

Innovations

Digital Marketing and Customers Purchase Intention of Smart Phones in South-South Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the effects of digital marketing on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria. The research employed the cross-sectional survey research design method. The population of the study was limited to customers of smartphone dealers in South-South Nigeria. The Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size of 384 respondents'. The study used the stratified random sampling method. Structured questionnaire was used in the study to obtain data. The reliability of the instrument was assessed through a test-retest reliability method. The data collected for the study were analysed by using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. Findings showed that digital marketing explained 65% of the variations in customers purchase intention. The study concluded that e-mail marketing, display advertising, social media marketing, affiliate marketing and influencer marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria. The study recommended amongst others that smartphones companies should collaborate with influencers whose audience matches their target demographic and share an affinity for smartphones.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Customers Purchase Intention, Smartphones

Introduction

Smartphones have evolved into one of the most essential channels for handling personal information in the modern world because of their distinctive features and vast market availability. As consumers become increasingly aware of the increasing value of smartphone devices and have simple access to their available operating systems and applications, they swiftly move to cutting edge brands with unique features (Rahman & Haque, 2021). Modern smartphones have largely taken the place of PCs, enabling users to accomplish a lot on this tiny hand-held device. It can be used for many other activities, such as exchanging information, buying items, browsing, learning, and shopping. Using conventional marketing strategies to reach target audiences has grown riskier for Smartphones dealers in this digital age. Due to the digital transformation and changes in

consumer behaviour, businesses that need to adapt their attitudes and discover new methods to attract and keep customers now face additional challenges (Peçanha, 2019; Hekkens, 2019). The term "digital marketing" describes the creation of technology based, online-supported conventional marketing tactics. Understanding the dynamics and characteristics of digital marketing is crucial for the development and implementation of successful marketing strategy initiatives. Nuseir and Aljumah (2020) asserted that a salesperson needs to have relevant experience and in-depth brand knowledge in order to communicate with customers successfully and effectively. Understanding customers' communication methods, engagement trends, and desired content are necessary for developing effective digital marketing strategies. A deeper understanding of buyers is required in order to evaluate customer behaviour and interaction preferences and create more engaging experiences.

Corporations are consistently searching for ways to improve their competitive standing using technological innovation and growth-promoting creativity. In order to support their operations and provide timely and up-to-date information, the majority of organizations have learned the value of adopting and installing technologically complex applications (Aggarwal, 2017). As a result of greater competition, digital technologies have altered business processes, mainly communication and the dissemination of information within corporations. It is widely accepted that digital applications and other forms of web-based technology are the most effective means of fostering meaningful connections with customers. It has been noted that in today's highly competitive corporate climate, traditional marketing strategies are no longer adequate for generating growth and maintaining a competitive edge (Kaur, 2017). Recent technological developments have sped up the transition of marketing to the digital world. The marketing industry has advanced to the point where it is critical to adapt to current digital trends. The emergence of digital technology has significantly changed how people live their lives and expanded the scope of their consumption. In response to these ongoing shifts in sociocultural dynamics, these remarks highlight, theories about, and explain how digital consumer culture supports digital acculturation and consumer purchase intention.

The accessibility and connection of social media, mobile technology, and other digital technologies and apps promote users to assimilate, integrate, or acculturate outside of their immediate social circles (Yen & Dey, 2019). Customers reside in a dynamic environment that is always evolving. This fast-paced environment is significantly impacted by technological advancement. These days, almost every person possesses some sort of digital connection. People have a tendency to waste a lot of time on their cellphones, tablets, and personal computers. This presents numerous opportunities for businesses, in particular, to profit from such a digital shift. As a result, it should not come as a surprise that there has been a significant shift in marketing away from traditional media such as television and newspapers and towards online digital media. Irrespective of the company's size, digital marketing should be at the centre of any and all promotional efforts. These days, no one starts a firm without first creating a detailed digital marketing strategy. The majority of businesses in the modern information age adopt digital marketing strategies (Kamal, 2016). In addition to opening up new avenues for product and service distribution, digital marketing seeks to build relationships with buyers. Recognising and adapting to the shifting expectations of the consumer base can only benefit the business.

Digital marketing initiatives allow businesses to have one-on-one conversations with clients no matter where they are. In addition, digital marketing employs a wide variety of channels to reach its intended audience, including social media, websites, multimedia ads, online display advertising, search engine marketing, email marketing, communicating marketing (including opinion polls), game augmentation, and mobile marketing (Garg, Bansal, & Single, 2021). Marketers now have a new tool at their disposal: online surveys to get customer feedback. Analysis of the data yields insights about how best to address customer concerns. As the e-market has grown, so has the number of potential customers that businesses can reach through social media. Social media and other digital media resources have made global internet shopping possible. The importance of technology and social media applications in today's competitive business climate has

prompted increased attention from academics conducting research on the topic (Gazal, Montague, Poudel, & Wiedenbeck, 2016).

Because of cheap cellphones and easy access to cheap data, the number of people in Nigeria who have internet connection has increased significantly. Because of this situation, businesses may easily communicate with their target audience through internet channels, develop brand recognition, and sell their products or services. The brand's internet presence is essential since customers will research products online before making a purchase. Digital technologies provide consumers the power to compare costs and find the best deal. These well-known facts have led to the necessity to look into how digital marketing affects customers purchase intentions for smartphones in South-South Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

All stages of the customer buying decision-making process, including information search, brand awareness, purchasing behavior, and post-purchase communication and evaluation, are significantly impacted by digital marketing. The target audience has migrated to a digital setting. The COVID-19 outbreak has significantly altered every part of our way of knowing, thinking, and living. Marketers and consumers are both working to adjust to this bizarre new normal situation. Following significant losses, businesses of all sizes are struggling to survive. The widespread illness concern and the required lockdown have transformed people's attitudes, behaviors, and spending patterns. The use of contemporary digital platforms like social media in consumer marketing is the area that has drawn the most attention. Few studies have examined the effects of these shifts on the ability of industrial enterprises to effectively manage their sales channels, serve those who purchase from them, conduct marketing campaigns, or maintain relationships with their current customer base (Jermisittiparsert, et al 2019, Vipaporn, et al 2019).

The most effective media for businesses in the past were television, newspapers, and billboards. The bulk of people, however, do not have time to watch TV or read newspapers during this hectic day. These channels are no longer as effective at promoting a brand. Live programming, like that for cricket events, can be useful on occasion. To reach consumers, however, firms must use a reliable media outlet to promote their goods. Making improper use of a customer's provided email address is one of the worst things a company can do. Once an organization has a customer's address, it should use that information to send those offers and information that they are likely to find useful, including coupons and discounts. As a result of constant exposure to commercials on television, radio, and print publications, buyers have developed an aversion to any and all types of advertising. The same is true for promotions shown on the internet, where viewers can choose to ignore banner ads, dismiss pop-up windows, or even fast-forward through them while watching a movie. Shoppers can choose which ads they want to interact with. When people go online, they usually have something specific in mind, like getting their news fix, listening to some tunes, making some new acquaintances, or making a purchase. Buyers who frequent websites might easily become sidetracked and diverted from online advertisements due to the abundance of competing options available to them.

A good social media plan requires full-time management. It requires a tremendous investment of time, energy, and resources. A company has a significant chance of failing if it lacks the resources to provide it with the necessary care. Small businesses typically fail in social media because they have unreasonably high expectations and wait too long for results. And when they see that things are not going as they had hoped, they quit up too soon. Although there are many options available for digital marketing, its potential still seems to be underutilized. This is mostly because marketers do not understand digital marketing, and the phenomena is still in its early stages. As a result, there aren't many effective role models to follow. When marketers deliver messages to customers without first getting their approval, the terms "permission" and "acceptance" are employed. As a result of this action, people grow irritated and perhaps hostile towards the business. An illustration of a poor marketing tactic is when messages are sent to clients who haven't opted in

to receive them. As digital marketing becomes more prevalent, more research is required to provide a thorough knowledge of the concept because Nigeria has very few regulations regulating its use. It is therefore crucial to examine how digital marketing influence consumers' decisions to purchase smartphones in South-South Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the effects of digital marketing on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the effects of e-mail marketing on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.
2. Determine the effects of display advertising on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.
3. Determine the effects of social media marketing on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.
4. Assess the effects of affiliate marketing on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.
5. Ascertain the effects of influencer marketing on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

H₁: E-mail marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.

H₂: Display advertising had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.

H₃: Social media marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.

H₄: Affiliate marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.

H₅: Influencer marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Digital Marketing

Chen and Lin's (2019) asserted that digital marketing encompasses marketing practices, including branding, that employ a range of media such as blogs, websites, emails, Ad Words, and diverse social media platforms. The utilization of digital marketing has brought about a transformation in the way marketers engage with their target audience. Yasmin et al. (2015) reported that a significant proportion of consumers possess and employ a diverse array of digital gadgets, such as personal computers, mobile devices, and various social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and YouTube. The employment of these technologies has been instrumental in propelling the remarkable expansion of digital advertising spending. According to Hollebeek and Macky's (2019) research, there has been a growing trend among marketers to allocate a greater portion of their budget towards digital marketing. This trend is particularly evident in the automotive, financial services, and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industries. Furthermore, it is evident that consumers are exhibiting consistent engagement in digital marketing endeavors through their utilization of digital platforms for purchasing, sharing information, expressing brand loyalty, providing ratings and feedback, offering opinions, and directly interacting with marketers (Classen & Friedli, 2019).

The global economic paradigm has been altered due to the emergence of digital marketing, which has resulted in the expansion of consumer power (Buttle & Maklan, 2019). Furthermore, digital marketing has the potential to foster a diverse customer base and cultivate a robust rapport with the company via digital platforms, thereby influencing their purchasing behavior (Lodhi & Shoaib, 2017). Digital marketing is an effective means of reinforcing brand value and enhancing customer relationships, as it allows for the sharing of user opinions, ideas, and experiences (Wai, et al. 2019).

Garcia et al. (2019) posited that digital marketing is an innovative approach within the realm of online marketing that has a significant impact on customer engagement across various platforms such as social media, mobile applications, blogs, and search engine Optimization tools. Sawicki's (2016) stated that digital marketing involves the examination of the vast digital technological landscape that functions as a medium for engaging a significant audience base. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) stated that the concept of digital marketing involves prioritizing the needs and preferences of current customers, or alternatively, adopting a customer-centric approach to business operations. Furthermore, it possesses significant potential for promoting products and services via an e-commerce platform with instantaneous online connectivity. Al-Azzam and Al-Mizeed (2021) opined that digital marketing provides businesses with the opportunity to connect with consumers through diverse channels, such as mobile marketing, social media marketing, online advertising, and email marketing.

E-Mail Marketing

Email marketing refers to the practice of disseminating a promotional message through electronic mail, typically to a targeted audience. In the most comprehensive sense, any electronic mail correspondence directed towards a current or potential customer could be classified as a form of email marketing. Email marketing encompasses the act of disseminating promotional content, soliciting business inquiries, or soliciting contributions or sales via electronic mail. Rai (2018) opined that emails directed towards customers, regardless of whether they are new or returning, can be classified as a form of email marketing. The term "email marketing" pertains to the practice of sending electronic messages to individuals who are either prospective or existing customers. Taylor's (2020) posited that email marketing offers a notable advantage in terms of meaningfulness, as it allows companies to customize their messages for different clients and provide relevant content and promotions based on their profiles.

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing approach can be perceived as a component of internet-based marketing endeavors that reinforce pre-existing web-oriented marketing strategies, such as digital mail bulletins and web-based promotional undertakings (Omar & Atteya, 2020). Social media is a software platform that enables and promotes engagement in discussions. With the evolution of social media, the influence of consumer opinions has increased significantly, resulting in a greater reach and impact of their voices. Social media marketing has a direct and positive impact on brand awareness. According to Kingsnorth's (2016) findings, social media marketing holds the second most significant impact on brand awareness, following the mobile channel.

Al-Abdallah et al. (2021) posited that social media marketing has the potential to facilitate crowdsourcing, enhance brand awareness, and provide a platform for customers to express their opinions. Additionally, social media marketing presents numerous branding opportunities. Furthermore, it has the potential to recognise individuals who are considered experts in their field, increase the volume of visitors to a brand's website, provide unique and specific information, establish a customer base, and cultivate confidence in the brand (Lăzăroiu, et al. 2020). Al Amin et al. (2020) asserted that the implementation of these strategies can potentially enhance brand confidence and positively impact brand perception.

Display Advertising

Digital advertising is a form of marketing that disseminates information to the public and influences potential buyers to engage in commercial transactions. The assimilation of knowledge is facilitated by a congenial environment, as posited by Mishra and Mahalik (2017). Furthermore, the utilisation of online advertising marketing is a strategic approach that leverages the vast expanse of the Internet to attract traffic to websites and disseminate marketing communications to the relevant demographic (Budiman, 2021). Al-Azzam and Al-Mizeed (2021) posited that the Internet has been acknowledged as a viable advertising platform due to its ability to facilitate uninterrupted communication between advertisers and customers. Goldfarb (2014) defined online display advertising as encompassing various forms of digital advertisements, including banners, plain text, media-rich content, and video ads. Yeo et al. (2020) identified various online marketing tools that are commonly employed by businesses, including display advertising, web banner ads, mobile advertising, centrefold ads, text ads, pop-ups/pop-under ads, floating ads, expanding ads, trick banners, news feed ads, email advertising, and HTML ads. The strategies utilised by businesses are contingent upon the nature of the products and services they offer.

Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing refers to the practise wherein an organisation engages the services of reputable third-party publishers to advertise and promote its products and services on their websites (Lammenett, 2017). Patrick and Hee (2019) posited that affiliate marketing can be characterised as a strategic approach employed by organisations to delegate the sales of their products to external entities. This technique involves the utilisation of advertising channels, such as product data files, text links, or banners. When a customer interacts with these links by clicking on them (click), contacting the organisation (leads), or making a purchase (sale) of the recommended products, the affiliate marketer is entitled to receive a commission from the organisation (Fox & Wareham, 2010). Affiliate marketing is a form of online marketing wherein two entities, namely an affiliate and a merchant, collaborate. The affiliate, typically a website owner, undertakes the task of promoting and selling products or services belonging to another party on their website. Dwivedi et al. (2017) opined that an affiliate marketing programme is a performance-oriented online marketing strategy in which a merchant (referred to as the actor) enters into an agreement with an affiliate or publisher (another actor) to display a link from its own websites on affiliated sites.

Influencer Marketing

The practise of influencer marketing, which involves influencers promoting a brand's products or services on their personal social media platforms, is experiencing significant growth. Rakuten (2019) opined that brands have the opportunity to capitalise on the strong connections between influencers and their followers by enlisting influencers to endorse their products or services for customers who already identify with the influencers' image or beliefs. The reputation of influencers is primarily established through the content they share and their engagement on social media platforms, often in partnership with their followers (Hu, et al., 2020; Schouten et al., 2019). Frequently, individuals tend to direct their attention towards a more specialised audience with whom they possess common interests, perceiving them as virtual companions. Influencers possess a perceived proximity to their respective audiences, which contributes to their perceived trustworthiness (Lou & Yuan, 2019) or credibility (Sokolova & Kefi, 2019) in comparison to traditional celebrities. Consequently, followers often seek out or depend on their opinions to guide their purchasing choices, thereby highlighting the significance and potential consequences of social media influencers (Casaló et al., 2020).

Consumers Purchase Intention

Stefan (2019) asserted that contemporary consumers exhibit brand preferences and deliberate on various factors such as the quality of goods or services offered before making a purchase decision. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that preceding phases of the decision-making process hold significance in shaping purchase decisions; nevertheless, marketers retain the opportunity to exert influence on consumers who have already progressed to the purchasing stage (Iblasi, et al 2016). The significance of purchase intention lies in the desire of businesses to increase sales of a particular brand or product, with the aim of generating a one-time windfall of profit (Abrar, 2020). The inclination to make a purchase is contingent upon several factors, such as customer contentment, allegiance, and preservation. A brand possesses distinct advantages or characteristics that motivate consumers to engage in buying behavior. The aforementioned attributes encompass the perception of the brand, knowledge of the product, quality, involvement, and traits. Consumers consider products before making purchases (Kurniasari&Budiatmo, 2018). This process includes looking up information about products or brands, references, and marketing. Customers' propensity to buy a product or service from a specific company is measured by their "purchase intentions." Intents are the customers' premeditated moves towards making a purchase. The degree of happiness that customers expect and experience influences their intentions to make purchases (Chaffey, 2021).

Conceptual Framework

Variables of Digital Marketing
(Independent Variables)

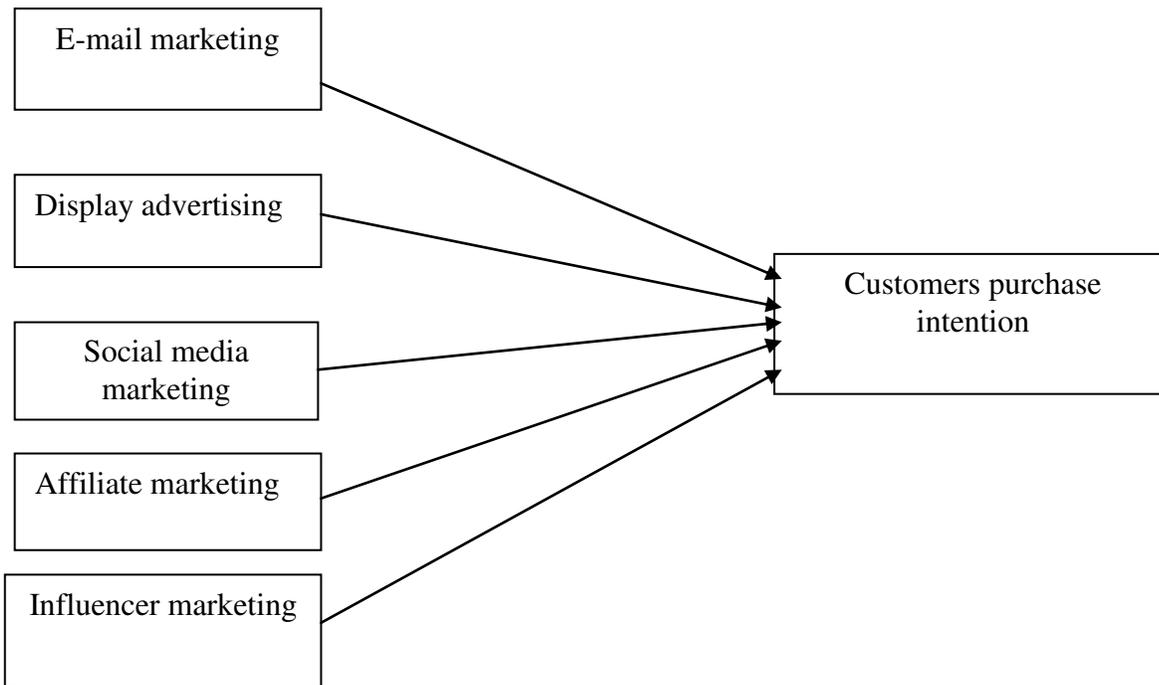


Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework

Source: Researcher's Model (2023)

Figure 2.1 is the proposed conceptual framework adapted from two similar studies carried out by Nuseir and Aljumah (2020), Al-Azzam, and Al-Mizeed (2021) showing an illustration of how the components of digital marketing affect customer purchase intention.

E-mail marketing and customers purchase intention

Email marketing involves the dissemination of targeted messages to a specific audience at the opportune time. Ugonna et al. (2017) asserted that email can be utilised by companies to send customized messages that meet the specific needs of the customers they serve. Furthermore, email marketing is a type of direct marketing that establishes a connection with target audiences through the transmission of messages or promotional content via email (Lodhi & Shoaib, 2017). Furthermore, the study conducted by Yang et al. (2018) revealed that email marketing campaigns exert a noteworthy influence on aspects such as database quality and user registration form design, as well as industrial domains, and that these effects are closely associated with the performance of the organisation.

Display advertising and customers purchase intention

Dhore and Godbole (2019) posited that internet advertising provides businesses with the chance to promote their products to a diverse range of online platforms, thereby augmenting their potential for future sales. Moreover, the flexibility of online advertising enables businesses to conveniently modify their offerings, services, and information (Afzal & Khan, 2015). Display advertising offers a significant advantage in terms of consumer targeting, particularly through the utilisation of behavioural targeting technology. In contrast to display advertising, which leverages individual-level consumer behaviour data, offline advertising employs a broad-based approach to target customers based on demographic or psychographic factors.

Social media marketing and customers purchase intention

Al-Mohammadi and Gazzaz (2020) opined that the strategic utilisation of social media marketing can lead to an augmentation of brand awareness and an improvement in sales outcomes. Lal et al. (2020) asserted that social media platforms can serve as a means for brands to engage in communication with their intended audiences. Social media offers brands the potential to gain influence and receive feedback from consumers, which are two additional advantages. Lappeman et al. (2018) opined that prompt responses to unfavourable social media comments can safeguard a firm's image and restore the confidence of its customers. This holds particularly true when the response is personalised rather than standardised. The proficiency to engage in social media communication is a crucial skill for professionals in the marketing industry. The study conducted by Kang and Park (2018) revealed that the message structure, specifically interactivity, formality, and immediacy, significantly impacted customers' brand perceptions, corporate trust, and purchase intentions.

Affiliate marketing and customers purchase intention

Affiliate marketers provide personalized recommendations based on their knowledge and understanding of their audience. When customers receive recommendations from trusted sources, it increases their confidence in the product and positively influences their purchase intention (Dwivedi, et al. 2017). Customers may be more inclined to purchase a product when it comes with a recommendation from someone they trust. Affiliate marketers often build trust and credibility with their audience over time (Enberg, 2021). By consistently providing valuable and honest information, they establish themselves as reliable sources (Lammenett, 2017). When customers trust an affiliate marketer, their purchase intention is more likely to be positively influenced. They feel more comfortable making a purchase based on the affiliate's endorsement and believe that the product will meet their needs.

Influencer marketing and customers purchase intention

Influencers often specialize in a particular niche or industry and are considered experts in their respective fields. Their expertise and knowledge about products or services make their recommendations credible (Fashionista, 2019). When influencers provide in-depth information, reviews, or demonstrations, it helps customers understand the product better and influences their purchase intention. Influencers often connect with their audience on a personal level (Leung, et al. 2022). They share aspects of their lives, experiences, and aspirations, making their followers feel connected. When influencers promote a product or service that aligns with their audience's desires or aspirations, it can significantly impact customers' purchase intention (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Customers see the product as a way to emulate or achieve a lifestyle they aspire to. Influencers actively engage with their audience through comments, direct messages, or live sessions (Rakuten, 2019). This interaction builds a sense of community and connection. When influencers respond to queries or provide personalized recommendations, it enhances customers' purchase intention (Lee & Eastin 2020; Lou & Yuan 2019).

Theoretical Review

The Regulatory Focus Theory

The study was anchored on the Regulatory Focus Theory proposed by Higgins in 1997 to gain a deeper understanding of buyer characteristics, including their personalities, beliefs, and motivational states, through their goal orientation. The theory can serve as a valuable approach to discerning discrepancies among buyers. The self-concept, also known as the "actual-self," is brought to light through the phenomenon of self-discrepancy. The concept of the "ideal-self" pertains to an individual's self-representations, encompassing their personal aspirations, or those of their significant others, such as a friend, partner, or parent. Higgins postulated that the conducts and objectives associated with an emphasis on the disparity between the actual and ideal selves are separate from those associated with a focus on the disparity between the ought and actual selves, based on his self-discrepancy theory. According to Higgins (1997), the promotion focus is characterised by a tendency to prioritise desired outcomes, thereby enhancing motivation when success is deemed attainable. Conversely, the prevention focus is typified by an inclination to avoid undesirable outcomes. The extent to which individuals endeavour to achieve their objectives or fulfil their responsibilities is contingent upon their temperament and the contextual circumstances.

Methodology

Research Design

The research employed the cross-sectional survey research design method as it facilitated the collection of data from participants at a particular point in time. The rationale for employing a cross-sectional survey design is based on its pragmatic and economical nature, which is deemed appropriate within the temporal constraints of the study.

Population of the Study

In relation to the sampling frame used for the study, the population is defined. The population of any research study is the total list of all the components or objects of the clearly defined group being investigated. The population of the study was limited to customers of smartphone dealers in South-South Nigeria.

Sample Size Determination

The population of the study is unknown, because it was centered on customers of smartphone dealers in South-South Nigeria. The Cochran (1977) formula is a usually used for determining sample size in studies with an unknown population size. The formula for the Cochran sample size calculation is as follows:

$$n = z^2 * p * q / e^2$$

Where:

n = sample size

z = z-score corresponding to the desired level of confidence

p = estimated proportion of the population with the characteristic or behavior of interest

q = 1 - p

e = level of precision desired (margin of error)

$$n = \frac{Z^2 PQ}{e^2}$$

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.025}$$

$$n = 384$$

Sampling Technique

The study used the stratified random sampling method. The use of stratified sampling approach was made since it guarantees that each demographic subgroup is adequately represented in the sample.

The Research Instrument

Structured questionnaire was used in the study to obtain data. Members of the chosen sample were given the specified questionnaire, which was presented in a likert scale format. The instrument was sent to the respondents with a covering note explaining the purpose of the study and assuring them of the confidentiality of their answers. The purpose of the opening letter or covering letter is to encourage respondents to give truthful and important answers to the questions. There are two sections in the questionnaire: Section A and Section B. The respondents' profiles was in Section A, and the questions relating to the channels of digital marketing and customers purchase intention were in Section B. A five (5) point Likert scale question with responses ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) were included in the survey.

Validation of Research Instrument

The strength of the measurement or how well it fulfills its stated purpose is what determines a measurement's validity. The questionnaire was administered to eminent specialists in the field of Marketing at the University of Nigeria Enugu Campus in order to validate the instrument for data collection. As a result, modifications and corrections were made to guarantee that it yields the requested information.

Reliability of Research Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was assessed through a test-retest reliability method. The Cronbach's Alpha test was utilised to express the reliability coefficient. According to Hair et al (2006) the minimum threshold for acceptability in quantitative research ranges from 0.60 to 0.70.

Table 1 Reliability test for all items in the Questionnaire

S/N	Dimensions	Number of items	Source	Alpha (α) Value
1	E-mail Marketing	5	Chaparro-Peláez et al. (2022)	0.714
2	Display Advertising	5	Bayer, et al. (2020)	0.713
3	Social Media Marketing	5	Jamil et al (2022)	0.716
4	Affiliate Marketing	5	Nwokah and Ngirika (2018)	0.718
5	Influencer Marketing	5	Belanche, et al (2021); Leung, et al (2022)	0.717
6	Customer Purchase Intention	5	Belanche, et al (2021); Chatzoglou, et al (2022)	0.712

Source: output of pilot survey data, 2023.

Methods of Data Analyses

The data collected for the study were analysed by using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to summarise and explicate the sampling parameter. To ascertain the strength of relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the result. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis helped to determine the extent to which the independent variables affected the dependent variable. The data analysis for this study was conducted using the SPSS software, specifically version 25, which is a statistical package used in social sciences research.

Model Specification

The following model specification was developed for the study;

$$Y = F(X) \dots\dots\dots(i)$$

$$Y = F(EMK, DAV, SMMK, AM, IM) \dots\dots\dots(ii)$$

The model below shows the study hypotheses formulation:

$$Y = a_0 + a_1 EMK + a_2 DAV + a_3 SMMK + a_4 AM + a_5 IM + e \dots\dots\dots(iii)$$

Where:

a_0 = Constant Coefficient

$a_1 - a_5$ = Coefficients

Where:

CPI = Customer Purchase Intention (Y)

EMK = E-mail Marketing (a_1)

DAV = Display Advertising (a_2)

SMMK = Social Media Marketing (a_3)

AM = Affiliate Marketing(a_4)

IM = Influencer Marketing(a_5)

Results and Discussion

Table 2. Response Rate

S/N	Questionnaire	Number	Percentage
1	Copies of questionnaire administered	384	100
2	Copies of questionnaire retrieved	371	97
3	Unreturned copies of questionnaire	13	3

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 2 showed that out of the 384 copies of questionnaire administered, 371(97%) copies were retrieved and were properly filled. Therefore, the analysis in this chapter is based on the response rate of 97%.

Table 3. Frequency Analysis of Respondents Profile

S/N	Characteristics of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender:		
	Male	152	41
	Female	219	59
	Total	371	100
2	Age Range:		
	Below 30	52	14
	31-40	176	47
	Above 41	143	39
Total	371	100	
3	Marital Status:		
	Single	186	50
	Married	154	42
	Divorced	31	8
Total	371	100	
4	Educational qualification:		
	OND/ NCE	151	41
	HND/ BSc	189	51
	MSc/MBA	31	8
Total	371	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 showed the background attributes of the research respondents for analytical purposes representing 97% of the sample size. It was indicated on the gender composition that 152 of the respondents representing 41% of the sample were male, while 219 being 59% were female. The age bracket of the respondents showed that 52 of the respondents being 14% were below 30 years of age; 176 of the respondents representing 47% falls within the age bracket of 31-40 years of age; lastly, 143 of the respondents representing 39% were above 41 years of age. The marital composition of the respondents indicated that; 186 of the sample respondents were single being 50%, 154 of the respondents being 42%were married, while 31 other respondents being 8% were divorced. On the educational background of the sample, it was indicated that most of the respondents have a high level of those with tertiary background with 189 respondents

representing 51% being HND/ BSc holders; while 151 respondents being 41% of the sample size were OND/ NCE holders, while 31 respondents being 8% of the sample size were MSc/MBA holders.

Table 4. Dimensions of Digital Marketing and Customers Purchase Intention

Model	Coefficients ^a					Collinearity Statistics	
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1 (Constant)	-13.182	1.553		-8.488	.000		
E-mail marketing	.407	.042	.345	9.699	.000	.746	1.341
Display advertising	.354	.038	.302	9.393	.000	.908	1.101
Social media marketing	.121	.041	.095	2.927	.004	.890	1.124
Affiliate marketing	.189	.032	.196	5.891	.000	.846	1.182
Influencer marketing	.464	.037	.413	12.695	.000	.889	1.125

a. Dependent Variable: Customers purchase intention

The regression model was, therefore;

$$CPI = -13.182 + 0.407 EMK + 0.354 DAV + 0.121 SMMK + 0.189AM + 0.464IM$$

Table 5 Fitness of the Models

Model		ANOVA ^a				
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	186.926	5	37.385	139.493	.000 ^b
	Residual	97.823	365	.268		
	Total	284.749	370			

a. Dependent Variable: Customers purchase intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer marketing, Social media marketing, Affiliate marketing, Display advertising, E-mail marketing

The results in table 5 showed the F measurement of 139.493 and the p value (0.000) which was less than 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the model was statistically significant

Table 6 Variations in Customers Purchase Intention

Model	Model Summary			
	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.810 ^a	.656	.652	.518

a. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer marketing, Social media marketing, Affiliate marketing, Display advertising, E-mail marketing

The results in Table 6 showed that digital marketing explained 65% of the variations in customers purchase intention.

Table 4 showed that e-mail marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention ($\beta = 0.345$, $p < 0.05$). Test of hypothesis one showed that e-mail marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria ($0.000 < 0.05$). The result agreed with Taylor's (2020) perspective, that email marketing offers a notable advantage in terms of meaningfulness, as it allows companies to customize their messages for different customers and provide relevant content and promotions based on their profiles. Furthermore, the study conducted by Yang et al. (2018) revealed that email marketing campaigns exert a noteworthy influence on aspects such as database quality and user registration form design, as well as industrial domains, and that these effects are closely associated with the performance of the organisation. The result suggested that email marketing can be utilised to notify individuals on an email roster regarding novel products and promotions.

Table 4 showed that display advertising had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention ($\beta = 0.302$, $p < 0.05$). Test of hypothesis two showed that display advertising had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria ($0.000 < 0.05$). Dinner et al. (2014) asserted that display advertising has a greater potential to establish brand recognition compared to paid search in the realm of online advertising. Colicev et al. (2018) asserted that online display advertising exhibits certain characteristics of conventional advertising, including the company's promotional approach and capacity to cultivate brand recognition. The result suggested that display advertising offers a significant advantage in terms of consumer targeting, particularly through the utilisation of behavioural targeting technology.

Table 4 showed that social media marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention ($\beta = 0.095$, $p < 0.05$). Test of hypothesis three showed that social media marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria ($0.004 < 0.05$). The result agreed with Laksamana (2018) assertion that the utilisation of social media marketing facilitates a dual communication avenue that fosters a positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions. The assertion is supported by the research conducted by Bhandari and Bansal (2018), which revealed a noteworthy impact of social media marketing on the inclination of consumers to engage in purchasing activities. Consumers utilise social media platforms to disseminate information to their peers and rely on the information obtained to make informed purchasing choices. This result suggested that social media marketing has the potential to facilitate crowdsourcing, enhance brand awareness, and provide a platform for customers to express their opinions.

Table 4 showed that affiliate marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention ($\beta = 0.196$, $p < 0.05$). Test of hypothesis four showed that affiliate marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria ($0.000 < 0.05$). Affiliate marketers often build trust and credibility with their audience over time (Enberg, 2021). In essence, the affiliate serves as an intermediary connecting online consumers with the merchandise offered by the merchant (Bitochon, 2016). The findings suggested that customers are more inclined to purchase a product when it comes with a recommendation from someone they trust.

Table 4 showed that influencer marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention ($\beta = 0.413$, $p < 0.05$). Test of hypothesis five showed that influencer marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria ($0.000 < 0.05$). The result agreed with Kim and Kim (2020) study findings that a higher degree of fit between the product and the influencer leads to more favourable attitudes towards the product among customers. When influencers promote a product or service that aligns with their audience's desires or aspirations, it can significantly impact customers' purchase intention (Lou & Yuan, 2019). The result suggested that when influencers provide in-depth information,

reviews, or demonstrations, it helps customers understand the product better and influences their purchase intention.

Conclusion

It was concluded that digital marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones in South-South Nigeria. The study concluded that e-mail marketing, display advertising, social media marketing, affiliate marketing and influencer marketing had significant positive effect on customers purchase intention of smartphones.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

1. Smartphones dealers should keep customers informed about the latest smartphone models, features, and advancements through regular email updates.
2. Smartphones dealers should implement retargeting campaigns to display ads to users who have visited your website or engaged with your products previously.
3. Smartphones dealers should create engaging posts with visuals, videos, and interactive content to highlight your smartphones' features and benefits.
4. Smartphones dealers should create a structured affiliate program with clear commission structures and resources for affiliates to effectively promote your products.
5. Smartphones companies should collaborate with influencers whose audience matches their target demographic and share an affinity for smartphones.

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