videos with the world.
- **“Livecasting”** – Some tools for broadcasting in real time include SHOUTcast, BlogTalkRadio, TalkShoe, Justin.tv and Live365.
- **“Gaming”** – Similar to virtual worlds, these online environments feature competitive games like World of Warcraft, Entropia Universe or Halo3. In EverQuest, a “three dimensional...multiplayer online role-playing game,” users interact in specific roles. Firms like Pizza Hut have used EverQuest as a “viral marketing tool.”
- **“Productivity applications”** – This category is a catchall for business productivity tools, such as ReadNotify, Zoho, Zoomerang, Constant Contact and Eventful.
- **“Rich site summary”** (RSS) – This tool keeps you updated on the most current

information from Web sites you select. Popular tools include RSS 2.0, Atom and PingShot. One RSS, FeedBurner, is an “audience engagement” and publicity application that enables companies to promote their online content. It provides useful data about visitors to your blog and their reactions to it. **“Search”** – These tools help you find what you want on the Web. Popular versions include Technorati, Redlasso, EveryZing, MetaTube, Yahoo! Search and IceRocket. Google Search is the Internet’s most popular search application (130 million U.S. users in May, 2008). It lets companies link their Web pages and targeted online ads to pages that searchers select and visit often.

- **“Mobile”** – Many businesspeople see their cell phones as their most crucial technological devices. New media cell phone tools include Jumbuck, CallWave, airG, Jott and Brightkite. Jott, a “voice transcription service,” lets you call a number from your cell to transcribe a note to anyone, including yourself. It is an effortless way to remind you of upcoming tasks and meetings. CallWave offers a lot of cell phone tools, like voicemail-to-text, “synchronized video,” audio conferences and e-mail faxes.
- **“Interpersonal”** – These Web sites help people communicate with each other. They include WebEx, iChat, Meebo, Acrobat Connect and Skype. Go To Meeting is a popular online meeting application that also offers VoIP (voice over internet protocol) “meeting recording” and multiple-user screen sharing, which is great for slide shows.

NEW MEDIA CHARACTERISTICS

New media enjoys five distinctive characteristics: digitality, convergency, interactivity, hypertextuality, and virtuality (Chen & Zhang, 2010; Lister, Doverly, Giddings, Grant, & Kelly, 2009 and Flew, 2005.). New media or digital media dematerializes media text by converting data from analogue into digital form, which allows all kind of mathematical operations. It also makes it possible for large amount of information to be retrieved, manipulated, and stored in a very limited space. The new media also converges the forms and functions of information, media, electronic communication, and electronic computing. The convergence power of new media can be easily demonstrated by the emergence of the Internet in terms of its

powerful functions embedded in computer information technologies and broadband communication networks. This also leads to the industry convergence displayed by the constant merger of big media companies and the product and service convergence evidenced by the successful connection and combination of media's material, product, and service in the media industry. Third, the interactive function of new media, i.e., between users and the system regarding the use of information resources, provides users a great freedom in producing and reproducing the content and form of the information during the interaction. In addition, the interactivity of new media makes the interaction among different networks and the retrieving of information through different operational systems, both available and convenient. The freedom in controlling the information endows new media a great power in the process of human communication.

Fourth, the hypertextuality of new media brings forth a global network centre in which information can freely move around and spontaneously interconnect. This global network phenomenon has begun to rebuild a new life experience for human beings, which in turn will lead the transformation of economic activities, cultural patterns, interactional styles, and other aspects of human society (Castells, 2000). Finally, the cyberspace formed by new media allows people to generate virtual experience and reality. The invisible cyberspace not only induces a gap between reality and virtuality, but also effectuates the free alternation of one's gender, personality, appearance, and occupation. The formation of virtual community that crosses all the boundaries of human society definitely will challenge the way we perceive reality and have traditionally defined identity. (Jones, 1995).

NEW MEDIA FUNCTIONS

Businesses use the new media to promote products or services with 'word-of-mouth' advertising e.g. Facebook enables Internet users to connect via numerous clever applications and make suggestions to their friends and acquaintances on the platform. Facebook is also useful for contacts within organizations. MySpace, one of the first, most popular social network sites, grows daily by 230,000 new users working in 15 different languages. It is great for reaching targeted groups, and features numerous popular applications, including blogs, instant messaging and widgets, which are on-screen

tools, such as clocks and weather reports. LinkedIn, a primary business network, has 24 million professionals in 150 industries. It's a good source of job listings and candidates' resumes. The new media encourages creativity as customers are allowed to publish their own materials on any topic. e.g Blogger available in 41 languages enables the instantaneous sharing of all types of information in multiple formats, including video, making it a superior marketing tool. Millions of bloggers use Word Press, which employs "open-source software" to let users develop their own blogs or Web sites. Multiple authors can co-develop blogs on Word Press, which offers 60 templates to simplify Web site construction.

The new media aids the sharing of pictures or visual images e.g Flickr lets users share visual content. People at different locations can work together to organize photos and videos, so this is a great application for families and friends, as well as businesses that want to distribute visual images. Flickr account holders can upload 100 megabits of visuals monthly. It has more than three million users. Through Podcast.com marketers reach targeted consumers and professionals can use them to showcase their expertise. One is also enabled to podcast (personal on demand broadcast) digital audio or video files to selected users. Businesses also use YouTube to market products and services. Highly versatile, YouTube even works with the Apple iPhone. For example, Brightcove, an online video publishing service, allows companies to display films to build brand awareness and disseminate recruitment information.

It is also an effective platform for distance learning e.g. the NOUN programme where students learn via materials downloaded from the Internet. The new media is used for quick communication. Businesses use Twitter to communicate quickly with employees and to conduct basic market research by evaluating users' comments and reactions. Through BlogTalkRadio, users can create and broadcast their own radio shows over the Internet. This service offers numerous professional features, including functions that enable users to field telephone calls during their broadcasts and to distribute MP3s (digital audio files using data compression). It's an excellent way to disseminate audio content, such as product information, educational materials and public relations fact sheets. Business meetings can even be broadcast. The new media allows

people to interact, for example, Second Life enables users, called “residents,” to come together and interact in the guise of avatars (virtual alter egos in various forms, from humans to robots, animals or mythical creatures). Second Life has some 15 million accounts registered worldwide. Its participants’ interactions often involve trading. Entrepreneurs can use Second Life to promote products or develop online businesses. Companies that are active on Second Life (e.g., CNN, Coca-Cola, Dell and Disney) often have 24-hour staff to voice the avatars that greet you in their Second Life stores. The American Cancer Society raised more than “200,000 real dollars” in this virtual world, where John Wiley & Sons publishing has a bookstore you can visit. Sun Microsystems uses it to run a “virtual campus” for staff training. Often, 70,000 users are logged on simultaneously.

Acteva helps organizations manage events. Its software generates attendee lists, name badges and other materials. With Google Docs, users can collaborate on the development and editing of documents, including spread sheets. It features the versatility of a commercial suite of office programs, and has surveying and polling capacity. The free desktop application MSGTAG tells you when others receive and view e-mails you’ve sent. The TiddlyWiki aggregator works well for collaborative online ventures, like project management, and for publication of user manuals and product tutorials. Digg lets users relay Internet content and Web site information to help keep employees, salespeople and clients up-to-date with Web-based information. Yelp is a popular rating service for retailers, restaurants and other businesses that need public feedback. The new media has also made people to be current about events happening around them. An example is the TiddlyWiki aggregator that works well for collaborative online ventures, like project management, and for publication of user manuals and product tutorials. Digg lets users relay Internet content and Web site information to help keep employees, salespeople and clients up-to-date with Web-based information. Yelp is a popular rating service for retailers, restaurants and other businesses that need public feedback. Kotler and Armstrong (2010, p.529) enumerated the following as the major online marketing domains namely Business to Consumer (B2C), Business to Business (B2B), Consumer to Consumer (C2C) Consumer to Business (C2B) and Business to Government (B2G).

DIGITAL ADVERTISING’S CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Tax Breaks for Conducting Business Online

Many merchants using online advertising can save more in taxes than if they sell using traditional retail or a physical storefront. Online merchants can also write-off certain portions of utilities like vehicles, office equipment.

Cheaper than Print Advertising

Digital advertising is more cost effective than traditional advertising particularly for small businesses because it is much quicker to update and maintain digital marketing campaigns, especially as technology continues to improve. By conducting business Online and using the proven form of e-Commerce marketing, merchants have the potential to generate far more in Return On Investment (ROI) with less spending than they could ever hope to expect from costly print advertising campaigns.

Interactive Ads or Marketing Campaigns

One benefit to online advertising is the merchant’s ability to develop and improve a number of interactive advertising or marketing campaigns designed to reach out and engage shoppers. Videos, flash, presentations, graphics, moving animations; they can all be used as interactive devices to help entice shoppers to drop in and shop around for the products or services offered.

Flexible Ad or Marketing Campaigns

With digital advertising, merchants can develop more creative marketing ideas and launch them using the power and flexibility of the Web for both delivery and functionality.

Builds Lasting Customer Relationships

Technology and the reach of the Web have made it easier for online merchants to form long lasting relationships. That, combined with tools that make customer management and servicing more efficient, using up less time, has also sparked more creative ways to market to customers online. Online can have a direct influence on how customers view the overall brand or product. If done correctly, it will help build lasting customer relationships, which in itself has benefits.

Helps Build Brand Credibility

Digital advertising helps in increasing brand awareness and credibility among shoppers looking for what you sell. With the ever-

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expanding list of online marketing channels, it's getting easier for sellers to spread the word and saturate certain areas of the Web with their products and brand. As shoppers scour the Web for information about a product that interests them they notice the companies and brands that they see, many take note and store them away for next time. By utilizing the proper marketing channels in your niche, you may very well find yourself building long standing credibility and brand awareness among shoppers and existing customers. Better brand awareness and credibility also helps to increase word of mouth buzz

Gathers Feedback from Customers

Having a website that displays and offers products for sale is a great way to attract customers, make money and grow a business where you can get feedback about your site. Some digital advertising tools are meant to gather information or feedback from customers about how the business can improve. Conducting business online and offering polls, questionnaires and feedback forms is a great way to get direct input from existing customers and even shoppers who haven't yet purchased.

Conduct Cheap Market Research

Many online sellers use their site, customers and competitors as a way to conduct market research surrounding a particular product or one in which they hope to introduce in the future. It's much easier to catch a glimpse into a particular selling market using the resources and data from online businesses, including your own. Trying to conduct market research for a brick and mortar store can be difficult and may take much time to plan and execute. With the availability of data on the Web and through the use of new technologies offered on the Web, online sellers are able to conduct market or product research quickly, efficiently and without hassle.

Lower Start-up Costs/ Increase Efficiency

Many times it is much cheaper and takes less start-up capital to open up an e-Commerce business compared to a retail store location or chain. By starting out the business with less investment capital or start-up funds, it can help to increase efficiency and leaves more funds available for actually marketing the brand or products.

Increases Growth or Opportunity Potential

Marketing Online has the potential to increase store growth at a much quicker rate than traditional marketing or retail business. Digital

advertising can also generate more opportunities for any business no matter the products you sell and potentially at a much quicker rate. Major media networks may pick up on you via online channels and report your business to consumers, while you may not have ended up on their radar had you only sold offline. The Online market offers a much fairer playing field and opens up doors that otherwise might be closed off to a retailer. It allows nearly any business, no matter their size to grow and have the same potential opportunities as larger sellers do.

Global Market Reach

The World Wide Web spans across and reaches exactly the world. With the reach and technology offered through digital advertising, sellers have the ability to target consumers anywhere in the world, even smaller sections or local regions. Online marketing initiatives are deployed in a variety of ways, to span globally and having this type of reach opens up the possibility that customers can find the business from anywhere they reside and buy from them without having to travel to another location having global market reach means potentially having customers worldwide, without the limitations of traditional media or geographic boundaries. Finally, digital advertising communicates directly to your niche/target market when executed properly and it is easy to measure the success of your campaign.

THE STATE OF ADVERTISING IN NIGERIA

On the Nigerian landscape, marketers and their clients are becoming aware of the need and underlying effects of online marketing. The trend has started to build where agencies ignorantly advise clients to use banner ads and display ads for campaign on Facebook, Yahoo, local news and entertainment sites, as opposed to looking critically at what the clients want to achieve and advising them on all the various digital marketing platforms available and what each of them can achieve and how to use them Azoto (2015, p.5). The Nigerian Communication Communications (NCC) Nigeria has recorded over 75 million active mobile phone lines as at March 2010. By 2012, this had increased by about 69.01%. 84% of urban dwellers have access to mobile phones while only 58.5% of rural dwellers have access to mobile phones, about 3 billion advertising impressions are served in Nigeria every month which amounts to more than 1140 impressions every second. Also, media consumption is

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changing too with the rise of convergent technology. Social media is growing while the number of consumers online is growing rapidly because the Internet makes their lifestyle easier as they tend to shop around more because they have access to several other points of information and they use the Internet to research before committing to purchase. Many are early adopters of technology and do have a worldview. Presently, so many things like phone, tablets, applications, games consoles, websites and the rest take people's attention. All of a sudden there are so many places people are spending their time and to capture attention, you no longer need a good product, you need something that is either exceptional or meets a definite need of the public. Consumer attention span is also reducing and there is a jostling for space between different media. There is a bigger measure of control in the online space. And there is a more accurate measure of who is interacting, engaging with and viewing your adverts. Companies also want to have a presence in as many areas as possible hence the need for digital advertising.

Digital advertising is also a lot more customisable and can fit a wider range of budgets. People prefer a sustained presence online. Another increasingly important aspect of digital advertising is feedback to ensure that there is a way to measure the reach of your adverts and have an idea of whom your adverts are impacting. Digital advertising gives room for audience participation to get the potential customer excited about using your product or service. The current 'share a coke' campaign being carried out by the Coca-Cola Company has risen to become a global phenomenon. There is a need for content generators to constantly try to create a need for participation at the end of every advert.

State of Digital Marketing in Nigeria

The Nigerian Digital space has witnessed tremendous growth, people now turn to their digital devices for a lot of activities; information consumption, communication, socialisation, entertainment etc.

Table 1: People on digital platforms in Nigeria (NCC, 2012)

Year	Internet Users**	Penetration (% of Pop)	Total Population	Non-Users (Internetless)	1Y User Change	1Y User Change	Population Change
2016*	86,219,965	46.1 %	186,987,563	100,767,598	5 %	4,124,967	2.63 %
2015*	82,094,998	45.1 %	182,201,962	100,106,964	8.4 %	6,348,247	2.66 %
2014	75,746,751	42.7 %	177,475,986	101,729,235	15.3 %	10,076,474	2.7 %
2013	65,670,276	38 %	172,816,517	107,146,241	19 %	10,487,424	2.72 %
2012	55,182,852	32.8 %	168,240,403	113,057,551	18.5 %	8,622,851	2.73 %
2011	46,560,001	28.4 %	163,770,669	117,210,668	21.7 %	8,298,063	2.73 %
2010	38,261,938	24 %	159,424,742	121,162,804	23.3 %	7,220,509	2.72 %
2009	31,041,429	20 %	155,207,145	124,165,716	29.5 %	7,074,482	2.71 %
2008	23,966,947	15.9 %	151,115,683	127,148,736	140.6 %	14,004,723	2.69 %
2007	9,962,224	6.8 %	147,152,502	137,190,278	25.4 %	2,015,189	2.68 %
2006	7,947,035	5.5 %	143,318,011	135,370,976	60.4 %	2,992,013	2.66 %
2005	4,955,023	3.5 %	139,611,303	134,656,280	183.2 %	3,205,447	2.63 %
2004	1,749,576	1.3 %	136,033,321	134,283,745	136.2 %	1,009,007	2.6 %
2003	740,569	0.6 %	132,581,484	131,840,915	78.8 %	326,383	2.58 %
2002	414,185	0.3 %	129,246,283	128,832,098	265.6 %	300,896	2.56 %
2001	113,289	0.1 %	126,014,935	125,901,646	43.9 %	34,549	2.55 %
2000	78,740	0.1 %	122,876,723	122,797,983	60.1 %	29,565	2.55 %

* Estimate for July 1, 2016

** **Internet User** = individual who can access the Internet at home, via any device type and connection.

Source: **Internet Live Stats** (www.InternetLiveStats.com)

Elaboration of data by International Telecommunication Union (ITU), World Bank, and United Nations Population Division.

With the projected growth of Internet penetration in the country, there is the need for digital marketing campaigns to be carefully planned and executed in line with the objectives of key performing indices (KPI) clearly spelt out. It is of utmost importance to develop an

effective Internet marketing strategy by pondering over what the company is trying to achieve by answering questions such as:

Does the company want to communicate news? Is it to build a corporate identity?

Is it to distribute marketing information? Does it want to provide a live information source? Does the brand want consumers to purchase/find best buys? Does the brand want to sell, auction, or perhaps get people to call? On the basis of these would benefits be derived from online advertising?

Against the above, it is therefore necessary to highlight benefits to both agencies and brands respectively. Digital advertising has led to consumer involvement and interaction, brand engagement through content creation, media accountability, measurability and effectiveness and customer relationship management. Digital advertising has led to effective advertising approach which creates synergy between diverse media, higher margins – increased innovation and development of unique services and tools, more robust planning platform – using strengths of traditional media to drive awareness to digital touch points, creates a point of differentiation amidst other agencies. It is therefore noteworthy to state that online marketing for Nigerian brands should be about engagement; a reason to notice, a reason to stay with your consumer because Nigerian brands cannot ignore the power of the Internet. The first step is to consider the brand's Internet strategy by identifying the overall goals of the business, as this is the case in all business and strategy planning. Once you have planned your overall strategic goals, you need to decide how your online Internet strategy can complement your off-line plans. An Internet marketing strategy should include: specific business goals, objectives for internet activity, and a programme of actions that will achieve your business goals, benchmarks for measuring achievement, a business model – what it will cost and what it will achieve.

However, here are some of the issues facing digital advertising in Nigeria. Lack of Internet connection and most of the people in the rural areas are not connected or do not have Internet connections hence they are cut off from it. Low-speed Internet connections are another barrier. Also, if companies build large or over-complicated websites, individuals connected to the Internet via dial-up connections or mobile devices experience significant delays in content delivery. Another issue is insufficient ability to measure impact, lack of internal capability, and difficulty convincing senior management about the need for digital advertising. There is scepticism on making online payment hence

there are late adopters of new technology. In Nigeria, we have very few specialized digital marketing agencies/consultants that do offer professional services, and this affects the output and results got from test campaigns thereby making organizations think of online advertising and interactive marketing as ineffective.

CONCLUSION

The fact that many Nigerians, most especially those in urban areas have adopted the Internet as part of daily life is not in doubt and wherever people congregate, you have markets developing and where you have markets developing you have advertising of products and services. In Nigeria, this has led to evolution of platforms like VConnect, OLX, Vanguard online, Nairaland and LindaIkeji's Blog. Advertising online is far more effective than traditional forms of marketing because you can target a particular demography, country, search keyword or phrases. It lets you reach new customers and grow your business. It's unique because you can customize your budget, where, when your ads appear; determine the budget that you can afford while measuring the ROI of your Ads. However, in order to achieve optimum utilisation of digital advertising in Nigeria, there is the need to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban Nigerians, In addition, there is the need to build a viable and all encompassing broadband infrastructure round the country.

Educationally, the areas of multimedia, digital advertising and new media need to be infused into our educational level than present level. Also, there is the need for government to reduce tariffs on computer hardware and other technological devices to a level that they are freely available and cheap to acquire by Nigerians. Furthermore there is the need to encourage the growth of homemade software and apps by Nigerians that will power digital advertising. Researches are also to be conducted on the state of digital advertising in Nigeria and solutions sought on how digital advertising can be well utilised in the country.

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Citation: Dr. Femi Adedina, Abolanle Oguntola, "Maximizing Digital Advertising for Effective National Development ". *Journal of Advertising and Public Relations*, 1(2), 2018, pp. 38-47.

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