Impact of Social Media Marketing on the Performance of Clothing Design Industry in Abuja

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Abstract: The social media drives the society today. This makes it essential that firms understand the social media as a contemporary marketing tool for growing their businesses. The paper assessed the impact of social media marketing tools on performance of fashion designing in Abuja. The paper focused mainly on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram as social media marketing tools and measured performance in terms of finance, growth and customer loyalty. The paper employed both primary and secondary data sources. Questionnaire was used to collect data from 132 selected fashion designers from the 897 registered clothing fashion designers in Abuja. Secondary data were obtained from the Internet, journals, textbooks and periodicals. Data were analyzed using parametric analysis and multiple regression was conducted to test the hypothesis. The paper found that Facebook, twitter and Instagram collectively influenced performance of fashion designers in Abuja. The paper concluded that it is valuable for clothing fashion designing firms to adapt to, and use social media outlets in promoting their products as technology changes and new platforms emerge. The paper recommended that clothing fashion designers should adopt social media sites for both communication and marketing purposes.

Key words: social media; marketing; performance; clothing; fashion designing

JEL codes: M31

1. Introduction

The understanding of social media, its implications and efficiency are increasingly essential. Social media channels have changed the way people and businesses communicate online. With limited restrictions to entry and participation, businesses are beginning to use the social media as a method of marketing and creating marketing opportunities that never existed before now. More Marketers now understand how to use the social media as a marketing strategy (Akar & Topçu, 2011).

Social media is a group of Internet based applications built on ideological and technological foundations that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated Internet content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It offers abundance of services which include social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Myspace and LinkedIn), micro-blogs (Twitter, Plurk and Friend Feed), reviews and ratings (Yelp, Amazon and Trip Advisor), video (YouTube, Snapchat and Vimeo) and lots more. While there are a number of different media sites, Facebook, Twitter, and instagram will be the focus of the study. According to Internet world Stats (2016), they have the highest number of

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users in Nigeria.

The social media shape and redefine the nature of communication among people globally. It affects the way organizations market, communicate, interact and engage with their customers. According to Imaralu (2013), Guarantee Trust Bank, MTN Nigeria, Etisalat, Jumia and konga are the top five companies currently blazing the effective use of social media platforms in Nigeira. The number of followers, likes and how often they share relevant product or service information to customers and have tremendously built their brand awareness and loyalty. Business organizations like Target, Whole Foods and Dell use social media channels to reach their target markets, provide customer service, advertise for events and gatherings and engage with target audiences (Tuten & Angermeier, 2013). As consumers are progressively relying more on social media to research brands, social media channels are becoming a vital part in business marketing. Mustaffa et al. (2011) note that firms adopt social media marketing to reach a very active online target audience. Clothing fashion firms can take advantage of this novel opportunity to strategically position themselves in the market.

The Fashion Industry is a multibillion dollar global enterprise devoted to the business of making and selling clothes (FADAN, 2015). Fashion design is the art of application of design and aesthetics and natural beauty to style clothing, shoes, bags, make-up, art and accessories. The industry promotes and supports looking good, and is influenced by cultural and social attitudes, which vary overtime and place. Creativity is a secret of success in this industry. The fashion industry comprises mainly of clothing, bags, shoes, make-up and cosmetics, jewelries and beading and hair dressing. This study focused on clothing as an aspect of fashion designing and sought to determine the effect of social media marketing on its performance.

Kaplan and Norton (1992) reported that business performance is measured in the areas of finance, learning/growth, internal processes and the customer (i.e., consumer purchase behavior). The financial measure is essential to summarize the economic consequences of strategy such as profitability, sales and return on investment. Learning and Growth are the organization's ability to learn and improve the activities that drive future financial performance such as innovation, investments and human capital. Internal process identifies the critical internal processes such as innovation, quality, operation and cost measures which the organization must excel in implementing its strategy. The Customer related measure identifies the customer and market segments in which the business desires to compete which includes customer intention, actual purchase, satisfaction and loyalty.

The main objective of this paper is to assess the impact of social media marketing tools on the performance of clothing fashion designing industry in Abuja, Nigeria. The paper specifically sought to determine the extent to which Facebook, Instagram and Twitter as social media tools affect the performance of clothing fashion designing in Abuja, Nigeria individually and collectively. The study contends that Facebook, Instagram and Twitter do not have significant effect on the performance of clothing fashion designing industry in Abuja, Nigeria.

2. Statement of the Problem

Social media offers a variety of opportunities for both large and small enterprises in promoting their brands, products and services. The Internet offers personal autonomy and freedom that enable people actively connect with each other and share ideas, experiences and opinions on products and services. The extent to which this affects the performance of the clothing fashion designing industry in Abuja, Nigeria requires investigation.

FADAN (2015) states that the fashion industry in Nigeria is lucrative and worth trillions of naira, with potentials of becoming one of the main drivers of the economy. The media interactive platform through the social

media is seriously changing the approach to fashion whereby consumers can make on-demand desire for trends, gain access to them anytime, anywhere, and on many platforms. The social media has allowed brands and designers to connect with the public in an instant. Despite the relevance and influence of social media marketing on the fashion industry, there has been no known study conducted on its impact on the performance of fashion designing in Abuja, Nigeria. It is, therefore, imperative to study the impact of social media marketing on the performance of clothing fashion industry in Abuja, Nigeria.

3. Literature Review

The Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web. It allows the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Agnihotri, Kothandaraman, Kashyap and Singh (2012) agree that the social media has the ability to affect all parts of the sales process no matter the organization's products or services. The social media, as a marketing strategy, allows for a wider and more connected network for the salespeople. Increasingly, businesses in progressive markets have adopted social media marketing as the newest form of mass communication; therefore, many are recognizing it as effective, cheap public relations and marketing tools.

In Nigeria, more than 52% of the population, specifically 97,210,000 use the Internet (Internet World Stats, 2016). Callaghan (2013) and Hauger (2014) aver that a staggering 73% of all online adults are now using a social media site worldwide. With massive growth and close to one billion users all over the world and 15 million users in Nigeria, Facebook alone has created a new communication channel that is to be reckoned with in less than ten years, becoming one of the biggest communication channels in the world today.

Though there are different electronic media sites, the social media is growing every day. Hubspot (2012) affirm that 90% of the 18-24 age group internet users, called the millennial, use social network via any device at least once per month. Social media affects every age group with much higher increase rates of the age group over 35years. Social media has allowed brands and designers to connect instantly with the public and target audiences. Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, Pinterest, Myspace, LinkedIn, Plurk, Friend Feed, Yelp, Amazon, Trip Advisor, YouTube, Vimeo, Snapchat and every other form of social media have been inundated with live-streams, tweets, posts and pins by brands, designers, bloggers, customers and observers (Strugatz, 2013).

The Internet is commonly the first source channel that consumers use to find information on products and services that they are considering to patronize. People hold conversations on the internet about the products and services they have used, share both good and bad experiences and feedbacks. Actually, almost two out of every three conversations online refers to a brand, product or service (Hubspot, 2012). With limited barrier to entry and cheap cost of participation, small businesses are beginning to use the social media as a means of marketing, creating a marketing opportunities that never existed. For marketers, this represents a new, fast growing, increasingly important and mostly unexplored marketing channel and strategy (Akar & Topçu, 2011).

Tuten and Angermeier (2013) assert that businesses use social media to reach their customers for a variety of business functions such as customer service, promotion, product development, lead generation and research. According to them, social media can be mutually beneficial to the customer and the organization. The consumer gets social enhancement, interpersonal interconnectivity, self-discovery and entertainment. The organization gets access to target markets, engagement opportunities, media cost reduction and the chance to facilitate word of mouth communication. Bhanot (2012) corroborated this in his study of the impact of social media on company

performance in India. He found that companies which adopted, invested in and utilized the social media as marketing strategies had higher returns with greater gains predicted for the future.

Facebook allows its users to create a profile with pictures and status updates, connect with millions of people around the world through friend requests and wall posts, and monitor friends and family's activity through the news feed. According to Facebook (2012), the number of active Facebook users surpassed one billion by the end of 2012. Its users spend more than 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook scanning and taking in all kinds of information. Facebook (2014) notes that the number of active users was 1.28 billion as at the beginning of 2014 which makes Facebook the most active social media service. A study of the Fortune 500 companies showed that in 2012, 63% of the companies maintained an official Facebook page (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). By 2013, it was already up to 70%. Using this medium proposes opportunities for companies as it enables them to engage in very timely and direct consumer communication which can be achieved with fewer budgets compared with the traditional communication channels (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Twitter is another social media marketing tool. It is a micro-blogging website that lets users tweet brief messages in 140 characters or less, which would appear on followers' twitter feed. Followers can re-tweet favorite or reply to tweets. Twitter has more than 100 million active users, 40% of which doesn't create tweets, but rather read other tweets, click on links and gather news. An average of 750 tweets is re-tweeted per second (Collier, 2012). Both Facebook and Twitter are rapidly growing channels of communication for personal, professional and business uses.

Instagram is an online photo-sharing and social networking service recently acquired by Facebook. It enables its users to take pictures, apply digital filters and share them on a variety of social networking services, such as media sites including Facebook or Twitter (Facebook, 2014). Instagram can be considered the Polaroid of our generation; images are even specifically formatted for iPhone compatibility. Whereas Twitter took the status update aspect of Facebook and capitalized on it, Instagram has effectively done the same with the photo-sharing component. Tinari (2013) observes that 100 million people use Instagram at least once a month and many probably use it more often. Approximately 40 million photos are posted each day, along with site traffic translating to 8500 "likes" per second, and 1000 comments per second (Instagram Press, 2014). Instagram has spawned a new visual language, a new etiquette of sharing and an outpouring of creativity in the form of contests, collaborative art exhibits and personal expression.

The social media is changing the approach to fashion. Consumers can, on-demand, desire trends and gain access to them anytime, anywhere, and on any platform. It has allowed brands and designers to connect with the public in an instant. Strugatz (2013) asserts that Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, Pinterest and other forms of social media have been inundated with live-streams, tweets, posts and pins from the brands and designers. According to Schneider (2014), fashion, in the age of Instagram is in a dynamic era in which digital media is changing the way clothes are presented and even the way they are designed. This implies that the way designers shoot clothes, design, make and showcase them have changed.

Large scale fashion events like the African fashion week and Heineken Lagos fashion and design week used to be extremely exclusive. But with Internet connection, consumers can follow various Fashion Week at the comfort of their homes irrespective of the location (Dunne, 2014). The web has made it possible for ordinary consumers to reach a mass audience and make use of the megaphone (McQuarrie, Miller & Phillips, 2013). Fashion blogging has created a community of influencers and trend setters. Fashion brands such as H&M even created an outlet brand that was influenced by social media and fashion blogging (Rickey, 2013).

Desmond (2010) opines that the marketing value of social media success and efficiency is difficult to calculate. However, comparing the delivery costs of traditional advertising makes it easier to understand the importance of having social media strategy (Jerijervi, 2014). The cost of social media strategy does not only include delivery cost, time and resources, but as Bulearca & Bulearca (2010) observe, the cost of having a social media strategy must include time spent on planning, producing and participating.

Social media marketing is confronted with the challenge of privacy control. In the area of brand building, concerns of social media marketing include security breaches, loss of control over content, viral spread of negative press or word of mouth and new forms of legal liability (Tuten & Angermeier, 2013). Firms engaged in online marketing also face the risk of potential damage to the organization's brand and goodwill resulting from negative comments from customers which go viral. Multiple complaints by customers about the brand can put the organization in a vulnerable state. It is important that business organizations that use social media marketing be careful not to expose financial information, strategy, employee data or corporate secrets which constitute security breaches to the organization. They must also be aware of how their employees represent the company online.

This paper employed the Social Network Theory. Callon (1999) citing Hassard and Law avers that social network analysis is an overlapping tool for learning about patterns that develop within social networks and how they influence behavior. Social media marketing channels such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are useful in this regard. They allow marketers listen to consumers. This allows marketers leverage the power of influential users to spread messages throughout their networks, which influence performance in the long run.

4. Methodology

The paper used survey research design. The population comprised 897 registered clothing fashion designers in the six area councils (Abuja Municipal, Abaji, Bwari, Kwali, Gwagwalada and Kuje) of Abuja, Nigeria (Vconnect, 2016). A sample of 120 was randomly selected from the population using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination formula thus:

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP(1\text{-}P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2 P(1\text{-}P)}$$

Where:
S = Required sample size
N = Population size
X = Z value (95% confidence level) =1.96
d = degree of accuracy 5% (margin of error .05)
P = Population proportion expressed as decimal assumed to be 50% maximum. 10% (0.1) was used for this study.

$$S = \frac{1.96^2 \times 897 \times 0.1(1-0.1)}{.05^2 \times (897-1) + 1.96^2 \times 0.1(1-0.1)} = \frac{310.132}{2.5857} = 119.9 = 120$$

The sample size is 120. This was, however, increased by 10% to allow for attrition which makes a total of 132. Israel (2013) states that 10% to 30% of the sample size could be added as attrition. Data for the study were obtained by the use of questionnaire. The Data was measured using a four-point Likert rating scale. Data were

analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Regression was employed to determine the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

5. Results and Discussion

In presenting the results, use was made of the data analysis techniques discussed in the methodology considering the socio-demographic and economic variables of the respondents.

Table 1   Response Rate of Respondents

Questionnaires	**Respondents**
Administered	132
Returned	122
Response rate	92.4%

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The returned copies were scrutinized for errors, omissions, completeness and inconsistencies of which 122 returned were found to be adequately completed.

Figure 1 shows that 54% of the respondents were male, while 46% were female. This indicates that there are more male clothing fashion designers than female designers in Abuja. This could result from the fact that some of the female are engaged in the formal sector, others are full-time house wives, while some others are not computer literate to engage in on-line marketing.
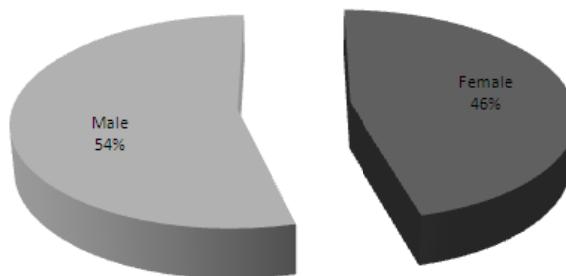
Figure 1   Sex Distribution
Source: Field Survey, 2016

Figure 2 shows that most of the respondents are young and energetic men/women with ages ranging between 26-35 years. This constitutes 50% of the sampled population. Ages 18-25 constitute 12%, 36-45 25%, while 46 and above constitute 13%. This shows that more of the active population are involved in social media usage.
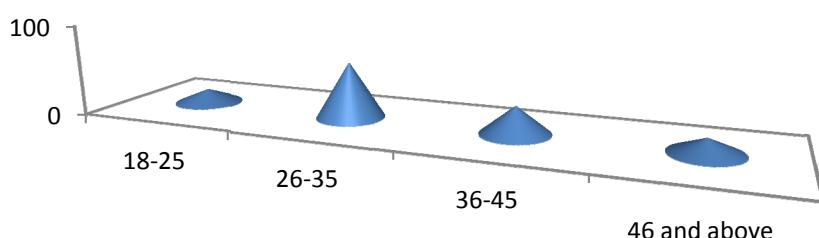

Figure 2   Age Distribution
Source: Field Survey, 2016

Figure 3 indicates that 36% of the respondents have NCE/OND, 33.6% have Secondary education, 20.5% hold a minimum of B.Sc. degree, while 9.84% have First School Leaving Certificate or other qualifications. The respondents are literate and can utilize the social media marketing tools to advocate their fashion designing business.

Table 1 shows that Facebook has a positive and significant influence on the performance of clothing fashion designing industry in Abuja at 5% significance level with a p-value of 0.00 and a t-value of 8.58. Instagram also significantly influenced the performance of the industry positively with a p-value of 0.00 and a t-value of 4.51. Twitter, however, has a positive but insignificant impact on the performance of the industry during the period under review. This implies that, at individual levels, Facebook and Instagram positively drive performance at a significant level, while Twitter relies on other factors to significantly drive performance. The R-square value indicates that Facebook, Twitter and Instagram collectively influenced the performance of the clothing fashion industry in Abuja up to 43.32%. The t-value of 30.06 indicates fitness of the model at 0.05 significance level.
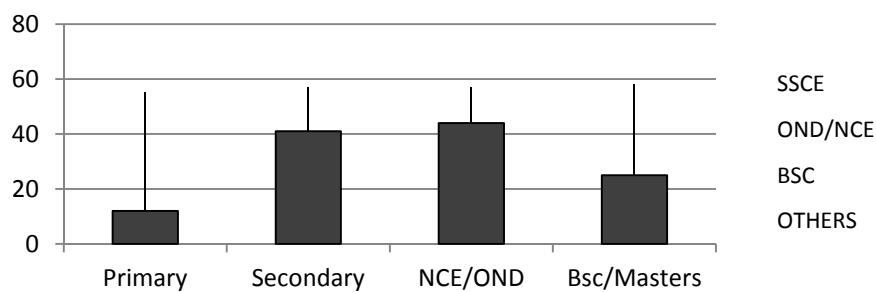

Figure 3   Distribution by Educational Qualification

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Table 1   Regression Result

Variables	Coefficient	T	P-value
Facebook	.4078657	8.58	0.000
Instagram	.1903769	4.51	0.000
Twitter	.0089976	0.21	0.833
Cons	.513945	4.88	0.000
f-stat		30.06	0.000
r-square			0.4332

Source: Stata Output, 2016

Table 2 shows that Facebook, as a predictor, significantly influenced the performance of clothing fashion designing industry at 5% significance level with a correlation value of 57.76%. The impact of Instagram on the industry is significant at 5% significance level with 26.26%. Twitter does not significantly relate with performance at 1% and 5% significance levels. All the exogenous variables used to represent social media tools, have positive relationships with the performance of clothing fashion designing in Abuja during the period of study. This is mostly felt in their sales volume due to effective advertising which led to increased profitability among other factors.

Multi-collinearity measures the level of association amongst the predictors/exogenous variables used. The result presented above indicates the absence of multi-collinearity since variance inflation factors were consistently

less than 10 and tolerance ranges were less than 1 point. This implies that multi-collinearity does not pose a threat to the findings of this study.

Table 2   Correlation Matrix

Variables	Performance	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter
Facebook	0.5776 0.000*	1		
Instagram	0.2626 0.0035*	-0.0889 0.3301	1	
Twitter	0.1230 0.1772	0.1364 0.1341	0.0819 0.3700	1

Source: Stata Output, 2016

* correlation significance at 1% Significance level

Table 3   Multi-collinearity Test

Variables	VIF	1/VIF
Facebook	1.03	0.971313
Twitter	1.03	0.972492
Instagram	1.01	0.983092

Source: Stata Output (2016)

6. Test of Hypothesis

In testing the hypothesis, it is assumed that a p-value less than 0.05 depicts rejection of the null hypothesis. The otherwise holds true where the p-value is above the region of 0.05.

Ho: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter do not significantly influence performance of Fashion Designing in Abuja

Table 4   Measuring Effect of Social Media Tools on Performance

Variables	Coefficient	P-value
Facebook	.4078657	0.000
Instagram	.1903769	0.000
Twitter	.0089976	0.833

Source: Stata Output, 2016

Table 4 shows that both Facebook and Instagram, as social media tools, significantly influenced performance at 0.05% with p-value of 0.000 respectivelt. The null hypothesis is, therefore, rejected. Twitter has a p-value of 0.833 which is above 0.05. This implies that Twitter has no significant effect on performance of fashion designing in Abuja, Nigeria during the period under review.

Table 5   The most used Social Media Tool

Variables	Obs	Mean	Rank
Twitter	122	1.271	3rd
Facebook	122	1.557	1st
Instagram	122	1.434	2nd

Source: Stata Output, 2016

Table 5 indicates that Facebook has an average mean value of 1.557; Instagram has an average mean value of 1.434, while Twitter has an average mean value of 1.271. This implies that Facebook is the most widely utilized social media tool alongside Instagram as both aid effective advertising of clothing fashion products in the market.

Evidence from the study reveals that:

1) Both Facebook and Instagram significantly influenced the performance of Clothing Fashion Designing industry in Abuja, Nigeria; while Twitter does not have a significant impact though positive.

2) The most used social media tool is Facebook with a mean of 1.557. This is followed by Instagram with a mean of 1.434.

3) Social media tools significantly influenced the performance of Clothing Fashion Designing industry in Abuja, Nigeria.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Social media outlets dictate the day-to-day life of many firms. To retain customers and maintain enduring relationships, clothing fashion designing firms must portray a good reputation by creating an accessible and professional presence on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

More businesses are utilizing Social media marketing and employing various strategies to achieve their objectives. As technology changes and platforms emerge, new opportunities in the social media community are created. Each evolving channel offers valuable marketing features, new marketing research and business opportunities for fashion designing firms in Abuja, Nigeria.

Thus, the paper recommends that:

1) Innovative models in the clothing fashion industry incorporate the social media to allow it build strong customer relationship, encourage loyalty and interaction with customers through new channels.

2) Clothing Fashion designing firms develop a deeper understanding of the influence of social media marketing tools to improve their business strategies.

3) Clothing Fashion designing firms in Abuja adapt to, and use evolving technology and emerging platforms in the social media to properly position themselves and their products.

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