# EFFECTIVENESS OF BILLBOARD ADVERTISING; A CASE OF SOFT DRINKS IN NAIROBI

BY

# JACQUELINE ANNE ACHIEN'G

D61/P/8149/2002

A MANAGEMENT RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTERS DEGREE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA) OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SEPTEMBER, 2009

#### **DECLARATION**

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university.

JACQUELINE A. ACHIEN'G:

D61/P/8149/2002

Sign: Date: 11/11/09

#### **SUPERVISOR:**

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor

DR. R. M. MUSYOKA

Date: 12/11/09

# **DEDICATION**

For my loving son Daryl Serwa You are the words in my life

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First, I would like to thank God for His guidance, protection and strength. I am also very grateful to the soft drink consumers and friends for providing me with invaluable input towards achieving the project goals.

I'm indebted to my supervisor; Dr. Raymond Musyoka for his guidance and supervision throughout the project; I just would not have gone this far without your help.

Very special thanks to Dr. Yabs, my project moderator who helped me with excellent input during the initial presentation.

Finally, thanks to my family for their patience and understanding throughout the study period.

God bless you all.

#### **ABSTRACT**

Billboards are defined broadly as any large outdoor printed (or projected) sign. Artists' Billboards have been a key medium or vehicle to explore and express the ideas and strategies behind the most important art movements over the last fifty years: conceptualism and dematerialization, temporality, appropriation and authorship issues, socio-political critique, institutional critique, direct political engagement (defending the voices of minorities like women, gays, blacks, different ethnicities, etc.), postmodern concerns about the difference between reality and representation, among many others (indooradvertising.org). Billboards are a vital means of communication especially in business. They therefore follow communication principles to ensure effectiveness.

Effective billboards must have a clear, concise message and attractive illustrations and visual appearance. They need to be as clutter-free as possible and easy to read. They only receive about 2-4 seconds of a customer's attention so the message needs to be easily digested. Assessing the value and effectiveness of billboard advertising is challenging. There are many methods of advertising which produce results that are easier to evaluate such as newspaper ads and direct mail campaigns. The difference with billboard advertising is that it is exposed to the masses but there is no real way to evaluate who really absorbs the message. Methodologies have been applied to evaluating effectiveness, but they are weak in demonstrating validity.

The research design employed in this study was descriptive survey research design. This method was preferred because it allows for generalization of the research findings.

From the findings of the research, it was found that soft drink companies on average utilized billboards for promotions. This was because they are attractive and could catch the customer's eye easily. On the same note it was found that the number of billboards was not sufficient especially in rural areas. Most of the promotions utilized were found to be media advertisements.

To enhance the effectiveness of billboards in promotion of soft drinks, the researcher recommended that companies must follow the 7 Cs of communication: Context, Content, Components, Cuts, Composition, Contrast and Consistency so as to come up with an effective message that will promote the product.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| DECLARATION   | ii  |
|---|-----|
| DEDICATION  | iii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS  |     |
| ABSTRACT  | v   |
| LIST OF TABLES  | i   |
| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION   | 1   |
| 1.1 Background  |     |
| 1.1.1 Billboard Advertising   |     |
| 1.1.2 Overview of Fast Moving Consumer Goods Sector in Kenya        |     |
| 1.2 Statement of the Problem  |     |
| 1.3 Objectives of the Study   |     |
| 1.4 Importance of the Study   |     |
| CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW                                      | 8   |
| 2.1 Introduction  |     |
| 2.2 Communication   |     |
| 2.3 Billboard Advertising   |     |
| 2.3 Types of Electronic Billboards                                  | 14  |
| 2.4 Characteristics of Billboards versus Other Media                |     |
| 2.4.1 Executional Factors Associated with the Success of Billboards | 15  |
| 2.5 Selective Perception and Clutter                                | 16  |
| CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY                                 | 18  |
| 3.1 Research Design   | 18  |
| 3.2 Target Population   | 18  |
| 3.3 Study Sample  | 18  |
| 3.4 Data collection   |     |
| 3.5 Data analysis   | 19  |
| CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION                      | 20  |
| CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND                  |     |
| RECOMMENDATIONS   | 28  |
| 5.1 Summary of findings   |     |
| 5.2 Conclusion  |     |
| 5.3 Recommendations   |     |
| REFERENCES  | 32  |
| APPENDICES  | 34  |
| Appendix I: Questionnaire for Soft drink Customers                  | 344 |

#### LIST OF TABLES

| Table 4.1:Respondent's Gender   | . 20 |
|---|------|
| Table 4.2:Respondent's Marital Status   | . 20 |
| Table 4 3:Respondent's Age  | . 21 |
| Table 4. 4: Respondent's Education level  | . 21 |
| Table 4.5: Respondent knowledge of the soft drink   | 212  |
| Table 4.6: Respondent knowledge of the soft drink   | 233  |
| Table 4.7: Extent to which billboards are effective as compared to other forms of promotions. | 244  |
| Table 4. 8: Number of billboards in respondents' area   | . 24 |
| Table 4.9: Presence of billboards of the soft drink of the respondents                        | . 24 |
| Table 4.10: If the billboard promotion has increased respondent's awareness of the drink      | . 25 |
| Table 4.11: Challenges respondents faced as consumers in billboard advertising                | . 25 |
| Table 4.12: Extent these challenges posed challenges to the respondents as consumers          | . 26 |
| Table 4.13: Recommendations   | . 26 |

#### **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

#### 1.1 Background

Communication can play an important role in the process by which an economic system guided by moral norms and responsive to the common good contributes to human development. It is a necessary part of the functioning of modern market economies, which today either exist or are emerging in many parts of the world and which provided they conform to moral standards based upon integral human development and the common good currently seem to be "the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs" of a socio-economic kind (Pinker, 1997).

In such a system, communication through advertising can be a useful tool for sustaining honest and ethically responsible competition that contributes to economic growth in the service of authentic human development. The Church looks with favor on the growth of man's productive capacity, and also on the ever widening network of relationships and exchanges between persons and social groups. From this point of view she encourages advertising, which can become a wholesome and efficacious instrument for reciprocal help among men (catholicmedianetwork.org). Advertising does this, among other ways, by informing people about the availability of rationally desirable new products and services and improvements in existing ones, helping them to make informed, prudent consumer decisions, contributing to efficiency and the lowering of prices, and stimulating economic progress through the expansion of business and trade. All of this can contribute to the creation of new jobs, higher incomes and a more decent and humane way of life for all. It also helps pay for publications, programming and productions including those of the Church that bring information, entertainment and inspiration to people around the world (Pearson, 1983).

#### 1.1.1 Billboard Advertising

Billboards are defined broadly as any large outdoor printed (or projected) sign. Artists' Billboards have been a key medium or vehicle to explore and express the ideas and strategies behind the most important art movements over the last fifty years: conceptualism and dematerialization, temporality, appropriation and authorship issues, socio-political critique, institutional critique, direct political engagement (defending the voices of

minorities like women, gays, blacks, different ethnicities, etc.), postmodern concerns about the difference between reality and representation, among many others (indooradvertising.org). Billboards are a vital means of communication especially in business. They therefore follow communication principles o ensure effectiveness.

Effective billboards must have a clear, concise message and attractive illustrations and visual appearance. They need to be as clutter-free as possible and easy to read. They only receive about 2-4 seconds of a customer's attention so the message needs to be easily digested. Assessing the value and effectiveness of billboard advertising is challenging. There are many methods of advertising which produce results that are easier to evaluate such as newspaper ads and direct mail campaigns. The difference with billboard advertising is that it is exposed to the masses but there is no real way to evaluate who really absorbs the message. Methodologies have been applied to evaluating effectiveness, but they are weak in demonstrating validity.

The advantages of using billboards are many and among them is potential placement of the advertisement close to the point of sale. This ensures high frequency of exposure to regular commuters. The aspect of 24-hour presence for billboards underpins their utility as a high reach tool of advertising. Geographic flexibility for local advertisers ensures economic efficiency in terms of low production costs and low cost per thousand exposures. Visual impacts from advertisement size and message creativity are very important in advertising and create high brand awareness. Billboards however have their disadvantages that range from the need to limit the number of words in the message to short exposure to the advertisement. Low demographic selectivity and measurement problems are also critical.

Specific combination of promotional methods such as print or broadcast advertising, direct marketing, personal selling, point of sale display, merchandising, etc., used for one product or a family of products. It is mainly comprised of four elements; advertising, sales promotions, personal selling and public relations.

- Advertising: Advertising is the no personal communication of information usually
  paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by
  identified sponsors through the various media. (Taflinger, 1996)
- Personal Selling: Personal selling is a process of developing relationships, discovering needs, matching products with needs, communicating benefits and its viewed as a process that adds value. (Manning and Reece, 1995)

- Promotion is a business marketing strategy designed to stimulate a customer to take
  action towards a buying decision. Promotional marketing is a technique that includes
  various incentives to buy such as contests, coupons and coupons. (Estil, 1998)
- Public Relations include promotional activities that work to create a strong public image of the company. Public relations activities include helping the public to understand the company and its products. Public relations if done right can reach a large audience without the expensive cost of traditional advertising and marketing. (Lake, 2003)

# 1.1.2 Overview of Fast Moving Consumer Goods Sector in Kenya

With a rapidly growing population, Kenya is a comparatively affluent market in East Africa and is likely to experience faster growth in the modern retail sector as the economy continues its upward trend. In fact, Kenya's modern grocery retail sales are forecast to more than double by the end of the 2008 trading period (Mue, 2007). This is facilitated by the government's continued effort to improve the country's business environment. Retail development has benefited from the fact that in recent years, the Kenyan government has made considerable headway in terms of making the business environment in Kenya more attractive for investors (worldbank.org, 2008). Domestic players such as Nakumatt are beginning to open stores in smaller towns outside the capital city Nairobi.

Although there are relatively few major grocery players operating in Kenya by Western standards. Nakumatt and Tuskys are leading the retail market. With its network of hypermarkets and supermarkets, Nakumatt operates a fairly groundbreaking strategy for the region because it was the first retailer in East and Central Africa to open its stores around the clock. Furthermore, over the next few years, the retailer has announced strategic and ambitious expansion plans with the intention of investing outside Kenya. The countries in consideration are neighboring Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda. The first store in Rwanda was planned to open its doors for shoppers in November 2008 (worldbank.org, 2008).

Nakumatt is the market leader operating hypermarkets and superstores. Tuskys, the second largest retailer in the country, operates supermarkets and has been able to seal any gaps left by Nakumatt. The retailer recently rebranded from Tusker Mattresses to Tuskys, a sign of the company's transformation from a family business to a corporate entity. Whilst Nakumatt and Tuskys are playing a leading role in Kenya's burgeoning retail market, Uchumi

Supermarkets, currently positioned in fourth place in Kenya, has had a history of financial problems. The company's problems are derived from general mismanagement and corruption issues. John Smith announced its closure in June 2006. The government moved in quickly, after an attempt by South African retailer Shoprite to acquire the chain, and drew up a rescue plan that saw Uchumi opening its doors again for customers under new management.

Apart from Uchumi, which closed and re-opened, other retailers have been forced to make a silent exit from Kenya. Skymart, for example, operated a supermarket chain in Nairobi and Mombasa and recently made a retreat after trading for less than a year. Skymart's failure was attributed to high levels of competition and the poor location of its stores. Meanwhile Metcash was also forced to make an exit in 2005. Local retailers have not been spared either. The family-run Nova supermarket chain was acquired by Naivasha Self Service (in fifth position in the ranking) and as a result of the acquisition, the stores have become more profitable (worldbank.org, 2008).

Even though the Kenyan economy is growing rapidly, retail development is likely to be restricted by the fact that around 50% of Kenyans still live on less than USD1 per day. This means that a large proportion of the Kenyan population still use the traditional channels as they still buy their food from market stalls and hawkers. Grocery chains therefore have to compete for those that can afford to shop in modern grocery outlets. Despite these restrictions, many of the domestic retailers are taking the opportunity to tap into any potential that the local market holds for them. Nakumatt is likely to continue its market leadership in Kenya and widen the gap between itself and other players. Nevertheless, we cannot rule out that it is likely many consumers might welcome the market entry of foreign players such as Shoprite and Massmart.

Recently, companies have spent a lot of money researching consumers eating habits and preferences. Statistics show that more people are dining out, and food producers are finding themselves devoting more attention to products designed for restaurants, vending machines, and other foodservice providers. Although this is bad news for grocery retailers, food makers realize food eaten away from home is still food they can provide, many times at higher margins.

Another trend in the industry has been the development of health foods, such as those containing less trans-fat or fewer calories, or those containing only organic ingredients. Bottled water has become well established in the market as many beverage companies, and enhanced waters containing vitamins or supplements are gaining popularity. Energy drinks, such as Red Bull, have also burst forth onto the scene. Rising costs have become an issue in the food and beverage industry, as the rising costs of petroleum cause a twofold increase in cost for companies in the food industry: costs have increased at the agriculture end, which increases raw materials costs for food processors who also deal with increased production and transportation costs at their end. Since the industry is so competitive, it is difficult for these companies to raise their prices accordingly and profit margins have suffered as a result.

Quality control and assurance are vital to this industry. Food safety programs have been adopted recently as issues of chemical and bacterial contamination and new food-borne pathogens remain a public health concern.

#### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Problem of the study will be to find out the effectiveness of billboard advertising. Communication is one of the basic functions of management in any organization. It is a process of transmitting information in and out of an organization. Good and effective for good and successful business. Effective communication is required at various levels and for various aspects in an organization such as advertising. Advertising is a necessary part of the modern market economies. In such a system, advertising is instrumental in informing people about the availability of rationally desirable new products and services and improvements in existing ones. This helps them to make informed, prudent consumer decisions, contributing to efficiency and expansion of business. To succeed in the long term, organizations must compete effectively and out-perform their rivals in a dynamic environment (Trethowan and Scullion, 1997). Advertising on a billboard can be an effective and money-saving way for many people and businesses to advertise their services or products. Compared to other means of advertising, billboards are cost-efficient (Trethowan and Scullion, 1997).

Billboards are typically found in high traffic areas such as alongside busy roads. Billboards present large advertisements to passing pedestrians and drivers. Typically showing large, ostensibly witty slogans, and distinctive visuals, billboards are highly visible in the top designated market areas. Bulletins are the largest, most influential standard-size billboards.

Located primarily on major highways, expressways or principal arterials, they command high-density consumer exposure (mostly to vehicular traffic). Bulletins afford greatest visibility due not only to their size, but because they allow creative "customizing" through extensions and embellishments. Posters are the other common form of billboard advertising, located chiefly in commercial and industrial areas on primary and secondary arterial roads. Posters are a smaller format than bulletins and are viewed principally by residents and commuter traffic, with some pedestrian exposure.

Previous research on billboards has not been concentrated on effectiveness of billboards in marketing FMCG products with special attention to soft drinks. For example Abdallah (2001) researched on an empirical investigation of the strategic marketing practices of the soft drink industry in Kenya, Mburu (2002) the impact of perceived quality on brand choice. The case of soft drinks, Nyang'au (2003) a survey of the nature of competition in the soft drink industry in Kenya and Waweru. (2003) A survey of the extent to which soft drinks advertising slogans influence brand preference. The researcher is not aware of any study that has focused on the effectiveness of billboards in marketing FMCG products with special attention to soft drinks. The proposed study is motivated by the need to fill this gap in knowledge.

# 1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to understand the effect of marketing on fast moving consumer goods with special attention to soft drinks.

The study has the following specific objectives.

- i. To determine the extent to which soft drink companies in Kenya utilize billboards for promotion.
- ii. To determine the effectiveness of billboards in marketing soft drinks in Kenya.
- iii. To determine the consumer interests in the use of billboards
- iv. To determine the challenges faced by the consumers.

# 1.4 Importance of the Study

The study is invaluable to the following:

Policy makers: The policy makers will obtain knowledge of the soft drink industry dynamics and the responses that are appropriate; they will therefore obtain guidance from this study in designing appropriate policies that will regulate the sector. The government is the key policy making institution and would be in a good position to utilize the findings of this study.

Soft drink companies: The management of the various soft drink companies will also find this study valuable as a source of information on what affect their market and the effect of billboards on their performance. This will help them in understanding the value of billboards on their overall performance hence act accordingly to improve their products and satisfy their customers.

Consumers: The consumers will find the study useful in understanding the importance of the billboards they find and to gather information on the soft drink products and others in the market. The overall actions generated by response to this study's findings are largely directed to the consumers. It is therefore important for consumers to be informed in making good choices

#### **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### 2.1 Introduction

Billboards are defined broadly as any large outdoor printed (or projected) sign. Artists' Billboards have been a key medium or vehicle to explore and express the ideas and strategies behind the most important art movements over the last fifty years: conceptualism and dematerialization, temporality, appropriation and authorship issues, socio-political critique, institutional critique, direct political engagement (defending the voices of minorities like women, gays, blacks, different ethnicities, etc.), postmodern concerns about the difference between reality and representation, among many others (indooradvertising.org). Billboards are a vital means of communication especially in business. They therefore follow communication principles to ensure effectiveness.

#### 2.2 Communication

Communication is based upon following seven principles. These are known as 7 C's of communication namely;

Context - Questions such as the following should be asked to inform appropriately when communicating. What's going on? Do you understand the situation? Is there a dead elephant in the middle of the room that you're not aware of? You'll need a clear goal before you begin to design any communication. Ask: who are you talking to and what do you want them to do? Also it is important that the message must have completed meaning that will provide the sufficient information to its reader. There must be proper consideration in the message and it should emphasize on you attitude rather than 'I' and 'we' kind of words.

Content - Based on your goal, define a single question that your communication is designed to answer. This is the best possible measure of communication effectiveness. What do you want your audience to walk away with and remember? Once you have defined your prime question, set out to answer it. What information is required? Do you have the answer already, or do you need to search it out? Message should be concrete as having all the meanings conveyed in it but should be shorter in length. The message conveyed must be checked for correctness and should be free from all grammatical errors. Another important feature is that the sender must be emphasizing on the courteous tone and must give some compliments and benefits to its readers.

Components - Before you build anything, break down your content into basic "building blocks" of content. Formulate the information into clusters and groups. What patterns emerge? How can you make the information more modular? Given your goal, what is the most fundamental unit of information? You can use index cards to break down information into modules.

Cuts - This is one of the hardest parts of the process and most often neglected. People's attention will quickly drift - they expect you to get to the point. It should be noted that the message should be concise in nature so that it will be easy to catch the readers' attention.

Composition - Now it's time to design the way you will tell your story. Think in terms of both written and visual composition. When writing; who are your main characters? How will you set up the scene? What are the goals and conflicts that will develop? How will the story reach resolution? In visual terms; where will the reader begin? How will you lead the eye around the page? In all your compositional thinking; how will you engage your audience? How will you keep them engaged?

Contrast - What are the differences that matter? Use contrast to highlight them: Big vs. little; rough vs. smooth; black vs. white. When making any point, ask, "in comparison with what?" Contrast is a trigger to the brain that says "pay attention!"

Consistency - Unless you're highlighting differences, keep things like color, fonts, spacing and type sizes consistent to avoid distracting people. Research shows that any extraneous information will detract from people's ability to assimilate and learn. It must give appropriate and explicit meaning that would not diversify and confuse the reader at any instance. This can be achieved by placing prominence and consequences with all the facts and figures.

#### 2.3 Billboard Advertising

A number of alternate 'channels' of distribution may be available. One of them is selling direct, such as with an outbound sales force or via mail order, Internet and telephone sales. There are agents, who typically sells direct on behalf of the producer. The distributors (also called wholesaler), who sells to retailers and retailers (also called dealer or reseller), who sells to end customers, are important stakeholders in distribution. Advertisement typically used for consumption goods can therefore be done through their premises.

There have also been some innovations in the distribution of services. For example, there has been an increase in franchising and in rental services - the latter offering anything from televisions through tools. There has also been some evidence of service integration, with services linking together, particularly in the travel and tourism sectors. For example, links now exist between airlines, hotels and car rental services. In addition, there has been a significant increase in retail outlets for the service sector. Outlets such as estate agencies and building society offices are crowding out traditional grocers from major shopping areas. Franchising is also in the soft drink industry for example with the Coca-Cola Company.

Not all Billboards are "Artists' Billboards," even if they have been created by artists. The difference between the two lies in the intention behind their use. Billboards are most commonly used for advertisement, political propaganda or pure decoration by the corporate industry or by governmental and political organizations. Although the effect and intention behind Artists' Billboards may contain some of the latter categories, (Laura Stewart, 1999) these find "cracks' in the monolith of these corporate or institutional cultures in which to insert dissent. Often disguising themselves in the trappings of advertising, (Artists' Billboards) are Trojan Horses, slipping into the built environment almost unnoticed, then springing their messages on us." By filling in the space expected to be reserved for advertising, the artist "infiltrates" the public space in an unexpected way, triggering a different kind of thought stream in the viewer than an Ad would, and generating a different kind of dialogue between the billboard and the viewer, regardless of its content. Peggy Diggs writes: "Billboard art often instigates a process, a questioning, or an argument about an issue or value that often goes unquestioned or unresolved in the public mind."

Secondly Artists' Billboards can take the form of roadside billboards, bus or subway billboards (or posters), bus stop shelter posters, etc. Some artists use parts of advertisement billboards to build paintings, collages or other art objects; that is the case, for example, of some of the followers of the art movement "Nouveau Réalisme" that flourished in France in the 1960s and 1970s, who literally "ripped off" public advertisements as a way of protesting against the "reality of commercialism" and reused them to create another "reality." We will not consider these artworks Artists' Billboards unless they are located outdoors in a public space as billboards, i.e., they are recreated as billboards again. Artists' Billboards may contain only text, only images, or a combination of both. They can be made in a variety of mediums (painting, drawing, printing, projection) with digital printing and projecting

technologies gaining predominance in the field. New technologies, particularly advances in fiber optics, have lead to new forms of expression (in both advertising and billboard art). Some are starting to resemble TV screens, with changing images, and new lighting technologies can even turn a whole building into a billboard (some examples of this were observed in Washington D.C. as part of "Fotoweek") for example, appeared on digital screens that stream advertisements on a constant loop.

By their very nature, Artists' Billboards are ephemeral and usually destroyed when taken down. In this respect they belong to the category of artistic expressions where the materiality of the art object is of lesser or no importance compared to the idea, concept, message or effect given to the viewer. In cases where billboards are repeated and placed in innumerable locations, a kind of "re-materialization" occurs, as happened with Victor Burgin's "Possession" described below. Apart from the duration of the billboard display, its location is key to determine viewing time. On the road, for example, the billboard is usually seen from a moving vehicle, so the experience for the viewer is different than that for stationary viewers, which become captive audiences for a while. The effect on the viewer also varies depending on whether there is visual competition (say, many other ad billboards in a busy urban environment) or not (for example, in a lonely road in the country side). In a bus, it is the image and not viewer that moves. Given this temporality, the billboard must capture the viewer's attention, sometimes in the time frame of a passing glance. For that reason, Artists' Billboards (same as ad billboards) have the characteristic of using reductive text and/or images to express expansive ideas. Therefore, the idea is prioritized over the process or object. This short time-frame to perceive the message also makes Billboard art suitable for questioning art's dependence on notions like authorial origins and institutional placement "The temporary art work... requires a comprehension of value based on ideas and content rather than on lasting forms, a flexibility of procedures for making and placing art, and a more inventive and attentive critical process (Phillips, 1992)

Some artists target audiences consciously and choose locations accordingly, others don't. The meaning of the piece can change dramatically depending upon location. Alfredo Jaar's Billboard, "A Logo for America" (1987), for example, was displayed in Times Square, NYC with no notorious public reaction, while it generated a great deal of controversy in Miami, given the local tensions between Hispanics and Anglo populations. Similarly, different time historic contexts can have different effects or generate different readings of the same



message. The "themes" developed by billboard artists vary considerably, and are basically the same themes that characterize art since the 1960s, mainly the issues explored by the Pop Art movement, conceptualists and neo-conceptualists and postmodernists after the 1980s; the majority of billboards made by artists address social issues. Given the fact that, "Billboards occupy a space defined by –and therefore as— advertising" they have become a fertile field for artists to explore the ways in which public space is constructed in relation to commercialism.

Since their appearance at the beginning of the last century, billboards have had detractors and champions. Court rulings have said they are "inartistic and unsightly" (1911), dismissed them as "visual pollution" (1975) and as late as 1981, the US Supreme Court concluded that billboards "by their very nature, wherever located and however constructed, can be an esthetic harm. There are billboard legislation and regulation based on aesthetic grounds. Mostly following the clean and "pristine" aesthetic of Modernism in architecture and design, many complained about the chaotic growth of commercial buildings and advertising, which has been defined as "visual contamination." In contrast, others like architect Robert Venturi, in a typical "postmodern" spirit, after visiting Las Vegas for the first time, argued for complexity and contradiction, ambiguity, multiple readings, the ironic convention, embracing the main street aesthetic; as Harriet Senie writes in "Learning from Las Vegas: The forgotten symbolism of Architectural Form," he has a section entitled "Billboards are almost right" Since these rulings have naturally hurt corporate interests, billboards have become a platform for testing conflicting notions of "the common good." Against this backdrop, a large group of artists, in the same fashion as the French "Situationists" and the "Nouveau Realistes" mentioned earlier, have critiqued the way capitalism has evolved in an age of mass media reproduction, and in particular the way public space has been controlled and structured to "facilitate the passive consumption of advertising and other imagery by a mass audience...undermining the burgeoning culture industry soon to be celebrated by certain Pop Artists." Following the ideas of Guy Debord and other French intellectuals, these artists have denounced the myths of social freedom and satisfaction promoted by advertising and entertainment, which create only "spectacles" which people perceive as reality, living the illusion of sharing values, the meaning of life, etc. Though this critique was particularly forceful in the 1970s, it still continues to vibrate. (Stern et al, 2006)

Also concerned with the cumulative effects of the invasion of commercial images, many artists have developed the issue using the strategies of Pop Art, that is to say, using the same language and images of advertising. Venturing into the site of advertising, they call the viewer to decode the messages and challenge the pre-coded assumptions associated with them. Like Andy Warhol, they do it in a subtle way, open to different interpretations. Some postmodern artists have, consciously or unconsciously, embraced commercialism and, not without a great deal of irony, have used the advertisement site to "sell" themselves or their work

Effective billboards must have a clear, concise message and attractive illustrations and visual appearance. They need to be as clutter-free as possible and easy to read. They only receive about 2-4 seconds of a customer's attention so the message needs to be easily digested. Assessing the value and effectiveness of billboard advertising is challenging. There are many methods of advertising which produce results that are easier to evaluate such as newspaper ads and direct mail campaigns. The difference with billboard advertising is that it is exposed to the masses but there is no real way to evaluate who really absorbs the message. Methodologies have been applied to evaluating effectiveness, but they are weak in demonstrating validity.

Billboards are not typically utilized by small companies to promote a particular product or service. Viewers don't have time to jot down a phone number or other information. That's why billboards are more often used by large companies promoting their brand and image. Major corporations such as insurance, beer, or soft drink companies have money to put into billboards to promote brand awareness. A picture is truly worth a thousand words on billboard advertising for this purpose. Rather than focus on the effectiveness of billboards as a single component of a company's marketing and promotional campaign, it is more important to see it as part of the entire campaign. The benefits of billboard advertising which cannot be specifically measured in dollars and cents include: Instilling brand recognition Emphasizing a specific image Keeping brand name in front of the masses Filtering to the subconscious for future recall when purchasing products Supporting revenue growth when combined with other advertising strategies Giving a "feel good" feeling about a product or service

Marketing campaigns deploy a variety of advertising tools focused on engaging new customers. They bombard the senses with information about the specific product and billboards are one tool in the toolkit. When billboard advertising is combined with proven strategies for revenue growth, they can enhance a company's market position and overall image thus contributing to the success of the marketing campaign. (Stern et al, 2006)

# 2.3 Types of Electronic Billboards

Technology has advanced sufficiently for billboards to provide dynamic and realistic views much like color television. The advanced EBB has the capability to present multiple views and objects that have realistic motion. In contrast, tri-vision signs provide one of three views with rotating cylinders and generate mechanical motion or movement. Since both the EBB and trivision sign incorporate components that display motion, some of the issues associated with EBBs are also associated with tri-vision signs. These two types will be compared in functional terms. An electronic billboard can be defined as a programmable display that has the capability to present a large amount of text and/or symbolic imagery. Some EBBs present images in realistic motion and in a large variety of colors. The tri-vision sign is defined as a display device capable of presenting three separate images sequentially by rotating triangular cylinders. The EBB consists of several visual characteristics. EBBs present high-resolution color images, complex visual arrangements, rich variation in color, and a vast amount of images. Operational characteristics include electric power and remote control though a computer terminal. The EBB screen display elements are typically arranged in a matrix. The shape of the EBB is usually rectangular, but irregular shapes are possible.

#### 2.4 Characteristics of Billboards versus Other Media

Textbook authors and academic researchers have identified a variety of distinctive characteristics of billboards and outdoor advertising (Taylor, 1997).

The advantages of using billboards are many and among them is potential placement of the advertisement close to the point of sale. This ensures high frequency of exposure to regular commuters. The aspect of 24-hour presence for billboards underpins their utility as a high reach tool of advertising. Geographic flexibility for local advertisers ensures economic efficiency in terms of low production costs and low cost per thousand exposures. Visual impacts from advertisement size and message creativity are very important in advertising and create high brand awareness. Billboards however have their disadvantages that range from the need to limit the number of words in the message to short exposure to the advertisement. Low demographic selectivity and measurement problems are also critical.

A recent study of billboard users found that compared with other media, billboards were rated higher in terms of ability to communicate information affordably, attract new customers, and increase sales (Taylor and Franke 2003). While many advantages of billboards have been identified anecdotally, from experience, or through academic study, there is a need to investigate whether frequently listed advantages overlap with each other, and to examine whether they truly are advantages that are important to billboard users.

#### 2.4.1 Executional Factors Associated with the Success of Billboards

Relatively few studies have attempted to examine executional factors associated with the effectiveness of billboard advertising. However, a few have provided very specific advice for outdoor advertisers. In examining the outcomes of outdoor advertising, some studies found that a novel or very creative execution could improve recall or attention to billboards (Fitts and Hewett 1977; Hewett 1975). Thus, use of a clever creative execution is one factor that has been hypothesized to correlate with effective outdoor advertising. In a content analysis of billboards, Blasko (1985) examined whether advertisers were following accepted creative principles associated with outdoor advertising.

Drawing on Burton's Advertising Copywriting (1983) and the Traffic Audit Bureau's Planning for Out-of-Home Media (1977), Blasko highlighted five main principles of effective billboard advertising. One of them is a short copy (eight or fewer words in copy). Simple background is important to bring out the advertisement more clearly. Product identification (billboard clearly identifies product or advertiser) is one of the key goals of advertising. Simple message (single message communicated) and creativity (use of clever phrases and/or illustrations) are important in effective billboard advertising.

Studies conducted by Donthu, Cherian, and Bhargava (1993) and Bhargava, Donthu, and Caron (1994) found recall of billboards to be positively related to a variety of factors, including brand differentiation, emphasis on product performance, inclusion of price, use of a photograph, use of humor, use of color, and a good location for the billboard. The 1993 study emphasized that advertising recall can be enhanced by using fewer words or unusual executions. As with the key advantages of outdoor advertising, there have been many discussions of strategic and executional factors related to the success of billboards, but little systematic investigation of the underlying factors that drive successful billboard advertising.

Below, is some insight through two theoretical perspectives on the promotional role of billboards.

Two theoretical perspectives are used as a basis for hypotheses in this study. First, because humans have limited information-processing capacity, part of the attraction of billboards involves their ability to cut through clutter. To deal with the large volume of advertisements shown, people engage in selective perception, which involves screening out advertisements that are less relevant to them (Celsi and Olson 1988; Mowen and Minor 1998). Second, because a billboard appears at a specific location, many of its advantages are linked to geographic factors. As is suggested by gravity models in retailing (e.g., Allaway, Berkowitz, and D'Souza 2003; Bell, Ho, and Tang 1998), in the absence of a compelling stimulus such as substantially larger floor space for selling, consumers are more prone to shop closer to home.

# 2.5 Selective Perception and Clutter

A key obstacle to advertising effectiveness is the volume of advertising to which consumers are exposed. Godin (1999) reports that: an average consumer is exposed to approximately one million marketing messages every year. To help manage this volume of information, consumers control their own information processing and engage in selective perception, which leads to processing only a limited number of advertisements and ignoring many others. Selective perception has been conceptualized as a four-part process consisting of selective exposure, attention, comprehension and retention.

In an advertising context, selective exposure refers to people limiting the communications they see and hear to those that conform to their preexisting ideas and attitudes (Burgoon, Hunsaker, and Dawson 1994). Selective attention refers to actually paying attention to the advertisement once exposed to it. Selective comprehension involves the process by which the consumer reconciles the advertisement's content with preexisting beliefs. Finally, selective retention is defined as remembering messages that are more consistent with one's prior beliefs and one's own self-image. When related to advertising, these four stages generally must occur before the advertisement reaches the consumer. At a minimum, attention and retention must take place (Assael 1981). As a result, advertisers must consider how selective perception is affecting their ability to get a message through to consumers.

Due to the heavy volume of advertising to which consumers are exposed, they must decide which advertisements to screen out and which to process. As media-planning expert Erwin Ephron has observed, outdoor advertising is unique in that people are not involved in the medium as they would be when watching a television program or reading the newspaper. As a result, Ephron (2004) has described outdoor advertising as a unique case in which the "medium is the message." When driving by a billboard, a motorist is not bombarded with other media options, so selective perception is not as much of an obstacle as in some other media. Although the short exposure time and lack of involvement in the medium mandate that higher frequency of exposure is necessary for billboards to have the same impact as other media.

# **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### 3.1 Research Design

The research design employed in this study was descriptive survey research design. This method was preferred because it allows for generalization of the research findings. The study sought to investigate the effectiveness of billboards in marketing FMCG products with special attention to Soft Drinks in Kenya. It described what, how and why something is happening. The researcher was expected to define clearly what he/she wanted to measure and must find adequate methods for measuring it. This also involved having a clear definition of the population that was under study.

# 3.2 Target Population

The target population of study comprised of the consumers, both male and female living in South B and South C estates along Mombasa road. This is because Mombasa road being the home of many billboards including the only electronic bill board in East Africa. Mombasa road being a busy highway is considered a strategic site by advertisers. The estates included in the study included Plainsview, Bellevue, Akiba, Kenya –Re, Golden gate, Akila and five star estates for proximity. (See appendix: 1).

## 3.3 Study Sample

The sampling technique that was used was simple random method since it gives a chance of selection to every soft drink company. The sample size constituted of consumers aged 14 years and above who can make rational informed decision when doing purchasing. Their education level was at least form one. Sample size comprised of 150 respondents.

## 3.4 Data Collection

The researcher used primary data. Data was collected through questionnaires that were administered to consumers who take soft drinks. The researcher used close ended questionnaires to help her collect data. Target households were houses with even gate numbers within the estates selected. The questionnaire comprised of two sections. Section one focused on the extent of billboard utilization and its effectiveness while section two focused on the challenges that the consumers face with regards to bill boards and the possible recommendations.

# 3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis method took on both descriptive statistics. The structured questionnaires were coded in respect to questions for ease of electronic data processing prior to the commencement of the fieldwork. After tabulation, the data was coded to facilitate statistical analysis. On the quantitative data obtained, SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) package was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics such as means, percentages, standard deviation and frequency distribution were used to enable the researcher to meaningfully describe the distribution of measurement

# CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the analysis of the data collected from the respondents and its interpretation. The researcher intended to find out the effect of billboard advertising on soft drink. About 70% of the target population responded.

Table 4.1:Respondent's Gender

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Male     | 60        | 57.1    |
| Female   | 45        | 42.9    |
| Total    | 105       | 100.0   |

Table 4.1.shows the gender of the respondents, 57% were male while 43% were female. Majority of the respondents were therefore male which could be because male gender has got soft drink intake.

**Table 4.2: Respondent's Marital Status** 

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Single   | 61        | 58.1    |
| Married  | 44        | 41.9    |
| Total    | 105       | 100.0   |

From Table 4.2, 58.1% of the respondents were single while 41.9 were married. Therefore majority of them were single could be because they are more influenced by the promotions of soft drinks.

Table 43: Respondent's Age

| Variable       | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|
| 14-25          | 51        | 48.6    |
| 26-37          | 33        | 31.4    |
| 38-49          | 11        | 10.5    |
| 50-61          | 6         | 5.7     |
| Above 58 years | 4         | 3.8     |
| Total          | 105       | 100.0   |

From Table 4.3, 48.6% of the respondents were aged 14-25, 31.4% were in the bracket of 26-37, 10.5% of them were between 38-49, 5.7% were aged 50-61 while only 3.8% were above 58 years. Therefore the least respondents were aged above 58 years which could be due to the reason that they are aged.

Table 4. 4: Respondent's Education level

| Variable        | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|
| Post Graduate   | 7         | 6.7     |
| Graduate        | 33        | 31.4    |
| Undergraduate   | 38        | 36.2    |
| Diploma/College | 18        | 17.1    |
| Ordinary Level  | 9         | 8.6     |
| Total           | 105       | 100.0   |

Table 4.4 shows respondent's education level, 36.2% had undergraduate level, 31.4% were graduates, 17.1% had diploma/ college level while 8.6% and 6.7% had ordinary and postgraduate levels respectively. Majority of the respondents therefore were undergraduates. This could be because these are young and are more likely to take soft drinks more often.

Table 4.5: Respondent knowledge of the soft drink

| Variable            | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|
| Media Advertisement | 45        | 42.9    |
| Posters             | 29        | 27.6    |
| Friends             | 14        | 13.3    |
| Billboards          | 17        | 16.2    |
| Total               | 105       | 100.0   |

Table 4.5 shows the sources of knowledge for the customers' soft drink, 42.9% of them got knowledge of the soft drink from media advertisements, 27.6% from posters, 16.2% from billboards and 13.3% from friends. Therefore majority of them got knowledge from media advertisements. This could be because media advertisements are more popular in advertisements.

Table 4.6: Respondent knowledge of the soft drink

| Variable/Factor                          | No extent | Less Extent | Moderate extent | Large extent | Very Large extent | Mean |     | Std. Dev. |
|--|-----------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|------|-----|-----------|
| Good Customer Care                       | 46        | 32          | 18              | 7            | 2                 | 1.9  | 1.0 |           |
| Good promotions like billboard promotion | 2         | 1           | 29              | 57           | 16                | 3.8  | 0.8 |           |
| Its affordable/ Price                    | 4         | 13          | 40              | 17           | 31                | 3.6  | 1.1 |           |
| Quality/ Taste                           | 0         | 5           | 19              | 35           | 46                | 4.2  | 0.9 |           |
| Easily found                             | 4         | 6           | 25              | 42           | 28                | 3.8  | 1.0 |           |

Respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with various issues which made them loyal to the soft drink. A five likert scale was used to analyze the results. The mean was used to indicate the extent of agreement while the standard deviation was used to indicate the variations in the results. Means that were less than 3.0 were considered to have been disagreed on to a very great extent. From table 4.6 good customer care was considered to have been greatly disagreed on with a mean of 1.9, affordability/price was agreed on to a less extent with a mean of 3.6, good promotion like billboards and easily found were agreed on to moderate extent while with means of 3.8 while quality/ taste was considered to have been agreed on to a large extent. Therefore majority agreed that quality/taste made them loyal to their soft drinks. This could be due to the sensitivity of the drink to respondents' health.

Table 4.7: Extent to which billboards are effective as compared to other forms of promotions.

|   | Frequency | Percent  |
|---|-----------|----------|
|   | 49        | 46.7     |
|   | 41        | 39.0     |
|   | 15        | 14.3     |
| × | 105       | 100.0    |
|   | 8         | 49 41 15 |

From Table 4.7, 46.7% said that billboards were effective to a large extent, 39% said they were moderately effective while 14.3% said they were effective to a low extent. Therefore majority said that billboards were effective to a large extent as compared to other forms of promotions.

Table 4. 8: Number of billboards in respondents' area

| Variable    | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------|-----------|---------|
| None        | 14        | 13.3    |
| One- two    | 26        | 24.8    |
| Three- five | 65        | 61.9    |
| Total       | 105       | 100.0   |

From Table 4.8, 61.9% of the respondents said they had three to five billboards in their area, 24.8% said they had one or two 13.3% had no billboards in their areas. Majority of them had 3-5 billboards in their areas

Table 4.9: Presence of billboards of the soft drink of the respondents

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Yes      | 82        | 78.1    |
| No       | 23        | 21.9    |
| Total    | 105       | 100.0   |

From table 4.9, 78.1% of the respondents said there were billboards of the soft drink they took, while 21.9% said that there were no bill boards. Therefore majority of the respondents said there were billboards of the soft drink they took in their area.

Table 4.10: If the billboard promotion has increased respondent's awareness of the drink

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Yes      | 77        | 73.3    |
| No       | 28        | 26.7    |
| Total    | 105       | 100.0   |

Table 4.10 shows if the billboard promotion has increased respondent's awareness of the drink, 74.3% said that the billboards increased their awareness while 25.7% said that they did not increase their drink awareness. Majority said that the billboard increased their awareness of the drink. This could be due to the attractiveness of the billboards.

Table 4.11: Challenges respondents faced as consumers in billboard advertising

| Variable                                | Frequency | Percent |  |  |
|---|-----------|---------|--|--|
| Disabilities like blindness             | 5         | 4.8     |  |  |
| Not conveying the message               | 31        | 29.5    |  |  |
| Accessibility especially in rural areas | 25        | 23.8    |  |  |
| Being for a short duration of time      | 44        | 41.9    |  |  |
| Total                                   | 105       | 100.0   |  |  |

From the responses shown on Table 4.11 respondents faced various challenges as consumers. About 49.1% were faced with the problem of the advertisement being for a short period of time, 29.5% said the message was not conveyed through the billboards, 23.8% faced the problem of accessibility especially in rural areas while 4.8% were faced with the challenges of blindness. Therefore many challenges were faced by the consumers.

Table 4.12: Extent these challenges posed challenges to the respondents as consumers

| Variable/ Factor                        | Least extent | Low extent | Moderate extent | Large extent | Very Large<br>extent | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|--------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------|------|-----------|
| Disabilities like blindness             | 44           | 35         | 17              | 3            | 2                    | 1.6  | 1.1       |
| Not conveying the message               | 5            | 14         | 18              | 52           | 16                   | 3.1  | 1.5       |
| Accessibility especially in rural areas | 7            | 41         | 20              | 33           | 4                    | 2.5  | 1.4       |
| Being for a short duration of time      | 14           | 45         | 9               | 28           | 9                    | 2.4  | 1.5       |

The researcher wanted to know to what extent these challenges posed challenges to the respondents as consumers. The responses from the respondents were analyzed by use of a likert scale of the scale of five. From the table 4.12 means greater than 2.0 were considered to have a very large extent challenge to the consumers. This included not conveying the message with a mean of 3.1, others posed challenges to a large extent which included accessibility especially in rural areas and being a short period of time. Disability like blindness posed challenges to a low extent with a mean of 1.9.

Table 4.13: Recommendations

| Variable/ Factor   | Least extent | Low extent | Moderate extent | Large extent | Very large extent | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|--|--------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|------|-----------|
| Attractive billboards  | 5            | 8          | 17              | 25_          | 44                | 3.3  | 1.8       |
| Create consumer awareness  | 4            | 22         | 37              | 33           | 9                 | 2.8  | 1.4       |
| Place the billboards strategically                               | 4            | 8          | 32              | 41           | 20                | 3.2  | 1.5       |
| Have a variety of billboards                                     | 3            | 41         | 30              | 19           | 12                | 2.6  | 1.4       |
| Lengthen the billboard duration                                  | 23           | 31         | 7               | 38           | 6                 | 2.4  | 1.5       |
| Invest more on billboard kind of promotion in relation to others | 9            | 16         | 29              | 33           | 18                | 2.9  | 1.6       |

Respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with various recommendations. These recommendations included: Attractive billboards, Create consumer awareness, Place the billboards strategically, Have a variety of billboards, and lengthen the billboard duration and Invest more on billboard kind of promotion in relation to other kinds. A five likert scale was used to analyze the results from the respondents. From the table 4.13 recommendations with means less than 3.0 were considered to have been agreed on to a very large extent. Such included Lengthen the billboard duration, Have a variety of billboards, Create consumer awareness and Invest more on billboard kind of promotion in relation to other kinds with means of 2.4,2.6,2.8 and 2.9 respectively. Others were agreed on to moderately large extent with means greater than 3.0. These were place the billboards strategically and attractive billboards with means of 3.2 and 3.3 respectively. Therefore the recommendations all seemed important in improving billboard promotions.

# CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

# 5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The respondents' demographic information is that on the gender of the respondents, 57% were male while 43% were female. Majority of the respondents were therefore male which could be because male gender has got more soft drink intake than the female gender. On the marital status; 58.1% of the respondents were single while 41.9 were married. Therefore majority of them were single could be because they are more influenced by the promotions of soft drinks. About the age; 48.6% were aged 14-25, 31.4% were 26-37, 10.5% of them were 38-49, and 5.7% were aged 50-61 while only 3.8% were above 58 years. Therefore the least respondents were aged above 58 years which could be due to the reason that they are aged because they have less preference to the soft drinks.

The extent to which soft drink companies in Kenya utilize billboards for promotion the respondents agreed or disagreed with various issues which made them loyal to the soft drink. Good customer care was considered to have been greatly disagreed on with a mean of 1.9, affordability/price was agreed on to a less extent with a mean of 3.6, good promotion like billboards and easily found were agreed on to moderate extent while with means of 3.8 while quality/ taste was considered to have been agreed on to a large extent. The number of billboards in respondent's areas, 42.9% of the respondents said they had three to five billboards in their area, 31.4% said they had above five while 17.1% had one to two and 8.6% had no billboards in their areas.

On the effectiveness of billboards in marketing soft drinks in Kenya, 46.7% said that billboards were effective to a large extent, 39% said they were moderately effective while 14.3% said they were effective to a low extent. On whether there were billboards of the soft drinks, 78.1% of the respondents said there were billboards of the soft drink they took, while 21.9% said that there were no bill boards also concerning increased awareness of the soft drink.

On the consumer interests in the use of billboards the respondents said that attractive billboards create consumer awareness, the billboards should be strategically placed, there should be a variety of billboards, lengthen the billboard duration and invest more on billboard kind of promotion in relation to other kinds. A five likert scale was used to analyze

the results from the respondents. Recommendations with means less than 3.0 were considered to have been agreed on to a very large extent. Such included Lengthen the billboard duration, Have a variety of billboards, Create consumer awareness and Invest more on billboard kind of promotion in relation to other kinds with means of 2.4,2.6,2.8 and 2.9 respectively. Others were agreed on to moderately large extent with means greater than 3.0. These were place the billboards strategically and attractive billboards with means of 3.2 and 3.3 respectively.

Respondents were also asked what challenges they faced as consumers in billboard advertising, respondents faced various challenges as consumers. About 49.1% were faced with the problem of the advertisement being for a short period of time, 29.5% said the message was not conveyed through the billboards, 23.8% faced the problem of accessibility especially in rural areas while 4.8% were faced with the challenges of blindness. The researcher wanted to know to what extent these challenges posed challenges to the respondents as consumers. The responses from the respondents were analyzed by use of a likert scale of the scale of five. Means greater than 2.0 were considered to have a very large extent challenge to the consumers. This included not conveying the message with a mean of 3.1, others posed challenges to a large extent which included accessibility especially in rural areas and being a short period of time. Disability like blindness posed challenges to a low extent with a mean of 1.9.

#### **5.2 CONCLUSION**

The researcher's objectives were: To determine the extent to which soft drink companies in Kenya utilize billboards for promotion, to determine the effectiveness of billboards in marketing soft drinks in Kenya, to determine the consumer interests in the use of billboards and to determine the challenges faced by the consumers.

From the findings of the research, it was found that soft drink companies on average utilized billboards for promotions. This was because they are attractive and could catch the customer's eye easily. A recent study of billboard users found that compared with other media, billboards were rated higher in terms of ability to communicate information affordably, attract new customers, and increase sales (Taylor and Franke 2003). Most of the promotions utilized were found to be media advertisements. Effective billboards must have a clear, concise message and attractive illustrations and visual appearance. They need to be as clutter-free as possible and easy to read so as to attract customers which the

Billboards were found to be less effective in marketing soft drinks due to several challenges involved which included: disability like blindness, billboards not conveying the message or message not being understood by the customers. Inaccessibility especially in rural areas was also a challenge as well as the message being aired for a short period of time. Since their appearance at the beginning of the last century, billboards have had detractors and champions. Court rulings have said they are "inartistic and unsightly" (1911), dismissed them as "visual pollution" (1975) and as late as 1981, the US Supreme Court concluded that billboards "by their very nature, wherever located and however constructed, can be an esthetic harm. There are billboard legislation and regulation based on aesthetic grounds. Mostly following the clean and "pristine" aesthetic of Modernism in architecture and design, many complained about the chaotic growth of commercial buildings and advertising, which has been defined as "visual contamination." With this challenge the soft drink companies need to re evaluate the method or the strategies of billboard advertising to make it more effective.

Consumers were found to have moderate interest on billboards because to some they increased their awareness of the soft drink. Others did not have interest in billboards because they did not increase their awareness.

On challenges faced by the consumers it was found that consumers were faced with many challenges some of which included: billboard not conveying the message, inaccessibility especially in rural areas, being aired for a short period of time. Accordingly consumers recommended such recommendations as: billboards be made more attractive, lengthen airing duration and message to be clear and concise.

The researcher therefore concluded that billboards can be effective if well administered in a clear and concise message and also conveniently located for consumers to view. Following the ideas of Guy Debord and other French intellectuals, effective billboards must have a clear, concise message and attractive illustrations and visual appearance. They need to be as clutter-free as possible and easy to read. They only receive about 2-4 seconds of a customer's attention so the message needs to be easily digested. Therefore billboards advertising can have a great effect on the product.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to the policy makers are that they should enhance the effectiveness of billboards in promotion of soft drinks, the policy makers should recommend that the companies must follow the 7 Cs of communication: Context, Content, Components, Cuts, Composition, Contrast and Consistency so as to come up with an effective message that will promote the product. This will work upon the challenges faced by the consumers as outlined earlier: disability like blindness, billboards not conveying the message or message not being understood by the customers and inaccessibility especially in rural areas.

The researcher also recommended that the soft drink companies should focus more on billboard promotions for effectiveness as they focus on other forms such as the media. This will help in enhancing billboards as a form of promotion of products of the soft drinks. This will include increasing the number of billboards and also extending the promotion evenly to all areas.

Finally the researcher recommended to the consumer that the use billboards should be viewed as a means of promotion due to its advantages: among them is potential placement of the advertisement close to the point of sale. Also the aspect of 24-hour presence for billboards underpins their utility as a high reach tool of advertising. Finally, visual impacts from advertisement size and message creativity are very important in advertising and create high brand awareness.

#### REFERENCES

- Abdallah H. K., (2001) An empirical investigation of the strategic marketing practices of the soft drink industry in Kenya. Unpublished research project UON.
- Barbara Kruger (2008), Plenty should be enough. Deutsche Bank Artmag
- Billboard Retrospective" in Billboard Art on the Road, Mass MoCA Publications-MIT Press, 1999, pp. 48-66. [See also: Jaar, Alfredo, A Logo for America.] Bryan-Wilson, 2008.
- Bryan-Wilson, Julia. (2008) "Signs and Symbols (On Billboard Projects in Los Angeles)", Art Forum, October, 2008.
- Diggs, Peggy (1999) "Causing Conversations, Taking Positions", Billboard Art on the Road, Mass MoCA Publications-MIT Press, 1999, p. 33.
- G. Lancaster and L. Massingham, 'Essentials of Marketing' (McGraw-Hill, 1988)
- Hopkins, David (2000) After Modern Art 1945-2000, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 179-183.
- Jim Estil, (1998) Evaluating different methods of promotion in marketing. Helium Inc 2009 Accessed at http://www.helium.com/items/73027-evaluating-different-methods-of-promotion-in-marketing on August 2009.
- Julian Dent, "Distribution Channels: Understanding and Managing Channels to Market" (Kogan Page, 2008)
- Kotler P., Keller (2006) 'Marketing Management', London: Prentice-Hall.
- Laura Lake, (2003) Public Relations About.com Guide to Marketing since 2003
- Littlejohn, S.W. and Foss, K.A. (2008). *Theories of human communication*, 9th edition. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth
- Louis W. Stern et al, (2006) 'Marketing Channels', (Prentice-Hall, 7th ed., 2006)
- Manning, G.L., and Reece, B.L. (1998). Selling today: Building quality partnerships. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Mburu Robert, (2002) The impact of perceived quality on brand choice. The case of soft drinks. Unpublished research project UON.

- Nyang'au D.O. (2003) A survey of the nature of competition in the soft drink industry in Kenya. Unpublished research project UON.
- Pearson, J. (1983). *Interpersonal Communication*. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foreman and Company.
- Phillips, Patricia C.(1992) "Temporality and Public Art", Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context and Controversy, Harriet F. Senie and Sally Webster, eds.), New York, 1992, pp. 298-299. [Citation from Laura Steward Heon, p. 10.]
- Pinker, Steven (1997). How the Mind Works. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Richard E. Wilson, 'A Blueprint for Designing Marketing Channels', (www.chicagostrategy.com, 2008)
- Senie, Harriet. "Disturbances in the Field of Mammon: Towards a History of Artists' Billboards", Billboard Art on the Road, Mass MoCA Publications-MIT Press, 1999, pp. 14-31.
- Steward Heon, Laura, Peggy Diggs and Lisa Dorin, eds. "Billboard Retrospective" in Billboard Art on the Road, Mass MoCA Publications-MIT Press, 1999, pp. 48-66
- Taylor (1997), Use and Effectiveness of Billboards: Perspectives from Selective-Perception Theory and Retail-Gravity Models, Journal of Advertising, Vol 35,
- Taylor, C.R., Franke, G.R. (2003), "Business perceptions of billboards in the US economy", *Journal of Advertising Research*, No.June, pp.150-61
- Trethowan, J., Scullion, G (1997), "Strategic responses to change in retail banking in the UK and the Irish Republic", *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, Vol. 15 No.2, pp.60-8
- Waweru S.M (2003) A survey of the extent to which soft drinks advertising slogans influence brand preference. Unpublished research project UON.
- William D. Perreault, Jr. et al, 'Basic Marketing: A Marketing Strategy Planning Approach', (McGraw-Hill, 16th ed., 2008)
- www.beverage-digest.com retrieved on April 10, 2009.
- www.pepsico.com or www.cocacola.com/co retrieved on April 10, 2009.

## **APPENDICES**

# Appendix I: Questionnaire for Soft drink Customers

| 1. Gender                   |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Male                        | []  |
| Female                      | []  |
| 2. Marital Status           |     |
| Single                      | [ ] |
| Married                     | 1.1 |
| 3. Age                      |     |
| 14-25                       | [ ] |
| 26-37                       | [ ] |
| 38-49                       | [ ] |
| 50-61                       | [ ] |
| Above 58                    | [ ] |
| 4. Education Level          |     |
| Post graduate               | 1.1 |
| Graduate                    | [ ] |
| Under graduate              | 1.1 |
| Diploma/College Certificate | [ ] |
| Ordinary Level              | [ ] |
| Other (Specify)             |     |

| 0    | . •  | -   |
|------|------|-----|
| ADC: | tion | - 1 |
| JUL  | шчи  |     |

| 5. | What soft drink do you tak         | e?                                      | ************* |       |       |      |           |               |
|----|------------------------------------|---|---------------|-------|-------|------|-----------|---------------|
| 6. | Does the company that advertising? | manufacture                             | the soft      | drink | you   | take | use       | billboard     |
|    | Yes                                | []                                      |               |       |       |      |           |               |
|    | No                                 | []                                      |               |       |       |      |           |               |
| 7. | How did you come to know           | v the soft drink                        | that you t    | ake?  |       |      |           |               |
|    | Media advertisement                | [ ]                                     |               |       |       |      |           |               |
|    | Posters                            | []                                      |               |       |       |      |           |               |
|    | Friends                            | [ ]                                     |               |       |       |      |           |               |
|    | Billboards                         | []                                      |               |       |       |      |           |               |
|    | Any other (please specify)         |   |               |       |       |      | • • • • • | • • • • • • • |
|    |                                    | *************************************** |               | ••••• | ••••• |      |           | •••••         |
|    |                                    |   |               |       | .1    |      |           |               |

8. What has made you loyal to that soft drink? Please indicate the extent

|  | No extent | Less Extent | Moderate Extent | Large Extent | Very Large Extent |
|--|-----------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Good Customer Care                       |           |             |                 |              |                   |
| Good promotions like billboard promotion |           |             |                 |              |                   |
| Its affordable/ Price                    |           |             |                 |              |                   |
| Quality/ Taste                           |           |             |                 |              |                   |
| Easily found                             |           |             |                 |              |                   |

| 9. To what extent is billboard promotion     | on effective in relation to the other forms of |
|--|--|
| promotions?                                  |  |
| Large Extent [                               | . 1  |
| Moderate Extent                              | . 1  |
| Low Extent                                   | [ ]  |
| 10. How many billboard advertising do ye     | ou have in your area?                          |
| None   | []   |
| 1-2  | []   |
| 3-4  | []   |
| More than 5                                  | []   |
| 11. Is there a billboard of the soft drink t | hat you take around your area?                 |
| Yes  | []   |
| No   | []   |
| 12. Has the billboard promotion increas      | ed your awareness on the soft drink?           |
| Yes  | []   |
| No   | []   |
| Section 2:                                   |  |
| 13. What challenges do you face as a c       | onsumer in billboard advertising?              |
| Disabilities like blindness                  | []   |
| Not conveying the message                    | []   |
| Accessibility especially in the rura         | l areas [ ]                                    |
| Being for a short duration of time           | []   |

| 14. To what extent do the above factors                         | pose as | s a chai  | lenge              | to you a | is a cons             | ullici : |                   |
|---|---------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Key:  |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 1. Least extent   |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 2. Low extent   |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 3. Large extent   |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 4. Moderately large extent                                      |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 5. Very large extent  |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
|   |         |           |                    |          |                       | 7        |                   |
| Challenges  | 1       | 2         | 3                  | 4        | 5                     |          |                   |
| Disabilities like blindness                                     |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| Not conveying the message                                       |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| Accessibility especially in the rural areas                     |         |           |                    | -        |                       | -        |                   |
| Being for a short duration of time                              |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 15. What should be done to enhan company? Kindly mark the exten | nce be  | etter bil | llboard<br>u agree | promo    | otion for<br>ne recom | the so   | oft drii<br>ions. |
| Key:  |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 6. Least extent   |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 7. Low extent   |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 8. Large extent   |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 9. Moderately large extent                                      |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |
| 10. Very large extent   |         |           |                    |          |                       |          |                   |

| Recommendation   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attractive billboards  |   | - |   |   | - |
| Create consumer awareness                                      | _ | - | _ | - | - |
| Place the billboards strategically                             | _ |   | - | - | _ |
| Have a variety of billboards                                   |   | - | - |   |   |
| Lengthen the billboard duration                                |   |   | - |   |   |
| Invest more on billboard kind of promotion in relation to othe | r |   |   |   |   |
| kinds  |   |   |   |   |   |

| Any other recommendation (please specify) |  |
|---|--|
| ***************************************   |  |

THANK YOU

## Appendix II: List of the Soft Drink Companies in Kenya includes:

### Anspar Beverages Ltd

Soft Drinks Airport North Rd P. O. Box 13410 - 00800 Westlands Nairobi. Tel: (20) - 824048 Fax: (20) - 824230

Coastal Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Taib Abdel Nasser Rd P. O. Box 83154 - 80100 Mombasa. Tel: (41) - 2230600 Fax: (41) - 2229012

Coca-Cola Bottling Co of Nairobi Ltd Soft Drinks Airport North Rd Embakasi P. O. Box 18034 - 00500 Enterprise Rd Nairobi. Tel: (20) - 6998000 Fax: (20) - 6998014 Mobile: 733600174

Coca-Cola East Africa & Islands Regional Office Soft Drinks Old Mutual Bldg 1st & 4th Flr,Ragati Rd/Mara Rd P. O. Box 30134 - 00100 GPO Nairobi. Tel: (20) - 2712271 Fax: (20) - 2715647

East Kenya Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Machakos Rd P. O. Box 178 - 90139 Ekalakala. Tel: (44) - 21630 Fax: (44) - 21172

Equator Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Ang'awa Ave P. O. Box 780 - 40100 Kisumu. Tel: (57) - 2020540 Fax: (57) - 2021964 Mobile: 734651595

Executive Global Co Ltd Soft Drinks Odeon Cinema Bldg Gr P. O. Box 56762 - 00200 City Square Nairobi. Tel: (20) - 343637

Flamingo Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Nakuru/Nairobi Rd P. O. Box 2762 - 20100 Nakuru. Tel: (51) - 850064 Fax: (51) - 2211201

Kawsar Distributors Ltd Soft Drinks Dedan Kimathi Rd P. O. Box 85365 - 80100 Mombasa. Tel: (41) - 2220433 Fax: (41) - 2316345

Kisii Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Kisii/Keroka Rd P. O. Box 3456 - 40200 Kisii. Tel: (58) - 32011 Fax: (58) - 31825

Metro Bottling Co Soft Drinks Ol Kalou Rd P. O. Box 78377 - Nairobi. Tel: (20) - 559275

Mt Kenya Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Wang'ombe Waihura Rd Kingongo Area P. O. Box 623 - 10100 Nyeri. Tel: (61) - 2030634 Fax: (61) - 2032953

Mvita Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Taveta Rd P. O. Box 90224

Nairobi Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Opp Kimathi Estate P. O. Box 18034 - 01000 Thika. Tel: (67) - 21730

Pepsi-Cola (E A) Ltd Soft Drinks Lonrho Hse 10th Flr Standard St P. O. Box 30275 - 00200 City Square Nairobi. Tel: (20) - 2219099

Rift Valley Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Somali Rd P. O. Box 51 - 30100 Eldoret. Tel: (53) - 2032001 Fax: (53) - 2032005

Mobile: 733600132

Softa Bottling Co Ltd Soft Drinks P. O. Box 45510 - 00100 GPO Nairobi. Tel: (20) - 650020 Fax: (20) - 532110

Mobile: 722755421

Nairobi Bottlers Ltd Soft Drinks Airport North Rd Opp KQ Headquarters P. O. Box 18034 - 00500 Enterprise Rd Nairobi.