

INFLUENCE OF WEB ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN MAIDUGURI METROPOLIS, NIGERIA

James Mathew¹, Peter M. Ogedebe², Segun M. Ogedebe³

¹ Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri,

² Department of Computer Science, Bingham University, Karu , NIGERIA,
& ³Shady Glen drive, Capitol Heights, Maryland-20743, UNITED STATES.

¹inforname@gmail.com , ²peter@binghamuni.edu.ng , ³segunbaale@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study investigates the influence of web advertising on consumers in Maiduguri Metropolis. 150 questionnaires were distributed randomly to respondents scattered in the two Local Government Areas that made up Maiduguri Metropolis. 139 questionnaires were completed and returned. The study discovered that majority 100(71.94%) of the respondents said their disposition towards web advertising was positive. Minority 39(28.06%) of the respondents said that their disposition towards web advertising was negative. 102(73.38%) of the respondents said their attitude towards web advertising was informative. The study, also find out that majority 42(30.22%) of the respondents said web advertising influences them to use some of the products and services. A total of 32(23.02) of the respondents reported that web advertising only influences them to plan for their future purchase. Furthermore, another 22(15.83%) of the respondents said that web advertising influences them to purchase some of the products and services. The study revealed the challenges encountered while purchasing what consumers see advertised on the web, these include; erratic electricity supply, lack of access to internet, services not provided as advertised, fraud and products were delivered in bad conditions. The study then concluded that the influence of web advertising on consumers over other forms of advertising would continue to increase, because of its' interactive nature, the global platform it presents to companies that advertised on it and the opportunities offered to consumers to purchase goods and services through online.

Keywords: Web advertising, Interactive advertising, online advertising, internet advertising and Cyber advertising

INTRODUCTION

Both the traditional and the new media depend on advertising revenue to survive and to make returns for their investments and profits. The development of the internet and the emergence of the web 2.0 brought a new platform in which advertisers can make their goods and services known to a global audience. Advertising on the internet is made possible with the help of search engines, like Google and Yahoo. For example, Google charges fee to help link sponsors of these advertisements to other sites on its search engine by using a method called "pay per click". According to Dominick (2009) "internet advertising is a big business, generating more than 16 million dollars in 2006. One of the most common forms of advertising is "pay per click". Whenever you do a search on Google for example, on the right side of the results page, you will see a number of sponsored links to products or services to what you are looking for "search for satellite radio" and you will get nine sponsored links".

The interactive nature of the internet makes it possible for users to participate and also modify the form and content of the information sent to them. According to Belch and Belch,

(1998) interactive media such as the internet “allow for a back-and-forth flow of information whereby users can participate in and modify the form and content of the information receive in real time. Unlike traditional forms of marketing communications such as advertising, which are one-way in nature, these new media allows users to perform a variety of functions such as receive and alter information and images, make enquires, respond to questions, and of course make purchases”.

Many Nigerians who used the internet as one form of communication or another are bombarded daily with advertisements of products and services from companies around the globe.

The intention of this paper, therefore, is to find out whether these advertisements have in any way influenced Nigerians to purchase any of these products and services.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Internet penetration in Nigeria is very low compared to Europe, South East Asia and the United States. However, many of the internet users are not taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by the internet, to purchase what they need, simply because they considered the products and services to be expensive and alien to their culture. Many other Nigerians are ignorant of online purchase and those who are not, are skeptical about making online purchases. Some of these products and services so advertised on the internet are new and may not be available in Nigeria. Electricity supply in Nigeria is erratic making online purchases almost impossible. The question, then, is what should be done by web advertisers, to make Nigerian consumers patronize products and services seen on the internet.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Find out the disposition of consumers towards web advertising in Maiduguri Metropolis.
2. Find out the attitude of consumers toward web advertising in Maiduguri Metropolis.
3. Find out whether web advertising has any influence on consumers in Maiduguri Metropolis.
4. Find out the challenges consumers encountered while patronizing products and services seen advertised on the web.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What is the disposition of consumers towards web advertising in Maiduguri metropolis?
2. What is the attitude of consumers toward web advertising in Maiduguri Metropolis?
3. In what ways have web advertising influence consumer behaviour in Maiduguri metropolis?
4. What are the challenges consumers encountered while patronizing products and services seen advertised on the web?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Advertising provides information about products and services to intending consumers. This information help consumers to make choices among different brands based on their needs, wants and problems confronting them. The ultimate purpose of advertisers is to make their audience purchase such products and services either immediately or in the near future.

The American Marketing Association defined advertising as follows, and quoted by Diwan,(1999:7) that advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, and services by an identified sponsor.

Mcquail (2005:547) sees advertising as a paid publicity in media for goods or services directed at customers. It has various aims including the creation of awareness, making brand images, forming positive association and encouraging consumer behaviour. Ayanwale, Alimi and Ayanbimpe (2005) were of the view that, advertising is a subset of promotion mix that is, product, price, place and promotion. As a promotional strategy, advertising serve as a major tool in creating product awareness and condition the mind of potential consumers to take eventual purchase decision. Belch & Belch (2001:506) described the internet as an advertising medium, According to Belch & Belch, web advertising are in a variety of forms. These are banner ads, sponsorships, pop ups, interstitials, push technologies or web casting and links. Baran (2004: 402) explained web advertising as cyber advertising, according to Baran, “They are interstitial ads, pop-outs, extracommercials, intercommercials, targeted keyword buys, shoshkeles, large rectangles, surround sessions, text ad, advergaming and transaction journalism.”

Vivan (2002: 225) observed that, “web... carries advertising. At many sites the advertising is like a traditional ad that promotes a product or service and steers potential customers either to more information or to a place to make a purchase. These ads are akin to those in magazines, newspapers, radio and TV. At these dot., the non-commercial content is the attraction. You won't find usatoday.com touting print editions of USA Today, the site sells advertisers on the access it provides them to an audience attracted by the news content.”

Dominick (2009:342) remarked that “online advertising began in 1994 when Hotwired, the digital counterpart to the hip wired magazine, started a web with about a dozen sponsors who paid to have advertising banners embedded throughout the sites.”

Wikipedia (2012) defined online advertising as a form of promotion that uses the internet and worldwide web to deliver marketing messages to attract customers. Example of online advertising according to Wikipedia, include contextual ads on search engine results pages, banner ads, blogs, rich media ads, special networking advertising, interstitial ads, online classified advertising, advertising networks and e-mail marketing, including e-mail spam. Many of these types of ads are delivered by an ad server.

Gordon and Lima-Turner (1997) stressed that advertising on the internet can be viewed as a social contract between advertisers and internet users

Choi and Rifon (2002) were of the view that “rapid growth in online advertising revenues indicates the viability of worldwide web advertising as an alternative to that of traditional media considering internet advertising growth, there is little doubt that the internet is a powerful and viable alternative to traditional media advertising.”

Hwang, McMillan and Lee (2003) urged that “internet advertising is more than banners, buttons, and pop ups. According to Hwang, McMillan and Lee, the corporate web site adds

an important functionality that is not often available in traditional corporate advertising sales. Many corporate websites combine advertising messages and distribution channels. Additionally, the web offers a unique opportunity to combine multiple message types targeted to multiple stakeholders that was not simply possible when corporate advertisers were limited by the constraints of time. Thus the web has the potential to build on and expand the opportunities for corporate advertising.”

Wohn and Korgaonkar (2003) said that “males and females differ significantly in several ways. According to Wohn and Korgaonkar “males exhibit more positive beliefs about web advertising and more positive attitudes toward web advertising than females. Additionally, males are more likely than females to purchase from the web and surf the web for functional and entertainment reasons, whereas females are more likely to surf the web for shopping reasons”

Schlosser, Shavitt and Kanfer (1999) were of the opinion that “internet advertising includes many forms of commercial content- from electronic advertisements such as billboards, banner ads to formats that are different from traditional advertisements such as corporate web sites.”

Combard and Snyder-Duch (2001) also observed that “the internet and other interactive technologies made it possible to create ads that are more targeted, but more personal, in which advertising is an experience in which the consumers participate and is engaged.”

Rodgers and Thorson (2000) also remarked that “what we already know about traditional advertising is relevant to internet advertising... the additional complexities of interactivity and greater proximity to reality available via the web, additional specifications of function and structure are necessary.”

Li, Daughterty and Biocca (2002) were of the view that “rich media advertising is different from conventional banner ads, in that it generally incorporates high impact sound with video and is often more interactive.”

O’connor and Galvin, (2001) opined web advertising as consisting mainly of banners which served as advertising space on the website that carry advertisements and may contain animation in order to attract users to click the relevant page on the advertiser’s website.

Ducoffee,(1996) writes that web advertisement consists of impersonal commercial content paid by sponsors, designed for audiences, delivered by video, print and audio. According to Ducoffee, this comes in the form of corporate logos, banners, pop-up message, email messages and text -based hyperlink to official websites.

METHOD OF STUDY

A survey research method was adapted for this study. Structured questionnaire was used to gather data from respondents. One hundred and fifty questionnaires were randomly distributed to respondents with the help of six field assistants. The two local government areas, namely Jere and Maiduguri Municipal Council which made up Maiduguri Metropolis, were used as study areas. Seventy five (75) questionnaires each were distributed to respondents in the two local government areas. A total of one hundred and thirty nine (139) questionnaires, representing 92.67% of the respondents, were filled and returned. The questionnaires were then analyzed using frequency and simple percentage.

DATA ANALYSES**Table 1. Distribution by Gender, Age and Educational Qualification**

<i>Types of Distribution</i>		<i>Responses</i>	
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequencies</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	
Male	75	53.96%	
Female	64	46.04%	
Total	139	100.00	
<i>Age Range</i>			
15-25yrs	55	39.57%	
26-35yrs	51	36.69%	
36-45yrs	24	17.27%	
46-55yrs	8	5.76%	
56- above	1	0.71%	
Total	139	100.00	
<i>Educational Qualification</i>			
S.S.C.E	26	18.71%	
N.D	27	19.42%	
N.C.E.	3	2.16%	
H.N.D	12	8.63%	
First Degree	55	39.57%	
Masters & above	16	11.51%	
Total	139	100.00	

Field survey 2012

Table 1 shows that majority 75(53.96%) of the respondents were males, while 64(46.04%) of the respondents were female. Majority 55(39.57%) of the respondents were between the ages of 15 and 25 years. Another 51(36.69%) of the respondents were between the ages of 26 and 35 years. 24(17.27%) of the respondents were between the ages of 36 and 45 years. 8(5.76%) of the respondents were between the ages of 46 and 55 years. While the least 1(0.71%) of the respondents were between the ages of 56 years and above.

Research Question 1**Table 2. What is your disposition towards web advertising?**

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
positive	100	71.94%
Negative	39	28.06%
Total	139	100.00

Field survey 2012

Table 2 above shows that majority 100 (71.94%) of the respondents said their disposition towards web advertising was positive. Minority 39 (28.06%) of the respondents said their disposition towards web advertising was negative.

Research Question 2

Table 3. What is your attitude towards web advertising?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Annoying	3	2.16%
Enjoyable	24	17.27%
Informative	102	73.38%
Boring	10	7.19%
Total	139	100.00

Field survey 2012

Table 3 shows that majority 102(73.38%) of the respondents said that their attitude towards web advertising was informative. A total of 24(17.27%) of the respondents said their attitude towards web advertising was enjoyable. Another 10(7.17%) of the respondents said their attitude towards web advertising was boring. However, 3 (2.16%) of the respondents said their attitude towards web advertising was annoying.

Research Question 3

Table 4. In what ways does web advertising have influence on you?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Purchase some of the products and services so advertised	22	15.83%
Use some of the products and services	42	30.22%
Only influences me to plan for their future purchase	32	23.02%
It has no influence on me because the products and services are too expensive	6	4.32%
It has no influence on me because I do not trust online purchase.	26	18.70%
I do not pay attention to web advertisements	11	7.91%
Total	139	100.00

Field survey 2012

Table 4 shows that majority 42(30.22%) of the respondents said web advertising influences them to use some of the products and services. 32(23.02%) of the respondents said that web advertising only influences them to plan for future purchase. 26(18.70%) of the respondents said web advertising has no influence on them because they do not trust online purchase. 22(15.83%) of the respondents said web advertising influences them to purchase some of the

products and services. Furthermore, 11 (7.91%) of the respondents said they do not pay attention to web advertising, while 6(4.32%) of the respondents said that web advertising has no influence on them because the products and services were too expensive.

Research Question 4

Table 5. What are the challenges consumers encountered while patronizing advertised products and services seen on the web?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Erratic electricity supply	37	26.62%
Lack of access to internet	32	23.02%
Services not provided as advertised	25	17.99%
Fraud	26	18.71%
Products are delivered in bad conditions	19	13.66%
Total	139	100.00

Field survey 2012

Table 5 shows that majority 37(26.62%) of the respondents indicated that erratic electricity supply was their major challenge. A total of 32(23.02%) of the respondents said that lack of access to internet was their challenge. 26(18.71%) of the respondents said fraud was their challenge. Another 25(17.99%) of the respondents said that services were not provided as advertised as their challenge. Minority 19(13.66%) of the respondents said that products were delivered in bad.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Majority 100(71.94%) of the respondents said they have positive disposition towards web advertising. While minority 39(28.06%) of the respondents said they have negative disposition toward web advertising. This supported the position of Levy, (2010), Cho and Leckenby (1999), Wu, (1999) Stout (2001), Ducaffe, (1996) Schosser, Shavitt and Kanfer (1999) who observed that consumers have positive opinion toward web advertising.

Majority 102(73.38%) of the respondents said their attitude toward web advertising was informative. 24(17.24%) of the respondents said their attitude towards web advertising was enjoyable. Another 10(7.19%) of the respondents said their attitude towards web advertising was boring. Minority 3(2.16%) of the respondents said their attitude towards web advertising was annoying.

Majority 42(30.22%) of the respondents said that web advertising influence them to use some of the products and services. 32(23.02%) of the respondents said web advertising influence them to plan for their future purchase. Another 22(15.83%) of the respondents said that web advertising influence them to purchase some of the products and services so advertised. This validated the positions of Boudreau & Watson (2006), Ayanwale...et al (2005) and Dever (2012) who stated that web advertising has influence on consumers than any other forms of advertising.

26 (18.70%) of the respondents said that web advertising has no influence on them because they do not trust online purchase. 11(7.91%) of the respondents said that web advertising has

no influence them because they do not pay attention to web advertisement. Minority 6(4.32%) of the respondents said that web advertising has no influence on them because the products and services are too expensive.

Majority 37(26.62%) of the respondents said erratic electricity supply was their challenge while patronizing products and services advertised on the web. 32(23.02%) of the respondents said lack of access to internet was their challenge while patronizing products and services advertised on the web. 26(18.71%) of the respondents said fraud was their challenge while patronizing products and services advertised on the web. 25(17.99%) of the respondents said services were not provided as advertised was their challenge while patronizing products and services advertised on the web. Minority 19(13.66%) of the respondents said products were delivered in bad conditions was their challenge while patronizing products and services advertised on the web.

CONCLUSION

Web advertising is a new form of advertising that many companies all over the world are venturing into, for the purpose of informing consumers of their products and services. Studies have shown that internet have influence on consumers than any other mass media when it comes to making purchase decisions. According to Dever (2012) "the internet is the most influential in the consumer purchasing decision process than advice from friends/family and any other medium such as Television, Newspaper... 66% of online consumers consider the internet helping them make purchasing decision compared to 61% from friends/family and 42% from Television".

The influence of web advertising on consumers over other forms of advertising will continue to increase in many years to come because of its' interactive nature, the global platform it presents to companies that advertised on it and the opportunities it offers to consumers to make purchases through online.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Regulatory agency should be established by government to register and regulate the activities of companies in Nigeria who are involved in providing goods and services via the internet. This way, the problem of fraud will be eliminated or brought to a bearable level.
2. Government should continue to invest in power until there is uninterrupted electricity supply to every home in Nigeria.
3. Government should place sanctions in form of fines on companies who do not provide services as advertised on the web to their consumers. While incentives should be given to companies in form of tax holidays for providing services as advertised on the web.
4. All products purchased through online should be insured by reputable insurance companies. This will encourage people to purchase what they see advertised on the web through online purchase, as the insurance companies would be made to compensate for products delivered in bad condition.
5. The government should provide internet infrastructure by launching communication satellite into space. This will make internet accessible to every Nigerian. Apart from this, the government should encourage foreign companies to set up computer and mobile phone (with internet connectivity) manufacturing plants in Nigeria. This will help reduce the cost of computers and phones and also provide jobs to millions of Nigerian.

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