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Relationship between Website Internet Marketing Strategy and the Growth of Sales: A Case of Zantel Company, Tanzania

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Abstract:
This study examined the relationship between website internet marketing and sales growth of Zantel Telecommunication Company. The researcher employed a quantitative approach. The sample size for this study consists of 175 respondents, and a questionnaire was used to collect data. A correlation analysis was used to analyze the data. The study found that all independent variables (optimizing the website for search engines, publishing blog posts, and downloadable sales resources) have a greater correlation with sales growth at Zantel. It indicates that the correlation between optimizing website for search engines, publishing blog posts, downloadable sales resources and sales growth at Zantel are 0.551, p < 0.000; two-tailed, 0.514, p < 0.000; two-tailed, 0.545, p < 0.000; two-tailed respectively. The study concluded that website internet marketing has a relationship with sales growth at Zantel Telecommunication Company in Zanzibar, as optimizing websites for search engines, publishing blog posts, and downloadable sales resources positively correlate with sales growth at Zantel. The study recommended that to increase the impact of website internet marketing, telecommunication companies should increase optimizing websites for search engines, publishing blog posts, and downloadable sales resources.

Keywords: Optimizing website, publishing blog, downloadable sales resources, sales growth, telecommunication

1. Introduction

Nowadays, internet marketing is growing, as everyone can see that many great companies in emerging markets are using the internet for marketing and sales in general. Customers are a crucial source of revenue for businesses, and it is vigorous to understand clients to gain a competitive advantage in the market. Scholars and experts have been researching the study of consumer performance for a very long time (Zhang & Zhang, 2007). This shows that in all ways, the companies should always focus on the consumers' interactions to gain their acceptance towards companies' products/services. The excessive growth of the internet has shaped opportunities for customers and companies to contribute to an online world-wide market. However, the internet has delivered an exceptional opportunity, particularly for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It exchanges organizations outside the physical limits of their traditional supply networks and generates a global extensive, effective community in which SMEs can participate with enormous enterprises.

The perspective of the internet as a viable medium and market has been extensively recognized in a diversity of publications (Arora & Gambardella, 2010). Conversely, the literature so far on electronic commerce is by and large undependable. The effective and ineffective cases of internet marketing have been conveyed through different sources of research, which demonstrate that there are no proven effective representations that can support the organization to define the assistances that internet marketing could deliver for their business (Kiang & Robert, 2001). Whereas businesses are taking place on the internet, the recent level of commerce is minor compared to general commerce in Tanzania, particularly Zanzibar. The impressive development of the internet community has started to modify how consumers and suppliers interchange information and the arrangement of distribution. It breaks down the physical obstacles traditionally located in commerce and changes companies into an innovative commercial bazaar, the chance for consumers to observe or check the product or service and cooperate with the supplier to get extra information or support can be provided over the online service. Internet marketing may increase the country's income. For example, in Malaysia, it contributes 41.7% per annum to the economy (Nagolipa, 2020).

Internet has made social media platforms thrive, including Blogs, Social Networks such as Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, Media-Sharing Sites, Social Bookmarking and selection Sites, analysis Sites, and forums (Baruah, 2012). These internet platforms have emerged to be important in business marketing. Internet marketing has taken center stage for companies, including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the developed world, such as the USA, Britain, and

China. The use of internet marketing in these countries has led more companies to perform better financially and therefore contribute to the economy of the countries.

In Tanzania, including Zanzibar, internet marketing in the form of website marketing, mobile marketing, and social media marketing is being used by some businesses, which include telecommunication companies. However, a chunk of businesses seems to be not taking this internet marketing as a vital strategy. This may be because of the lack of enough literature on the impact of internet marketing on sales growth in the individual business. Therefore, this study was contacted to provide a real picture on the internet of internet marketing on sales growth using Zantel Telecommunication Company as the case study.

2. Statement of the Problem

It is already known that internet marketing has created many great opportunities for the marketing departments. It saves time and cost for purchasing goods or services. A high-quality internet marketing scheme visibly communicates a firm's unique selling scheme or the distinctive collection of benefits that generates value for its consumers. Consumers can participate in a much further active role in searching for information online with some intention in mind. That goal can control individual behaviors and reactions to online information and advertisements (Smith, 2002). The internet has become admired advertising policy since marketers realize that the internet enjoys greater flexibility and control over advertising materials world-wide (Phau & Poon, 2000). Chille (2018) pointed out that in Tanzania, including Zanzibar, more people have access to mobile devices, computers, and the internet. Nagolipa (2020) argued that in Tanzania, internet marketing has been dismally adopted by various companies and individuals. The authors associated this scenario with the high cost of internet, lack of impacts of internet on business sales, and lack of knowledge of internet use. In Tanzania and Zanzibar, in general, there is scanty information on how internet marketing impacts sales growth. This is because only a few studies available did not focus clearly on internet marketing using websites, mobile phones, and social media marketing. Therefore, it is on this basis that this study was designed to assess the relationship between website marketing on sales growth of Zantel Telecommunication Company.

2.1. Theoretical Review

Affiliate Marketing Theory was developed by Tobin (1989) and stated that a product or service is promoted on websites or social media channels. According to Prussakov (2007), affiliate marketing theory is a theory where the partners or affiliates advertise commercial products. The theory further states that this type of marketing is based on performance since compensation is usually calculated through the number of connections. This is where you are a 'commission only' salesperson, and it is the best place to begin online. The content provider, also referred to as the affiliate, usually places an advertisement creative on his website. When a user clicks on the banner, he will be redirected to the merchant's site. If the user continues to make a purchase, this is tracked and will result in a commission for the referring affiliate. The strength of using this theory in this study was that it is the most basic theory to discuss concerning variables explained in this study.

2.2. Empirical Review

This part reviews some of the related studies done by other scholars in this area under study.

Lockett (2018) conducted a study on the use of internet by small retail businesses. The author explained that small retail businesses use online marketing to connect with consumers and the community. This qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore the strategies some small retail business leaders use to implement online marketing to increase sales. Data were collected from four small retail business owners who successfully used strategies to implement online marketing in California. Data collection techniques were semi-structured, face-to-face interviews, and review of public business documents, company websites, and social media websites. A thematic analysis of the data yielded four themes: social media platforms and strategies, online marketing strategies and challenges, online content strategies, and follow-up strategies. Business leaders of small retail organizations, who want to increase revenue, remain competitive, overcome challenges associated with online marketing, and increase communication by implementing new technology might elect to align with the strategies identified in this study.

Doleman (2017) postulated that mobile marketing is a marketing technique that uses established systems that give businesses the ability to communicate directly with customers through smartphones or other mobile devices. Small businesses lack experience in developing and using mobile marketing strategies to increase sales. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how five small business marketers successfully created and implemented mobile marketing strategies to increase brand awareness and sales. The research focused on successful, small, independent businesses that have successfully used mobile marketing. This study was motivated by two research questions: How are successful mobile marketing strategies created to increase brand awareness and sales? How is mobile marketing used in the small business marketing communication mix? Participants were the primary people in charge of creating and implementing mobile marketing strategies for small businesses. Data were obtained from semi-structured interviews with small business marketers, collection of mobile marketing documents, observation of mobile marketing processes, and mobile marketing platforms. The findings were that mobile marking helped small business marketers gain insight into the planning and implementation of mobile marketing strategies that can be used to influence consumer acceptance.

Belanger et al. (2002) conducted a study that aimed to explore the role of mobile marketing communication on social media networks and how it contributes to customers' experience. The study was both qualitative and quantitative. Analysis was performed using thematic perception to explore the role of mobile marketing communication on social media

networks and how it contributes to customers' experience. The findings were that companies using social networking sites could easily attract many customers to increase sales and profit. People are more aware of products, and they like online purchasing for various reasons, such as lack of time and the ability to compare different products.

A study done by Nagolipa (2020) assessed the impact of social media on service delivery. The general objective of the study was to determine the impact of social media on service delivery in the organization. The study was guided by three specific objectives, which were:

- To determine the impact of social media on the improvement of the organization's services,
- To determine the roles of social media as a marketing tool in an organization, and
- To examine the challenges of using social media as a channel for service delivery in the organization

Data collection methods used were questionnaires and documentary reviews, while analysis was conducted through quantitative and qualitative forms. The findings were:

- Social media has increased the number of informed customers, increased information flow about competitors, and led to an improvement in the quality of services,
- Social media has increased interaction with a large market, increased marketing of services, and somehow led to earning a competitive advantage

There were challenges to using social media, which include:

- Lack of enough time among service providers to stay input with posts of customers,
- Lack of awareness among social media users,
- Lack of seriousness when using social media,
- Absence of policy supporting social media use, and
- Poor internet quality

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Area

The study was conducted at Zantel Telecommunication Company. The area was selected because it is the most vibrant indigenous telecommunication company in Zanzibar.

3.2. Research Design

According to Kothari (2003), a research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims at combining relevance to the research. The study used a descriptive research design. This is because it involves the observation and description of the behavior of the respondents regarding the variables (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Moreover, only a quantitative research approach was used.

3.3. Study Population

The target population is the researcher's population of interests to which the researcher would like the results to be generalized (Kothari, 2004). The population for this study was 312 respondents, which comprised 112 Zantel workers and 200 Zantel users.

3.4. Sample Size

A sample of 175 was involved in providing information on internet marketing services. The sample size was calculated by using Yamane (1967) formula.

3.5. Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the process of selecting a subgroup of a population to represent the entire population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The study employed probability sampling techniques. Random sampling was used to select the respondents from the population.

3.6. Data Collection Methods

The research design that was used allowed the researcher to collect primary data only. The primary data of this study was collected through a questionnaire.

3.7. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed through frequency, percentages, and multiple regressions to determine the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

4. Results

4.1. Demographic Characteristics

In social sciences research, the demographic characteristics of respondents have a very significant role in expressing and responding to the problem. Therefore, this part is based on the characteristics of the respondents related to their age, gender, marital status, and educational level. The discussion of each characteristic follows below.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age	20-30	29	16.6
	31-40	64	36.6
	41-50	61	34.9
	51 and above	21	12.0
Gender	Male	100	57.1
	Female	75	42.9
Marital status	Married	87	49.7
	Single	62	35.4
	Widow	20	11.4
	Divorced	6	3.4
Educational level	Informal education	22	12.6
	Primary education	13	7.4
	Secondary education	13	7.4
	Certificate	46	26.3
	Diploma	61	34.9
	Degree and above	20	11.4

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics
Source: Researcher (2022)

Table 1 summarizes the demographic information about the respondents of this study. The results indicates that out of 175 respondents, 29 equals to (16.6%) ranges from 20 – 30, 64 (36.6%) ranges from 31 – 40, 61 (34.9%) ranges from 41 – 50, 21 (12.5%) ranges from 51 and above. Therefore, the analysis revealed that respondents were dominated by a large number of age groups of 31 to 50. This is a good age of manpower in every activity in any country. Also, the results showed that more than half (100) of the respondents, equal to 57.1%, were male, and 66 respondents, equal to 37.7%, were female. These results clearly indicated that both genders participated in the study. Furthermore, the results showed that:

- 87 respondents (49.7%) were married,
- 62 (35.4%) were single,
- 20 (11.4%) were widows, and
- Those who were divorced were 6 (3.4%)

This indicates that most of the respondents involved in answering questions in this study were married. Finally, the results indicated that out of a total of 175 respondents involved in this study, 22 respondents, equal to 12.6%, were having informal education, 13 (7.4%) were having primary education, 13 (7.4.3%) were in secondary education, 46 (26.3%) were in certificate level, 61 (34.9%) were in diploma level, and those at degree and above were 20 (11.4%). Therefore, the results implied that most of the respondents involved in this study were at a certificate and diploma level.

4.2. Relationship between Website Marketing and Sales Growth of Zantel Telecommunication Company

4.2.1. Correlation Analysis
This study used this technique to explore the strength of the relationship between two continuous variables. Pearson correlation coefficients (r) can range from –1 to +1 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2014). The sign in front indicates whether there is a positive correlation (as one variable increases, so too does the other) or a negative correlation (as one variable increases, the other decreases). The size of the absolute value (ignoring the sign) provides information on the strength of the relationship. A perfect correlation of 1 or –1 indicates that the value of one variable can be determined exactly by knowing the value of the other variable. On the other hand, a correlation of 0 indicates no relationship between the two variables. Specifically, in this study, a researcher was interested to know the strength of the following relationship:

- The relationship between optimizing websites for search engines and the growth of sales in Zantel Company
- The relationship between publishing blog posts and the growth of sales in Zantel company
- The relationship between downloadable sales resources and the growth of sales in Zantel company

Thus, to determine/ interpret the value of correlation, different authors suggest different interpretations. However, Cohen (1988, pp. 79–81) suggests the following guidelines:

Values of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation
r = 0.10 to 0.29	Small correlation
r = 0.30 to 0.49	Medium correlation
r = 0.50 to 1.0	Large correlation

Table 2: Interpretation of Person's Correlation Coefficient (R)
Source: Cohen (1988, pg 79 – 82)

The results of Pearson's correlation coefficient (r), as seen in table 3, show that all predictor variables, namely optimizing websites for search engines, publishing blog posts, and downloadable sales resources correlate positively with the dependent variable sales growth.

		Optimizing Website for Search Engines	Publishing Blog Posts	Downloadable Sales Resources	Sales Growth
Optimizing website for search engines	Pearson Correlation	1	.279**	.502	.551
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.008	.006
	N	175	175	175	175
Publishing blog posts	Pearson Correlation	.279**	1	.295**	.514
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.003
	N	175	175	175	175
Downloadable sales resources	Pearson Correlation	.502	.295**	1	.545**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000		.006
	N	175	175	175	175
Sales Growth	Pearson Correlation	.551	.114	.205**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.506	.133	.006	
	N	175	175	175	175

Table 3: Correlations
**. Correlation Is Significant at the 0.01 Level (2-Tailed)

In looking at the strength of the relationship, it is clearly seen that all independent variables (optimizing websites for search engines, publishing blog posts, and downloadable sales resources) have a greater correlation with sales growth. Table 3 indicates that the correlation between optimizing website for search engines, publishing blog posts, downloadable sales resources and sales growth at Zantel are 0.551, $p < 0.000$; two-tailed, 0.514, $p < 0.000$; two-tailed, 0.545, $p < 0.000$; two-tailed respectively. For the strength of the relationship, the results indicated that all independents variables (optimizing website for search engines, publishing blog posts, downloadable sales resources) have a large correlation with the dependents variable (sales growth) Cohen (1988, pg 79 – 82)

The results of this study, supported by the results of the study conducted by Madhusanka and Lakmali (2015), found that there was a correlation between variables which is 51%. It indicates a positive and moderate relationship. At the same time, other independent variables show a weak positive relationship. It indicates 33.8% and 28.7% between ER (economic responsibility) and BL (brand loyalty), which means there is a significant positive correlation between brand loyalty and economic responsibility. Also, the study by Olonde (2017) found that digital marketing has provided small and medium enterprises with a platform to create awareness among consumers on what they offer due to their relatively low cost. The study results indicated that email marketing and social media marketing significantly impacted SMEs' sales growth to a great extent. On the other hand, mobile marketing, search engine optimization (SEO) marketing, pay-per-click (PPC), and online marketing all significantly affected SMEs' sales growth to a moderate extent.

In addition, Khalufi et al. (2019) supported these results in their study of the role of mobile marketing communication on social media networks. Analysis was performed using thematic perception to explore the role of mobile marketing communication on social media networks and how it contributes to customers' experience. Empirical evidence claims that companies using social networking sites can easily attract many customers to increase sales and profit. People are more aware of products, and they like online purchasing for various reasons, such as lack of time and the ability to compare different products.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that website internet marketing has a relationship with sales growth at Zantel Telecommunication Company in Zanzibar, as it can be seen that optimizing websites for search engines, publishing blog posts, and downloadable sales resources have a positive correlation with sales growth at Zantel.

6. Recommendations

The study recommended that to increase the impact of website internet marketing, telecommunication companies should increase optimizing websites for search engines, publishing blog posts, and downloadable sales resources.

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