

Purchase and Credibility of Online Advertised Consumers' Products Among Residence of Abakaliki Urban

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INTRODUCTION

The need to create awareness and inform potential consumers and distributors of the existence and availability of products both at national and international markets became imperative following the development of some modern advertising strategies used to promote the sales of goods and services. In traditional Nigeria setting, advertising has been parts of commercial activities even before the advent of imperialism. [1] opined that tri-media advertising (print, television and radio) was the only popular means of advertising before the advent of highly sophisticated media technology of advertising known as online advertising through the internet. [2] averred that online advertising is expected to be a key player in the twenty-first-century global economy. Advertising is more alive today than it has ever been. Based on this development, traditional advertising is dying slowly, and the reason is simple- the interactive nature of online advertising were consumers want and expect to be heard [3] has widened the scope of advertising.

Today, the concept of advertising is gradually changing from the tri-media or conventional mode of advertising to a more closely evaluated, non-theoretical advertising, a process where advertisers only pay for real and measurable actions through the internet. Thus the existence of online advertising has become one of the major and very busy avenue or channel through which potential consumers all over the world participate in buying and selling of various types of products, goods, service and ideas [4]. The increasing number of people and the ever growing percentage of the

consumer demographics opting for online shopping in developing countries have contributed in making internet advertising a multi-billion dollar industry. These developments are as the result of a colourful history of online advertising.

Assessing the level of acceptance of online advertising as a major medium/channel of promoting goods and service: [5] affirmed that at present, the new advertising approach (online advertising) is unfolding at hurricane velocity in view of internet's high marketability profile. Internet advertising is bound for profound expansion as it zeroes in on the philosophy of micro targeting (identifying more specific targets or audiences and reaching them with more precise messages that advertise their specific needs - rifle approach - rather than using the traditional method of "sending out a generic message to an undifferentiated audiences" - the shotgun approach [6]. The emergence of online advertising of web 2.0 and other platforms brought a new opportunity through which advertisers can make their goods and services known to a global audience.

The availability of all these new media for regular online advertising gives credence to the assertion of [7] when they stressed that advertising on the internet is social contract between advertisers and internet users. These online marketers and promoters are often the same ones who braced traditional media outlets like television, radio and newspaper. Presently, they have developed interest and adopted different types of tools to get eyes on

their commercial messages using online platform [8].

Statement of the Problem

The original perception and thinking that consumers' products, goods and services can only be advertised and purchased of consumers' products on newspaper, radio and television only may soon become an old way of thinking. This is because online advertising has provided a unique opportunity where consumers' products and services can be advertised through the aid of internet. Though, it is evident that internet penetration in Nigeria is still at its lowest ebb when compared to Europe, United States of America and some parts of Asia: many Nigerians are not taking good advantage of all the opportunities offered by the internet to purchase goods and other services online: the reason is that some consider online advertising alien to their culture and with the assumption that the product may be expensive and of less quality.

Despite the availability of online stores and online service agencies in Nigeria, such as, Konga.Com, Jumia.Com.ng, Jovago.Com, Wakanown.Com, PrivateProperties.Com.ng, Olx.Com.ng etc, the response of Nigerians to online advertising remains low. These online service agencies can display their products in the following online media;

THEORITICAL FRAMWORK

This study adopted Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). This is an information system theory. The model was developed by Davis, Bagozz and Warshaw in 1989. The thrust of this model rests on the assumption/belief that "when users are presented with new technology, a number of factors influence their decision about how and when they will use it". They identified two notable factors that influence the usage of any new technology which include; Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived-Ease-Of-Use (PEOU).

- (1) **Perceived Usefulness (PU)**; this means the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance or his entire wellbeing.

cooperate website of the agency, notable personal blogs, various social media and online search engines.

The general question which this study poised to address is: what is the awareness level of residents of Abakaliki metropolis regarding the utilization of online advertising in purchasing consumers' products online

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study include:

1. to find out if residents of Abakaliki metropolis know they can buy goods and services online?
2. to determine if exposure to online advertising influence the purchasing decision of residents of Abakaliki metropolis?
3. to access how residents of Abakaliki metropolis understand the concept of online advertising?

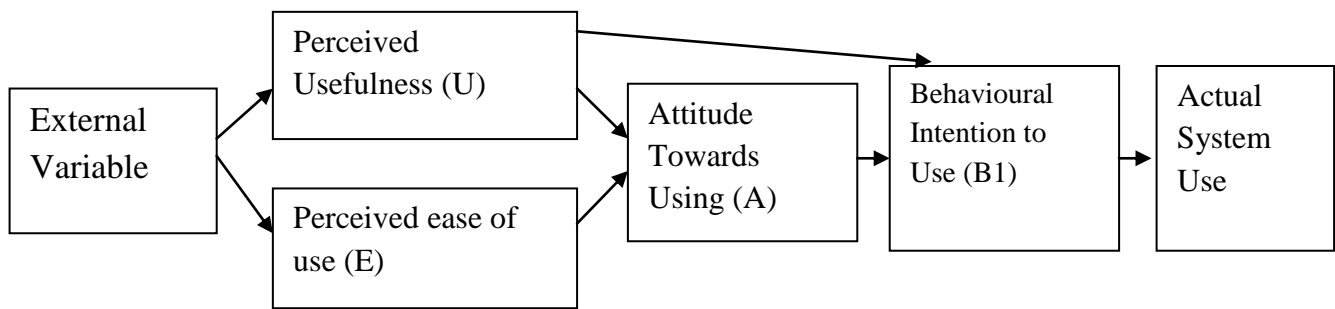
Research Questions

1. Do residents of Abakaliki metropolis know they can buy goods and services online?
2. Can exposure to online advertising influence the purchasing decision of residents of Abakaliki metropolis?
3. How do residents of Abakaliki metropolis understand the concept of online advertising?

- (2) **Perceived ease-of-use (PEOU)**; this means the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort.

[9] writes, "because new technologies such as personal computer are complex and an element of uncertainty exists in the minds of decision makers with respects to the successful adoption of them, people form attitudes and interactions towards trying to learn to use the new technology prior to initiating efforts directed at using it". This model demonstrates how difficult it is for people to accept online advertising in South East Nigeria as a credible alternative to conventional advertising practice.

The Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw 1989).



The Concept of Online Advertising

Some existing literature share different views on the concept of online advertising. These views derive from the writings of [10], [11], [12], [13], [14].

[15] opined that one of the most common forms of online advertising is "Pay per Click". He went further to state that whenever you do a search on Google for instance, on the right side of the results page, you will see a number of sponsored link to product or services to what you are looking for "search for satellite radio and you will get nine sponsored links". Organizations whether public or private; sponsor their products, services or any other activities online to serve online communities and create awareness about their services and products online. In many sites, online advertising is like a traditional advertising that promotes a product or services and induce potential consumers/customers either by providing more information about the product or service or linking them to a place to make purchase [16].

According to [17], online advertising is a new form of advertising that many companies all over the world are venturing into, for the purpose of informing consumers of their product and service online. [18] further posit that the influence of online advertising on consumers over other forms of advertising will continue to increase in many years to come because of its interactive nature, the global platform it presents to companies that advertised on it and the opportunities it provides to consumer to purchase through online. [19] observes that internet is the most influential in the consumer purchasing decision process than advice from friends/ family and any other medium such as television, newspapers

and radio. [20] postulates that "66% of online consumers consider the internet helping them make purchasing decision compared to 61% from friends/families and 42% from television respectively".

[21], argued that internet advertising is more than banners, buttons and pop ups/pop under. They further affirmed that "corporate website adds an important functionality that is not often available in traditional corporate advertising sales". Many corporate websites combine advertising messages and distribution channels in their website online. This singular gesture provides additional value and unique opportunity to combine multiple promotional message types, targeted to multiple stakeholders that were not simply possible when corporate advertisers were limited by the constraints of time. Thus, online advertising has the potential to build on and expand the opportunities for corporate advertising [22].

[23] stress that "the internet and other interactive technologies made it possible to create advertising that are more targeted, more personal, in which advertising is an experience which consumers participate, engaged, through electronic interactive mechanism during online advertising campaign". Internet advertising has many forms of commercial contents - from electronic advertisements such as billboards, banner advertisement to other electronic interactive measures that are different from traditional advertisements such as corporate web advertising [24].

[25] defined online advertising as a form of promotion that uses the internet and worldwide web to deliver marketing messages to attract customers. Online advertising according to Wikipedia,

include contextual advertising on search results pages, banner advertising, blogs, rich media advertising, special networking advertising and e-mail marketing, including e-mail spam. According to Wikipedia, online advertising also called online marketing, or internet advertising, is a form of marketing and advertising that uses internet to present promotional marketing messages to consumers, which includes, e-mail marketing, search engine marketing (SEM), social media marketing and many types of display advertising (including web banner advertising), and mobile advertising. [26] averses that like other advertising media, online advertising frequently involves both publisher who integrates advertisements into its online contents, and an advertiser, who provides the advertisements to be displayed on the publisher's content. [27] concludes that other potential participants in the process of online advertising includes; advertising agencies who help generate and place the advertising copy and advertising server which technologically delivers the advertisement and tracks statistics, and advertising affiliates who do independent promotional work of evaluation for the advertisers. [28] writes that online advertising consists of impersonal commercial contents paid by sponsors, designed for audience, delivered by video, print and audio. He further asserts that online commercial contents comes in various forms, which includes corporate logos, banners, pop-ups messages, email messages and text-based hyperlinks to official websites. [29] writes:

As the fastest-growing medium in history of advertising, the internet offers incredible opportunities for a wide range of people in both business and advertising, despite the unknown factors of the medium. For advertisers, there is a whole new world of potential customers out there, waiting to be engaged.

For advertising, historically speaking, television-oriented creative, just leaning

to use the new medium effectively is a challenge, especially with the medium's ever-changing and ever-evolving technological landscape. [30] further opines. They conclude by noting that what is interesting is that this is exactly the same challenge that took place when television advertising was first introduced some fifty years back.

[31] studied influence of web advertising on consumer behaviour in Maiduguri metropolis, the study adopted survey method with a total population of 150 residents with a sample size of 139 respondents. The study found that the challenges encountered by web/internet users when they try to purchase any consumer products or services advertised online includes, erratic electricity supply, lack of access to internet, services not provided as advertised, fraud and tendencies of delivering product in bad condition. The study recommended that regulatory agency should be established by government to register and regulate the activities of companies in Nigeria who are involved in providing goods and services via the internet. The study failed to establish the extent of utilization of online advertising on consumers' product patronage among residents of Abakaliki the Ebonyi State Capital, which is the major focus of this study.

A study titled "Consumer patronage and risk perceptions in Internet shopping" conducted by [32] at Auburn University USA, examined the nature of perceived risks associated with internet shopping and the relationship between types of risks perceived by internet shoppers and their online patronage behaviour. The study used over 5000 participants and adopted survey method. A total of 641 respondents answered all the pertinent questions. The finding of this study includes; that perceived risks is useful to online shopping, that four basic risks are of major concern to internet users, which include, finance, product performance, psychological dispositions and time/convenience. The study recommended that it is very essential that internet marketers to understudy and understand the characteristics and patronage behaviour of this new market to better meet

consumers' needs. This study was conducted in USA where online advertising/purchasing of online advertised products is a common practice and as such cannot in any way relate to any study conducted in Nigeria where online advertising is still very low. Another study by [33], titled *The Impact of Perceived Channel Utilities, Shopping Orientation and Demographics on the Consumers' Online buying Behaviour*, the study used an online survey to evaluate the impact of perceived channel utilities, shopping orientation and demographics on the consumers' online buying behaviour. The study found that channel knowledge is the strongest predictor in our model of online buying behaviour. The study recommended that online advertisers should strengthen the capacity of web site where goods and services is been advertised for optimum performance and utilization. This finding supported the major intent of this research work, because underutilization of online advertising and ignorant consumer who do not know the level of convenience enjoyed in purchasing online advertised goods and services, the inherent benefit enjoyed by advertisers and brand owner whose goods and services are positioned on the global scale will never border seeking for information on the workability and benefit of online advertising.

A review on the paper published on *International Journal of Human-*

DATA PRESENTATION AND RESULT

This section extensively deals on the interpretation and analysis of generic data obtained at the course of this research. The researcher after critical examination of the respondent's answers to the research instruments extracted and presented facts considered relevant to the study [38]. The relevant facts were primarily selected in consideration of the research questions.

To further elicit the needed facts and figures of this study, 385 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to senior public and civil servants resident in Abakaliki the capital city of Ebonyi State. The researcher also considered the peculiarity of the research topic and selected computer literate once who can

Computer Interaction by [34] "titled *A Review of Online Advertising Effects on the User Experience*" the study adopted survey research with a population of 480 and a sample size of 286 respondents. The study recommended that online advertised practitioners should approach online advertising from a deeper and more comprehensive perspective because of its back-and-forth interactive features, the global platform it presents to companies that advertised on it and the opportunity given to consumers to purchase goods and services through online. This recommendation is in tandem with some of the objectives of this research especially in relation to utilization and perception of residents of Abakaliki metropolis in respect to online advertising.

It is evident that online advertising is not only cheap for advertisers who spend reasonable percent of their budget advertising in traditional advertising medium, therefore, accessing the utilization level of this cheaper and interactive mode of advertising is very essentials [35] [36]. As the rate with which internet penetration in most developing countries of the world increases exponentially, online shopping and display of promotional messages online will definitely become the major advertisement channel in Nigeria in due course [37].

give valid responses to the research instrument. Out of 385 copies of the research instruments distributed, a total of 380 copies of the instrument were retrieved [39].

To evaluate each of the research questions, tables were used to present the result according to the responses as indicated in the returned research instruments. Tables that contain the percentage and sum of the frequencies of the responses of the sampled population were used to present the results [40]. At the end, 21 Tables were presented which adequately represent the most closely and detailed questions posed in the questionnaire, they are presented below:

Table 1: Gender of the Respondents:

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender and the result shows that:

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	213	56.1%
Female	167	43.9%
Total	380	100%

Source: Field work 2016.

From the above statistical Table, which was aimed at obtaining the gender variables of the respondents, it can be construed from the above Table that out of 380 respondents sampled 213 respondents were male thus,

representing 56.1% of the entire population while the remaining 167 respondents constituting 43.9% were female [41]. It can be deduced from the data above that male were greater in number than their female counterparts.

Table 2: Marital Status of Respondents: Respondents were asked to show if they are married, single or divorced.

The responses from this question elicited the following results:

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	221	58.2
Single	144	37.9
Divorced	15	3.9
Total	380	100%

Source: Field work, 2016.

A glance at the statistical Table above indicated that 221 respondents representing 58.2% were married, 144 respondents constituting 37.9% were single while the residual 15 respondents

which represent 3.9% were said to have married and divorced. However, it can be deduced from the data above that the higher percentage of the respondents are married.

Table 3: Age Distribution of Respondents.

To determine the age categories and distribution of the respondents, the respondents were asked to indicate their :

age bracket and the result obtained proved thus

Age Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
18 - 35	90	23.7%
36 - 45	102	26.8%
46 - 55	100	26.43%
56 - 65	88	23.2%
Total	380	100%

Source: Field work, 2016.

From the statistical Table above, it can be seen that 90 respondents, constituting 23.7% of the entire population were within the age range of 18 - 35 years of age. 102 respondents representing 26.8% were at age bracket of 36 - 45 years of age, while 100 and

88 respondents were between the age range of 46 - 55 and 56 -65 respectively. From the statistics above, it can be deduced that age distribution of 36 - 45 recorded the highest frequency of the entire population.

Table 4: Educational Qualification of Respondents

To determine the educational qualification of respondents, they were asked to indicate the academic qualifications.

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE/GCE	72	18.9%
NCE/OND	90	23.7%
B.Sc/HND/B.A./B.Ed	123	32.4%
M.Sc/MA/M.Ed	70	18.5%
Ph.D	25	6.5%
Total	380	100%

Source: Field work, 2016.

Looking at the above statistical Table, it is implicit that Ph.D recorded the lowest number of respondents with 6.5% of the population. While those with SSCE/GCE and M.Sc/HND/B.A/B.Ed almost recorded similar respondents of 72 and 70 which represents 18.9% and 18.5%

respectively [42]. Furthermore, 90 respondents representing 23.7% had NCE/OND. In the same vein, B.Sc/HND/BA/B.Ed recorded the highest numbers of respondents with 123 respondents which constitutes 32.4% of the entire population.

Table 5: Ascertaining if they are aware that consumer products are advertised online.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	80	21.1%
No	240	63.2%
Undecided	60	15.7%
Total	380	100%

Source: Field work, 2016.

The statistical Table presented above was done to elicit response from respondents on their awareness level concerning online advertisement of consumer products. It can be deduced from that statistical Table that 240 respondents which represents 63.2% are not aware that consumer products are advertised online and as such can be

bought online [43]. While 80 that represents 21.1% indicated that there are aware that consumer products are advertised online. Another set of 60 respondents, representing 15.7% are undecided on whether yes or no that consumer products are advertised online.

Table 6: Ascertaining whether respondent has ever bought online advertised consumer's products.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	40	10.6%
No	260	68.4%
Undecided	80	21.0%
Total	380	100%

Source: Field work, 2016.

It is clear from the information obtained from the statistical Table above that 260 respondents which constitute 68.4% of the entire respondents had never in their life purchase any consumer's products online. While 40 respondents

which stand at 10.6% accepted that they had purchased online advertised products. Also 80 respondents constituting 21.0% of the respondents are undecided on whether they had ever bought online consumers' products [44].

CONCLUSION

Advertising is known to be a very important aspect of business promotion that helps to facilitate the growth and

development of any business. Advertising is as old as human race; it has been parts of commercial activities

even before the coming of the colonial masters in Africa. Pre-historically, advertising was done through the help of certain material such as town criers, hawking, display of goods etc. thereby sending various types of messages to potential consumers of the availability of such products.

Over the years, the concept of advertising has evolved from pre-historical approach to a modern approach of advertisement [45] [46]. This advancement was made possible due to technological development in various areas of human endeavour. Print, radio, television and outdoor advertising succeeded pre-historical forms of advertising, these modern type of advertising in no small measure are more sophisticated and has the capacity of reaching more audience when

RECOMMENDATIONS

Online advertising has revolutionized the process of advertising in the world; interactive nature of online advertising has led credence to its influence and recognition in the business world.

In line with the findings of this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- (1) There is need for sensitization and awareness creation on the benefit of buying online advertised consumers' products.
- (2) Government should popularize this type of advertising by advertising job vacancies using online platforms to further make the citizens more ICT compliant,

advertising campaigns are placed on any of them.

Online advertising is invariably a brain child of internet. The penetration of internet in Nigeria and the advent of global system of mobile telecommunication greatly supported the advancement of advertising from what is was before to a more closely evaluated type of advertising which has no trans-national barriers, limitless time frame to its capacity. This is the type of advertising that allow both advertiser and the audience to closely evaluate the progression, success or otherwise of any advertising campaign. People should be open to accept new approach to issues such as utilizing online advertising in patronizing online advertised consumers' products.

in the same vein began the utilization of online advertising to patronize online advertised consumers' products.

- (3) Universities in Nigeria should develop module for teaching of online advertising as a course or a degree awarding programme.
- (4) Institutions and brand owners especially manufacturers of consumers' products should adopt online advertising because of its cost effectiveness and global audience and status it gives to every product advertised online.

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