DIGITAL ADVERTISING: AWARENESS, ATTITUDES, AND RESPONSIVENESS OF NIGERIAN YOUTH
(A study of students in Ibadan Polytechnic)

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Abstract

Without a doubt, the rise in popularity of online media has resulted in a paradigm shift in how advertisers and marketers approach the promotion of their products and services and the influence of their target market's purchasing decisions. However, research on the advertisements placed on digital platforms such as facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube Channel TikTok and Google Ads, shows that the level of awareness, attitude, and responsiveness of Nigerian youth are still in their infancy. This study therefore examines the level of awareness, attitude, and responsiveness to digital advertising on the part of Nigerian youths who are thought to be acting in the interests of digital marketing future. The survey finds that young people have an average awareness of digital advertising, drawing a sample size of 100 from marketing department, Ibadan Polytechnic. However, it was discovered that these young people have some "attention challenges" in noticing and observing the advertisements in their virtual interactions with digital platforms. Their attitude towards the advertisements also raises alarm bells: though they observe digital advertisements, the majority of them would not make a purchase or visit the website. Uses-and-gratification theory was used for this study.

Keywords: Digital Advertising, advertising, marketing, Nigerian youth

Introduction

Every young person in Nigeria aspires to have a stable and long-lasting source of income, so many of them explore the harmful use of social media that is bringing shame to their nation around the world. One needs to hustle and work extremely hard in a legal way in order to succeed. Digital advertising is one of the social media platforms that Nigerian youth can use to monetize their use of social media.

The Digital Advertising Bureau claims that in 2013 digital advertising surpassed broadcast television for the first time ever and crossed the $40 billion mark. According to e-Marketer, the sector's compound annual growth rate (CAGR) since 2004 has been 18% for both internet and mobile advertising, with CAGR reaching $180 billion soon (Amy, 2014).

Given the rising cost of traditional media, many advertisers have either increased their spending on digital media or have shifted away from it because they believe interactive advertising on the internet, mobile devices, and social networks is more effective and efficient. However, this change does not imply that conventional advertising will disappear anytime soon. Numerous studies have shown that digital advertising complements traditional media such as TV, print, and other traditional media to increase marketing effectiveness (ABAC, 2014).
Thus, through online marketing and social media, this social engagement gives marketers and advertisers the chance to advertise their products and services and influence the purchasing decisions of their customers and target audiences (Evans, 2010; Rudloff and Frey, 2010).

Statement of the problem

The world of advertising is currently going through a new phase called digital advertising, which has completely moved advertising online from how it was previously. Nigerian youth may be familiar with or have heard of digital advertising. Compared to how it is used in developed countries, the full understanding of digital advertising is still being learned. Therefore, this study investigates the Digital Advertising: Awareness, Attitudes, And Responsiveness of Nigerian Youth In a nutshell, this study conducts a thorough investigation to ascertain whether young people who participate in digital advertising from observation have positive attitudes and responsiveness to these new forms of advertising.

Objectives of the study

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. To determine the level of awareness of digital advertising among youth
2. To investigate the attitude of Nigerian youth towards digital advertising

Research Question

1. What is the level of awareness of digital advertising among Nigerian youth?
2. What is the attitude of Nigerian youth toward digital advertising?

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

Digital Advertising

Digital advertising is a targeted, data-driven advertising strategy for reaching consumers in every stage of the buying funnel and moving them from one stage of the buying funnel to the next. From awareness to purchase, you can use digital media advertising (and online ad channels like Google) to drive revenue.

Digital advertising refers to the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites. Social media advertising campaigns usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks. Impact of social media can be seen in television advertisements which sign off with a plea for consumers to visit their websites, Creating a Facebook or Twitter page that offers users an engaging online experience, entertaining incentives, and a sense of community that they actually want to be a part of (Kaushik, 2012). Social media has developed into a platform that is readily available to anyone with Internet access, according to Bajpai et al. (2012). Organizations that communicate more often promote brand awareness and frequently provide better customer service. Additionally, social media provides businesses with a relatively low-cost platform to run advertising and marketing campaigns.

Working Tools of Digital Advertising

WebFX (2021) states that advertisers can take advantage of four types of digital advertising for the successful growth and development of their businesses:

- Search
- Display
- Social Media
- Influencer

Search

80 percent of shoppers start their product research online. Many go to their favorite search engine, like Google, Bing, or Yahoo!, to get started. With search advertising, your company can promote your products and services on these platforms (WebFX, 2021). Ads can appear in search results (like in the examples above), they can also display across affiliate websites. Google, for example, features a search partner's network. This network consists of sites approved to display ads created for Google.

When ads is created for search, one target specific searches or keywords. For the best results, business should target transactional keywords, which means the searcher wants to buy something, like landscaping services for their business or emergency heating and cooling services for their home (WebFX, 2021).
According to Okigbo (2017), Sales force, a software-as-a-service (SaaS) provider, appears as an organic and paid search result. The company's coordinated PPC and SEO effort allows it to capitalize on searches related to its products and services

Display

Your ads are displayed on affiliate websites, which may include YouTube, when you use display advertising. Google, Bing, and Yahoo! are just a few examples of search engines where you can start a display advertising campaign. Due to the fact that Google's display ads are visible on YouTube, many businesses prefer using Google.
Given that 80% of people admit to switching between search and video channels when researching a good or service, Google's ownership of YouTube is significant. Thus, the business could connect with customers through both essential channels.

Social media

Companies can also take advantage of digital advertising on social media networks, which include: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and Pinterest

Businesses can produce text, image, and video ads using social media. If one chooses to use social media to promote a business, try to create video or image ads instead of text ones because they tend to perform better.
Social media gives businesses access to more bid options as a digital media advertising channel. For instance, if one wants to gain more followers on Twitter, they can use cost-per-follow (CPF). To reach passive candidates, one can also use LinkedIn's cost-per-send (CPS) feature.

Influencer

Partnerships with influencers (Celebrities and Socialites) on various social media networks are another benefit of social media advertising for businesses. Influencers are extremely valuable because they command the respect and trust of their intended audience, which enables them to successfully recommend goods and services (Adebayo, 2018:23) Influencers use a different pricing model than other digital advertising channels. A flat fee based on an influencer's number of followers or post engagement rates, for instance, might apply. Or they could charge business owners based on how well sponsored posts perform.

- Influencers on Instagram, for instance, typically use one of two pricing models.
- $10 per post, per 1000 followers
- $250 to $750 for every 1000 post engagements

Numerous businesses favor influencers who are paid based on post engagement. This is due to the fact that post engagement frequently offers a more accurate picture of an influencer's audience. Additionally, since doing so moves users down the funnel, advertisers want users to engage with their sponsored posts.

Awareness of Digital Advertising among Nigerian Youth

Digital advertising awareness is a form of marketing and advertising campaign which uses the internet to promote product and services to audience and platform users using formats such as images, text audio and video. This is creating a marketing strategy online in a way to enhance and entice the consumers awareness with what the company is offering in a short term (Product) and long term message. Digital advertising awareness can be formulated according to the goals and objective of the company in the image the company seeks to form in the mind of consumers (MBA Skool team, 2020).

According to Babeeko (2020), the new trend in digital advertising is by employing a larger percentage of young people by new generation of advertising agencies that are emerging, they kept encouraging youths to join them because one of the key cardinal pillars of any ads campaign is to embrace youth as this is 2st century where everything has gone digital.
Given that Nigeria is not a developed nation like Europe, which is well-versed in technology and its applications, the majority of Nigerian youth are not too knowledgeable about digital advertising (Okorie, 2019).

Attitudes of Nigerian Youth towards Digital Advertising

Njeri (2017) asserts that youth who see adverts online react by making search online for further information, or posting their views and opinions about the ads on social media.

For consumers who encounter advertisements from multiple sources, information search is essential. When they see a product or service advertised, younger people used to research it online. Consumers are increasingly using social media as a forum for conversation and interaction with brands. In fact, some young people utilize their social media platforms to talk about advertisements, while others interact with brands directly through their online platforms.
Businesses must look for greater insights into their marketing approach for this demographic as internet usage among the questioned age group continues to rise. As consumers who view brand commercials seek out more information, behaviors like online brand research and social media interactions with and about businesses continue to rise rapidly (Njeri, 2017).

The youth of today are more vocal about their contacts with brands before, during, and after making purchases of goods and services. These young consumers are more likely to be using their smartphone while watching TV, engaging with outdoor media, or even listening to the radio due to the phenomena of the second screen. This is as a result of Smartphone usage growing more quickly than other kinds of media. The most common form of advertising that people encounter and largely use on their smart phones is digital (Okorie, 2019).

Response of Nigerian Youths to Digital Advertising

Due to their admiration for it, Nigerian youth's responsiveness is a fascinating topic. Because young people are thought to have more influence over the major family purchasing decisions,
Nigerian youth at times don't click on the advertisements they see online because the rate of fraud in Nigeria is on the high side and this gives them the negative thought that there is every possibility that they are going to lose their money when they pay for product or services online (Ayinde, 2017)

Olajide (2021) opines that what if happens that what you ordered for may not be what you would get in the long run as the picture put online to advertise products which are always appealing to the eyes are not the same thing you would get in real life.

In their study, Xu, Oh, and Teo (2017) discovered a favorable association between personalisation and knowledge, credibility, and diverting the commercial message, but a negative relationship with annoyance. Multimedia Location-Based Advertising (LBA) messages improve attitudes and raise the likelihood that users will utilize the LBA application. Expectations are raised by the stream experience and advertising quality. The value of advertising has a favorable effect on purchase intention. The results of the study by Kim and colleagues have a connection to incentives, distraction, and validity. Relevance, entertainment, and motivations are all closely related to stream experience.

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In a research published in 2019, Blanco, Blasco, and Azorin investigated the impacts of independent factors (mobile advertising attitude) and independent variables (stimulation, usefulness, advertising attitudes) on the English and Spanish mobile phone markets. The findings showed a positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This finding shows a fascinating link between customer attitudes and behavior in response to mobile advertising.

Theoretical Framework

The Uses and Gratifications Theory of Mass Communication and the Social Cognitive Theory of Psychology and Mass Communication serve as the theoretical foundation for this study. The Uses and Gratifications approach, which asserts that people actively and purposefully choose between the various media that surround them based on their needs and the various gratifications these media provide, is fundamental to studies analyzing media adoption and use patterns (Katz et al., 1974; Ruggiero, 2000; Roy, 2008; Cauwenberg et al., 2010).

The Uses and Gratifications approach places the responsibility for connecting audience members' needs and media preferences squarely on their shoulders in the process of mass communication. It implies that people's needs have an impact on the media they choose, how they use particular media, and the satisfactions the media provide. The uses-and-gratifications perspective asserts that media outlets compete with other information sources to satisfy audience needs (Katz et al., 1974a). Understanding the usage patterns of the various media forms requires an understanding of the Uses and Gratification Theory The choice between new and traditional media will ultimately depend more on how well these technologies satisfy the unique interests and needs of individual consumers than on the current social distribution of necessary equipment and skills. This is especially true in light of the development of new media (Cauwenberg et al., 2010).According to Kocak and Terkan's 2009 analysis of this approach, "Uses and Gratification approach takes the use of mass media as a process of the satisfaction of needs and takes the media audiences as individuals that are active, rational, and resistant to the effects and makes choices according to their preferences" (p. 2).

In response to the changes taking place in the digitization of content, the creation and distribution of digital artifacts, and other areas of new media, a wide range of new theories, approaches, and methodologies have been proposed. These new trends have also motivated scholars to revive traditional theories in the field of mass communication and journalism, which could aid in examining digital communication. Hence, in determining the media use behaviors and motives of the Nigerian youths who consistently engage and interact with the emerging social media, the uses and gratification approach gives some important data. Also, the proponents of Uses and Gratification argue that the technique is suitable for studying new communication technologies. As Ruggiero (2000) puts it, “since new technologies present people with an increase number of media choices, motivation and satisfaction become even more crucial components of audience analysis” (p. 14)

The uses and gratifications approach (U&G), though an old media theory, is presented as a theoretical lens and empirical means for studying how audiences engage with new media. U&G provides a unique perspective on new media as it stresses the relevance of media in the context of everyday life, examining uses, gratifications sought and obtained, and media practices over time. In particular with the increasing adoption of social media, the U&G approach seems promising in providing a theoretical framework from which to examine whatkinds of social media are adopted by what segments of the population, and what gratifications individuals obtain from their use of various social media platforms, sites, and services. This will help us better understand what motivates users to spend large amounts of time on these sites sharing, liking/disliking, forwarding, adding, and disseminating content. In other words, each of the new media concepts – interactivity, abundance, demassification, asynchrony, etc – offers a vortex of communication behaviors to examine, using the uses and gratification theory. Media scholars have also suggested that traditional models of Uses and Gratification may still provide a useful framework from which to begin to study Internet and new media communication (Kuehn, 1994; December, 1996; Morris & Ogan, 1996; Ruggiero, 2000).
The U&G theory effectively explains why and how certain demographic groups find satisfaction in any type of advertising present on new media when discussing digital advertising. It would also clarify why and how social media content other than advertisements competes for audiences' attention, which could make some advertisements less appealing and less effective.

Methodology

The qualitative design is used for this study as the purpose of this study is to determine opportunities for Nigerian youth through digital advertising among the youth in Ibadan polytechnic community using students in marketing department of the institution to drive the study.

The population of the study is the students in the Department 0f Marketing. The population of students in this department is 1,100 and that was used for this study. Also, Quota sampling techniques was used as not all the students could be used for the purpose of this study. Therefore, only 110 full time HND II students in the marketing department were used as they are mature and would find best answers to the questions. A 10ure% sample size of the population was used. Therefore, the sample size for this study is One hundred and ten (110). Research instrument used for this study was questionnaire which has two sections Section A and B.

Data obtained from the questionnaires is analysed and presented as simple and contingency (cross-tabulated) tables. The tables contain simple counts (frequency) and percentages. In these analyses, descriptive and analytical methods are used using SPSS.

Data Presentation and Discussion

There were 10 useless questions that respondents did not complete out of the 110 total questionnaires that were issued to respondents from the Polytechnic, with a 100% return rate. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to analyze the valid ones (SPSS). The specifics of the data analysis based on the study's goals are provided below. However, for the sake of comprehensibility, the data presentation and the discussion of relevant findings are hereunder merged together.

Table 1: Demographic Variables

Demographics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male Female	22 78	22% 78%
Age bracket	26-30 years 22-25 years 19-21 years	18 50 32	18% 50% 32%

From the demographic data above, 78 percent of the respondents were females whereas 22 percent were males. This shows an almost even distribution of the young people who were surveyed. Data also show that for majority of them, their ages were spread between 19 to 25 years. This indicates that these young people are between the ages adjudged by the United Nations to be the ideal definition of youth – between the ages of 15 and 24 (United Nations, 2003) - as only 18 percent were between the ages of 26 – 30 years.

Table 2: Level of awareness of digital advertising among Nigerian youth

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
I am not too aware	16	16
I am very aware	66	66
I am aware	18	18
Total	**100**	**100**

Table 2above indicates that the extent to which Nigerian youth are aware of digital advertising is on an average, the respondents representing 66(66%) of the population study, followed by **High** representing 18(18%) of the population while low represents 16(16%) of the study population.

Table 3: Attitude of Nigerian youth to digital advertising

Statement	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Digital advertising is a new phase of advertising that youth can engage in	Yes No	60 40	60% 40%
*I will visit a product website after seeing an advertisement on*line	Yes No	32 64	3% 64%
Will you tell your friend to like or click on the advert seen online?	Sometimes Yes No	28 50 22	28% 50% 22%
I always look out for digital advertisements because they tell me what's new and popular	Yes No	62 38	52% 38%

Table 3. above indicates that digital advertising is a new phase of advertising that youth can engage in with "Yes" Frequency 60(60%) representing the population study, followed by "No" Frequency 40(40%) representing the population of the study.

Above indicates that Nigerian youth will not visit a product after seeing it advertisement online with "Yes" Frequency 32(32%) representing the population study, followed by "No" Frequency 64(64%) representing the population of the study.

Above indicates that Nigerian youth will like a product/brand when they are told their friend likes such as "Yes" Frequency 50(50%) representing the population study, followed by "Sometimes" Frequency
In the column that indicates how always Nigerian youth look out for digital advertisements shows that 62 respondents representing 62% of the populationagreed that Nigerian youth look out for digital advertising to make their choice of the kind of product to buy.

Conclusion

This paper set out to tackle three research objectives – To determine the level of awareness of digital advertising among youth; to investigate the attitude of Nigerian youth towards digital advertising and to know the responsiveness of Nigerian Youth to digital advertising. The study finds that this study is known to some extent among the surveyed Nigerian youths – undergraduate students and that over 60 percent make use of digital advertising to make their choice of the product they want to buy. This use is however facilitated by their internet-enabled mobile phones. It shows that Nigerian youths are beginning to join their contemporaries in other societies to engage more with the Internet and digital advertising.

Furthermore, it was discovered that the majority of the young people who participated in the survey were aware of digital platform advertisements because many of them had seen them and could name a few of the different types. These include, among other things, product advertisements, cooperative advertisements, telecommunications, advertisements for music festivals, real estate, and advertisements for international scholarships. However, it is concluded that the youths' vicarious usage of digital platforms may be accompanied by what have been dubbed "attention difficulties."

This seems to be the case as, despite 62 percent of respondents saying they can see the adverts without difficulty, 38 percent say they do notice them but opt not to reply to them. It's interesting that the majority of them still insist that they continuously search digital platforms for advertising since they provide one clear advantage: they inform them of what's trending and fresh.

Marketing collateral and ads are pervasive on digital platforms. There is proof for this. While media experts might be quick to conclude that marketing gimmicks and commercials are among the wants and pleasures of media users and the causes for "digitalization," this study has found a little inconsistency with this. Although they are prominent and enticing, advertising do not, in the perspective of the young people studied, represent a more significant kind of gratification than using digital platforms. This is explained by the potential that people may be busy with a number of different gratifications they are seeking on Facebook and so may not notice the flood of adverts that continue to "compete" for space on these digital platforms.

Recommendations

- Advertisers should do more by making use of digital advertising as this is the trend in the world of advertising appeals that are centered on youth.
- Youth should not only know about digital advertising as avenue to purchase products, services or idea but explores it as avenue for self-empowerment. Such as creating contents, showcasing their products, services, ideas and skills.
- Nigerian youth should acquire the technical-know-how to create job opportunities and decongest unemployment market.

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