

Effects Of E-Commerce Marketing Strategy On Performasnce Of E-Commerce Firms In Nigeria

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of e-commerce marketing strategy on performance of e-commerce firms in Nigeria. In business, message is conveyed through various channels of building online awareness for the company brand, products, and services; driving traffic to the website through Local Search Optimization, Google Base, online advertising, referrals, social media, and other online resources. However, online customer knowledge, information technology expertise, e-business competitive learning, internet dissemination and e-commerce infrastructure are the moderating variables of the research in e-marketing strategy. Whether or not significant change(s) results in the performance of an organization as a result of e-commerce marketing strategy, through the application of the mentioned variables is yet to be empirically established. This study, therefore, was carried out to investigate the relationship between e-commerce marketing strategy and performance in e-commerce firms in Nigeria (a less developed economy). Using the survey method, the study obtained sample data from 1500 e-businesses in Nigeria using convenience sample method. Completed questionnaires returned were 703 copies, and 608 were found usable for the present study, resulting in an effective response rate of 40.5%. The research instrument showed encouraging evidence of reliability and validity. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, percentages and t-test analysis. The study found that e-commerce is emphasized to a reasonable extent in the surveyed Nigerian companies, and that e-commerce marketing strategy has significant positive influences on e-commerce performance. However, the 'level of emphasis' is a question of degree. It was also found that the extent of practices of effective e-commerce was related to the category of business (service or manufacturing). Online customer knowledge, information technology expertise and e-business competitive learning have positive effects on e-commerce marketing strategy. For moderating effects, internet dissemination and e-commerce infrastructure statistically have positive significance influences on the relationships. The research findings are limited to some extent by the confounding effect of variations within and between industry types of firm and industry sectors, and the use of respondents' own-assessments of performance. The established research potentially contains some lessons for practitioners and researchers in other developing countries.

Keywords: E-Commerce Marketing Strategy, Online Customer Knowledge, Information Technology Expertise, E-Business competitive learning, internet dissemination, E-commerce infrastructure, Performance, E-commerce Firms, Nigeria.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the uniqueness of e-commerce marketing strategy is in understanding what makes a firm online business unique, attractive, and thus giving the best opportunity to implement the best strategy to help gain more visibility and attract the right shoppers. E-Commerce is the paperless exchange of

business information using electronic platforms like electronic data interchange (EDI), e-mail, electronic bulletin boards, fax transmissions, and electronic funds transfer, Internet shopping, online stock and bond transactions, the downloading and selling of "soft merchandise" (software, documents, graphics, music, etc.), and business-to-business transactions. According to Kotler and Keller (2009), e-

marketing explains company endeavors to notify buyers, communicate, promote and sell its offerings through means of Internet". While e-commerce marketing strategy help to drive traffic to the firms site to boost online business by showing why someone looking for a particular product or service should buy it from a particular company over that of competitors, well established products require a different marketing strategy that will stand out above that of competitors, and making sure the entire selling process flows smoothly.

E-commerce marketing strategy improves return on investment by aiding cost saving, product promotion, timely information, reduced disbursement time, information consistency, greater customer service and customer relationships, products customization, competitive advantages, and convenience of running business (Wen et al., 2001). According to Tan and Teo (1998), operating e-commerce effectively gives opportunity for companies to access global information comfortably; building a global image; expanding worldwide market reach; establishing new business opportunities; ameliorating customer service; direct selling of products; and reducing of operational costs.

Basically, the essence of e-commerce marketing strategy are: understanding business and knowing what makes it unique in the industry; determining whether the website capabilities and positioning are in sync with the marketing goals of the company; building online awareness for the brand, products, and services; driving traffic to the website through Local Search Optimization, Google Base, online advertising, referrals, social media, and other online resources; converting visitors to paying customers by identifying the target audience that will be interested in what have to be offered, and optimizing the experience for them; analyzing the results and continuously looking for ways to improve campaign.

However, the effectiveness of e-commerce marketing strategy differs from one firm to another. Therefore, it may be stated that e-commerce may be beneficial for some businesses, while it may not be for others as a result of variations in the environment, practices, technology, internet dissemination, e-commerce infrastructure, online customer knowledge, information technology expertise, e-business competitive learning, contexts, cultures, and amongst others.

There are scholarly arguments pertaining to the effectiveness of e-commerce in developing economies, including Nigeria. For example, the effectiveness of e-commerce in developing countries has attracted some criticisms with respect to information of product and service displayed in the web site, level of displayed technology and infrastructure. Also, there is the controversy on, if it does adequately meet the requirements and expectations of potential customers (Dedhia, 2001).

However, some scholars have argued that these constraints do not detract from the use of e-commerce and that e-commerce should be of benefit to all companies world over, including developing countries such as Nigeria. However, the e-commerce marketing strategy differs from one firm to another. Based on the above perception, this paper is using a contextualized and literature based research instrument to measure the application of the investigated constructs for an understanding to investigate the effect of e-

commerce marketing strategy on performance of e-commerce firms in Nigeria.

This approach recognizes the difficulty and complexity associated with changing environment and increasing complexity of the 21st century workplace (Blalock, 2005). Flowing from this central purpose, are the following specific objectives of the study:

- ✓ To determine the extent to which Nigerian e-commerce firms emphasize e-commerce marketing strategy.
- ✓ To determine the relative effectiveness of Nigerian e-commerce firms in achieving their set goals and objectives via e-commerce marketing strategy.
- ✓ To determine the reliability of the research measures used in this research.
- ✓ To make managerial and policy recommendations for improved understanding and practice of e-commerce marketing strategy in Nigerian firms.
- ✓ To suggest cognate areas for future research.

The following hypotheses stated in the null form were formulated and tested in order to achieve the objectives of the study:

H10: E-commerce marketing strategy is not emphasized in the surveyed Nigerian e-commerce firms.

H20: The extent of practices of effective e-commerce marketing strategy is not related to e-commerce infrastructure of the firm.

H30: There is no relationship between online customer knowledge, information technology expertise and e-commerce competitive learning on e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firm's performance.

H40: There is no relationship between e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firm's performance.

This study will not only find out the relationship between e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firms performance with evidence from Nigeria, but also add to the previous literature.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

E-commerce has been widely accepted in the business world as a way of minimizing the expense and cumbersomeness of time, distance and space in doing business, which yields better customer service, greater efficiency, improved products and higher profitability. Johnson and Sholes (2002) define strategy as the long-term direction of an organization. According to Mintzberg (1994), strategy can be viewed in various forms, as a plan, pattern, position, ploy and perspective, while Chailon et al. (2012) define e-commerce marketing strategy as the application of traditional marketing strategy, 4P--products, price, place, and promotion, into the online context which can lead to accomplishment of marketing objectives of the firm.

PRODUCT: Kotler (1991) defines a product as anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquirement, or consumption which might satisfy a need. On the Internet, customers can universally search for products and also conduct cost analysis. This enables e-commerce firm to use the consumers' cost-of search as a competitive advantage.

PRICE: In the e-commerce environment, price can be a weapon of choice by many firms (Holden, 1998), and also a way to compare prices across all suppliers using the Internet.

PLACE: According to Kotler (1991), place or marketing channels can be referred as any companies concerned in the process of making a product or service available for consumption, while e-commerce lets the buying decision happen anywhere Internet connection is available. E-commerce companies need to sustain their websites to be accessible and operative all the time.

PROMOTION: Kotler (1991) posit that promotion covers all the various ways a company use to publicize its products' strengths and to convince target customers to buy from them. Promotion can be done online as advertising, research, coupon distribution, and customer support. Likewise, firm can collect information about their customer from e-commerce sites (e.g. sales information, customer demographics, and among others).

Based on extant literature, customer service is another e-commerce marketing strategy which establishes an additional method to the strategy of accessing new customers (Pitera, 1999; Korper and Ellis, 2001; Schneider and Perry, 2000). E-commerce allows firms sell products, advertise, purchase supplies, bypass intermediaries, track inventory, eliminate paperwork, and share information. According to Whitley (2001), the inputs into the strategy formulation process are the results of evaluating e-commerce technology, the business environment, and the capabilities of the organization plus the existing business strategy. The greater the impact of e-business on the overall business, the more significant is e-commerce marketing strategy implementation, and the more important it is for the organization to understand and articulate clearly the relationships between e-commerce marketing strategy and performance. Therefore companies that incorporate e-commerce with marketing strategy will implement firm strategy effectively.

Basically, extant literature has it also that online customer knowledge, information technology expertise, e-business competitive learning, internet dissemination and e-commerce infrastructure are the moderating variables of e-commerce marketing strategy, and that e-commerce marketing strategy has significant positive influences on e-commerce performance (Davenport et al., 2001; Stauss, 2002; Day, 2000; Bose et al., 2003; Gamble et al., 2003; Zhu and Kraemer, 2002; Melville et al., 2004; Chailom and Kaiwinit, 2011; Voss and Voss, 2000; Chailom and Kaiwinit, 2011; Alsmadiet al., 2009) and among others.

E-commerce infrastructure can be divided into various categories: legal, software and hardware perspectives. According to Trainor (2011), infrastructure could be (e.g. connectivity hardware and software, telecommunications, product delivery and transportations systems) and services (e.g. e-payment systems, secure messaging, electronic markets, etc.). Lack of e-commerce infrastructure like access to computers, software, hardware, and telecommunications, brings failure to e-business.

As posit by Basu and Muyllé (2003), generally, e-commerce has the ability to provide information about firms service and product, enable two-way communication with customers, gather data of market research, promote

products and services, support the online product purchasing, and offer new retail channel. The e-commerce marketing strategy would improve buying management and enhance firm's profitability as a result of the cost reduction together with effective supplier search, purchase transaction, and inventory management system (Fellenstein and Wood, 2000).

III. METHODOLOGY

The study is a survey that used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained with the aid of standardized instrument (questionnaires) while the secondary data were obtained from extant literature. A mail survey was used for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed to 1500 e-business firms in Nigeria. The organizations were selected based on convenience sample. The use of convenience sample has been found relevant in previous studies (Hall and Lock shin, 2000). A total of 295 of the mail surveys were undelivered, because some firms had not operated internet or they have moved to unknown locations. The valid mailing surveys were 1,205 questionnaires. Out of the 1,205 valid mailing, completed questionnaires returned were 703 copies, and 608 were found usable for the present study, resulting in an effective response rate of 40.5%. According to Aaker et al. (2001), the response rate for mail survey, without an appropriate follow-up procedure, is less than 20%. For this reason, this response rate of this study is considered acceptable in this study. The variables were measured through a Five point likert scale section ranging from "very high extent (5) to no extent at all (1) - The questionnaire covered variables of demographic profiles of the respondent in section A, e-commerce marketing strategy measures in section B and e-commerce performance measures in section C. Section A focus on personal information such as title of respondents, address, phone number, category of business, working experience, gender, educational qualification, marital status, and age. Section B deal with the measurement of e-commerce firms marketing strategy based on perceived 4Ps (product, price, place and promotion), online customer knowledge, information technology expertise, e-business competitive learning, infrastructure, and ecommerce marketing strategy. While section C deals with the consequences of e-commerce marketing strategy that are e-commerce performance. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, percentages, and t-test analysis. The research instrument showed high reliability and validity. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for e-commerce marketing strategy variable (0.76) and performance measures (0.71) exceeds the value of 0.70 (suggesting adequate reliability, Cronbach (1947). The opinions of scholars of management and marketing confirmed the content validity of the measures used, while the pilot study result confirmed their predictive validity. The findings from the research are presented in the results section.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to accomplish the purpose of the research study, the key to research variables in the appendix are designed and used in Tables 1-3 to enable the researcher collect information relating to the effect of e-commerce marketing strategy on performance of e-commerce firms in Nigeria. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the degree of practice of e-commerce marketing strategy by the surveyed e-commerce firms. From the mean values in Table 1, it can be seen that all the variables (A1 – A30) witnessed encouraging degree of practice and support the statement, that “there is relationship between e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firms performance”, and (A30) with mean value of 5.4250 having the highest extent of support to statement asked. There is a general consensus in extant literature that support that e-business with higher degree of marketing strategy has greater business performance (Ussahawanitchakit and Intakhan, 2010; Grover and Saeed, 2004; Rowley, 2002; Chailom and Kaiwinit, 2011; Jiang, 2003; Strickland, 2000) and among others. It is believed that customer relationship management, online customer knowledge about online customers, their needs and their behaviors must align with company processes, products, and services for effective e-commerce marketing strategy that will lead to competitive advantage and greater business performance (Porter, 1985; Kim and Kim, 2001; Bose et al., 2003; Gamble et al., 2003; Helfert et al., 2002; Karimi et al., 2001). Likewise, A28 with mean value of 5.250 (High information technology expertise aid greater e-commerce marketing strategy), and A5 with mean value of 5.237 (e-commerce marketing strategy is influenced by level of e-commerce infrastructure) followed respectively. This can be supported with extant literature. According to Bharadwaj (2000) and Zhu (2004), information technology includes the use of Internet, and whether e-commerce firm can generate value in the aspects of resources depends on the grade of expertise in employing internet technologies, and the ability to use Internet technologies successfully. As posit by Karimi et al. (2001), Bharadwaj (2000), Zhu (2004), Porter (1980), Miles and Snow (1978) and Melville et al. (2004), there are so many benefits of implementing technology into e-business operation, and by employing information technology, the relationships between company and customers can be improved. It is believed that being able to adapt to changes in technology will aid competitive advantage. According to Melville et al. (2004), firms with upper levels of IT expertise are more likely to understand the technical views of e-business and this will contributes to firm performance, compare to firms with lower levels of IT expertise, e-commerce firms also adopt new technologies to fend off new competitors, and reinforce an existing competitive advantage. According to extant literature, Jennex and Amoroso (2004), Alsmadiet al. (2009), Makati (2000) and Cloeteet al. (2002) and among others, indicated that infrastructure of e-commerce are the most important factor to the success of any business. Thus, e-commerce infrastructure is believed to increase the relationship between e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce performance. Lack of e-commerce infrastructure like access to computers,

software, hardware, and telecommunications, brings failure to e-business.

Based on surveyed firms, variables A6 (e-commerce marketing strategy is influenced by the size of the firm), and A2 (Measures customers/clients’ satisfaction frequently and systematically online) with mean value of 4.1105 and 4.1250 received the least emphasis among the firms surveyed. This can be explained because both large and small firms can get benefits from e-commerce. Based on extant literature, it is not only the large companies that have dominated e-commerce but also small companies have increasingly joined the trend. The advantage of large organizations over small organization is also reduced by the Internet as it somewhat flattens the battle (Joseph et al., 2001; Bellman, 2001; Schneider and Perry, 2000; Wilder, 1998). Pallab (1996) also posit that internet allow companies (big or small) to globally access areas that would have been difficult. It is a borderless business operation that offers products to people who cannot find the products in their region, and also allows a 24/7 operation, that enables people to shop when it’s convenient to them. Likewise, most of Nigerian companies just sees e-commerce as the paperless exchange of business information using electronic platforms in conducting business-to-business transactions, rather than a means to Measure customers/clients’ satisfaction. It is believed that e-commerce is not really a way of neither boosting moral nor measure of customers/clients satisfaction.

| Variables | Mean | STD DEV | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|-----------|--------|---------|----------|----------|
| A1 | 4.4105 | 0.7909 | -1.504 | 3.056 |
| A2 | 4.1250 | 0.8414 | -1.862 | 6.130 |
| A3 | 4.2614 | 0.9271 | -1.113 | 2.343 |
| A4 | 4.5503 | 0.8464 | -0.404 | -0.523 |
| A5 | 5.2375 | 1.1710 | -1.716 | 3.036 |
| A7 | 4.6625 | 1.1054 | -1.412 | 2.466 |
| A8 | 4.8620 | 1.0413 | -0.632 | 0.107 |
| A9 | 4.8013 | 0.8543 | -0.740 | -0.274 |
| A10 | 4.7615 | 1.0862 | -0.673 | -0.216 |
| A11 | 4.2240 | 0.7645 | -1.523 | 3.523 |
| A12 | 4.6530 | 1.1684 | -0.831 | 0.541 |
| A13 | 4.7033 | 1.0256 | -0.762 | 0.715 |
| A14 | 4.7000 | 1.0139 | -1.142 | 0.818 |
| A15 | 4.750 | 1.1476 | -0.474 | -0.646 |
| A16 | 4.5124 | 0.6304 | -0.730 | 0.674 |
| A17 | 4.6335 | 1.0743 | -0.790 | 0.808 |
| A18 | 4.5330 | 1.0175 | -0.734 | 0.670 |
| A19 | 4.8250 | 1.1750 | -0.864 | 0.606 |
| A20 | 4.6125 | 1.1415 | -0.672 | -0.105 |
| A21 | 5.0241 | 1.1287 | -1.579 | 2.762 |
| A22 | 4.9250 | 1.0871 | -1.333 | 2.237 |
| A23 | 5.0300 | 1.0571 | -1.259 | 1.342 |
| A24 | 4.8772 | 0.8024 | -0.889 | 0.053 |
| A25 | 4.9125 | 0.8236 | -1.123 | 0.973 |
| A26 | 5.1325 | 0.9102 | -1.532 | 2.478 |
| A27 | 4.9275 | 1.1277 | -1.146 | 0.598 |
| A28 | 5.250 | 1.0368 | 1.0338 | -1.466 |
| A29 | 5.1375 | 0.9870 | -0.841 | 0.516 |
| A30 | 5.4250 | 1.4371 | -0.982 | 0.250 |

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of e-commerce marketing strategy measures (n = 608)

The B variables of the descriptive statistics in Table 2 show the extent of the effect of e-commerce marketing strategy realization and actualization on performance objectives of e-commerce firms in Nigeria. From the table, the

most achieved result of e-commerce performance measures is B24 (i.e. e-commerce marketing strategy increase e-commerce firms performance) with mean value of 5.17, also followed by B14 (i.e. e-commerce marketing strategy increase Profitability of e-commerce business), with a mean value of 5.12. However, the least achieved firms performance measure of e-commerce performance measures are B6 and B21, with each having mean value of 4.0 respectively (i.e. B6 e-commerce marketing strategy increase Staff reward system (e.g. extra pay) and B21 e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of pricing goals). However, from the e-commerce performance measures in Table 2, and analyzing the various mean values, it can be concluded that to a reasonable extent e-commerce marketing strategy will aid the achievement of increase profitability, and thus increasing firm's performance.

The results above suggest that e-commerce marketing strategy is being focused upon to a reasonable extent in the surveyed firms. However, it should be noted that the emphasis on e-commerce marketing strategy in any organization, sector, industry or country is a question of degree. The sign of effective e-commerce marketing strategy in business is exhibited by the degree of profitability, total sales volume, number of customers, and achievement of marketing management goals.

| Variables | Mean | STD DEV | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|-----------|--------|---------|----------|----------|
| B1 | 4.6225 | 0.7280 | -1.614 | 3.086 |
| B2 | 4.9223 | 1.1641 | -0.633 | -0.040 |
| B3 | 5.0625 | 1.1574 | -0.749 | -0.144 |
| B4 | 4.4125 | 1.2545 | -0.515 | 0.298 |
| B5 | 4.6625 | 1.1042 | -0.534 | 0.092 |
| B6 | 4.0250 | 1.0698 | -0.506 | 0.039 |
| B7 | 4.7860 | 1.2840 | -1.016 | 0.514 |
| B8 | 4.1774 | 1.0614 | -0.578 | 0.740 |
| B9 | 4.4475 | 1.0231 | -0.663 | 0.335 |
| B10 | 4.2425 | 1.0423 | -1.149 | 1.453 |
| B11 | 4.1322 | 1.3707 | -1.171 | 2.166 |
| B12 | 4.4185 | 1.1462 | -1.288 | 2.365 |
| B13 | 4.1639 | 0.8418 | -1.424 | 4.547 |
| B14 | 5.1250 | 0.8327 | -0.376 | -0.766 |
| B15 | 4.3875 | 0.6343 | -0.140 | -1.137 |
| B16 | 4.2125 | 0.8678 | -1.570 | 3.377 |
| B17 | 4.2175 | 0.7833 | -0.568 | 0.228 |
| B18 | 4.1875 | 1.1163 | -0.603 | 0.321 |
| B19 | 4.4020 | 0.9467 | -0.813 | 1.424 |
| B20 | 5.0275 | 1.0155 | -0.225 | 2.562 |
| B21 | 4.0605 | 0.9363 | -0.712 | 0.241 |
| B22 | 4.6350 | 0.9517 | -1.326 | 3.057 |
| B23 | 5.0550 | 0.8353 | -0.811 | 0.241 |
| B24 | 5.1750 | 0.9417 | -1.325 | 3.067 |

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 2: Descriptive statistics performance measures

TEST OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS ONE

HYPOTHESIS HO: stated that e-commerce marketing strategy is not highly emphasized in the surveyed Nigerian e-commerce firms.

With the generation from the mean value in Table 1 which shows the full result of the descriptive statistics of the performance measure of e-commerce marketing strategy activities by the surveyed e-commerce firms in Nigeria, the

first hypothesis in the study was put to test, and from the mean column in Table 1, it can be seen that all the variables (A1 –A30) witnessed encouraging degree between 4.125 – 5.425 respectively, experiencing average support for the researchable questions. This suggests that e-commerce marketing strategy is emphasized and practiced to a reasonable extent in the surveyed Nigerian firms. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is hereby accepted. Likewise, in t-test analysis (not recorded here), for the first hypothesis tested at 5% level of significance, the t score value = 4.251 and the t table value = 1.96. Since the t score value of 4.251 exceeds the t - table value of 1.96 values, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Hence, e-commerce marketing strategy is emphasized in the surveyed Nigerian e-commerce firms.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS TWO

THE SECOND HYPOTHESIS STATES THAT: HO: The extent of practices of effective e-commerce marketing strategy is not related to e-commerce infrastructure.

With the generation from the mean value in Table 1, the second hypothesis in the study was put to test. From the mean column in Table 1, it can be seen that A21 - e-commerce infrastructure moderate e-commerce performance witnessed encouraging degree of support of 5.024. This suggests that the extent of practices of effective e-commerce marketing strategy is related to e-commerce infrastructure in the surveyed Nigerian e-commerce firms. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is hereby accepted.

Likewise, in the t-test analysis (not recorded here tested at 5% level of significance, the t-score value = 5.883, and the t score value of 5.883 exceeds the t – table value of 1.96. Since the t-score value of 5.883 exceeds the table value of 1.96, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Hence it can be concluded that e-commerce infrastructure moderate e-commerce performance. Thus, it can be said that the extent of practices of effective e-commerce marketing strategy is related to e-commerce infrastructure.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS THREE

THE THIRD HYPOTHESIS STATES THAT: HO: There is no relationship between online customer knowledge, information technology expertise and e-commerce competitive learning on e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firm's performance.

From the mean column in Table 1, it can be seen that A12 = Online customer knowledge influences e-commerce marketing strategy, with mean 4.65; A13 = Online customer knowledge influences e-commerce firms performance with mean 4.703; A14 = Online information technology expertise influence e-commerce marketing strategy with mean 4.700; A15 = Online information technology expertise influence e-commerce firms performance with mean 4.750; A16 = Online e-commerce competitive learning influence e-commerce marketing strategy with mean 4.512; A17 = Online e-commerce competitive learning influence e-commerce firms

performance with mean 4.633. All the variables witnessed encouraging degree of between 4.512 – 4.750 respectively, thus, experiencing average support for the researchable questions. This suggest that there is relationship between online customer knowledge, information technology expertise and e-commerce competitive learning on e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firms performance in surveyed Nigerian companies. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is hereby accepted.

Likewise, in the t - test analysis (not recorded here) for the various variables A12, A13, A14, A15, A16, and A17 respectively, it was found that when tested at 5% level of significance, the t score values are as follows A12 = 4.621; A13 = 4.649; A14 = 5.038; A15 = 4.937; A16 = 5.105; A17 = 4.964 and the t table value = 1.96. Since the t score values of all the variables exceed the t - table value of 1.96 values, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there is relationship between online customer knowledge, information technology expertise and e-commerce competitive learning on e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firms' performance in the surveyed Nigerian e-commerce firms.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS FOUR

THE FOURTH HYPOTHESIS STATES THAT: HO:

There is no relationship between e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firm's performance. With the generation from the mean value in Table 2, B1 – B24 which shows the result of the descriptive statistics related to performance measure, the most achieved performance measure is B24 i.e. e-commerce marketing strategy increase e-commerce firms performance with mean value of 5.1750. This suggests that to a reasonable extent, e-commerce marketing strategy increase e-commerce firm's performance.

Likewise, in the t-test analysis (not recorded here) for this hypothesis, tested at 5% level of significance, the t-score value = 6.013 and the t score value of 6.013 exceeds the t value = 1.96. Since the t-score value of 6.013 exceeds the table value of 1.96, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Hence it can be concluded that there is relationship between e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firm's performance.

| VARIABLES | PERCENTAGE % |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Title of Respondent | |
| - CEO/MD/Chairman | 9.6 |
| - Manager | 82.4 |
| - No response | 8.0 |
| 2. Address | |
| Given | 88.2 |
| Not given | 11.8 |
| 3. Phone number | |
| Given | 80.6 |
| Not given | 19.4 |
| 4. Category of Business | |
| Service | 49.2 |
| Manufacturing | 48.0 |
| No response | 2.8 |
| 5. Working experience | |
| 01 – 15 yrs | 25.0 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| 16 – 30 yrs | 59.6 |
| 31 – 55 yrs | 15.4 |
| 55 – above | ----- |
| 6. Gender | |
| Male | 75.3 |
| Female | 24.7 |
| No response | ----- |
| 7. Educational Qualification | 78.6 |
| B. SC / HND | 7.4 |
| Masters | 0.6 |
| Doctorate | 11.0 |
| PGD | 2.4 |
| No response | |
| 8. Marital Status | |
| Single | 31.2 |
| Married | 66.8 |
| No response | 2.0 |
| 9. Age | |
| 01 – 29 | 2.4 |
| 30 – 40 | 58.1 |
| 41 – 50 | 34.2 |
| 51 – 60 | 5.3 |
| 61 and above | ---- |

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Table 3: Demographic statistics of respondents

From the demographic profile of respondents in Table 3, considering respondents response with respect to title, address, phone number, category of industry of respondent company, educational qualification, marital status, gender, ages and working experience, respondents working experience ranged from 16 to 30 years while respondent ages ranged mainly from 30 to 50 years. Generally, the demographic profiles of the respondent sample represent a rich data set with regard to ages, working experience, educational qualifications, title, and category of business.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The research has empirically investigated the effect of e-commerce marketing strategy on performance of e-commerce firms in Nigeria. Via the adapted and modified e-commerce marketing construct measure, it has been found that the performance of e-commerce firms in Nigeria generally, is significantly influenced by the level of e-commerce marketing strategy.

E-commerce marketing strategy helps business expand their new channels, to grow, and increasing number of customer, thus, enhancing firm's performance. From the research findings, some conclusions can be made that performance is very vital for the functioning of any business firm, and that the performance of any firm is affected by the different marketing strategies that the firm adopt. For a firm to be effective, efficient and relevant and be profitable, then strategies like e-commerce marketing strategies are inevitable in enjoying a competitive advantage, increased customer and total sales volume.

The study confined itself to e-commerce firms in Nigeria. For effective generalization, this research therefore should be replicated in all other developing economies and the results be compared so as to establish whether there is consistency in the performance of all e-commerce firms, as a result of e-commerce marketing strategy. Thus the findings may not be a thorough reflection of the developing nations as a whole.

Future research may also adopt a comparative perspective by conducting empirical studies using sector- specific and industry-specific samples. These results may be useful to both academics and business practitioners with interest in the Nigerian economy. The e-commerce marketing strategy scales used in this research in conjunction with the associated results there from, should enable corporate managers in Nigeria to identify their strategic strengths and weaknesses, in practicing e-commerce, and the relevant areas that needs managerial attention.

APPENDIX

KEY TO RESEARCH VARIABLES USED IN TABLE 1 – 3 E-COMMERCE MARKETING STRATEGY MEASURES

A1 =Level of commitment of e-commerce firms to serve the needs and wants of customers/clients via online. A2 =Measures customers/clients' satisfaction frequently and systematically online. A3 =know the customers/clients in section of e -business activity. A4 = e-commerce marketing strategy is emphasized in your firm. A5 = e-commerce marketing strategy is influenced by level of e – commerce infrastructure. A6 = e-commerce marketing strategy is influenced by the size of the firm. A7 = e-commerce marketing strategy encourage executives to maintain regular contact with present and potential customers/clients online. A8 = e-commerce marketing strategy provide opportunities to obtains ideas and suggestions from customers/clients faster online in order to improve business activities. A9 = e-commerce marketing strategy aid higher online customer knowledge, by carrying out frequent studies of customers/clients in order to know the business activities which customers /clients will value in the future-. A10 =e-commerce marketing firms frequently gathers data from sector of business operations online easily for use in planning business activities. A11 = Periodically contacts customers/clients online to learn about the quality of goods /services. A12 =Online customer knowledge influences e -commerce marketing strategy. A13 = Online customer knowledge influences e-commerce firms performance. A14 = Online information technology expertise influence e-commerce marketing strategy. A15 = Online information technology expertise influence e-commerce firms performance. A16 =Online e-commerce competitive learning influence e-commerce marketing strategy. A17 = Online e-commerce competitive learning influence e-commerce firms performance. A18 =Company is able to detect changes in the preference of customers /clients through online customer knowledge A19 =Company e-commerce infrastructure moderate e-commerce marketing strategy. A20 =Regular

analyses of e-business competitive learning influence e-commerce marketing strategy. A21 = e-commerce infrastructure moderate e-commerce performance. A22 =Information technology expertise influence e-commerce marketing strategy. A23 = Interaction between internet dissemination and online customer knowledge influence e-commerce marketing strategy. A24 =Interaction between internet dissemination and e-business complete learning influence e-commerce marketing strategy. A25 =Internet dissemination is moderator for online customer knowledge and e-commerce marketing strategy. A26 =The higher e-commerce marketing strategy, the higher e-commerce business will have greater performance. A27 = Higher online customer knowledge aid greater e-commerce marketing strategy, A28 =High information technology expertise aid greater e-commerce marketing strategy. A29 = The higher e-business competitive learning, the more likely that the firm will have greater e-commerce marketing strategy. A30 = There is relationship between e-commerce marketing strategy and e-commerce firms performance.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

B1 = e-commerce marketing strategy improve Customers/client services. B2 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase number of customers. B3 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase total sales volume. B4 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase income and net benefit. B5 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase sales growth. B6 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase Staff reward system (e.g. extra pay). B7 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase sales revenue. B8 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase Staff/customer motivation. B9 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase awareness of market environment. B10 = e-commerce increase level of competition in line of business. B11 = e-commerce marketing strategy improved technological system used. B12 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase market share. B13 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase changing customer/ client needs/wants and encourage new market entry. B14 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase Profitability of e-commerce business. B15 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase customers/client satisfaction. B16 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of short – term goals. B17 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of long-term goal. B18 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of personnel management goals. B19 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of producing management goals. B20 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of market management goals. B21 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of pricing goals. B22 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of placement goals. B23 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase achievement of promotional goals. B24 = e-commerce marketing strategy increase e-commerce firms performance.

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