

**Entertainment Orientation of Advertisements on Television  
and Social Media: A Study of Selected Brands in Nigeria's  
Telecommunications Industry**

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**Abstract**

Advertising performs functional and aesthetic roles in society. The marketing (functional) uses of advertising include the provision of information, choice enhancement, sustenance of competition and convenience, quality assurance and reassurance, consumption stimulation, and value addition. Beyond this, the non-marketing (or aesthetic) uses of advertising are diversion, entertainment, social networking, role model aspirations and affiliations, checking on the opposite sex, attitudinal and value reinforcement, education, surveillance, and ego enhancement. The increasing uses of entertainment in broadcast commercials, particularly television commercials (TVCs) and social media are discussed. Using descriptive content analysis, the paper examines the entertainment orientation of commercials (advertisements) of selected telecommunications brands in Nigeria. A departure from the hard sell approach adopted by advertising practitioners prior to the advent of emerging social media, this paper establishes that advertisements now take the entertainment root

with musical commercials becoming increasingly popular.

**Keywords:** Advertising, Entertainment, Social Media, Television commercials (TVC), Uses and Gratification

## **Introduction**

Advertising is a pervasive and an inescapable fact of the modern society. The father of modern advertising in the United States of America, Albert Davis Lasker once described it as salesmanship in print. That was the era when advertising was characterized by 'hard sell' as the main creative strategy. This might have informed a scholar in the 1960s to define advertising as a form of invitation "to buy or sell, to borrow or lend, to work for or support worthy causes" (Harris and Seldon, 1962, p. 3). Another scholar, (Jefkins, 1976, p. 7) notes that creativity in advertising is "the production of ideas that sell". The same notion of the hard sell approach was shared and expressed by a contemporary advertising practitioner in Nigeria, Olorode (1989, p. 36), who remarked that "if it does not sell, it is not creative". Although not a recent publication, the definition of advertising proposed by Harris and Seldon (1962), modified by Jefkins (1976) and amplified by Olorode (1989) is still relevant as it emphasizes the sales orientation of the practice.

As a social institution, advertising is a mirror as well as shaper of images in societies. It is a dynamic institution which takes into consideration changes in society and adapts well to them, or simply portrays them. The present era of globalization is equally one of both media divergence and convergence. In addition to the traditional media (print-newspapers and the like and broadcast- radio, television and film), emerging media are highly interactive and personalized, including the global system of telecommunications (GSM), DVD, MP3, VCD and other Internet based social media.

A survey by Media Reach OMD (2011) a media independent agency in Nigeria reveals that a total of N100 billion was spent on outdoor advertising in 2010. This figure represents a 7.3% increase over the amount spent in 2009, which saw about N90 billion invested into outdoor advertising, mostly in above the line advertising (ATL) activities. ATL advertising includes television, radio, outdoor, and press advertisements. Interestingly, the telecommunications industry spent the highest on ATL advertising as in 2009 having recorded over N16 billion of ad spends. Mobile Telecommunications Nigeria (MTN Nigeria) was top in ad spend with N7.145 billion, followed by Globacom, which spent N4.485 billion for advertisements in 2010, while Etisalat Nigeria and Airtel Nigeria spent N2.489 billion and N2.126 billion respectively. All the four telecommunications operators are on the list of the top 20 brands in terms of ad spend in 2010. Television advertising amounted to N39.656 billion of the total N97.549 billion, accounting for 40.7% of the cumulative Nigerian ad spend in 2010. Outdoor expenditure was next to television with N28.562 billion. The forgoing confirms that the telecommunications industry leads as advertisers in Nigeria and much of the sponsored messages appeared as television or social media commercials during the study period.

Another report by Myjoyonline.com (2009) says that telecommunications sector topped advertising spend in both Nigeria and Ghana in 2009. Again, it is in the sphere of above-the-line advertising. In Nigeria, the telecommunication sector accounted for N15.096 billion in the total spends of N90.92 billion, while in Ghana; the sector recorded 43.5 billion Ghanaian Cedis out of a total of 184.9 billion Cedis. In both countries, television advertising raked in the highest revenue. "In Ghana 58 per cent of the total advertising spend went to television, while in Nigeria it clinched 42.2 per cent. Radio advertising attracted the second highest advert revenue in Ghana while out-of-home is next to television in the Nigerian above the line (ATL) advertising

market”.

Advertising reaches out to its numerous audiences through available media, mass, personalized, or social media. Audience tastes, needs and wants determine media content, and by that extension, advertising content. Each segment of the audience has peculiar media consumption habits. Population profile of much of the developing nations, including Nigeria, is skewed in favor of the youths. This group, along with young adults, has penchants for new technologies and is oriented towards the entertainment cum social media. In awareness of this trend, this paper examines the entertainment orientation of advertisements on television and social media, using relevant cases from the telecommunications industry for the promotion of telecommunications brands in Nigeria.

### **Literature Review**

Advertising may be classified based on its media channels. Accordingly, the traditional media of advertising include: word-of-mouth; print (newspapers, magazines and other forms of publications); broadcast (radio, television, film/ video), and outdoor (billboards, handbills, mobile, in-flight and so on). However, there are new media of advertising know as social media, also called “consumer generated media” (Mangold and Faulds, 2009, p. 357). Social media refer to a variety of sources of online information that are created and used by consumers with the intention of educating, informing or entertaining each other about products, services, icons or issues. These are often interactive and personalized media. Mangold and Faulds (2009) identify an array of emerging online (Internet-based) social media, including: word-of-mouth, blogs, company-sponsored discussion boards and chat rooms, consumer-to-consumer email and consumer product/service ratings websites. Others are Internet discussion boards and forums, moblogs including sites containing digital audio, images, movies or photographs and social

networking websites. The observations of Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 358) are apt:

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is witnessing an explosion of Internet-based messages transmitted through these media. They have become a major factor in influencing various aspects of consumer behavior including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase-behaviors and post-purchase communication and evaluation.

While recognizing the increasing shift in media consumption habits towards Internet-based, personalized social media, it is equally important to note that the strategy for disseminating advertising and promotional messages now tends towards the use of entertainment as a creative device. This is much more the case when considering advertising messages through the traditional television and radio as well as the audio, visual or audio-visual components of modern social media. Advertisements are usually about products, services, ideas or other forms of offerings. In this paper, we examine a selection of promotional messages sponsored by leading telecommunications brands in Nigeria and exposed through television (including satellite broadcasting) as well as other Internet channels. However, as earlier mentioned, the entertainment orientation of these advertisements forms the major focus of attention.

Telecommunications services in Nigeria began from the period of colonialism when the British established the Post and Telegraph (P& T) to link the colony with Britain and serve the administrative needs of the colonial rulers within the country. In 1960 after political independence, the P & T was re-branded as the Nigeria Telecommunications (NITEL), following the merger between P&T and Nigeria's External Telecommunications (NET) (Onwumehili 2001). Telephone penetration or what is referred to as tele-density in Nigeria was very low or poor in the first four

decades of Nigeria's political independence. In fact, there were about 400,000 telephone lines in existence in Nigeria in 1999 when Chief Olusegun Obasanjo assumed the office of the Executive President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. He introduced the Global System of Mobile Telecommunications (GSM) in 2001, beginning with two operators- MTN International Ltd (later MTN (Nig) Limited) and Econet (later V-mobile, Zain, and Airtel, in that order). Globacom was licensed in 2003, followed by Etisalat in 2008 and other fixed wireless operators.

Because of this revolution, the number of GSM lines increased exponentially: 37 million lines at the end of 2007; 70 million GSM lines in 2009 and about 80 million lines in 2010. According to data posted on the website of Nigerian communication Commission (NCC), accessed on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2012, there are, as at October 2011, a total of 110, 326, 120 connected GSM lines and 2, 285,930 fixed wireless lines in Nigeria. However, the active lines stand at 88,005,862 (for the GSM) and 801,297 lines for the fixed wireless. This leaves the country with a tele-density of 67.09 percent at the end of November 2011. The revolution in the telecommunications industry has impacted positively on the advertising industry as a result of huge advertising appropriation and spends by advertisers. Our immediate concern here, however, is the influence of the GSM revolution on advertising creativity. In this paper, we shall discuss the increasing uses of entertainment in advertisements of selected telecommunications brands in Nigeria channelled through the television and other relevant social media.

There are several types of commercials, including demonstrations, testimonials, slice-of-life, animation, humor, music, and emotional commercials, all of which have relevance to the on-going discussion. Testimonials involve the use of celebrity in advertisements- whether the common man, an accomplished

expert, or a model, called celebrity. Bill Cosby, a US popular artist often featured in commercials in that part of the world. Slice-of-life entails the use of a story or staged playlet featuring characters and the advertised brands. “The setting is realistic, such as a dinner, barber shop, beauty salon, or supermarket, and the characters act out a scene in which the product is hero”, submit Berg and Katz (1999, p. 449).

There is also the use of humour, dance and the emotions in commercials. Humour creates fun that makes both message and product memorable. Music is often used to set the mood for the spot, to improve memorability, or as the advertising message in itself. Emotional appeals, on the other hand enable the audience to remember the brand by associating it with the feelings conveyed by the advertisement. The above mentioned aspects of commercials are of relevance to our discussion in this paper since they are oriented towards entertainment uses in advertisements.

Advertising, described by Ghosh (1981) as “The great art”, catches the eye of the buyer through ingenious devices such as the use of “humorous cartoon”; “a jingling rhyme”; story telling; or “artfully negligent persuasive manner”. Indeed, “the way of drawing attention are many and varied”, says Ghosh (1981). It is of little surprise that Molokwu (2000) describes the traditional advertising practitioner in Africa, the Town Crier, as “attention catcher”. In the modern era, entertainment devices have become most prominent among the strategies adopted by practitioners in advertising to catch attention while making sales.

Moyer-Guse (2008) sees entertainment education as a popular strategy nowadays for incorporating health and other educational messages into popular media with the goal of positively influencing awareness, knowledge, attitudes and or behaviors. Moyer-Guse (2008) submits that entertainment education facilitates an emotional experience of becoming involved with the characters therein. It is defined as pro-social messages that are embedded into popular entertainment media

content (Moyer-Guse, 2008). This involves identification with characters. In this case, the viewer takes on a character in the narrative; forgets about his/her own reality and temporarily becomes the character being viewed. In other words, the viewer imagines “being that character” and replaces his or her personal identity and role as audience member with the identity and role of the character.

Wishful identification, on the other hand, occurs when a viewer wants to be like the character; experiences an active desire to emulate the figures; and looks up to the character. Identification here is different from insight identification in that it represents an emotional and cognitive process, whereby the viewer takes on the role of the character being viewed, rather than a desire to make him/her more like the character.

Similarity (sometimes called homophile) refers to the degree to which an individual perceives that he/she is similar to a character. The similarity can refer to physical character, demographic variables, beliefs, personality, or value. Similarity refers to a cognitive assessment of what one has in common with a character, whereas identification is characterized by empathy, shared emotions, and loss of self-awareness. In this way, similarity involves maintaining one's own perspective while making judgments about a character, while identification requires taking on the role and experiencing events, as a character.

Generally, advertisers use celebrities to “breakthrough the advertising clutter”, according to Kazmi and Batra (2004, p. 107). There is the notion in advertising called source attractiveness, which refers to likeability, familiarity, or affiliation an audience has with models in the advertising media. As Kazmi and Batra (2004, p. 106) put it, “consumers often admire the source's looks and other personality traits, and thus the source's attractiveness becomes persuasive through a process of “identification”” This then might explain why much of advertising campaigns nowadays tend towards the use of entertainment and celebrities in

commercials. It is therefore a widely held notion in advertising that “a popular celebrity cannot only influence audience feelings, attitudes and purchase behavior positively, but can also enhance image or performance of the consumers' mind” (Kazmi and Batra, 2004, p. 107). This underscores the increasing use of entertainment in Commercials or advertisements generally.

Douglas (2005) undertook a review of a book titled “Consuming Children: Education, Entertainment, Advertising” authored by Kenway and Bullen (2005). The summary of the review reads:

*Consuming Children* argues that we are entering another stage in the construction of the young as the demarcations between education, entertainment and advertising collapse and as the lines between the generations both blue and harden.

It is this similar position that was articulated by Aladeyomi and Olatunji (2011), when they advocated the 'balanced activity approach' to teaching and learning. This approach utilizes the media (cool and hot media) for transmitting information, education, entertainment and fun.

Social media are essentially interactive and therefore activity-based. In a study, Lenhart (2009) reports that 93 per cent of American teens (12 to 17 years) go online, using available Internet facilities from home (89%); from school (77%); from friends and relatives (71%); and from other libraries (60%). The following Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools were also found popular among teenagers: game console (77%); iPod or Mp3 player (74%); cell phone (71%); desktop or laptop computer (60%); and other gaming devices (55%). In addition, the following online activities were found to be common among teens: Video games (97%); 97 percent go to websites for movies, TV shows, music groups or sport/music stars; and another

65 percent use an online social networking site. The most dominant social networking activities among teens were found to be for the purpose of sending comments to a friend's picture (83%); posting messages to a friend's page or wall (77%); sending private messages to friends (71%); and posting comments on a friend's blog (66%). Young adults (18-31 years, otherwise called Gen Y) as not excluded. Lenhart (2009) found that 91 percent of them use the Internet; 89 percent of Gen Y use email; and 70 percent use social network sites. Moreover, 85 percent of Gen Y use cell phone to send texts; and 79 percent go online, just like the 65+, to access health related information.

Mangold and Faulds (2009, p. 358) identified the role of social media within the context of the promotional mixes: social media enable companies to talk to their customers and allow customers to both talk to one another and talk to the company in return. This, the authors noted, is consistent with the use of traditional integrated marketing communication (IMC) strategy that uses word-of-mouth, amongst several other tools. The major shift is that, unlike in the past where a dissatisfied customer to tell ten more people, social media provide the platform for a dissatisfied customer to tell 10 million others. This confers unlimited power to the customer, unlike the traditional mass media that make little or no allowance for feedback mechanism. Similarly, in the era of social media, advertisers' "control over the content, timing, and frequency of information is being severely eroded. In the new paradigm, information about products and services also originates in the marketplace", (Mangold and Faulds, 2009, p.360). This requires that advertisers recognize the emerging power of the consumer and the "critical nature of the discussions being carried on by consumers using social media", (Mangold and Faulds, 2009, p. 360).

Johnson (2006) expresses a serious concern that TV commercials now show a clash of entertainment with advertising objectives. "So what happens when advertising masquerades

itself as hip-hop entertainment, and the line between advertising and entertainment gets blurry? Thanks to *YouTube*, (a social medium) we have the perfect case study”, he notes. One example cited is the use of entertainment by hip-hop impresario, Sean "Diddy" Combs who posted home video clips to *YouTube* to promote his upcoming CD- *Press Play*. The video was also publicized on his MySpace profile page. Another artist partnered with Burger King to launch a branded channel Diddy TV on *YouTube* and launched with a video of Diddy going into his local Burger King, ordering food, and announcing the partnership. A branded channel like Diddy TV is *YouTube's* attempt to promote a user-friendly advertising model.

La Monica, (2007) too observes that many modern day commercials are overtly “funny or entertaining, which to him raises the poser “aren't ads supposed to tell you something about a product?”. He speaks further that “These days, it seems like many TV ads are more about getting laughs first”. The author then expresses a strong reservation at the emerging practice of over-concentration of entertainment in commercials, saying: “It's a disturbing trend for many large corporations, who may find that instead of boosting sales, they are wasting millions of dollars on advertising campaigns that simply boost the egos of marketing executives and ad agency types”. To support his assertion, La Monica then cited a statement made by Neal M. Burns, professor of advertising at the University of Texas at Austin who notes: "There are some spots on TV where people say, 'Gee, that was really cool. But what was the product?'"

La Monica observes further that “Advertising is increasingly morphing into another form of entertainment, and not as something that effectively conveys a company's brand message.” (CNNMoney.com, accessed on 04/02/12). The forgoing implies that billions of advertising dollars or Naira are being wasted in the name of pandering to the advertisement needs (gratifications) of the audience, largely the youthful segment of

the population. In his view therefore, “advertising is increasingly morphing into another form of entertainment, and not as something that effectively conveys a company's brand”.

Entertainment-laden commercials are popular among youths and young adults. This group easily zaps past commercials with a digital video recorder or watches a commercial-free video on *YouTube* instead of ad-supported TV (La Monica, 2007). Jon Bond, co-founder of Kirshenbaum Bond & Partners, an ad agency, justified the need for entertainment laden TV commercials as follows: "Telling and selling doesn't work as well as it used to because I'd literally just tune out the commercial. Because of that, the merger of entertainment and selling is inevitable. Unless there is entertainment value, why would I opt in?"

However, the overt use of entertainment in commercials creates a situation of “vampire creativity”, according to Wells, Burnett and Moriarty (2002, p. 161), a situation which occurs “primarily with advertisements that are too original, too entertaining, or too involving”. Resultantly, the entertainment content gets in the way of the brand. This occurs mostly where rock stars are used. In this case, audiences often remember the commercial, but not the brand. Hence, Wells *et al* (2002, p. 161) suggest that commercials should establish a strong link between the message and the product in such a way that “remembering the advertisement also means remembering the brand”.

The foregoing calls for a middle of the road position. "The two places to err in a commercial are all entertainment and no selling or all selling and no entertainment. Everyone watches and nobody buys anything or nobody watches. Finding the overlap is the issue," Bond said, in his response to La Monica's investigation (2007). This suggests a need to blend entertainment into commercial messages in the context of advertising in an environment where youths and young adults are hooked to the new media.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Notable scholars such as Katz, Blumler and Gurevich (1975) have drawn attention to the now popular uses and gratification theory. Using this functional approach, Katz *et al* (1975) came out with the U & G theory that articulated various forms of gratifications obtained by the audience members include, but not limited to diversion, personal relationships, personal identity, and surveillance. The U & G theory took attention away from the omnipotent power theory of the media by noting that people are not helpless victims of all powerful media, but use media to fulfill their various needs or gratifications.

Diversion, escape or fun is the most noticeable gratification that audience members seek from the media today. Through such gratification, media texts provide escape from reality. This is the case with the use of entertainment media in advertising. The entertainment component of media uses and gratification includes but not limited to escaping, or being diverted, from problems; relaxing, getting intrinsic cultural or aesthetic enjoyment, filling time, emotional release, and sexual arousal. Personal identity is yet another gratification. The use of models in musical, entertainment or drama commercials afford opportunity for audience members to create personal relationships with the characters in a media text. Same thing goes for personal identity. Members of the audience often create part of their own identities from things or objects they find attractive in people from media texts, for example, someone may have a dressing pattern similar to the ones surveyed through the media, as earlier mentioned. The fourth of the media uses and gratification in the original conception has to do with surveillance, a phenomenon through which the audience gains an understanding of the world around them by consuming a media text as advertising messages.

Major criticisms against the U & G theory are that it should be seen as mere mediators of, rather than substitutes for, media effects; it is regarded as vague and non-theoretical; and that it

offers “little more than a data collection strategy and lists of reasons why people attend to the mass media”, (O'Donohoe, 1994, p. 54). In spite of its limitations, U & G theory has been applied, with success, to different aspects of the mass communication practice, notably advertising O'Donohoe, (1994). There are two categories of advertising uses and gratifications according to O'Donohoe, (1994). The first set is referred to as marketing uses and gratifications These include need for product information, entertainment, implied warranty, value addition, post-purchase re-assurance, vicarious experience and involvement.

Advertising is used as a source of information, primarily on brand availability and price. Secondly, it stimulates competition by providing people with more alternatives; it also provides people with opportunity to choose. The third has to do with quality assurance and re-assurance. Consumption stimulation follows. Moreover, advertising adds value to brands thereby promoting brand equity. Finally, various consumers may use advertising to gain vicarious access to experiences and lifestyles that may otherwise be beyond their means.

The often ignored U & G of advertising are its non-marketing aspects. These include the use of advertising to structure time. For example, television commercials are often used to structure or 'punctuate' time. The audience often takes time off to do something else when commercials are running in the middle of an interesting broadcast program. Also, advertising U & G extends to the need for diversion: “it made life richer and more colourful, it is something to look at when travelling on a bus, and “a break when there's nothing on TV and you're just sort of sitting there”, quoting one of the respondents in his study O'Donohoe (1994;p. 61). Use of advertising for diversion equally has to do with the escape function of the media in general, and of advertising in particular.

Of equal significance is the entertainment uses and gratifications of advertising. As noted in this paper, more and

more commercials are now oriented towards entertainment, with wide-ranging implications. Advertising reflects the familiar, everyday aspects of consumers' lives. Hence, familiarity is one of the advertising U & G. In addition, advertising serves purposes of enhancing audience members' aspirations and Role Models – consumers form aspirations of what best they desire in life through advertising images. In addition, consumers relate with significant others non-personal reference groups, or models that they encounter through advertising.

Furthermore, advertising is employed for checking out on the opposite sex – O'Donohoe (1994) reports that consumers tend to assess actors of the same sex as themselves as role models, and those of the opposite sex in terms of their physical attraction. Various controversies surround the use of sex in advertising (Olatunji and Ayodele, 2010). Other uses and gratifications of advertising are: reinforcement of attitudes and values-advertising serves as value affirmation function; and education.

As a social institution, advertising inculcate in the audience, the knowledge about their immediate and larger world/environment. There are also such U & G as surveillance; ego enhancement; and family relationships. O'Donohoe (1994, p. 69) reports that, on the one hand; advertising “was occasionally a source of tension, as some female respondents talked about their embarrassment at watching television with male members (particularly teasing brothers), when personal hygiene ads come on”. However, “On the other hand, ads could be used to remove generational boundaries by establishing some common ground”. Finally, there is the U & G of advertising towards enhancing peer relationships. In this instance, the interpersonal use of advertising extends beyond family circles to that of its use for strengthening peer group relationships or bonding.

The above demonstrates that the advertising institution performs a diversity of functions in society. Just as well, audience members access advertising messages for a multiplicity of uses

and gratifications. The marketing and non-marketing uses and gratifications of advertising are therefore legitimate and theoretically grounded. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that trend analysis demonstrates the entertainment orientation of television commercials, particularly in a global age of media digitization and convergence. It will be interesting to investigate how this observation plays itself out in the television commercials of selected telecommunication brands in Nigeria.

### **Method and Materials**

The goal of creativity in advertising is to promote sales of goods, patronage of services or acceptance of ideas or other offerings. This may justify the use of logical appeals in advertising or even the adoption of the straight-sell strategy in advertising creation. However, another approach is the hedonistic strategy that sees advertisements as fun. “They shine, they glimmer, they dance, they sing, they amuse, they enthrall, they inform”, observed Sandage, Fryburger and Rotzoll (2004, p. 185). Between the utilitarian and hedonistic approach, which strategy of advertising creation is now more popular in the Nigerian advertising environment? This paper, therefore, examines the entertainment orientation of commercials in Nigeria, with cases drawn from telecommunications industry in Nigeria. The researchers utilized content analysis to evaluate the commercials of the selected advertisements. Initially, an unstructured monitoring of advertising campaigns of notable telecommunications brands on TV reveals the increasing use of entertainment. This motivated the researcher to carrying out this exploratory study.

In this study, a descriptive content coding sheet was designed. It requires participants to monitor commercials of telecommunication brands (on TV and the Internet) with a view to identifying the following content categories: telecommunication brands; Advertisement orientation; Artistes featured; and Types of entertainment. Telecommunications brands were limited to the

following units of analysis: MTN Nigeria Limited; Airtel; Glo; and Etisalat. Units of analysis under advertisement orientation are (a) entertainment only (b) straight or hard sell, and (c) combination of entertainment and selling. To analyze types of entertainment, we looked out for use of music; drama; multiple artistes making appearances in a TVC, docu-drama and playlet. Artistes were identified by country/continent of origin, global rating, name and duration of commercials.

In addition to the two the efforts of the lead researchers, two research assistants participated in media monitoring and content analysis. The researchers monitored advertising messages on local television stations in Nigeria, the CNN and Internet. Only the advertisements of telecommunication brands originating from Nigeria were analyzed. To ensure inter-coder reliability, analysts data agreed upon by consensus were accommodated into the study. Descriptive data analysis and discussion of findings now follow.

## **Results**

Content analysis of the selected channels confirms that indeed, advertisers of telecommunication brands in Nigeria continue to maximize the potentials of entertainment media in brand promotion. Results are presented in Table 1 that follows. Uses of entertainment media are popular with three leading advertisers, namely: Etisalat, Glo, and Airtel.

Etisalat brand was introduced recently, relative to the other telecommunications service providers. During the launch, the use of entertainment media featured prominently. A Nigerian world-rated musician, Banky W, starred in the commercials. The commercial opens with “Wa jo Ijo Banky” (dance to the music of Banky) for nearly ninety percent of the 60 seconds commercial, and then terminates with “0809... 0809 ...Etisalat”. The musical commercial was complemented with body advertisement with a bold display of the four initial codes “0809” allocated to Etisalat

inscribed on the artiste's left shoulder. Thus, the commercial is both musical and dramatic.

**Table 1: Entertainment Orientation of Commercials**

S/N	Telecommunications Provider	Models/Celebrities	Nature of Entertainment
1	Etisalat	Jude Orhorha & Hafiz Oyetero (a.k.a Saka), Banky W	Comic drama Musicals/drama
2	GLO	<b>GLO Ambassadors</b> Nonso Diobu, Dbanj, Jim Iyke, Ramsey Noah, Chioma Akpotha, Funke Akindele, Kunle Afolayan, Rita dominic, kate Henshaw-Nutall, Ini Edo, Odunlade Adekola, Pasuma Alabi , Basket Mouth King Sunny Ade, Daddy Showkey, Psquare	Drama Drama Drama Drama Drama Drama Drama Drama Drama Musicals Musicals Musicals
3	Airtel	<b>Artistes &amp; Countries in Airtel one8 musical performance.</b> R.kelly- USA Tuface -Nigeria Fally Ipupa- DRC Alikiba Tanzania 4x4- Ghana JK- Zambia Amani Kenya Movaizhalene-Gabon Navio-Uganda	All artiste in one 8 Musical performance

Jude Orhorha and Hafiz Oyetero (a.k.a Saka), two Nigerian artistes appeared in a commercial sponsored by Etisalat. The entertainment type was both comical and dramatic. The brand name 'Etisalat' was dominant in the musical as well as the drama, an effective combination of use of entertainment and sales pitching.

Glo Mobile telecommunications is currently running a series of commercials called “Glo Ambassadors”. Included in this list are the following artistes: Nonso Diobu, Dbanj, Jim Iyke, and Ramsey Noah. There are also Chioma Akpotha, Funke Akindele, Kunle Afolayan, Rita Dominic, Kate Henshaw-Nutall, Ini Edo, Odunlade Adekola, and Pasuma Alabi. Others are Basket Mouth, King Sunny Ade, Daddy Showkey, and P-square. Each of the artistes engaged in playlets, musicals, and drama as the case may

be. Glo logo appeared conspicuously in all the commercials which were also exposed through local and global media, the CNN and other social media. Glo regularly sponsors “African Voices” on the CNN, a medium that provides opportunities for global reach for the brand.

While the selection of artistes by GLO was limited to Nigerians, probably because the advertiser originates from Nigeria, Airtel on the other hand starred an assortment of artistes from different African countries and African artistes in Diaspora. “Airtelone8 musical performance” features the following artistes: R.kelly,- USA, Tuface –Nigeria, Fally Ipupa- Democratic Republic of Congo, Alikiba- from Tanzania, 4x4 (Ghanaian artiste); JK (Zambian); Amani- (Kenya), Movaizhalene (Gabon), and Navio, a Ugandan artiste. The Airtel commercial was star- studded and presents the advertiser as a continental, if not a global brand sponsor. And although the marketing value of the commercial was not lost, much emphasis was on the entertainment (or aesthetic) value.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Katz, Blumler and Gurevich (1975) discussed extensively the uses and gratification theory of the media. These include information, education, surveillance and escape or entertainment. The commercials of selected advertisements in Nigeria have shown that the U & G theory have relevance. More importantly, O'Donohoe (1994) specifically identified the marketing and non-marketing U & G of advertising. It is observable that the design and execution of the advertisements of the selected brands are in keeping with the suggestion of Wells et al (2002) and La Monica (2007) of the need to establish a strong link between the message and the product in such a way that the entertainment content does not overshadow the marketing goal. When this is done, advertisers will be avoiding falling into an unacceptable situation referred to

by Wells et al (2002, p. 161) as “vampire creativity”.

What is not in doubt is that the hard sell orientation of advertisements is rapidly being replaced by a combination of entertainment and marketing. This trend is not limited to telecommunications commercials in Nigeria. Ready examples are Cow Bell milk by Promosador Nigeria Limited and Indomie Noodles, (manufactured by De United Foods Nigeria) with a popular musical tune:

*Mama do good o... E do good,  
She gives us Indomie...  
She do good.  
Indomie sweet well, well...  
she do well;  
Indomie good for us....*

The song, rendered in the Nigerian pidgin English simply means that 'My mother has done a nice thing by cooking for us the *Indomie* noodles, a delicious menu. *Indomie* is good for us'.

The foregoing commercial is now replaced with a more recent one that shows a grand-mother narrate stories of her days as a young mother when the children danced round her whenever she prepared a delicious meal of *Indomie* Noodles for them. A combination of African tale by the moonlight concept, deep cultural orientation and musicals are more and more embedded into commercials to achieve the advertisers' marketing goal.

Commenting on the usefulness of musical or entertaining commercials, Sandage, *et al* (2004, p. 207), citing Keith Reinhard, Creative Director in Needham, Harper & Steers advertising agency, have this to say:

Music can get people's attention.  
Music can differentiate a brand  
from others.  
Music can make people remember  
a brand name.  
Music can make people remember

a brand promise.

Music can add value to a product.

Music can create an atmosphere conducive to selling.

Music can create a winning personality.

Music can glue commercials together.

A study by Adebisi (2010) on the “use of music in banking promotional campaigns in Nigeria” found classical music genre, along with choral/vocal music are in use in the banking industry in Nigeria. The study was a survey of the perception of bank customers on the use of music for the promotional of financial products. Personal observation of the researcher was also another instrument adopted to support data from questionnaire and interview. Reporting the view of one of the interview subjects, Adebisi (2010, p. 54) notes, “music inside electronic doors of the bank has a calming effect on the customers, and makes them feel not trapped”. A very popular musical commercial by a bank in Nigeria (the United bank for Africa) (UBA PLC) is “Wise men bank with UBA; UBA; UBA”.

The greatest enthusiasts of music are youths and children. Demographic pattern in Nigeria and much of sub-Saharan Africa shows age distribution with preponderance of youths and children, to whom much of commercials on fast moving consumer goods are often directed. The *Indomie* noodle commercial mentioned above, and other rival brands like Honeywell noodles commercial created at about the same time seem to be very popular among youths and children, owing largely to its memorability entertainment -orientation, and ability to catch attention and sustain interest. In a world where media channels are multiplied, audiences are fragmented and audiences selectively attend to the media, musical and entertaining options for catching audience attention, sustaining their interests and positively positioning

brands seem to be an adequate strategy.

## **Conclusions**

We can conclude from the foregoing discussion that advertising message design and implementation in Nigeria is moving in the direction of similar developments in other parts of the world where heavy doses of entertainment is injected for the achievement of the advertisers' marketing goal. However, unlike the current global trend of overdoses of entertainment at the expense of advertisers' commercial motive, commercials in Nigeria reflect a perfect blend of marketing (information) and non-marketing (entertainment) uses and gratification, a strategy that is preferred by the present authors.

Mangold and Faulds' observation (2009, p. 364) is relevant now. The authors counselled advertisers and their agencies to always incorporate social media in the promotional mixes whenever they are developing and executing their IMC strategies. This, it was noted, "requires the adoption of a new communications paradigm that acknowledges the pervasiveness of information now being exchanged among consumers in the social media space." Unique to this new space as well as its predominant consumers is the propensity for more of entertainment than information. It is therefore not surprising that telecommunications advertisements in Nigeria that are exposed through television and other social media are increasingly entertaining in orientation.

The African oral traditional background, musicals, drama and other forms of entertainment media that are found in telecommunication commercials need to be sustained to enhance the achievement of advertisers' marketing objectives using entertainment as a creative strategy. We also recommend a more systematic content analysis of other brands and their messages to determine their entertainment orientation. On a final note, a study of the perception of the audiences on the effectiveness of uses of

entertainment in advertisements exposed through the myriad of existing social media should be carried out. Social media seem to offer the best environment for a combination of creative entertainment strategies in advertising exposure, owing to the increasing importance of Internet advertising and e-commerce.

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