

Guerilla Marketing Strategies and Customer Patronage of Noodles Product in Calabar, Cross River State.

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Abstract: *This study examines the influence of guerilla marketing on customer patronage of Noodles product in Calabar. The main objective of this study was to explore the relationship between guerilla marketing and customer patronage. The survey design was adopted as the main research design. The total sample size for the study which made up the number of questionnaires distributed was 200. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire. Simple linear regression analysis was used to measure the degree of relationship. The study found that viral and ambient marketing had significant positive relationships on customer patronage. On the basis of the findings, customer patronage increases with guerilla marketing strategy implementation and also, there is a significant possibility of achieving an increase in customer patronage if the available proxies of guerilla marketing (viral and ambient marketing) are made prominent. The researchers recommended that distributors should focus on the use of creative/unconventional advertising and ads which are viral should be engaged because it leads to an online word of mouth which is good for the organization's offerings.*

Keywords: Guerilla marketing, customer patronage, Noodles product

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern business life especially in Nigeria, marketing has become a dominant force in growing customer patronage, growing market shares, topping as a market leader and gaining profitability. To achieve all that, organizations channel a lot of their resources and manpower to promotional activities. These activities enormously impact on customer patronage and their performance. Globally, consumers are bombarded with an array of advertisements, commercial messages and marketing campaigns daily which makes decision making hard (Klepek, 2014).

This overload of marketing campaigns is referred to as communication competition (Hutter and Hoffman, 2013; cited in Wendland 2016). According to Homburg, (2012) and Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong, (2010) as cited in Nufer, (2013) posited that according to various studies, the level of information overload of a consumer amounts to between 95 and 98 per cent i.e. only a minute fraction of the information being offered has even the slightest chance of being absorbed by consumers. This finding has changed the views from the conventional communication tools in favour of unconventional communication tools, which amounts to demand for new and creative marketing strategies. One of these strategies is referred to as "Guerilla Marketing". Guerilla marketing over the years has been described as warfare without the use of weapons, mainly tackled psychologically in the minds of current and potential customers. Guerrilla marketing makes available new, innovative and unusual/uncommon ways to counter the increasing consumer detestation for advertising (Nufer, 2013).

Guerilla marketing encompasses a range of instruments (experiential marketing, stealth marketing, viral marketing and ambient marketing) used to get across to consumers to get their attention leading to purchase. Viral marketing encourages people to pass the message along to others (person to person) for free, leading to exponential growth of the message which is dependent through electronic media (Sareen and Behal, 2014). Ambient marketing concerns placing advertisement in places or on items where people normally would not see them (environment) (Hæreid and Indregård 2015). Also, they noted these advertisements could range from small stickers placed in bathrooms to art covering a whole building.

In Nigeria, organizations tend to make use of unconventional and creative promotional efforts as survival instincts in the harsh economic situation in which they operate in. Recently changes have occurred, not only in the market but the technologies being used e.g. e-mail, mobile phones, satellite TV, video calls, mobile and electronically devices etc. and it is of the utmost importance that today's marketers avail themselves with changes and seek ways and strategies to survive while also fulfilling their set goals and objectives and this can be ascertained through a review of patronage.

Consumer patronage on the other hand is considered to be a substantial factor for rising profitability and maintaining the position of the business. Saeed, and Behal (2014) report a powerful relationship between consumer defection rate and increased profits. In recent times, due to increased service of women outside the home and wide changes in lifestyle especially in child upbringing, the use of noodles and fast food is rising at home and restaurant. This can provide a very good market for this industry.

1.1 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Over the years several studies have been conducted to justify contemporary promotional efforts and very limited study done on guerilla marketing and also in relation to its performance. Guerilla marketing at its initial stage was designed for smaller businesses to promote their products or services in creative and unconventional ways with little budget to spend which focuses on grasping the attention of the public in a personal and memorable level. Though, in these times larger companies have gotten involved with the use of this phenomenon and the general public has adapted to seeing them make use of it.

Hence, the main buttress point is to find out if these unconventional and creative instruments of guerilla marketing which are ambient marketing and viral marketing will have an impact on customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar, Cross River State.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to determine the relationship between guerilla marketing and customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar, Cross River State.

The specific objectives include:

1. To determine the relationship between viral marketing on customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar, Cross River State.
2. To examine the relationship between ambient marketing on customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar, Cross River State.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The statement of the problem which stems from the idea of guerilla marketing, leads to the following questions:

1. What is the level of influence of viral marketing on customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar, Cross River State?
2. How does ambient marketing affect customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar, Cross River State.?

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The following hypotheses were formulated for this study:

1.5 Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between viral marketing and customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar, Cross River State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between ambient marketing and customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar, Cross River State.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 The Concept of Guerilla Marketing

Levinson Jay Conrad who is said to be the father of guerilla marketing, in his book which was published in the year 1984 and titled “guerilla marketing” defined the term as an act of implementing an unusual marketing activity everyday place in order to cause a buzz for goods or services”. In the revised edition of his book in 2007 he also opined that guerilla marketing is a generic term for “eye catching, low cost marketing activities”. Other authors have agreed to his points, because his book was mainly for small and startup businesses to break into the market and compete with much larger companies. But that does not seem to be the case anymore as bigger cooperation’s make use of guerilla marketing strategies to compete effectively, maintain market share, gain sales growth, customer loyalty, profitability amongst a host of others. This is because they aim at reducing their promotional budgets and also maintain their stand as market leaders.

Margolis and Garrigan, (2008) in their work defined guerilla marketing as a type of marketing that reaches consumers in an engaging and unexpected way. Here, the reach is the buttress point in this definition. They further explained that guerilla marketing is about using your own creativity and the tools at your disposal to make a genuine connection with your customers (the ones you already have and the ones you hope to attract). Sareen S and Behal V (2014), defined guerilla marketing as an advertising strategy, in which low cost unconventional means (sticker bombing, flash mobs, flyers etc.) are utilized in a huge network of individual cells, to promote a goods or services. Zavisic and medic (2006), defined guerilla marketing as an unconventional approach to marketing in the way that maximal goal are reached with minimal means. Hutter and Hoffmann (2011), defined guerilla marketing as an

umbrella term for unconventional advertisement campaigns which aim at drawing the attention of a large number of recipients to the advertising message at fairly low costs by inducing a surprise and diffusion effect.

From the above definitions, we can deduce that guerilla marketing is also a low-cost strategy in which businesses adopt to present their offerings to customers (potential and current) in a creative manner to induce an effect i.e. surprise and diffusion, to achieve maximal goals.

DIMENSIONS OF GUERILLA MARKETING

Viral Marketing

Guyot Maelle, 2016 made aware that viral marketing was founded in 1997 with the emergence of “Hotmail”, the first free e-mail service on the web. They attached promotional messages to every outgoing e-mail sent by its users. This was cost free and led the company to massive growth in terms of its users despite its really weak financial investment.

This led to the term “viral marketing” coined by venture capitalist “Steve Juvetson” in 1997, (Thenmozhi and Deepa N, 2014). The word “viral” in this context is described as the popularity and exponential spread of ideas, (Brandon Rollins, Anitsal Ismet and Anitsal Meral M., 2014). Sexton 2011 cited in Rollins et al, 2014, relayed that when marketing campaigns become popular online at a very rapid pace, it is said to be considered as viral marketing. The phenomenon has been defined by several individuals and institutions trying to make it possible for individuals to deduce what it really means. These are some of the definitions going to be used in this study;

AMA, 2021 defines viral marketing as a phenomenon that facilitates and encourages people to pass along a marketing message. Thenmozhi and Deepa, (2014) defined this concept as any strategy that inspires individuals to pass on a marketing message to others, generating the potential for growth in the message’s exposure and impact.

Viral marketing cuts across different aspects of marketing which has been noted in the work of (Rollins et al, 2014) which states that viral marketing can be described as the relationship between buzz marketing, word of mouth marketing and online marketing.

Ambient Marketing

The term ambient is derived from the word experience which stands for surrounding, (Jurca and Madberger 2015 cited in Othman Huda, 2020).

Shah Vijay, 2016 defined ambient marketing as an intrusive form of advertisement in public places.

Zai Yusuf Rahil, 2016 also defines ambient marketing as a form of guerilla marketing in which advertising is integrated into our natural surroundings and catches our attention in places, we least expect i.e. placing ads on unusual objects or places where an individual would least expect.

Due to it being an out of home advertising, it was classified as the guerilla marketing version of the classical outdoor advertising by Hutter and Hoffman 2013. It has been asserted that the world is an advertising stage, where creativity, novelty and appropriate themes are its props, (Othman, 2020). This means the physical environment sets the centre stage to send messages across to individuals.

The merits of this form of marketing has been highlighted by shah (2016) to be visibility, frequency, imaginative, elements of shock, effectiveness and easy to recollect. He also highlights some of the demerits to be difficulty in estimating the target audience, restricted messages and small coverage. Examples of ambient marketing would include; writings/ projections on park benches and walls, during sport events, transport hubs etc.

Wendland Lennart 2016 cited Turk et al 2006 as noting that due to the relatively low cost, wide range of opportunities and the potential of diffusion to a great proportion of individuals, that it makes ambient marketing one of the fastest growing form of marketing.

Concept of Customer Patronage

According to Njelita and marcus (2020) Patronage is an exchange process where one takes goods or service in exchange for money or other considerations. Njelita and marcus (2020) further explain that customer patronage is the purchase of goods or service from a vendor by a customer. The customer purchases and expects to get satisfaction from the goods or services as consideration for the exchange for money paid. Jim and Kim, 2003 explain that patronage motive is the carters of behavior that get customers to the marketplace to satiate their interior needs. The opinion of previous researchers clearly suggests that favorable attitude and repeat purchase were pre-requisites to defining patronage in the context of marketing.

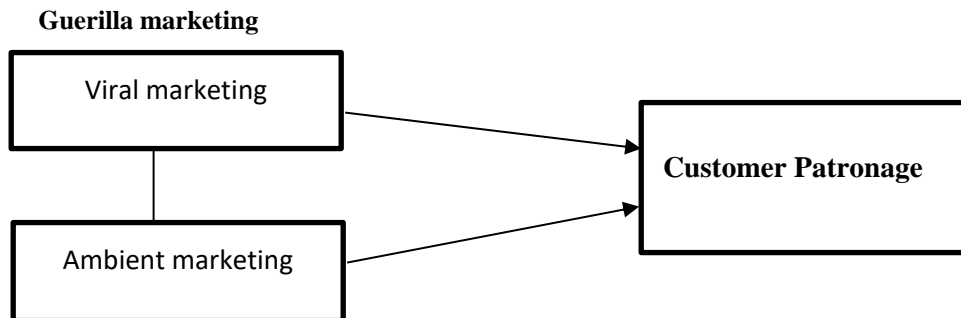


Figure 1. Conceptual Model on Guerilla Marketing and Customer Patronage of Noodles Product in Calabar, Cross River State

Source: The Researcher, 2022

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The anchor theory for this research is based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model, which was proposed by Richard E. Petty and John T. Cacioppo in the year 1980. The theory is based on the idea that persuasion level of a message can affect the desired effect of the message.

Here, the theory refers to persuasion as the action by which, convincing or causing an individual to do something through reasoning or argument. The Elaboration Likelihood model postulates that each and every message is experiencing the process of persuasion in two ways. They are known as Central route and peripheral route. Both of them are effective persuasion techniques, but each has its own guiding technique to make them more operative and effective. Persuasion will transpire through the central route when elaboration likelihood is high, that is when a person is motivated and able to process information about the object. Elaboration likelihood will be low if either or both of the above conditions (motivation or ability) are not met which persuasion will then be more likely via the peripheral route.

Elaboration Likelihood Model is of utmost importance to this study because guerilla marketing is an emerging phenomenon in Nigeria. This theory is being used to analyze how customers could be persuaded, which would eventually lead to the purchase of its offerings and even lead to repurchase

The main focus of this theory is on the Peripheral Route, because of the amount of advertisements thrown at customers in Nigeria on a daily basis, they try as much as possible to ignore the ads they come by on a daily basis. Here, the company and/ or its advertising agency have to use aspects of guerilla marketing to persuade the customers and to initiate a purchase.

REVIEW OF RELATED EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Njeru and Onyango (2018) did a study on the influence of guerilla marketing strategy on the performance of small and medium retail enterprises in Kenya. The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of guerrilla marketing strategy on performance of small and medium retail enterprises in Kenya. The study adopted descriptive and correlation research design. The targeted population of the study was 2,924 registered small and medium retail enterprises in Thika Sub-County. Stratified Sampling Technique was used to draw the right sample size from the targeted population which was used during the study. The primary data were collected through questionnaires which were supplied through drop and pick later method and secondary data was collected by reviewing of relevant passed literature like books, articles and journals. A sample size of 292 which is a ten percent (10%) of the total population was used during the study and were supplied with questionnaire through the mentioned above method. Descriptive statistical and regression analysis was used to analyze data for the study. The results indicated that guerrilla marketing strategy had positive influence on performance of small and medium retail enterprises in Kenya.

Isaac, A. A. (2014), did a study on the analysis of Guerrilla and Traditional Marketing Interface in Improving the Productivity of Organizational Marketing in Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The research aimed at exploring

and analyzing the integration of guerrilla and traditional marketing in small to medium scale enterprises in Nigeria with a case study of Marketing of Hotel Services in Owerri Imo State, Nigeria. Copies of questionnaire were used for the integration of guerrilla marketing and the traditional marketing and productivity of organizational marketing. The research hypotheses were tested with Pearson Moment Correlation. There was a substantial relationship between the integration of guerrilla marketing and the traditional marketing in the growth of productivity of organizational marketing in the enterprises that was studied. Findings indicated that guerrilla marketing is corresponding to traditional marketing. The researcher recommended Guerrilla Marketing as a paradigm and for hotel businesses in Owerri.

Methodology

Research design: The study utilizes the survey design. The survey design according to allows information to be gathered from a sample of populaces by the use of questionnaire

Study Area: This study was carried out in Cross River State, Nigeria. Cross River State is located in the South-South of Nigeria. It comprises 18 local government areas with Calabar as the State Capital.

Sample size: 200 possible users of noodles product where selected for the study using purposive sampling method. This sampling technique was used due to the need to access the nature of data needed for this study, from the target respondents. This number caught across Calabar south and Calabar municipality.

Data Collection Method: The study's questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice questions and the independent variables and criterion (Customer patronage) variables were measured on a 5 point Likert scale.

Method of data analysis: To determine the relationship that exists between guerrilla marketing (X_1, X_2) which are the independent variables (viral marketing and ambient marketing) and Customer patronage (Y) the dependent variable, the simple linear regression analysis was used. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05% level of significance

Model Specification: Customer patronage was estimated to be a direct function of some Guerrilla marketing proxies (viral marketing and ambient marketing)

This can be expressed in functional equation form as;

$$Y = F(X_1, X_2)$$

Recoded to represent the variables, it is presented as;

$$CP = F(Vm, Am)$$

The simple regression model representing the relationship that exists between each independent variables (X_1, X_2) and the dependent variable (Y) was expressed in this form;

$$H_{01}: Y = a_0 + b_1 X_1 + e$$

$$H_{02}: Y = a_0 + b_2 X_2 + e$$

To represent the variables in use, the simple linear regression equations were presented as:

$$H_{01}: Cp = a_0 + b_1 Vm + e$$

$$H_{02}: Cp = a_0 + b_2 Am + e$$

Where: $Cp(Y)$ = Customer patronage
 $Sm(X_1)$ = Viral marketing
 $Sm(X_2)$ = Ambient marketing
 e = error term

The above estimated equations are linear function which was used in testing the model separately.

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed, returned and made use of. This gives a response rate of 100 percent (%). The responses were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20.0) which was used in running the data analysis.

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis 1:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between viral marketing and customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar

Table 1. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.780 ^a	.609	.604	1.67521

a. Predictors: (Constant), Viral Marketing

Table 2. ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	340.656	1	340.656	121.389	.000 ^b
1	Residual	218.894	78	2.806		
	Total	559.550	79			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage

b. Predictors: (Constant), Viral Marketing

Table 3. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.259	.712		1.768	.000
	Viral Marketing	.860	.078	.780	11.018	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage

The table above with R value of 0.780 indicates that there is a strong relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The R-Square value of 0.609 implies that about 61% of the variation in customer patronage was explained by viral marketing. The F-calculated value of 121.389 and P-value of 0.000 implies that the model was adequate. That is, the independent variable was able to explain the dependent variable very well. The constant value of 1.259 indicates that keeping independent variable (viral marketing) constant, customer patronage will remain at 1.259. The coefficient of viral marketing was 0.860 which means that a unit change in viral marketing will lead to 0.860-unit change in patronage. The P-value of 0.000 means that the influence of viral marketing on customer patronage was statistically significant, therefore the need not to accept the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between ambient marketing and customer patronage of noodles product in Calabar

Table 4. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.789 ^a	.622	.617	1.64615

a. Predictors: (Constant), Ambient Marketing

Table 5. ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	348.185	1	348.185	128.491	.000 ^b
1	Residual	211.365	78	2.710		
	Total	559.550	79			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage

b. Predictors: (Constant), Ambient Marketing

Table 6. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients		
1	(Constant)	1.083	.707		1.531	.000
	Ambient Marketing	.863	.076	.789	11.335	.000

a. Dependent Variable: customer patronage

The table above with R value of 0.789 indicates that there is a strong relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The R-Square value of 0.622 implies that about 62% of the variation in customer patronage was explained by ambient marketing. The F-calculated value of 128.491 and P-value of 0.000 implies that the model was adequate. That is, the independent variable was able to explain the dependent variable. The constant value of 1.083 indicates that keeping independent variable (ambient marketing) constant, customer patronage will remain at 1.083. The coefficient of ambient marketing was 0.863 which means that a unit change in ambient marketing will lead to 0.863-unit change in customer patronage. The P-value of 0.000 means that the influence of ambient marketing on customer patronage was statistically significant.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study showed a significant positive relationship between the two proxies of guerilla marketing (viral and ambient marketing) and customer patronage. The results of the simple linear regression reveal that Noodles companies viral marketing approach towards reaching its target customers enhances its customer patronage. The result also reveals that Noodles ambient marketing approach is vital to the upward surge of its customer patronage. These findings tally with that of Njeru and Onyango (2018) who found out that guerilla marketing had positive influence on performance of small and medium retail enterprises in Kenya. The result corroborates the findings of Isaac, A. A. (2014) and Akhtar, Ahmad, Shahid, Abbas, Raza and Ahmad (2016).

CONCLUSION

From this study, it is apparent that guerilla marketing augments thus lead to huge customer patronage. The study concentrated on guerilla marketing practices and progressed to establishing the influence of guerilla marketing practices and customer patronage. The empirical results of the study underscore the following:

1. Customer patronage surges with guerilla marketing strategy implementation.
2. There is a significant possibility of achieving an increase in customer patronage if the available proxies of guerilla marketing (viral and ambient marketing) are made prominent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings the following recommendations are arrived at by the researchers:

1. Noodles companies and her distributors should focus on the use of creative/ unconventional advertising.
2. The use of social media platforms is necessary for building online business presence. In this, ads which are viral should be engaged because it leads to an online word of mouth which is good for the organization's offerings.
3. The organization should be involved more in creating an ambience all around its offerings, whether it be around where the product is being offered or an unexpected axis which would impress and ultimately lead to purchase.

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