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## **Entrepreneurial Marketing and Performance of Medium Size Hotel Businesses in Ibadan, Nigeria**

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#### **Abstract**

The challenge many medium sized hotels have today is how to effectively promote their services, bearing in mind the enormous cost of using traditional media to achieve the desired effects. Thus, marketers may have to embrace Entrepreneurial Marketing which is the practice of marketing with entrepreneurial mind set. Hence, this study examined the impact of Entrepreneurial Marketing on performance of medium-size hotel businesses in Ibadan, Nigeria. The data were collected through questionnaire administered to random sample size of 154 hotels and convenient sample of 2 senior staff from each of selected hotel. The data was analyzed using descriptive, regression and correlation statistical methods. The study concluded that Entrepreneurial Marketing (i.e. Guerrilla and Viral Marketing strategies), as it is related to promotion, have significant impact on and relationship with performance (i.e. sales growth and brand image creation) of Medium-size hotel enterprises in Ibadan, Nigeria. The study recommended that Hotel Entrepreneurs should embrace Guerrilla Marketing because of its direct and positive impact which is cost effective; and that they should embrace Viral Marketing because of its direct and positive impacts which are global reach, high speed contact and two-way communication.

**Key Words:** Entrepreneurial Marketing, Brand Image, Business Performance, Guerrilla Marketing, Viral Marketing

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#### Introduction

Entrepreneurs need to change their marketing strategies from traditional way to a better strategy that is non-traditional but very responsive to more customers' orientation for a competitive advantage. Successful Entrepreneurs undertake unconventional marketing, focusing first on innovations to products and services, followed by addressing customer needs. Thus, "Entrepreneurship Marketing" is a term that describes an approach to marketing that embraces the opportunities of the marketplace in terms of an effective implementation of price, place, promotion, and product tactics (4p) by being risk-taker, innovative, and proactive. Morris, Miles and Deacon (2002) identified three forms of Entrepreneurial Marketing in the domain of Marketing Promotion as Guerrilla Marketing, Buzz Marketing and Viral Marketing. Altogether, Entrepreneurial Marketing is marketing with an Entrepreneurial mindset that is more suitable for constantly changing markets. Today in Ibadan, Nigeria, the rate of hotel construction and establishment is alarming and this range from micro, small, medium and large in size.

The hotel industry is an industry with perishable products, and the success of any hotel often depends on good reputation. Researchers belief that these could be enhanced through effective promotion. Hence, brand image creation is one of the key components that enable hotels to gain superior advantage over their rivals. Levinson (2007) is of the opinion that small and medium-size businesses are failing in established record numbers due to failure to understand traditional marketing. Hence, this present study is conducted on the Entrepreneurial Marketing strategy of medium-size hotels in Ibadan, Nigeria to find out if innovative activities in the marketing strategy (as it is applied to PROMOTION) have impact on firms' performance (i.e. sales growth and brand image creation).

#### **Statements of the Problem**

The challenge many medium-size hotels have today is how to effectively promote their business bearing in mind the enormous cost of using traditional media in order to achieve the desired effects. Thus, to survive in Ibadan ever changing marketing environment, marketers have to change their approach, and the strategy that matches these unstable tides is Entrepreneurial Marketing. There are some challenges in adopting this new marketing approach. For example, Guerrilla Marketing and Viral Marketing which are two of the forms of Entrepreneurial Marketing are not well understood by SME. Therefore, the desire effects of both Guerrilla Marketing and Viral Marketing on sales growth and brand image creation have not been encouraging. These are some specific problems:

- i. Inadequate understanding of Guerrilla Marketing and how to employ the approach to enhance sale performance.
- ii. Low sales performance in spite of the attention given to and investment in Viral Marketing.
- iii. Link between Guerrilla Marketing and Company image have not been clearly defined in research.

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iv. No clear consensus among researchers on the impact of Viral Marketing on company image.

#### **Research Objectives**

Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- i. Examine the impact of guerrilla marketing strategy on sales growth of hotel business in Ibadan.
- ii. Determine the impact of viral marketing strategy on sales growth of hotel business in Ibadan.
- iii. Determine the extent to which guerrilla marketing strategy could affect brand image creation of hotel business in Ibadan.
- iv. Ascertain if viral marketing strategy has any significant relationship with brand image creation of Hotel business in Ibadan.

#### **Literature Review**

#### What is Entrepreneurial Marketing

Hills and Hultman (2013) defined Entrepreneurial Marketing as marketing practices that Entrepreneurs execute in their firms and that this can be implemented at all levels of the firm, irrespective of its size. They argued that although the concept of Entrepreneurial Marketing is more attributed to SMEs. The focus of Entrepreneurial Marketing is on adapting marketing to forms that are appropriate to small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs).

Stokes (2000) opined that the Entrepreneurial Marketing concept is focused on innovations and the development of ideas in line with an intuitive understanding of market needs. Morris, Miles, and Deacon (2002) described Entrepreneurial Marketing as the proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation. Bjerke and Hultman (2002) defined it as the marketing of small firms growing through Entrepreneurship.

It could be seen that Stokes conceptual background is Innovation orientation and Market orientation while Morris and his team are on Entrepreneurship and Value creation; Bjerke and Hultman conceptual background is on SMEs marketing. Altogether, Entrepreneurial Marketing is marketing with an Entrepreneurial mindset that is more suitable for constantly changing markets. At a practical level, it is about applying marketing practices in a manner that is best suited to the market needs of Entrepreneurial firms.

#### **Marketing and Entrepreneurship Interface**

Over the past few decades many researchers have observed a natural connection between Entrepreneurship and marketing, realizing that Entrepreneurs participate in many activities that are central to marketing theory (Collinson, & Shaw, 2011). As researchers have studied this crossover between marketing and Entrepreneurship, they have also found that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) typically utilize different marketing strategies than large firms, and

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that Entrepreneurs perhaps have a lot to offer traditional marketing theory (Morris, Schindehutte, & LaForge, 2015).

Entrepreneurial Marketing (EM) is merging the two disciplines, marketing and Entrepreneurship and this arises because of an awareness of the importance of Entrepreneurship (innovation) to marketing, and marketing for successful Entrepreneurship (Figure 1). The emphasis is on adaption of marketing that are suitable for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and recognizing the important role of Entrepreneurs in any marketing activities (Stokes, 2010a).

#### **Entrepreneurial Marketing Approaches to Promotion**

In the past, the focus of marketing was the transaction, but in an over-crowded market, the emphasis is shifting to the relationship between businesses and their customers (Morris & Deacon, 2011). Entrepreneurs understand the value of strong relationships with their customers and business partners and it can be argued that the greatest assets of Entrepreneurs are their network (Martin, 2009). Entrepreneurial Marketing firms need to apply this same mindset to their promotional marketing strategy. Entrepreneurial Marketing pertaining to promotion is based on word-of-mouth communication and recommendation to develop a customer base (Stokes, 2010b). This approach may be more cost-efficient than classical advertising.

Morris et. al. (2002) came up with the three best-known and momentarily most successful forms of Entrepreneurial Marketing in terms of an Entrepreneurial approach to promotion as: guerrilla marketing, buzz marketing, and viral marketing. These three forms are partially overlapping, since they are all based on the concept of word-of-mouth marketing (Ahuja, Michels, Walker, & Weissbuch, 2007). These techniques stand for a variety of low-cost, high-impact marketing activities that allow small companies and/or individuals to act like big companies.

#### **Guerrilla Marketing**

The term guerrilla marketing was coined by Levinson (2007). It stands for a variety of low-cost, high-impact marketing techniques that allow small companies and/or individuals to act like big companies. Guerrilla marketing can be regarded as the ancestor of the other Entrepreneurial Marketing concepts. It is about the attempt to achieve wide-ranging results with an untypically low utilization of resources by acting like a guerrilla. Guerrilla marketing is meant to be surprising, efficient, rebellious, infectious, and in the best case even spectacular. It focuses on simplicity, and aims for the recipient to be riveted to the message, which stimulates a willingness to distribute it further (Ahuja et. al., 2007).

Examples of Guerilla Marketing Strategies are word-of-mouth advertising, addressing consumers in their everyday work situation, for example via e-mail, sticker and poster campaigns with electrostatic, self-adhesive materials, 'forehead' campaigns, sending personal messages via Bluetooth, advertisements on cars, t-shirts, advertisements on sales receipts, projection of images, texts or videos in public areas via beamer or laser.

#### **Viral Marketing**

Viral marketing refers to marketing techniques that seek to exploit pre-existing social networks to produce exponential increases in brand awareness, through viral processes similar to the spread of an epidemic. It can often be word-of-mouth delivered and enhanced online; it can

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harness the network effect of the Internet and can be very useful in reaching a large number of people rapidly. The term "viral marketing" refers to the idea that people will pass on and share interesting and entertaining content; this is often sponsored by a brand, which is looking to build awareness of a product or service. It has the opportunity to reach thousands of potential customers at minimal expenditure with high and rapid response rate. (Howard, 2015)

#### Methodology

Descriptive survey techniques were adopted to elicit the needed responses from the sample for the study. Data was collected with structured questionnaire from randomly selected sample. The study was conducted among management staff of two hundred and fifty-one (251) registered medium-size Hotels in Ibadan. The hotels studied were those owned by individual Entrepreneurs not government or government subsidiary. 154 hotels were randomly chosen using Taro Yamane sample size formula (Yamane, 1973). However, it was the decision of the researcher to choose 2 management staff from each of the hotels to give 308 as the sample size of which only 266 questionnaires were found usable for the study.

Generally, descriptive method was used to analyze the data. However, the data used for testing the hypotheses were analyzed and interpreted using regression and correlation statistical methods at 0.05 alpha level of significant.

#### **Result and Discussion**

From Table 1, the mean and standard deviation of the responses given to questions 1 to 9 were presented. It shows the mean score responses variables across the Likert scale of 1-5, which is Strongly-disagree as 1, Disagree as 2, Neutral as 3, Agree as 4, and Strongly-agree as 5. It is observed that the mean of each of the variables (questions) computed is greater than 3 (critical value) and lower value of the standard deviation indicates a narrower distribution (more similar or homogeneous) of the responses around the mean. This indicates a strong association with Entrepreneurial Marketing by the Hoteliers. None of the computed mean score is  $\leq$  3 which is our critical value here in determining acceptance or rejection of any of our propositions. By implication, the table shows that Entrepreneurial Marketing is having a significant impact on and relationship with sales growth and brand image creation of medium-size hotel business in Ibadan, Nigeria.

#### **Test of Hypotheses**

#### **Hypothesis 1**

H<sub>o</sub>. Guerrilla marketing strategy has no significant impact on sales growth of hotel business.

Method: Regression Analysis

#### **Decision:**

Reference Tables 2, and 3. The  $R^2$  and adjusted  $R^2$  values of .424 and .421 respectively indicated that there was a low degree of goodness fit of the regression model. It also means that below 42% of variance in the dependent variable (sales growth) can be explained by the repression model. The F-test result was 590.822 with a significance of .000. This meant that the probability of these results occurring by chance was less than 0.05. Therefore, a significant

relationship was present between guerrilla marketing strategy and sales growth of medium-size hotels operating in Ibadan, Nigeria. So, the null hypothesis is rejected. The t-test results for the individual regression coefficients for the three independent variables were 2.347, 2.818 and 3.218. Again, the probability of these results occurring by chance was less than 0.05. This means that the regression coefficients for these variables were statistically significant at the P < 0.05 level. Therefore, the null-hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

#### Hypothesis 2

H<sub>o</sub>. There is no significant impact of Viral marketing strategy on sales growth of hotel business. **Method:** Regression analysis

#### **Decision:**

Reference Tables 4 and 5. The R<sup>2</sup> and adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values of .594 and .594 respectively both indicated that there was a low degree of goodness fit of the regression model. It also means that 59% of variance in the dependent variable (sales growth) can be explain by the regression model. The f-test result was 18.974 with a significance of .0005. This meant that the probability of these results occurring by chance was less than 0.05. Therefore, a significant relationship was present between viral marketing strategy and sales growth of medium-size hotels operating in Ibadan, Nigeria. The t-test results for the individual regression coefficient for the two independent variables were 5.274 and 3.079. Again, the probability of these results occurring by chance was less than 0.05. This means that the regression coefficients for these variables were statistically significant at the P<0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

#### Hypothesis 3

H<sub>o</sub>. Guerrilla marketing strategy has no significant impact on brand image creation of hotel business.

**Method:** Regression analysis

#### **Decision:**

Reference Tables 6 and 7. The R<sup>2</sup> and adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values of .380 and .393 respectively both indicated that there was a low degree of goodness fit of the regression model. It also means that less than 38% of variance in the dependent variables (brand image creation) can be explained by the regression model. The f-test result was 11.472 with a significant of .000. This meant that the probability of these results occurring by chance was less than 0.05. Therefore, a significant relationship was present between Guerrilla marketing strategy and brand image creation of hotels operating in Ibadan, Nigeria. The t-test results for the individual regression coefficient for the two independent variables were 4.471 and 2.313. This shows again, the probability of these results occurring by chance was less than 0.05. This means that the regression coefficients of this variable were statistically significant of the P<0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

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#### Hypothesis 4

H<sub>o</sub>. Viral marketing strategy has no significant relationship with brand image creation of hotel business.

Method: Correlation coefficient

#### **Decision:**

Reference Table 8. The correlation is 0.451. This is a fairly weak but positive relationship between viral marketing relationship and hotel brand image creation. The probability of this correlation coefficient occurring by chance alone is less than 0.01 (1%). This correlation coefficient is therefore statistically significant. (r = .451, p = .000) which is less than .01. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. This meant that the probability of these results occurring by chance was less than 0.05.

#### **Findings and Discussion**

#### Impact of guerrilla marketing strategy on sales growth of hotel business

The findings revealed that a significant relationship was present between guerrilla marketing strategy and sales growth of medium-size hotels operating in Ibadan, Nigeria. This is in agreement with the study of Klodiana and Ana (2016) on "Entrepreneurial Marketing: Evidence from SMEs in Albania". This study revealed that SME owners affirmed that their business was dependent on word-of-mouth recommendations as they do not have the time and resources for traditional marketing promotion.

#### Impact of viral marketing strategy on sales growth of hotel business.

The finding revealed that a significant relationship exists between viral marketing strategy and sales growth of medium-size hotels operating in Ibadan, Nigeria. This is in agreement with the study of Mwangi and Bwisa (2013) on "the effects of Entrepreneurial Marketing practices on growth of Hair Salons in Kiambu Town, Kenya"; where it was found that there is relationship between Entrepreneurial Marketing practices and the growth of the hair salons.

#### Impact of guerrilla marketing strategy on brand image creation of hotel business.

The finding revealed that a significant relationship was present between Guerrilla marketing strategy and brand image creation of hotels operating in Ibadan. This is in conformity with the study of Anukam and Achama (2015) on "diversification of Nigeria economy through guerrilla marketing principles as strategies for innovation by SMES" The results showed that the Hotel Entrepreneurs' use of guerrilla marketing weapons in Imo State, Nigeria, is consistent with literature. Likewise, the study of Adeleye and Fagboun (2014) on "Guerrilla Marketing: A sustainable tool for Entrepreneurs and marketing practitioners" gives an insight into the concept of Guerilla Marketing as being a tool for small to medium-size companies to achieve large impacts with little resources. This compliments the findings of the current research and was in agreement with the literature reviewed.

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### Relationship between Viral Marketing strategy and Brand Image creation of Hotel business.

The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between Viral marketing strategy and brand image creation of hotel business. This is in agreement with the work of Oyebode and Mustapha (2017) on "Entrepreneurship Marketing practices and hair salons' patronage in Kwara state: a survey of selected hair salons in Ilorin metropolis"; where it was concluded that there is a significant relationship between Viral Marketing strategy and brand awareness creation of Hair Salon business.

#### Conclusion

The researcher viewed Entrepreneurial Marketing as a method, a philosophy, an innovative strategy, a way of thinking, a mindset and a different attitude in order to gain advantages in the war for customers. It is concluded that Entrepreneurial Marketing (e.g. guerrilla and viral marketing strategies) have significant impact on the performance (e.g. sales growth and brand image creation) of medium-size hotel enterprises in Oyo, State, Nigeria. This is consistent with literatures reviewed and the findings of this study.

#### Recommendations

Following the result of the analysis carried out from the data collected for the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. As is often said, a satisfied customer is an unpaid advertiser for a firm. It was revealed that word-of-mouth is one important method of promotion that a hotel cannot do without. Hence it may be suggested that hotels should concentrate on satisfying their customers so that they can claim the benefit of their recommendation customers to prospective customers.
- ii. Hotel Entrepreneurs should embrace Guerrilla Marketing because of its direct and positive impact which is cost effective.
- iii. Hotel Entrepreneurs should embrace Viral Marketing because of its direct and positive impacts which are global reach, high speed contact and two-way communication
- iv. The empirical findings in this study shows that very few of the respondents are using conventional media. Consequently, the researcher is of the strong opinion that more and more marketers should start using Entrepreneurial Marketing if they want to remain competitive in the industry.
- v. The success of the Entrepreneurial Marketing as used by the hotels in Ibadan town should be introduced by other Entrepreneurs in other businesses. This would ensure that there would be a cross-sectional growth of all the small and medium enterprises.

#### **Conceptual Model**

#### **ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

+ MARKETING ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING FIRM'S PERFORMANCE

	AS APPLIED TO PROMOTION	
Creativity and	Guerrilla marketing	Sales Growth
Innovation of Product, Price, Place, Promotion	Viral marketing	Brand Image Creation
11100, 11100, 11011101201	Buzz marketing	
	*Marketing with Entrepreneurial mind set	

Figure 1 Source: Researcher's Conceptual Model

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics** 

	QUESTIONS (VARIABLES	Std	N	Mean
				Dev
	IMPACT OF GURRILLA MARKETING ON SALES GROWTH			
1.	Low cost marketing efforts have high impact on sales growth	266	3.73	1.100
2.	Surprises in marketing action leads to sales growth	266	3.70	.757
3.	Your hotel generates more sales through use of word-of-mouth	266	4.02	.967
	among customer			
	GUERRILLA MARKETING & BRAND IMAGE			
4.	Spectacular marketing tactics create positive image for your	266	3.83	.830
5.	business	266	3.26	1.025
	Rebellious marketing action create positive image for a business.			
	IMPACT OF VIRAL MARKETING ON SALES GROWTH			
6.	You use internet to generate sales.	266	3.91	.860
7.	Communicating our loyal customers through e-mail had helped in	266	3.91	1.097
	bringing them back for continuous patronage			
	VIRAL MARKETING & BRAND IMAGE CREATION			
8.	Internet, e-mail and phones create positive image for your business	266	4.04	.825
9.	Network, internets have helped in boosting our brand image locally	266	4.33	.754
	and internationally.			

Source: Field Survey Research 2018

#### Table 2

**Model Summary** 

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.651a	.424	.421	3.841

a. Predictors: (Constant), Guerrilla Marketing

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Table 3

#### **ANOVA**<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.625	3	6.875	590.822	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	185.454	262	.708		
	Total	206.079	265			

- a. Dependent Variable: Hotel sales growth
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Guerrilla Marketing

Table 4

#### **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.651a	.424	.421	3.841

a. Predictors: (Constant), Guerrilla Marketing

#### Table 5

#### **ANOVA**<sup>a</sup>

l	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	1 Regression	20.625	3	6.875	590.822	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	185.454	262	.708		
L	Total	206.079	265			

- a. Dependent Variable: Hotel sales growth
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Guerrilla Marketing

Table 6

#### **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.583ª	.380	.393	.746

a. Predictors: (Constant), Guerrilla Marketing

#### Table 7

#### **ANOVA**<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.779	2	6.390	11.472	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	146.484	263	.557	ı	
	Total	159.263	265			

- a. Dependent Variable: Hotel brand image creation
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Guerrilla Marketing

#### Table 8

#### **Correlations**

		Internet, e-mail and phones create positive image for your business	Network, internet has been helping in boosting our brand image locally and internationally.
Internet, e-mail and	Pearson Correlation	1	.451**
phones create positive	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
image for your business	N	266	266
		.451**	1
Network, internet has been	Pearson Correlation		
helping in boosting our	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
brand image locally and internationally.	N	266	266

<sup>\*\*.</sup> Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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