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# Advertising and the Social Media: A Synthesis

***Egbeh, P.C (PhD); Oguguo, F.C, Edomobi Okey & Iwuoha, B.C**

**Department of Marketing,**
**Imo State Polytechnic, Umuagwo, Nigeria**
***egbehpc@gmail.com**

**ABSTRACT**
This study which is purely qualitative in nature was undertaken to review extant literature on advertising using the social or rich media. Definitions and uses of the two concepts as well as available platforms for engaging with target audiences with emphasis on their strengths and weaknesses were critically examined. The major finding of the study is that social media advertising is increasingly becoming the advertising medium of choice of sellers as its reach is not only worldwide but also at a relatively affordable cost. Its interactive nature which gives target audiences a voice in product design and development is also a plus. Developments in the field of information and communication technologies especially the advent of smart phones which has not only put the world in our pockets but have also enabled advertisers to reach target audiences even while on the move are also contributory factors. The downsides of the social media such as information overload and the rapidity with which viral negative feedback spread were also identified. Arising from these findings is the basic recommendation that since a firm's competitors and customers are on the social media, a company wishing to achieve its promotional objectives which in the main are awareness creation, possible trial purchase/ consumption, brand adoption and retention must be there. However, to make the best of using the social media to advertise, an advertiser has to present a compelling offer to the appropriate target audiences using the appropriate platforms. Moreover, platforms where users will actively engage with paid ads should now be emphasized rather relying solely on the potency of viral marketing
**Keywords**: Advertising, Social media.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Before the advent of the *World Wide Web (www)* -it was launched by Time Barnes-Lee and his team in 1991- advertising relied on traditional media like television, radio, newspaper, and magazines and outdoor to reach target audiences. This scenario, where established content producers such as advertising agencies and marketing research firms controlled the distribution of content targeted at consumers was however to witness a paradigm shift with the adoption of the internet three decades ago ( Digital Marketing Institute Digest [n.d]). The Digital Marketing Institute (DMI) digest considers this development as the single biggest event that has impacted on marketing practice for decades now, as it significantly influenced sellers to place greater emphasis on in-bound marketing through information sharing, user-centred designs and collaborations. Chaney (2009) as cited in Nyekwere, Kur & Nyekwere (2013) in seeming agreement with DMI described the development in the following words "target audiences are no longer merely passive consumers of goods and services but active participants in co-creating them- they have now become *prosumers*". Lending further credence to their position statement on the subject matter, DMI observed that the introduction of social media sites like LinkedIn (2002), Myspace (2003), Facebook (2004) and Twitter (2007) made it more possible for marketers to have access to big data which made the tracking of, and patterns of human behavior and its applications in product design and promotion much easier…. a scenario which in the opinion of Hootsuite Academy (2018) was made much more possible

from the fact that internet access which was only about 70 million persons in 1996 now stands at about 3.19 billion people worldwide . And additionally, the world over, as Hootsuite Academy observed; 59% of global consumers use the social media as a source of inspiration for purchases; 34 % for receiving promotional offers with 16% most likely to click on an ad relevant to them (Price Water House, 2017 as cited in Hootsuite Academy). Further to the opinions they expressed about the internet and social media, Hootsuite citing Adobe Analytics further stated that social media ads have been found to drive 3 times non-existing customers than existing customers to retailer websites- a phenomenon that is up 2.5 times between 2016 and 2018. In seeming agreement with the submissions of Hootsuite, Enberg (2019) observes that ad revenues from the social media worldwide increased from $283.35 billion dollars in 2018 to $333.25 billion dollars in 2019 and that by 2020 ad revenues from the social media will amount to about 53.6% of total ad spend by advertisers. These trends Kotler and Keller, (2005) and DMI Digest, (n.d) asserts are projected to continue as they have largely been driven by the advent in 2007 of smart phones with which marketers can now reach consumers when they are on the move and communicate with them in ways that wasn't possible before as "the world has moved online and into our pockets". The social media play significant roles in influencing our purchase decision and considering the fact that that's where consumers are, companies wishing to attain their promotional objective needed to be there as 81% of consumers research online before they make a purchase (Meg, 2020). These current trends in the field of advertising, it is, that motivated this study which critically reviewed extant literature on using the social media to advertise so that sellers, advertisers, scholars and other interested parties will gain adequate insight and be appropriately guided in decision- making when choosing advertising media.

## 2.0. Advertising

Advertising has been defined as a form of communication through the media about products, services or ideas paid for by an identified sponsor (Okoro, 1998 as cited in Nyekwere, Kur and Nyekwere, 2013). Ekweme and Okoro (2018) defined it as the planned process of creating awareness and reinforcing customer loyalty to a product, person or idea via persuasive communication through media channels by an identified or identifiable sponsor. In the opinion of Kerin, Hertley and Rudelius, (2009), advertising was in addition to personal selling, public relations, sales promotion and direct marketing which are marketing communication tools defined as any paid form of non personal communication about an organization, good, service or idea by an identified sponsor.

### 2.1.1 Types of Advertising

Advertisements are often prepared for different purposes but are generally typified as (i) *Product advertising* and (ii) *Institutional advertising* (Perrault and McCarthy, 2003, Kerin et.al, 2009). Product advertising which is usually aimed at members of the trade focuses on selling a good or service and assumes any of the following forms (1) *pioneering (or informational), (2) Competitive (or persuasive) and (3) reminder.* Kerin et.al differentiates between the three forms of product advertising as follows:

*Pioneering* adverts are used at the introductory stage of the product life cycle to tell the target audience what a product is, what it can do, and where it can be found. The basic features of pioneering ads are: to be *interesting, convincing and effective*.

*Competitive* advertising seeks to develop selective demand for a specific brand. Perrault & McCarthy observes that competitive advertising may be direct or indirect. The *direct type* aims for immediate buying action while the *indirect type* points out product advantages to influence future buying decisions. A common type of competitive advertising is *comparative* advertising which makes specific brand comparisons using actual product names: (firms that use comparative advertising are advised to research the market well to provide legal support for the claims).

*Reminder* advertising aims at keeping a product's name before the public. Reminder advertising is the most useful when a product is at the maturity stage of its life cycle. The major essence of reminder advertising is the reinforcement of positive attitude towards a brand.

*Institutional advertisements* are undertaken by companies with the major objective of building goodwill or enhancing the corporate image rather than creating awareness for a specific good or service. It may seek to inform, persuade or remind. It may take the nature of *advocacy advertisement* or *pioneering institutional advertisement*.

*Advocacy* adverts are used to state the position of an organization on an issue like sustainable development. In the US for example, insurance companies carry out institutional adverts against "drinking and driving".

*Pioneering* institutional advertisements are carried out by organizations to announce: *what the organization is, what it can do, or where it is located.*

### 2.1.2 Objectives of Advertising

Advertising objectives vary. Perreault and McCarthy however observed that organizations advertise to achieve some of the following broad objectives:

1. To help position the organization's brand or marketing objectives by informing and persuading target audiences
2. Help introduce new products to specific target audiences
3. Help obtain desirable outlets and tell prospects/ customers where they can buy a product
4. Facilitate ongoing contact with target customers even in the absence of salespersons
5. Prepare the way for sales people by presenting the company's name as well as the features and benefits of a product
6. Instigate immediate buying action
7. Help to maintain relationships with satisfied customers and encourage more purchases

### 2.1.3 Choosing Advertising Media

In advertising, there are several strategic decision areas and they include (1) identifying the target audience (2) the kind of advertising to use (3) how to reach the target audience, that is, through which types of media (4) what to say to them, that is, the thrust of the advertising copy and (5) who will do the work? (Perreault & McCarthy, 2003). On deciding on how to reach the target audience which is the focus of this paper, Perreault and McCarthy advices that in the main, a firm must ascertain how the medium fits with the rest of the marketing strategy of the firm. The specific sub decision areas include:

- The promotion objectives of the advertiser
- The target markets the advertiser wants to reach
- The funds available to the advertiser to execute the campaign and
- The nature of the media; including who they reach, with what frequency, with what impact, and at what cost?

While addressing the issue of the nature of the media as well the specific decisions thereof, Kerin et.al clarified as follows; …. *Who they reach* refers to the number of different people or households exposed to an advert- television and radio houses used the wor*d rating* in place of *reach* while newspaper houses use *circulation figures* to denote reach. Impact refers to the qualitative value of an exposure while *cost* refers to what it takes in monetary value to reach 1000 households or individuals with the advertising message in a given medium. Adding to the opinions of Kerin et.al on the subject matter, Kotler and Keller added the factors of: (1) the media habits of the target audience (2) the characteristics of the product and (3) the message characteristics, that is, timeliness and message content as important variables for consideration. . To guide media planners in making fact – based decisions when choosing advertising medium, a template has been provided by Kerin et.al which shall be adopted in this paper (figure 1 below refers).

| MEDIUM | ADVANTAGES | DISADVANATGES |
|---|---|---|
| Television | Reaches extremely large audience; uses picture, print, sound, and motion for effect; can target specific audiences | High cost to prepare and run ads; short exposure time and perishable message; difficult to convey complex information |
| Radio | Low cost; can target special local audiences; ads can be placed quickly; can use sound, humor, and intimacy effectively | No visual element; short exposure time and perishable message; difficult to convey complex information |
| Magazines | Can target specific audiences; high-quality color; long life of ad; ads can be clipped and saved; can convey complex information | Long time needed to place ad; relatively high cost; competes for attention with other magazine features |
| Newspapers | Excellent coverage of local markets; ads can be placed and changed quickly; ads can be saved; quick customers response; low cost | Ads compete for attention with other newspaper features; short life span; poor colour |
| Yellow Pages | Excellent coverage of geographic segments; long use period; available 24 hours/365 days | Proliferation of competitive directories in many markets; short life span; poor colour |
| Internet | Video and audio capabilities; animation can capture attention; ads can be interactive and link to advertiser | Animation and interactivity require large files and more time to load; effectiveness is still uncertain |
| Outdoor | Low cost; local market focus; high visibility; opportunity for repeat exposures | Message must be short and simple; low selectivity of audience; criticized as a traffic hazard |
| Direct mail | High selectivity of audience; can contain complex information and personalized messages; high-quality graphics | High cost per contact; poor image (junk mail) |

**Figure 1. Different Advertising Media Alternatives**

**Source: Kerin, Hartley & Rudelius (2009). Marketing, pg 500**

## 3.0 The Social Media

The social media (also referred to as the *rich* media by Kerin et.al) has been defined as a user- centred networking and social interactions system which provides connections between manufacturers and end users by offering personal channel and currency (Kathivaran, 2017). Subramanyam and Greenfield, 2008 as cited in Otugo, Uzuegbunam & Obikeze (2014) saw the social media as a set of various web services that can be interrelated for social interaction using highly accessible and scalable communication techniques. In the opinion of Sisira (2011) as cited in Ekwueme and Okoro (2018), the social media is any website which allows users to share content, opinions, views and which encourages interaction and community building…. they are platforms through which individuals express their opinions, wants, needs, and values and which organizations leverage on to understand their customers and seek innovative ways to meet these needs. Giving the social media a marketing slant, Weigman (2011) as cited in Rahman and Rashid (2018) referred to the social media as a marketing tool which gives marketers the unique advantage to be at the same place as their customers, to interact with them and to gain access into their

attitudes, needs, interests and preferences; their wants and buying patterns- the social media influences various aspects of both the lives of individuals and the society as a whole. When discussing the term, Dehghani (2013) made a distinction between the social media and traditional media. Citing Susan (2012), Dehghani, referred to the social media as an online media consisting of a group of applications, powered on the internet and built on ideas similar to the foundations of Web 2.0 technology that facilitates communication through the use of feedback; engaging the users actively in the generation and improvement of content as opposed to traditional media which delivers content but does not allow the users to modify the content. Chukwu and Uzoma (2014) did not differ significantly with the views of other writers who had proffered meanings to the term "social media". It was their opinion that the social media implies an internet- based service that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of users with whom they share a connection and (3) view and transverse their list of connections and others made within the system….and with the nature and nomenclature of these connections probably varying from site to site.

### 3.1 Purpose of Social Media

Gonzales (2019) used the acronym S.L.I.M (sharing, learning, interacting and marketing) to denote the four main purposes of the social media. The social media allow people to *share* ideas in a variety of ways such as media sharing, photo sharing, video sharing etc. It also through *learning* enable people get updates about friends and family or learn about happenings within the community or around the world. Gonzales identified *interaction* as the most powerful element of the social media by virtue of the fact that it broke the traditional barriers of time and distance…. with video chart technology for example, people can talk face-to- face anywhere in the world. In terms of using the social media to perform *marketing* activities, Aria (2019), while acknowledging the observation of Gonzales of its application in product and corporate advertising, added the following marketing uses:

- It is a medium for interacting with potential individuals and businesses before they even become customers. It thus facilitates the conversion rate of prospects to customers
- It can help establish a brand as not only legitimate but credible and trustworthy, thus enhancing brand recognition and brand loyalty
- Constant interaction with prospects and customers continuously create awareness about the features, benefits and uses of a product
- It also affords companies the opportunity to build their reputation. Interactivity allows objections from prospects/ customers to be responded to immediately; clearing doubts as well as demonstrating high customer service level.

### 3.2 Social Media Advertising

Social media advertising has been defined as a general term capturing all forms of advertising-whether explicit (e.g. banner advertising and commercial videos) or implicit (e.g. fan pages or firm- related "tweets") that are delivered through social networking sites (Taylor, Lewin, and Sutton, 2011, Wright et.al, 2010 as cited in Rahman and Rashid, 2018). Oletewo (2016) in Ekwueme and Okoro sees social media advertising as the use of social networking sites (SNS) like Facebook, Instagram, Linkedin, Twitter and so on to create awareness and re-enforce customer loyalty to a product, person or idea through persuasive communications…. It involves the creation of appealing content on different social media sites to create awareness and gain new and existing customer's attention- it is marketing through online communities and social networks as opposed to traditional marketing channels like television, radio and newspapers. Additionally, Otugo et.al (2015) provided an alternative definition of the term by referring to social media advertising as the process of gaining website traffic or attention through SNS with efforts centering on creating content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks.

### 3.2.1 Nature of Social Media Advertising

In the opinion of Ekwueme and Okoro, creating social media advertising campaign is not overly tasking….it requires registration with platform(s) of choice , the proper devices and a plan of action ( the duo provided a template which shall be adopted for this study and which is reproduced hereto in Table 1)

**Table 1: How social media advertising works**

| | FACEBOOK | TWITTER | LINKEDIN | INSTAGRAM |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Create a face book page | Create a twitter page | Create a LinkedIn profile | Create an Instagram page |
| 2. | Log into face book ad manager | Log into twitterads.com | Log into linkedin.com.ads | |
| 3. | Click on create campaign/ ad | Select ad campaign type e.g. promoted tweet | Click the ad creation button | Connect your facebook page with instagram |
| 4. | Set objective (choose from the various options what best suits your intentions) | Name ad campaign; to differentiate it from past or future campaigns | Select campaign type e.g. sponsorship | While on placement on facebook, select Instagram |
| 5. | Create audience (here, you target your audience based on demographics and other variables) | Choose funding source, that is, how you intend to pay | Name campaign | Instagram basically has the same ad set as facebook especially since its acquisition by facebook |
| 6. | Budgeting and schedule (set the amount you want to pay, the bid you wish to be charged per action, the total budget for a campaign, how long you wish it to last, the start and stop dates) | Schedule campaign (start and stop time) | Image and copy | The ad set is made up of three main categories: goal, audience and spend |
| 7. | Creating images/ videos and copy | Audience targeting based on certain variables as keywords, platforms, following and followers etc. | Audience targeting | |
| 8. | Placement (where you want and how you want your campaign to appear e.g. PC and/ or mobile, newsfeed, left hand corner or both) | Creating images/ copy | Budgeting and bidding | |
| 9. | Place order | Budgeting/ bidding | Submit | |
| 10. | | Place order | | |

**Source:** Ekwueme and Okoro (2018). Analysis of the use of social media advertising among selected online businesses in Nigeria, www.eajournals.org

### 3.2.2. Frequently Used Methods of Internet Advertising

Methods of internet advertising are as varied as the channels, their strengths and weaknesses as well as the objectives the advertiser has in mind. Kathiravan (2017) gave some insights into the subject matter and which has been adopted for this paper and spelt out hereto:

1. Banner ads: These are simple ads. They usually appear either at the top portion or bottom side of the screen. The sizes of banner ads are measured in pixels.
2. Tickers: Such ads not only appear on a particular area of the screen but also move around the screen. It appears like a dialogue box with buttons. It appears on the screen as an alert message
3. Superstitial: It looks like an animated advertisement. It usually appears like a TV advert thus it uses flash 3D images or videos to make it look like TV adverts.
4. Interstitial: If you are searching for something in a particular web page, it may sometimes take time to load. To fill the loading time, these interstitial adverts appear on the web page and once clicked upon; you will automatically be redirected to the actual page.
5. Pop-up ads: Pop-up ads usually appear on the front of popular web pages at the time of loading. Without viewing these ads, one cannot access the popular site. Nowadays, these ads are sold to independent entrepreneurs who use their popular company sites to increase their business. The ideal example for this type of ad is Amazon.com
6. Pop-under: these adverts do not appear on the front of web pages but usually behind the actual website
7. Transactional ads: these ads are getting more popular with advertisers nowadays as by their nature they attract and retain the attention of visitors to the site who explore the advertised offer
8. Roadblocks: these are compulsion ads that have to be viewed compulsorily before moving into the actual website
9. Rich media ads: These are ads that combine motion with audio and will beep or flash. These kinds of ads require more capability in terms of processing as they are like filmed commercials.
10. Floating ad: these ads float across the user's screen space above the viewed content
11. Expanding ad: These ads change size and web page content.
12. Polite ad: These ads are not usually large; instead, they appear in small pieces to avoid disrupting the content the user is viewing
13. Video ad: Here, instead of using non-moving or cartoon- like images, actual videos are displayed. These kind of adverts were originally popular with TV but are now also getting popular with online advertising
14. Wall paper ad: They change the background of web pages
15. Map add: Like text messages or in graphic form, they appear in Google maps while searching for a location
16. Mile ad: it may be either text or multi-media message similar to SMS sent to a user

### 3.2.3. Choosing the Right Social Media Platform for your Business

When formulating a social media strategy, Weist (2018) recommends that an organization need to establish what its primary business objectives are on the social media. Is it to (1) Drive traffic to your website? (2) Increase followers? or (3) build brand awareness?. Addressing the subject matter, Warren (2017) stated that the social media network a company chooses will depend on the factors of:

- Where your target customers are most concentrated (usage, groups, etc)
- Where your target customers are most accessible ( preferred media, ad targeting, etc)
- Where your target customers most actively engage with ads

Likely views on the subject matter was also expressed by Azfar (2015) and Accion (n.d) with Accion developing the template reproduced hereto as a guide (figure 2 hereto refers).

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Demographics | 1.3+ Billion users<br>Ages 25-54<br>60% Female | 600 Million users<br>Ages 18-29 | 70 Million users<br>Ages 18-35<br>80% Female | 1 Billion users<br>All ages | 600 Million users<br>Ages 30-49 | 200 Million users<br>Ages 18-29 | 200 Million users<br>Ages 25-34<br>67% Male |
| Purpose | Building Relationships | News & Articles; Conversation | "Scrapbooking" | Search "How To" | News &Articles; Conversation | Building Relationships; Conversation | News & Articles |
| Best for | Building Brand Loyalty | Public Relations | Lead Generation; Clothing, Art & Food Business | Brand Awareness; Service industry | Business Development; B2B Businesses | Lead Generation; Retail, Art, Food, Entertainment, & Beauty Businesses | SEO; Tech/Design Businesses |
| Down Side | Limited Reach | 140 characters or less | Images only; Very specific demographic | Resource intensive | Limited interactions | Images only | Not as widely used |

**Figure 2: Choosing the right social media platform for your business**

In determining whom your target audience is, Accion were of the opinion that answers to the following questions will be quite useful. The questions are:

- Who is your typical customer?
- What are his demographics?
- What other things outside your products or service interest him?

Additionally, Weist adds that firms should also be able to identify where their *competitors* are as this will help in targeting the right brand influencers/ ambassadors as well as target audiences. To be able to appropriately establish where competitors are, the reference material provided by Enberg (2019) detailing the individual SNS,s shares of the global digital ad spend for 2019 as contained in figure 3 hereto shall suffice.

| **Social Network Site (SNS)** | **Ad Revenues in billions of dollars** |
|---|---|
| Google | 102.7 |
| Facebook | 67.7 |
| Alibaba | 29.20 |
| Amazon | 14.0 |
| Baidu | 12.60 |
| Tencent | 11.41 |
| Micrsoft | 6.44 |
| Verizon | 4.84 |
| Twitter | 2.97 |
| Sina | 2.38 |

**Figure 3:** Share of SNS of global digital ad spend for 2019
**Source:** Enberg, J (2019). Global digital ad spending, www.emarketer.com

In addition to following your competitors in terms of where they are advertising, Azfar was of the opinion that content should not only vary according to SNS specialty but paid advertising options should be prioritized. With respect to this opinion , Azfar said that SNS that have paid advertising tools not only allow advertisers target their content to specific audiences, but it also removes them from the pitfall of the users of an SNS sharing or liking an advertiser's content for the advert to be successful.

### 3.2.4 Merits of Using the Social Media for Advertising

Dehghani, Rahman and Rashid, Nyekwere et.al and Keran (2019) discussed the subject matter extensively. In the opinion of Dehghani, the merits of using the social media to promote goods and services include:

i) When compared with non-virtual media, it is the most versatile and cost effective avenue for all size businesses to engage with large audiences
ii) It provides numerous avenues for consumers to share their views, preferences or experiences with others about products thus influencing the purchase behavior of other members of the community
iii) Social Networking Sites are readily available and provide users with opportunities to be connected to virtually everyone around the globe
iv) Graphics generated from aligning the relationships between users or customers online can facilitate the prediction of customers responses to various online marketing strategies and messages
v) Consumers often attach more source credibility to recommendations from fellow members of an online community than that of sellers

In the opinion of Rahman and Rashid, the use of the social media to engage with target audiences can confer to advertisers the following advantages:

a) It gives sellers the opportunity to be at the same place as their customers, to interact with them, to gain access to their attitudes, needs and interests; their preferences, wants and buying patterns
b) It provides a forum that allows consumers access to product information that facilitate their purchase decision as well as voice their opinions about seller- generated content

Additionally, Nyekwere at.al highlighted the following as the merits of the use of social media in product promotions:

- The medium has become a platform that is easily accessible to people with internet access opening doors for organizations to increase product awareness as well as the facilitation of interactive exchanges with customers at relatively cheaper costs
- It provides an environment characterized by user control, freedom and dialogue- multi-way exchanges between brands and consumers and less about passive consumption of packaged contents take place
- It allows sellers to customize their advert content as social media advertising is highly targeted using market segmentation variables

Keran (2019) while contributing to the subject matter provided what this paper will consider as a summary of the merits of using the social media to advertise and they include:

- Your customers are on the social media
- Your competitors are on the social media
- Consumers will be more receptive to your messages when marketing through the social media as source believability is higher
- Advertising through the social media helps to increase brand recognition and equity
- Using the social media to advertise increases the sellers inbound traffic
- Different social media channels helps an advertiser to reach specific audiences
- It allows the advertiser to target and re-target ideal customers
- Marketing through the social media is cost effective
- Advertising on the social media often result to higher conversion rate of prospects to customers
- It affords the advertiser the opportunity to gain new customer insights

Keran concluded by saying that "it is for these reasons that 97% of sellers are using the social media to reach their target audiences".

**3.2.5 Demerits of Using the Social Media for Product promotions**

While acknowledging that the social media is a powerful tool for reaching target audiences at relatively low cost, Devra (2019) was also of the opinion that a successful social media campaign cannot take place without challenges. Some of the challenges he identified are:

1. Gaining the attention of social media users is becoming increasingly difficult as they are not only over stimulated but also over saturated with information
2. It requires the dedication of sufficient time as the advertiser must keep updating content and engaging with the target audience
3. Almost everything in the social media- positive and negative- is shareable (that is, there is "pass-along" effect). The implication of this is that one viral negative feedback about a company and /or its brand can do irreversible harm on corporate/ brand image.

In what could be considered a summary of the challenges associated with advertising on the social media, Otugo et.al (2015) stated thus: *Traditionally, marketers have been able to buy time or space on fixed media in a controlled context….they know where their ad would appear, what it would look like, and perhaps most importantly, in what context it would be seen. In other words, they would be guaranteed that their message wasn't being delivered in a hostile or inappropriate environment. Today, such guarantees are harder to make, and the lack of control can be a source of anxiety for marketers ….instead of inviting individual consumers into an environment of their own making, marketers*

*advertising on these sites are entering into a conversation initiated, maintained and 'owned' by consumers themselves*- a scenario Kotler, Wong, Saunders & Armstrong (2005) said converts consumers to *prosumers*.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Conclusion

Reviewing the digital ad spend for 2019, Enberg observed that by the end of 2020, digital ad spending will be accounting for up to of 53.6% of total ad spend by advertisers the world over. By Enberg,s submission, digital ad spend has been increasing progressively over the years (it was $283.35b in 2018, $333.25b in 2019 and projected to rise to $384.96b in 2020)….the percentages contributed to totals were 45.9% in 2018 and 50.1% in 2019. The implication of this trend is that this is where customers and competitors are and as Kotler and Keller (2009) espoused and rightly too "Marketers must go where the customers are and increasingly it is online. Customers define the rules of engagement as they determine what information they need, what offerings they are interested in, and what they are willing to pay". Social media advertising as Warren (2017) pointed out, presently deliver consistent, scalable, quality leads and customers from day one….using the social media to advertise come with some risks but failing to do so carry more risks and this is the position of this paper.

### 4.2 Recommendations

With mobile devices such as phones having internet access and the global average of internet penetration at 57% and people spending a minimum of 4 hours daily surfing the net, companies wishing to attain the promotional objectives for their products need to mandatorily use the social media in product promotions (Udodiong, 2019 and Enberg,2019). To be able to significantly exploit the potentials of the social media in advertising, it is recommended that advertisers ensure that:

1) They do not push the same content in all platforms as different platforms have their strengths and weaknesses
2) Your social media message must be fresh, informative and entertaining as social media users are suffering from information overload
3) You must not limit yourself to only the big social platforms; there are plenty of smaller, niche social networks that can be highly effective in achieving your promotional objectives
4) Handle complaints and negative comments with tact
5) Devote enough human resources to your ad campaigns to enable continuous update of your content and engagement with your target audiences
6) Use social media that provide you with analytical tools to track your followers and their page activity
7) You must not focus only on "pass-along" media but more importantly on platforms where users will actively engage in paid ads

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