



Analyzing the Effectiveness of Content Marketing Strategies on Customer Acquisition in Rivers State Businesses

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ABSTRACT

The study looked at analyzing the effectiveness of content marketing strategies on customer acquisition in rivers state businesses. Two research questions were developed in the study. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Two research objectives and questions were set in the study. The population of the study consisted of 346 selected Marketers in Rivers State. A simple random technique was used to select 205 marketers. The instrument for data collection was a close-end structured questionnaire titled, Effectiveness of Content Marketing Strategies on Customer Acquisition (ECMSCA). The instrument passed through a pilot test, 20 Marketers were used from Bayelsa State outside the study area and a reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). The Data were analyzed using mean rating. The data presented in table 1 indicates that items 1-5 with mean scores of 3.04, 3.06, 3.12, 3.04 and 3.07 respectively were accepted because they are above the criterion mean of 2.50. Furthermore, the grand mean of 3.07 is above the criterion mean of 2.50 which made the item to be accepted. This implies that these are different types of content marketing strategies that impact customer acquisition in Rivers State. The data presented in table 2 revealed that items 1-5 with mean scores of 3.10, 3.14, 3.12, 3.15 and 3.15 respectively are accepted because they are above the criterion mean of 2.50. Furthermore, the grand mean of 3.13 was accepted because it's above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that the item was accepted as the above-mentioned or listed items are the role of customer engagement in the effectiveness of content marketing strategies for customer acquisition in Rivers State. Based on the conclusions drawn from this study, it was recommended amongst others that businesses should utilize various content types, including blog posts, social media content, video content, info graphics, and email marketing, to cater to different customer preferences and maximize customer acquisition.

Keywords: Analyzing, Effectiveness, Content Marketing, Strategies, Customer

INTRODUCTION

Content marketing has emerged as a significant aspect of modern marketing strategies, with an increasing number of businesses recognizing its potential for driving customer acquisition and engagement (Pulizzi, 2012). In the digital age, where customers are inundated with information from various sources, businesses must differentiate themselves by offering valuable and engaging content to attract and retain customers (Kumar & Mirchandani, 2012). Content marketing encompasses the creation and sharing of valuable, relevant, and consistent content with the primary goal of attracting, engaging, and retaining a specific target audience (Holliman & Rowley, 2014).

In Rivers State, businesses are adopting content marketing strategies to enhance their customer acquisition efforts, using different types of content such as blog posts, social media content, video content, infographics, and email marketing. However, despite the growing importance of content

marketing, there is limited empirical research examining the effectiveness of these strategies on customer acquisition in the Rivers State context.

Internet websites, e-books, social media, blogs—the list of possible digital marketing channels for content is extensive, and the proliferation of technical advancements opens up new avenues for the production, distribution, and exchange of material by both common people and businesses. Depending on the requirements of a certain target audience, each of these approaches has advantages and limitations, varied entrance barriers, differently focused recipient potential, and delivers different rewards. The only way to determine which of these routes is the best one is to base operations in that direction by establishing aims, tactics, and requirements rather than via experimentation or random selection. Failures are not frightening as long as lessons are learned from them. Some programs are more successful than others. Some may let us down. Yet it's important to have an open, imaginative mind at all times and constantly looking for the best platforms for content dissemination.

He aspires to meet this objective as a part of a certain group and searches for ways to do so. Content marketing provides true commitment from the target audience and the development of an honest, open relationship with the group that is built on trust and collaboration. This is the only area of marketing where the commercially oriented message has such a great potential that it prompts target customers to deliberately seek it out. Content consumers are searching for the message that piques their attention and prompts them to take certain action. Every expert who wants to catch the consumer's eye must make an investment in content production. What's crucial is that the informational and entertaining material should be suitably targeted. By providing distinctive and reliable information, a business improves its position in the market and develops a loyal customer base. This happens as a result of effective client communication, which gives a business the chance to seem to message receivers as a reliable authority on the issue.

As a result, content marketing is sometimes described as the art of recognizing and comprehending the demands of a certain customer group and, as a result, skillfully meeting those needs. A conversation with receivers is made possible by material that is genuinely valuable. This further implies that their wants and aspirations may be categorized. Content that has been well prepared has a really powerful impact. It could provide the recipient the best options. Also, it can answer crucial questions for the community it is intended for. As a result, it plays a crucial part in the existence of the consumer groups that founded these communities. Education and, more importantly, modifications to the behavior of content consumers frequently play a significant impact in the process of authenticating the message.

The secret to everything in content marketing is content. It piques customers' curiosity and, in the Web 2.0 era, makes it easier to communicate with them directly. Yet clever, inventive, and strategically minded material is what makes up the substance of a digital communication. The Institute of Aviation in Poland is a prime example of effective web 2.0 application. The unit, which is a research organization in name only, engages in sophisticated operations on websites like Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube. Also, it has a Wikipedia entry. Those who are interested in and identify with the branch or subject routinely update and comment on the information presented on these websites. The published messages include information on the Institute's ongoing operations as well as intriguing details related to the activity of the aerospace industry. This expansive Institute activity's purpose is to showcase the group's scientific accomplishments and significant national and international events. As a result, this is a key component of the Institution's promotion. The unit takes on the responsibility of engaging people in conversation on any websites it creates that are connected to initiatives or events happening at the Institute.

Statement of the Problem

While content marketing has been recognized as an effective tool for customer acquisition, there is a need for empirical evidence to better understand the impact of different content marketing strategies on customer acquisition in Rivers State businesses. Furthermore, customer engagement is considered a critical factor in the success of content marketing strategies, but the role of customer engagement in the

effectiveness of these strategies for customer acquisition in Rivers State remains unclear (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

This study aims to address the gap in the literature by analyzing the effectiveness of various content marketing strategies on customer acquisition in Rivers State businesses, with a specific focus on the role of customer engagement. Understanding the impact of content marketing strategies and customer engagement on customer acquisition can provide valuable insights for businesses in Rivers State, allowing them to optimize their marketing efforts and improve their competitive advantage (Siamagka et al., 2015).

Literature Review

Strategy Content marketing has been used for a very long time. For many years, businesses have been disseminating bulletins or video messages. Nowadays, however, the availability of multiple tools for producing and spreading quality content is a crucial component in the struggle against a conventional advertising model that, for the majority of its audience, has taken on a cynical disposition. In 1895 John Deere by way of his consumer magazine "The Furrow" developed the first content marketing venture in history. The major goal of the program was to inform a group of farmers by releasing information outlining how technology and trends in the field should be used to their work in order to increase efficiency and profit. As a result, it may serve as an illustration of the best and most successful content marketing campaign ever. This effectively demonstrates the age of content marketing. Businesses have been producing and distributing content for a long time in an effort to both draw in new customers and retain existing ones. The difference between the current and prior forms is that "content utilized to create profit is not sale" in the current form. This material isn't at all like advertising. Although it doesn't have the traits of a "push" approach either, it is more similar to a "pull" strategy because it is marketing that seeks to attract customers. Customers and customers in this circumstance require and seek out information that possesses instructive, beneficial, appealing, engrossing, and occasionally amusing qualities.

Thousands of businesses relied (to some extent) on the tools that content marketing in its previous incarnation supplied before the word (strategy) of content marketing was coined, but never before have so many marketing experts concentrated their attention on this approach as it does now. Currently it is a fact that:

- More so than ever before, the customer accepts material from corporate sources. In other words, it's not essential to be included in the "Wall Street Journal" to attract and keep readers.
- Consumers discover 99% of the information required for a possible purchase on their own. They are in complete charge, and they are unconcerned with a company's sales approach.
- With media expenditures getting smaller, anybody can produce content. The conventional media paradigm is in a challenging position. As many media corporations do not make investments in content generation, there is a potential to fill this need.
- Creation and distribution costs have decreased significantly. Using resources like Word Press is absolutely free. At the same time, Google, email, and improved database access enable all users to benefit from these standard publishing tools.
- There are a lot of opinions on content. Editors are now more willing to work with experts from businesses to further their content marketing strategies than they were in the past, when they would have considered the steps done to develop content to be redundant.

Content marketing is no longer simply one choice among several. A firm now has to have a well-defined marketing plan if it wants to grow its business, attract new clients, and forge lasting relationships with its present clientele. This technique may be put into practice in two different ways: by providing entertaining material or by alerting clients at the proper moment. According to Rose and Pulizzi (2011), effective content marketing combines (integrates) these two approaches. The findings of research on content marketing show that it has a significantly bigger impact on customers and receivers than traditional

advertising. Although a strategy based on conventional methods of delivering advertising material still exists and will continue to do so, it is becoming less and less common. Advertisers are leaving the press, radio, television, and magazines at a record-breaking rate. According to research, 80% of corporate decision-makers prefer to learn about a firm via articles rather than marketing. Approximately 70% of people think that content marketing makes them feel more connected to businesses who produce and share this information. 60% believe the information helps people choose items more wisely.) Information serves as the best content marketing unit. It serves as the basis for the construction of specific contents, the function of which is to influence the receivers. The recipient receives a specific advantage from the information, but it is difficult to quantify that benefit because it is more cerebral and personal in nature, relating to the recipient's life. People refer to widely circulated tales rather than facts, numbers, or statistics. We give existing and new clients access to unique information through the dissemination of highly value material, which in turn motivates the groups affected by the information to take action. Delivering information during marketing communication has certain impacts, such as getting the receiver to focus on the generated message, fill out a contact form, participate in a contest or survey, and ultimately make a purchase.

By producing original material, content marketing helps a company become more recognizable by fostering a sense of legitimacy and trust among its audience. Also, it aids in the accomplishment of these objectives on multiple levels of a company's operations: for the entities it represents, for the business, goods, or services it offers, as well as for the personnel who represent the business or service.

Objectives

The main objective of the study is to analyse the Effectiveness of Content Marketing Strategies on Customer Acquisition in Rivers State Businesses. The study will specifically

1. Evaluate the impact of different types of content marketing strategies in customer acquisition in Rivers State
2. Investigate the role of customer engagement in the effectiveness of content marketing strategies for customer acquisition in Rivers State

Research Questions

1. How do different types of content marketing strategies impact customer acquisition in Rivers State?
2. What is the role of customer engagement in the effectiveness of content marketing strategies for customer acquisition in Rivers State?

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Two research objectives and questions were set in the study. The population of the study consisted of 346 selected Marketers in Rivers State. A simple random technique was used to select 205 marketers. The instrument for data collection was a close-end structured questionnaire titled, Effectiveness of Content Marketing Strategies on Customer Acquisition (ECMSCA). The instrument passed through a pilot test, 20 Marketers were used from Bayelsa State outside the study area and a reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (PPMCC). The Data were analyzed using mean rating.

RESULTS

Research Question 1. *How do different types of content marketing strategies impact customer acquisition in Rivers State?*

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation analysis of the different types of content marketing strategies that impact customer acquisition in Rivers State.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	\bar{X}	SD	DECISION
1	Blog posts	81 (324)	75 (225)	26 (52)	23 (23)	205 (624)	3.04	0.99	Accepted
2	Social Media contents	83 (332)	73 (219)	27 (54)	22 (22)	205 (627)	3.06	0.98	Accepted
3	Video contents	87 (348)	76 (228)	22 (44)	20 (20)	205 (640)	3.12	0.95	Accepted
4	Infographics	84 (336)	72 (216)	23 (46)	26 (26)	205 (624)	3.04	1.02	Accepted
5	Email marketing	79 (316)	83 (249)	22 (44)	21 (21)	205 (630)	3.07	0.95	Accepted
	Grand Total	83 (332)	76 (228)	24 (48)	22 (22)	205 (630)	3.07	0.97	Accepted

The data presented in table 1 indicates that items 1-5 with mean scores of 3.04, 3.06, 3.12, 3.04 and 3.07 respectively were accepted because they are above the criterion mean of 2.50. Furthermore, the grand mean of 3.07 is above the criterion mean of 2.50 which made the item to be accepted. This implies that these are different types of content marketing strategies that impact customer acquisition in Rivers State.

Research Question 2. *What is the role of customer engagement in the effectiveness of content marketing strategies for customer acquisition in Rivers State?*

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation analysis of the role of customer engagement in the effectiveness of content marketing strategies for customer acquisition in Rivers State.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	\bar{X}	SD	DECISION
1	businesses can establish trust and credibility, making it more likely that those customers will eventually make a purchase or become a loyal customer	87 (348)	72 (216)	25 (50)	21 (21)	205 (635)	3.10	0.98	Accepted
2	By creating content that encourages interaction, such as through social media posts or blog comments, businesses can build relationships with potential customers and gather valuable feedback and insights	90 (360)	74 (222)	21 (42)	20 (20)	205 (644)	3.14	0.96	Accepted
3	Engaging content can drive traffic to a business's website or social media channels, increasing the likelihood that potential customers will take action, such as making a purchase or signing up for a newsletter	86 (344)	77 (231)	22 (44)	20 (20)	205 (639)	3.12	0.95	Accepted
4	By creating and sharing content that demonstrates expertise in their industry or niche, businesses can establish themselves as thought leaders and attract a following of engaged customers	84 (336)	85 (255)	19 (38)	17 (17)	205 (646)	3.15	0.74	Accepted
5	Engaging content can increase brand awareness and recognition, making it more likely that potential customers will choose a business's products or services over those of competitors	87 (348)	79 (237)	21 (42)	18 (18)	205 (645)	3.15	0.93	Accepted
	Grand Total	87 (348)	77 (231)	22 (44)	19 (19)	205 (642)	3.13	0.94	Accepted

The data presented in table 2 revealed that items 1-5 with mean scores of 3.10, 3.14, 3.12, 3.15 and 3.15 respectively are accepted because they are above the criterion mean of 2.50. Furthermore, the grand mean of 3.13 was accepted because it's above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that the item was accepted as the above-mentioned or listed items are the role of customer engagement in the effectiveness of content marketing strategies for customer acquisition in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from this study indicate that various content marketing strategies, including blog posts, social media content, video content, infographics, and email marketing, have a significant impact on customer acquisition in Rivers State businesses. These results are consistent with other empirical works in the field of content marketing. For instance, a study conducted by Siamagka et al. (2015) found that content marketing strategies positively influence customer engagement and brand loyalty, ultimately leading to increased customer acquisition.

In addition, the results from Table 2 suggest that customer engagement plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of content marketing strategies for customer acquisition. The data shows that businesses can establish trust and credibility, build relationships with potential customers, drive traffic to websites or social media channels, demonstrate expertise in their industry or niche, and increase brand awareness and recognition through engaging content. These findings are in line with the work of Hollebeek et al. (2014), who highlighted the importance of customer engagement in driving customer acquisition and retention.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study's findings, it can be concluded that content marketing strategies significantly impact customer acquisition in Rivers State businesses. The use of various content types, such as blog posts, social media content, video content, infographics, and email marketing, can effectively attract and engage customers. Furthermore, customer engagement is vital in enhancing the effectiveness of content marketing strategies, as it builds trust, credibility, relationships, and brand awareness, ultimately leading to increased customer acquisition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn from this study, the following recommendations are provided for businesses in Rivers State:

1. Diversify content marketing strategies: Businesses should utilize various content types, including blog posts, social media content, video content, infographics, and email marketing, to cater to different customer preferences and maximize customer acquisition.
2. Focus on customer engagement: Businesses should prioritize creating and sharing content that encourages interaction, builds relationships with potential customers, and gathers valuable feedback and insights. This can be achieved through interactive social media posts, blog comments, or other channels that promote customer engagement.
3. Establish trust and credibility: Businesses should create content that demonstrates their expertise in their industry or niche, positioning themselves as thought leaders and attracting a following of engaged customers.
4. Drive traffic to websites and social media channels: Engaging content should be designed to drive traffic to a business's website or social media channels, increasing the likelihood that potential customers will take action, such as making a purchase or signing up for a newsletter.
5. Increase brand awareness and recognition: To differentiate themselves from competitors, businesses should focus on creating content that increases brand awareness and recognition, making it more likely that potential customers will choose their products or services over those of competitors.

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