THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON BRAND AWARENESS IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN KISUMU CITY, KENYA

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this project is my original work and has never been submitted for a degree in any university or college for examination or any academic purpose apart from the cited and acknowledged parts herein.

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This project has been submitted with my consent as the university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to God, my source of wisdom and inspiration. He has been a source of strength throughout the research project. I also dedicate this project to my family who have encouraged me all the way and whose encouragement has ensured that I finish what I started. God bless you.

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ABSTRACT

Social media marketing has become the most preferred method for advertisements in the wake of internet development. Business outlets have realized the use of online platforms to promote their services and products. This study sought to investigate the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness of hotels in Kisumu city. To achieve this, primary data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires. The questionnaires werephysicallyadministeredto the hotel marketing managers and online through hotel mails. The study targeted all the 53 hotels in Kisumu city listed with the Tourism Regulatory Authority. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in form of tables and piecharts. The findings indicated that prompt response to customer enquiries in both Facebook and Instagram pages increased brand awareness the most with following values respectively (M=4.21 SD=0.963), (M=4.00 SD=1.155)while interactive activity of twitter platform increased brand awareness in twitter page the most with the following values (M=5.45 SD=6.565).All social media activities were significant with brand awareness as most of hotels using social media platforms had increased customer outreach on social media platforms and received 100% hotel bookings per day in the social media platforms .The reason for adoption of social media platforms in marketing by hotels in Kisumu city is due to the cost which was considered to be cheaper and potential of reaching a wider market and potential customers who use social media platforms.

Thiswas a cross-sectional study that provides a snapshot of the study; therefore, the study recommends a longitudinal study that will be able to detect the changes in the behaviors of the hotel brands.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Social media marketing (SMM) is among the most preferred methods in the wake of internet developmentSingh and Diamond (2012). Entrepreneurs have realized the use of online platforms to promote their services and products. Businesses have also found it cheaper to market their products and services online where there is ease in finding specific products and lenient return policies Lee (2015). Social media marketing has been adopted on a wide scale among business entities that advertise their goods and services in a bid to improve the client's knowledge of the goods. In the case of the hotel industry, there has emerged a variety of services being offered, ranging from catering to accommodation services. For hotels, marketing has taken to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and also major online marketing platforms such as Booking.com, Jumia Travel, and Air BnBGössling and Lane (2015).

The study will be underpinned by two theories namely, marketing equity theory and Chaffey'stheory. The marketing equities theory postulates that social media marketing activities haveeffect on various aspects of marketing such as brand awareness Kim and Ko (2012)whereas Chaffey's theory holds that one on one communication between users and brands helps consumers of those particular brand to build a long term relationship which will eventually increase the sales of the brandChaffey and Smith (2013).It emphasizes that communication is key to any marketing strategy. Social media achieves this by frequently engaging users on social media platforms. These appeals users making them have a lasting relationship with the brand. Social media marketing utilizes these platforms to influence opinions on different products and

services, and ultimately lead them into making purchases, and even maintain loyalty to one brand.

Kenya tourism and regulation act 2012 provides that a hotel is any establishment providing accommodation, meals and any other service for travelers. Kisumu has a total of 53 hotels registered under tourism regulatory authority. This sector has grown in a faster rate over the last decade which has been aided mostly by marketing activities such as frequent posting of brands on platforms like Facebook, Instagram and twitter. Hôtel industry in Kisumu city recorded a lot of competition because they provided almost identical products to their users. According to a survey done by the ministry of tourism in Kisumu city they found out that most of the users booked their hotels online and there was a need of establishing a long-lasting relationship with their customers so as to increase the sales and to keep fit within the market. Social media marketing has always been adopted because other media forms are very expensive. Most hotels have ever established a desk for a marketing manager to oversee the marketing area since is the backbone of the industry. Hotels and Restaurants Act guidelines to hotels hold that a hotel is free to come up with strategies of expanding its customer base through social media marketing by most hotels in Kisumu city(Nyairo 2010).

1.1.1 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing (SMM) isidentifiedasthe process of creating awareness of products on social media platforms. It is a type of online marketing that employs social media networks to accomplishbranding targets Assaad and Gómez (2011). According to Couldry (2012)defines social media marketing as a type of marketing that employs networking websites to market products and services It entails sharing of information such as articles, photos, and videos for

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marketing, in addition to paid social media advertising. By using social media platforms companies can achieve targets such as customer relationship management, brand building sales, and public relations. By utilizing social media marketing, companies can introduce social media monitoring, which casts back the interpretationandcollection of content. The content can include what users publish, post or share on the Internet, including videos, audio files, data, photos, images, texts, and memes.

A study by Razak (2015) focused on Facebook, Instagram and twitter platforms on brand awareness where he found out that the three platforms were commonly used by most firms to market their brands. This study focusses on these three platforms in a different context to determine effect of Facebook, Instagram and twitter on brand awareness. Globally, social media tools such as Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebookprojected online engagement in terms of average consumed time and number of active users. It is widely acknowledged that Facebook is now the most used social media network platform in the current world. Approximately, 2.32 billion people actively use Facebook monthly by 2018Oz, Zheng, and Chen (2018). They state that the average Facebook user has 130 followers and creates 20 pieces of content each week; similarly, those who are logged onto Facebook depleted over 700 billion minutes in a month. It is approximated that almost 200 million active people are using Facebook through their phones. Demographically, Facebook offers a balance in terms of gender, income and educational diversity making it a good target for businesses. Additionally, most Facebook users make it a great place for any business that is trying to attract these types of users thus suitable for social media marketing Kaplan (2012).

Another upcoming social media platform is Twitter, which was founded in March 2006Chang (2010). This platform involves users sharing small pieces of messages with their followers, also known as "*tweets*". According to Namiot (2015), Twitter uses Short Message Service (SMS) as its website interface and mobile device application software. He further states that by July 2018, Twitter had around 800 million users. 156 million messages were sent each day, and the rate of users improves by approximately 350,000 daily. Twitter has come up with its own "Twitter for business" to help in connecting customers to businesses.

Instagram media networking service that uses high definition images and video sharing.Singhaffirms this mobile application is operated by Facebook. Since its inception in 2010, the platform has soared in popularity, especially among millennials. There are almost 150 million active users monthly on the networks who share videos and photos from mobile phones. Instagram can be used by businesses to encourage customers to share photos and post their content or of them connecting with their products or services. Most businesses use Instagram in conjunction with other social media-related platforms, automatically sharingInstagram images to Facebook and Twitter.

1.1.2. Brand Awareness

Brand awarenessisthe level of customers' consciousness on particulargoodsandservices in the market Macdonald and Sharp (2003).A study by Naveen (2005)identified brand awareness as overall measure of the performance of a certain brand in the market. Thereare two categories of brand awareness, aided awareness which arises when the customer is given the list of brand names and understands a certain brand in the question and main awarenesswhich arise when the

brand name is recollected because the customer relates the brand with a certain business provider. This is the brand recall dimension which forms the basis of our study.

When brand awareness is built, market share can be increased. According to Keller (1993)advertising and aggressive marketingof products and services are important factors in improving brand awareness and transforming awareness into market share. Brand awareness does not have monetary value in itselfbut has a marketingeffort that propels progressive sales of a service or a product. Brand awareness can be measured using several methods, including surveys, keeping an eye on website traffic over time and also search volume that tells one how often people search for a brand.

1.1.3 Hotels in Kisumu City, Kenya

The county government of Kisumu (2011)defines hotels as those facilities that offer accommodation and meals. They also include furnished apartments, hostels and guest houses. This study concentrates on the accommodation segment, emphasizing on hotels in Kisumu City. Increased social media penetration in Kenya has seen most of the entrepreneur's rush to social marketing platforms to market their goods and services. Social media has improved in the last decade and has been a key area of concentration for researchers onitscustomer's behavior anddevelopment. Technological development of smartphones has contributed to social media marketing as most people can access social media platforms anywhere anytime once they are logged into the internet according to Internet Usage and Telecommunications Report (2015).

Hotels offer intangible products and services that are adaptable for use through electronic data transfer. A survey carried by the ministry of tourism showed that those who used social media to

do bookings, for example, the travel communities,hada bright future because the information is presented easily for buying products on the Internet and the daily updates costs are comparatively low. This explains the association between the hotelindustry and social media, and how better they could improve their communication and correlate together to pass on information to the users in the online platform.

Kisumu's hotel industryhas beenimproving in the last decade. Devolution, which has created economies in the counties, has empowered residents, county governments and investors to aggressively explore and exploit opportunities in their localities. Together with socio-demographic changes, the rise of a new middle class, a more educated population, and increased proliferation of information technology. The rise of these developments is accelerated by the fact that county governments and inhabitants have a considerable degree of autonomy and leeway in terms of setting up businesses, hiring experts, adopting innovation, attracting investors, and providing services. The hotel industry has been one of the biggest beneficiaries of devolution as county governments can market their attractions and collaborate with local and external investors to increase their bed capacities.

According to Kenya hotels and Regulatory act(2012), new hotels are sprouting up in Kisumu City as demand grows due to leisure, tourism, and business. In the process, older establishments have been forced to refurbish and improve their facilities and services to avoid being edged out of the market. Kisumu city can now host major events, as evidenced by the 2018 devolution conference which took place in Kakamega yet saw many guests hosted in Kisumu. New hotels are financed by local, regional, and international investors, including those who have relocated

toset up shops in the city. The ranked hotels are all located within a 7 kilometers radius of the Central Business District.

1.2 Research Problem

With penetration of social media in the country with a hefty force, most organization have run to adopt marketing through social media as the only methodto make their products well known by customers. Despite of this, there has not been evidence on the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness. Hotels are increasingly shifting to social media marketing with a view of increasing brand awareness to their potential customers Owino et al. (2016).Many organizations employ social media to showcase products and make customers aware with their brands. Study by Honghui et al. (2017)on effect of social media to the brand established that its significantly influenced public awareness of launching a new product in the market. However, a study by Chu (2011)established that although social media has been widely used by many organizations to showcase their products to the users, there were many organizations that did not succeed in creating brand awareness because of the advertising message not being attractive to the users.

A study by Ayendun (2015)focused on availability of social media in Nigeria. The study found out that marketing had greatly influenced brand awareness through online activities. This study was based on another context and its findings cannot be generalized in Kenyan context. Whereas a study by Kiiru (2018) in Nairobi, Kenyasought to know different social media strategies and their benefits to the organizations using them to market their brands. The study found out that different social media marketing strategies did not necessary increase brand awareness as users claimed that the online platforms did not crate appealing images of the brands. Although the

study edged closer to Kenyan context, it only focused on one county and Kenya has a total of 47 counties in different geographical locations.

It's evident that from previous studies on social media marketing and brand awareness, that more need to investigated as still gaps still prevail. Some studies have shown different findings on the same focus, others have been based on different contexts and others with a wider concept. This provides both conceptual and conceptual gaps. The study sought to unravel the question, what is the effect of social media on brand awareness of hotel industry in Kisumu city?

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of this study was to determine the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness in the hotel industry in Kisumu City.

1.4 Value of Study

The results of this study will be used in the application of the marketing equities theory on the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness. Business researchers and scholars will refer to the findings of this research to help develop topics for further research in the future.

Managers in the hotel industry will also learn how they canutilize social media to improve brand awareness. This will provide insights on how the hotel managers or digital marketers can use social media as a marketing platform and also decide on which platform to use; Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube or Twitter by hotels in Kisumu City. The study through social media reviews which can be either positive ornegativecan help managers improve in the management of the hotels.

To the hotel industry, the study findings would help in making well informed decisions towards achievement of vision 2030, TheBig Four Agenda and sustainable goals in Kenya. The managers of the hotels in Kenya would gain invaluable input to help them make swift changes and conform withhighcompetition in the crowded hotel industry.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This section establishes theories that support the discussions and propositions in the research. Italso reviews the conceptual and empirical literature on effect of social media marketingon customer brand awareness.

2.2. Theoretical Foundation

This section is aided by the marketing equities theory and Chaffey's theory. These theories each have associations and predictions on the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness.

2.2.1 Marketing EquitiesTheory

Marketing equities was originated byKim and Ko (2012) and postulates that social media marketing activities haveproved to have positiveevidence on effect on business enterprise performance. The originators of the theory initially focused onthe marketing activities used by luxury fashion brands to promote their products. They included entertainmentin the particular sector of the industry, customer interactionbased on the goals of the business, trendiness, customizationof the products and services offered to the targeted audience for consumption, recommendationand word of mouth. Their impact on firm performance was analyzed in terms of brand equity and purchase intention. Finally,Kim and Koconcluded that this model provides a solid view on workings of social media marketing. The five marketing techniques are at the pillars of the strategy. Frequent customer interaction offers the firm andthe management runningthe business a good opportunityand avenue to directly or indirectly showcasethe benefits of its products, and address any complaints raised by the customers. The significance of this

theory to the study is that it looks at the associationbetween marketing activities, and business performance. It directly correlates social media marketing strategies to improved marketing features. It therefore forms a good basis in the research working to investigate the impact of social media marketing. However, the theory overly assumes that the same aspect of social media marketing would be applicable across contexts, yet the reality is that various practitioners explore different aspect of social media marketing.

2.2.2 Chaffey'sTheory

Originated byChaffey and Smith (2013), the theory looks at social media marketing as an informal marketing approach. According to the theory, communication and human networking are at the core of human behavior, and ultimately customer behavior. Social media marketing therefore utilizes these platforms to influence opinions on different products and services, and ultimately lead them into making purchases, and even maintain loyalty to one brand. This theory focuses on social media as a relationship-building tool. Through such interactions, a meaningful relationship is fostered between the business and its clients. The significance of this theory to the study is that it brings in a new angle of viewing the impact of social media marketing Heinze (2016). By establishing a long-term relationship with clients, not only does it cause an immediate impact, but also secures the performance of the business in the long term. It therefore calls for an evaluation of the short term and critically overseeing the long-term benefits of social media marketing. The theory however does not specify the conditions under which its postulations would be valid. Previous studies such as Kimaru (2011)have for example determined that haphazardly implemented communication and networks can actually be counterproductive.

2.3 Social Media Marketing and Brand Awareness

A descriptive study byBankole (2012)on interrelation between business growth and social media marketing found out that many companies in India had embraced social media platforms for advertising their business. Big brands embraced social media sites to help them in increasing brand awareness. A strong interrelation between social media marketing and business growth can be deduced. A study by Chi (2011)on the extent of use of social media as a marketing tool found out that people who extensively used social media platforms perceived advertising on social media as best way of product branding unlike depending on visual advertisements. This suggested that user inducement for networking could play a major role in expressing consumer reviews to social media marketing.

A study by Dutta (2010) on the effect of Facebook on the brand perception of products in European companiesestablished that high luxurious companies had built relationships through Facebook to market their products. He concluded that some celebrities with mass followings on Facebook were also paid to market the brands. A descriptive study by Chu (2011)found that Facebook users maintained a good brand recognition habits. Users who recognized products and services advertised were more likely to link up in a brand or a retailer's Facebook group to get advertisement messages. He concluded that there was link that existed between engagement in group pages and consumers' use of social media sites. The association between engagements with group applications and consumers' use of social media contributes to the effectiveness and rate of marketing, specificallyonFacebook.

A study byHaslam (2017)onage and attitude in social mediafound out that users who were between the age brackets of 18-28 had strong attitude towards video, blogs and brand channels.

The users claimed that theadvertisements on the social sites were informative, eye-catching and amusing. This showed positive attitude towards age on social media marketing.

A cross sectional study byGichunge (2018)onconnections between social media marketing and organizational performance. A methodology of this review survey design was embraced. The review revealed that adverts organization with good showcasing systems was improving on brand perception. A descriptive study by Bankole (2012)on the small microenterprise growth was done focused on small enterprises without a focus on age orientation. His outcome showed that social media is widely used for marketing. He also established a strong connection between performance and social media marketing.

A study by Gichunge (2018) on product perceptionexamined the degree to which the twitter platform improved product perception to its potential customers. He established the adoption of Twitter as a social marketing strategy for organizational performance a study involving 139 companies. A descriptive study by Owino et al. (2016) on the social media effect of marketing on small enterprises growth in Nairobi county found out that these platforms have positive results on sales revenue and several customers. He recommended that micro-enterprises should adopt the use of various platforms in business to achieve desired levels of performance.

Alongitudinal study by Hutter(2013) on social media activities focused on car assembly Facebook book fan page and its interaction strategy with its users and how all that affect brand awareness of its products. The survey target population involved the car assembly Facebook fan page users focusing on customer views on the content from the car assembly firm. The data from the study was analyzed using SPSS version 19 and the findings showed that user's engagement

with the page had a positive effect on brand awareness. Also, the findings from the research showed that annoyance of fan page users due to overload messages and leads to negative effect on brand.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Knowledge Gaps

Attempts have been made to determine the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness. Despite different scholars moving towards in unravelling this dilemma, there still exists a lot of gaps on this area. This sets agenda for further research. A study by Dutta (2010)on impact of social media marketing established that high luxurious companies are now building relationships through Facebook to market their products but he never focused on other social media platforms. The study provided a different context apart from Kenyan context as it was done in America.Broughton, Higgins, Hicks, and Cox (2010) found out that users who are between the age brackets of 18-28 had strong positive attitudes towards video, blogs and brand channels. This was a study which was done in Pakistan which cannot be generalized in our research because of differences in social media penetration. This therefore presents both contextual and conceptual gaps respectively. A study by Situma (2012)focused on small enterprises without a focus on age orientation. His findings showed that social media is widely used for marketing.N. C. Gichunge (2018) examined the rate at which the social media platform improved product perception to its potential customers. He also established the adoption of Twitter as a social marketing strategy for organizational performance but never focused on other social media platforms. According to Owino et al. (2016)found out that social media platforms have positive results on sales revenue and several customers but failed to show how these social media platforms.Hutter (2013) on brand awareness of car assembly Facebook fan page found out that social media platforms had a

negative effect but failed to indicate how the fan page contributed to negative effects. This study aims to bridge the gap and clearly show that social media marketing has affected brand awareness of hotels in Kisumu city by focusing on platforms used by the hotels.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section shows the technique that was used in this research. The scope includes research design, the study population, data collection methods, analysis of data and presentation techniques applied in the research.

3.2 Research Design

The selected study utilizeda descriptive cross-sectional method. The choice is justified by the fact that this approach explains subjects by developing a profile correspondence with objectives of the research through data collection and analysis Cooper (2006). This design is appropriate as it makes it easier to measure items such as content posting frequency and social media page preference by the respondents. The mentioned items are critical to acquiring an excellent grasp of social media marketing effects on customer brand awareness.

3.3 Population of the Study

According to (Cooper & Schindler, 2006)the study population is a cluster of people who form the constituency to which research findings will be generalized. In this case, the target population is 53 hotels (listed as per appendix 2) which offer accommodation services as their main selling point. The decision to focus on hotels in the city in general rather than narrowing them down to a specific classification is informed by the fact that Kisumu's hotel industry is not as vibrant as those of Nairobi or Mombasa. This means that the number of hotels that can be classified as three-star and above is too negligible to provide a comprehensive study population.

3.4Data collection

In this research, primary data was used. Structured questionnaires were utilized to collect the data from the 53 selected hotels in Kisumu city. Structured questionnaires are rigid and restrict respondents' answers to the questions provided. The questionnaire was conducted through social media pages, walk-ins or email where applicable. The questionnaire wasdivided into three parts; the first part covered demographics of respondents, the second focused on determining social media sites that were used by hotels in Kisumu and the third covered the social media effects of brand awareness in hotels in Kisumu city.The respondents who participatedweredigital marketing managers and reservation managers of the 53 selected hotels in Kisumu city (See Appendix III).

3.5Data Analysis

Nardi (2018)describes data analysis as the rationalization and elucidation of views, statistics, and perspectives gathered to make them relevant to the context of a study. In this instance, data was analyzed by the first proofreading and revising questionnaire outcomes to ascertain faultlessness and regularity. Mistakes and omissions were also checked and then coding done. A descriptive statistic was used to analyze data from the questionnaire. Data was presented in tables and pie charts.

The independent variables in this research weresocial media tools which include Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. To determine the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness, a Likert-scale was used to access how the respondents agree with particular opinions and show to what extent they agree or disagree with a certain statement. Forevery question that uses the

Likert scale, five responses were looked at and the numerical score given to each of the questions as follow:

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS, AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis, findings and discussions aided by the research objectives presented in chapter one. Study findings on descriptive statistics were presented in percentages, frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation focusing on the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness of hotels in Kisumu city.

4.1.1 Response rate

Questionnaires received from the field were sorted out and coded. Out of the 53 selected hotels for the study which included all hotels listed in Tourism Regulatory Authority in Kisumu City 1 hotel did not have an active websites and social media pages while 5 of them were sent back having not been satisfactorily filled. A study by Dean (2012),accountformore than70% response rate is sufficient to facilitate data analysis.

4.2Social media

4.2.1 Social Media Presence

The respondents were asked to state the social media platforms that they used to market their brands as presented in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1Social media presence
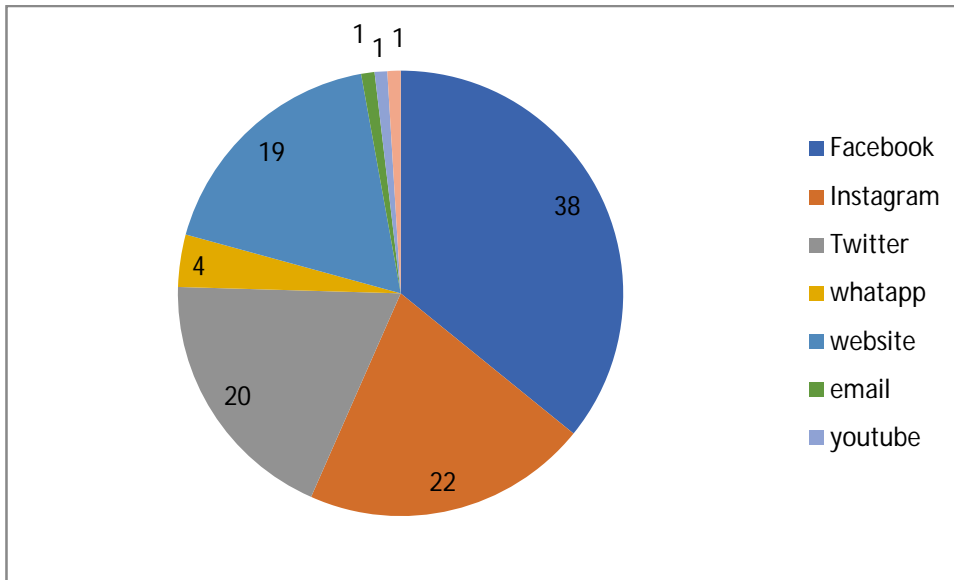
Figure 4.1, shows that 38 hotel brands indicated to be on Facebook, 22 on Instagram, 20 on twitter, 19 used websites to advertise their brands. WhatsApp was used by only four hotels whereas email and YouTube were used by 1 hotel respectively. Thisestablishedthat the hotel brands had social media presence on more than one page with 37 out of 47 hotels presenting Facebook as the most preferred media for channeling their brands. This was followed closely by Instagram and twitter with 22 and 20 count usage .19 respondents recorded to have used websites to air their brands. 4 hotels were active on WhatsApp whereas the only email, YouTube and jumia were only used by one hotel. The objective of this question was to gauge the technological knowhow of the hotels' managers with regards to the use of social media platformsinsuch a department.

4.3 Social media usage

The respondents were asked to state the social media platforms that they used to market their brands as presented in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Social media usage
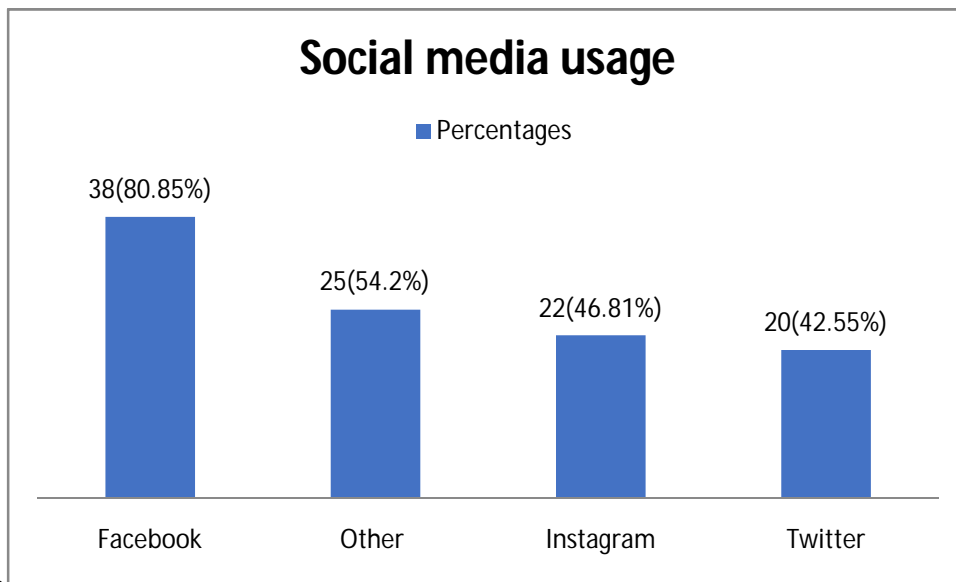
As per Figure 4.2, 38 hotel brands indicated to have been actively used Facebook whereas 25 hotels were actively using other pages such as email, YouTube, and jumia. 22 hotels confirmed to be active on Instagram and 20 on twitter. Other social media platforms such as YouTube, email, jumia and WhatsApp were the second most used and the least used media was twitter.Thissection sought to determine number of the hotels which wholly engaged in social media marketing by use of media platforms. Among the hotels practicing social media

marketing,80% of hotels wholly engaged in social media marketing while 20% partly engaged in social media marketing.

4.3.1Social media platforms influence on brand awareness

i)social media influemnce on brand awareness

Table 4.1: Social media influence on brand awareness

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Implementation of my marketing community is Supported by social media	47	3.77	1.005
I hired an online marketing expert	47	3.45	1.282
I have received new customers on social media	47	4.13	.924
I personally engage current potential customers on social media	47	4.06	1.092

According to Table 4.1, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed with specific statements regarding the influence of social media marketing on brand awareness. The Likert scale used included 1-indicating that respondent strongly agreed with the statements,2-Agree,3-Neutral,4-Disagree,5-Strongly Disagree. From the findings, majority of the respondents agreed that they had received new customers on social media (M=4.13 SD=0.924),followed by engagementofcurrent potential customers on social media (M=4.06 SD=1.092),Implementation

of marketing community is Supported by social media(M=3.77 SD=1.005) and lastly influence on brand awareness through hiring of online marketing expert(M=3.45 SD=1.282).This confirms that hotels which had received new customers on social mediaincreased awareness of hotel brands in these platforms.

ii)Facebook influence on brand awareness

To access the extent of social media activity on Facebook and its effect on brand awareness, the respondents were asked the following questions as presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2Facebook influence on brand awareness

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Facebook page is interactive	38	4.18	.896
Our followers on Facebook page has grown in the last 12 months	38	4.05	.957
We get frequent feedback on our Facebook page	38	3.97	.915
Customer reach has increased through our Facebook page	38	3.84	.916
We receive positive revenue through our Facebook page	38	3.74	1.155
Our response to customer inquiries is prompt	38	4.21	.963
Our hotel is booked at least more than half of bed set capacity every day	38	3.58	1.177

According to Table 4.2, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed with specific statements regarding the influence of Facebook on brand awareness. The Likert scale used included 1-indicating that respondent strongly agreed with the statements,2-Agree,3-Neutral,4-Disagree,5-Strongly Disagree. From the findings, majority of the respondents agreed

that their response to customer enquiries was prompt (M=4.21 SD=0.963), followed by Facebook page been interactive(M=4.18 SD=0.896),followers on Facebook page have grown in the last 12 months (M=4.05 SD=0.957),Customer reach has increased through Facebook page(M=3.84 SD=0.916),We receive positive revenue through our Facebook page (M=3.74 SD=1.155) and lastly hotel is booked at least more than half of bed set capacity every day (M=3.58 SD=1.177)

Facebook was the most used form of social media platform by the hotels in Kisumu city with atotal of 38 respondents out of 47 respondents confirming to have been using Facebook to market their hotel brands. Majority of the respondents agreed that their response to customer enquiries was prompt. This confirms that this feature on Facebook platform increased brand awareness the most as compared with other Facebook activities.

ii)**Instagram influence on brand awareness**

To access the extent of social media activity on Instagram and its effect on brand awareness, the respondents were asked the following questions as presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Instagraminfluence on brand awareness

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our Instagram page is interactive	22	3.45	1.101
Our followers on Instagram page has grown in the last 12 months	22	3.95	.899
We get frequent feedback on our Instagram page	22	3.55	.963
Customer reach has increased through our Instagram page	22	3.36	1.049
We receive positive revenue through our Instagram page	22	3.09	1.269
Our response to customer inquiries is prompt	22	4.00	1.155
Our hotel is booked at least more than half of bed set capacity every day	22	3.73	1.162

The statements shown in Table 4.3the respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed with specific statements regarding the influence of Instagram on brand awareness. The Likert scale used included 1-indicating that respondent strongly agreed with the statements,2-Agree,3-Neutral,4-Disagree,5-Strongly Disagree. From the findings, majority of the respondents agreed that their response to customer enquiries was prompt (M=4.00 SD=1.155),followed by followers on Instagrampage have grown in the last 12 months (M=3.95 SD=0.899), hotel is booked at least more than half of bed set capacity every day (M=3.73 SD=1.162),we get frequent feedback on Instagram page (M=3.55 SD=0.963),Instagram page been interactive(M=3.45 SD=1.101) Customer reach has increased through Instagram

page(M=3.36SD=1.049) and lastly we receive positive revenue through our Instagram page (M=3.09 SD=1.269).

Instagramwas the second most used form of social media platform by the hotels in Kisumu city with atotal of 22 respondents out of 47 respondents confirming to have been using Instagramto market their hotel brands. Majority of the respondents agreed that their response to customer enquiries was prompt. This confirms that this feature on Instagramplatform increased brand awareness the most as compared with other Instagramactivities.

iii)Twitter influence on brand awareness

Table 4. 4: Twitter influence on brand awareness

To access the extent of social media activity on twitter and its effect on brand awareness, the respondents were asked the following questions as presented in Table 4.4.

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our twitter page is interactive	20	5.45	6.565
Our followers on twitter page has grown in the last 12 months	20	4.05	1.050
We get frequent feedback on our twitter page	20	3.95	1.099
Customer reach has increased through our twitter page	20	4.00	1.076
We receive positive revenue through our twitter page	20	3.30	1.174
Our response to customer inquiries is prompt	20	3.65	1.226
Our hotel is booked at least more than half of bed set capacity every day	20	3.85	1.268

According to Table 4.4, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed with specific statements regarding the influence of twitter on brand awareness. The Likert scale used included 1-indicating that respondent strongly agreed with the statements,2-Agree,3-Neutral,4-Disagree,5-Strongly Disagree. From the findings, majority of the respondents agreed that their twitter page was interactive (M=5.45 SD=6.565),followed by followers on twitter page have grown in the last 12 months (M=4.05 SD=1.05), Customer reach has increased through twitter page(M=4.00 SD=1.076),we get frequent feedback on twitter page (M=3.95 SD=1.099),hotel is booked at least more than half of bed set capacity every day (M=3.85 SD=1.268),and lastly we receive positive revenue through our twitter page (M=3.30 SD=1.174).

Twitter was the third most used form of social media platform by the hotels in Kisumu city with atotal of 20 respondents out of 47 respondents confirming to have been using twitterto market their hotel brands. Majority of the respondents agreed that theirtwitter page was interactive. This confirms that this activity on twitter platform increased brand awareness the most as compared with other twitter activities.

4.4 Discussion

According to Kim and Ko (2012)marketing equities theory postulates that marketing in social media platforms enhances brand awareness. The founders of this theory focused on marketing strategies used by luxurious fashion companies to advertise their products. The strategies included customer engagement in the social platform pages which according to Kim gives a business a good opportunity to show case their products one on one with their customers. The significance of this theory to the study is that it looks at the association of marketing and brand awareness. This study therefore provides empirical evidence in support of postulations of the

theory because social media marketing was found to be significant to increase in brand awareness.

Chaffey's theory looks at social media marketing as an informal marketing approach. According to the theory, communication and human networking are at the core of human behavior, and ultimately customer behavior. Social media marketing therefore utilizes these platforms to influence opinions on different products and services, and ultimately lead them into making purchases, and even maintain loyalty to one brand. This theory focuses on social media as a relationship-building tool. Through such interactions, a meaningful relationship is fostered between the business and its users. The significance of this theory to the study is that it establishes another approach of viewing social media impact on brand awareness by establishing a long-term relationship with their users. This study therefore provides empirical evidence in support to this theory since social media marketing was found to influence brand awareness.

Based on previous studies on social media marketing on brand awareness, the findings of this study agree and disagree with some of the previous investigations. Dutta (2010) on his study established that high luxurious companies are now building relationships through Facebook to market their products. The current study agrees with this proposition since social media marketing has been found to significantly increase consumer consciousness.

A study by Broughton et al. (2010) found out that users who are between the age brackets of 18-28 had strong positive attitudes towards video, blogs and brand channels. The results of this study established a positive impact of marketing on online platforms.The current study agrees with this proposition since social media marketing has been found to significantly increase brand

awareness.A study by Situma (2012)focused on small enterprises without a focus on age orientation. His results showed that social media is widely used for marketing as it was cheaper and most of users had access of internet. The current study agrees with this proposition since social media marketing has been found to significantly increase brand awareness.

A study by N. C. Gichunge (2018) examined the degree to which the social media platform improved product perception to its potential customers. He also established that most of users of internet were only interested on communicating to their fellow colleagues and not accessing the marketing pages of these hotels.The current study disagrees with this proposition since social media marketing has been found to significantly increase brand awareness.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study, conclusions, limitations of the study and recommendations for further research. The objective of the study was to investigate the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness of hotels in Kisumu city.

5.2 Summary

According to the research findings, the most popular social media platforms were analyzed which were used by hotels in Kisumu city and how they affected brand awareness. The findings indicated that prompt response to customer enquiries in both Facebook and Instagram pages increased brand awareness the most while interactive nature of twitter platform increased brand awareness in twitter page. The reason for adoption of social media platforms in marketing by hotels in Kisumu city is due to the cost which was considered to be cheaper and potential of reaching a wider market and potential customers who use social media platforms.

All social media activities were significant with brand awareness as most of hotels using social media platforms had increased customer outreach on social media platformsandreceived 100% hotel bookings per day in the social media platforms. Each social media platform was considered to be important because it had a key branding feature that kept it in the competitive market. Responding to inquiries promptly proved as the most significant contributor to the increased brand awareness of the hotel brands on social media which motivated customers to establish a long-lasting relationship with brand.

As per the findings of this study, the use of social media to enhance brand awareness was confirmed to be the main reason for most hotels on social media as recorded that 80% Implementation of their marketing communication was supported by social media, social media exposes the brands to a global audience hence a wider reach. It is an effective communication tool, easily accessible and easy to use unlike traditional media and is a good source of sales leads.

5.3 Conclusion

This study focused on the effect of social media use on brand awareness among hotels in Kisumu city. The study shows that the use of social media marketing to increase brand awareness is beneficial to hotels in Kisumu city. According to the respondents, it increases customer outreach hence increasing sales which were evidenced by an increased number of hotel bookings in these platforms. Each social media platform was important in its aspect. For example, according to our findings, despite the twitter platform being among the least used social media platform, it was considered to have the best source of customers on referrals. Towards achieving higher brand awareness, the study recommends a social media strategy plan that considers all social media activities such as hiring a social media expert, responding promptly to customers' inquiries and holding up a high reputation of the hotel.

The social media pages should be interactive as this keeps customers engaged on the platform by giving them clarification on their questions as most of the customers relied mostly on the most reliable platforms. Furthermore, hotel brands should aim at establishing long-lasting relationships with customers on social media; consumers will become loyal to a brand they

perceive as having a high brand reputation and willingly participate in its social media activities which may lead to actual purchase.

5.4 Implications for Policy, Theory, and Practice

Firstly, hotels should pursue social media marketing to increase brand awareness of brands as it is cheaper and faster. Hotels should assign a marketing manager to do marketing activities as they are time consuming. The businesses should incorporate internet-based strategies in their strategic plans as is best ways of sourcing customers and establishing a long-lasting relationship with its users.

Secondly, social media platforms can be used to carry out customer satisfaction surveys, ask

Users which services they would like to see improved or introduced, get feedback and

inform them of promotional activities like price cuts and discount offerings. Given this,

the hotel industry can perform better than before.

The findings from the study will particularly be useful in the application of social media marketing theory on increasing brand awareness. Scholars and business researchers will also benefit from this study as they could use it in further related research. This study will be of most help to the marketing managers of the hotels as it will bring on the most reliable sites and most common features in each platform which could increase brand awareness. They will also appreciate the positives and negative effects associated with social media marketing on improving brand awareness.

5.5 Limitations of the study.

Although the research objective was met, there were some limitations. Firstly, the study only focused on the hotels but did not cover the whole hospitality sector, therefore, the findings from the study cannot be generalized for the whole hospitality industry since it only covered a section of the industry. Secondly, the study was only limited to the hotels in Kisumu city hence the results from the study cannot be used elsewhere. This was across-sectional study that provides a snapshot of the study therefore, it cannot be used to analyze the behavior of our brand. This study involves the use of social media as a form of marketing which was only limited to social media marketing. It never focused on other forms of marketing such as print media, outdoor and podcasts which constitutes marketing.

5.6 Recommendations for Further Research

The study sought to investigate the effect of social media marketing on brand awareness of hotels in Kisumu city. This was a cross-sectional study that provides a snapshot of the study; therefore, the study recommends a longitudinal study that will be able to detect the changes in the behaviors of the hotel brands. This will provide more reliable results. This research is focused only on the views of the marketing manager on social media platforms and their contribution to brand awareness. The research recommends a similar study to be conducted particularly with a view of getting customers on board. The researcher also recommends further theoretical and empirical investigation aimed at better understanding social media marketing in the greater field across all industries in Kenya.

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APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTION LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
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Telegrams: "Varsity" Nairobi
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P.O Box 19134-40123
Kisumu, Kenya

Date: 16th September 2018   **Ref:** D61/88006/2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter Ms. Ericka Mary Omodho

REGISTRATION NO: D61/88006/2016

The above named student is in the Master of Business Administration degree program. As part of the requirements for the course, she is expected to carry out a study on **"The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Brand Awareness in the Hotel Industry in Kisumu City, Kenya"**

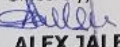She has identified your organization for that purpose. This is to kindly request your assistance to enable her complete the study.

The exercise is strictly for academic purposes and a copy of the final paper will be availed to your organization on request.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance.

Sincerely,

ALEX JALEHA
CO ORDINAOTR, SoB, KISUMU CAMPUS

Cc   File Copy

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APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

Part A; Demographics of the hotel. Kindly tick the appropriate answer

1. Gender: Male ( )   Female ( )

2. How long have you been working in this hotel in years?

(a) 0 – 3 ( )   (b) 4 – 7 ( )   (c) 8 – 11 ( )

(d) 12-15 ( )   (e) Above 15

3. Number of employees in the hotel

   a) 0- 10 ( )   (b)11- 20   ( )

   (c) 21-30 ( )   (d) 30 and above ( )

4. Age profile of the employees (Kindly state in numbers)

	Men	Women
Below 25		
25-34		
35-44		
45-54		
55 and above		

5. Please tick your education level

(a)Diploma ( ) (b) Degree ( ) (c) Masters (   ) (d) Professional qualification ( )

6. State the number of your hotel branches within the county……………

Part B; Social media marketing. Kindly tick the appropriate answer

7. Do you use social media as a marketing strategy?

Yes ( )   No ( )

If the above answer is yes, which kind of social media platform do you use in your business

a) Facebook.

b) Instagram.

c) Twitter.

d) Other (specify)………

8. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1. Strongly Disagree   2. Disagree   3. Neutral   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Implementation of my marketing communication is supported by social media					
I have hired an online marketing expert					
I have received new customers on social media					
I engage current potential customers on social media					

Part B: Facebook Measures

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1. Strongly Disagree   2. Disagree   3. Neutral   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5
Our Facebook page is interactive					
Our followers on the Facebook page has grown in the last 12 months					
We get frequent feedback on our Facebook page					
Customer reach has increased through our active Facebook page					
We receive positive revenue through our Facebook page					
Our response to customer inquiries is prompt					
Our hotel is booked at least more than half of the bed set capacity every day					

Instagram Measures.

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

    1. Strongly Disagree   2. Disagree   3. Neutral   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Our Instagram page is interactive					
Our followers on the Instagram page has grown in the last 12 months					
Customer reach has increased through our Instagram page					
We get frequent feedback on our Instagram page					
Our sales have increased through our Instagram page campaign					
Our response to customer inquiries is prompt					
Our hotel is booked at least more than half of the bed set capacity every day					

Twitter Measures.

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

   1. Strongly Disagree   2. Disagree   3. Neutral   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
We enjoy a high brand reputation					
Majority of our customers have heard about our hotel					
We receive regular requests for accommodation					
We get customers on referrals					
Our sales have increased through our twitter handle campaign					
Our response to customer inquiries is prompt					
Our hotel is booked at least more than half of the bed set capacity every day					

THANK YOU

APPENDIX 111: LIST OF HOTELS IN KISUMU.

1. Acacia Premier Hotel.
2. Whirl Spring Hotel.
3. Wigot Gardens Hotel.
4. Grand Royal Swiss.
5. Sovereign Hotel.
6. The Vic Hotel.
7. Barracuda
8. Parkview
9. Pinecone Hotel.
10. Kisumu Hotel.
11. Rockwell Hotel.
12. Novelty Guesthouse.
13. Everest House Hotel.
14. Beach View Hotel.
15. sovereign hotel
16. Shalom Hotel.
17. Hotel Palmers.
18. New East View Hotel.
19. The Clarice Hotel.
20. Yatch club
21. Milimani Holiday Resort.
22. Le Savannah Lodges.
23. Imperial Hotel.
24. Travelers hotel.
25. Museum view
26. Awala guest house
27. Ventakonne
28. Green lake
29. Prinnias hotel
30. Clarice Hotel.
31. Royal City Hotels.
32. Lake view hotel
33. Samba Marina.
34. Victoria Comfort Inn.
35. Great lakes hotel
36. Triple Trojan Hotel.
37. Lakers Inn.
38. Hotel Vundumba.
39. Good Samaritan Inn.
40. St. Ann Guest House.
41. Family nest
42. Milimani resort
43. Hotel merryland
44. Museum View Hotel.
45. Hotel Mamba.
46. Accra budget Guesthouse

47.Shammah Hotel

48.Macadai Guesthouse

49.Hacienda hotel

50. Lakers Inn.

51.Action palace

52. Miriam House Hotel.

53. Hillside Villa Hotel.

Source: https://Tourism Regulatory Authority.