

Awareness and Usage of Online Advertising Channels by Small Business Owners in Select Cities in Nigeria

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Abstract

Although Okoro and Epepe (2015, 2017) had done some empirical work on online advertising by Nigeria-based small businesses, there continues to be a need for more empirical research in this area considering the complexity and fluidity of online advertising. This is the major reason this paper examines awareness and usage of online advertising channels amongst small businesses in select cities in Nigeria. Using the Network Advertising Model (NAM) and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as theoretical frameworks, a survey of 281 small business owners/managers was conducted in selected capital cities (Asaba, Ikeja, Jalingo and Awka) of four randomly selected States to elicit data for the study. Findings indicate relatively low online advertising awareness level (about 45%), contrary to respondents' claim of awareness. In order of importance, 'Free listings' (92.1%) 'Others'(63.7%), 'Affiliations'(61.4%), 'Facebook' (40.2%) and 'Google'(22.0%) were the five most used online advertising channels, with owning a brand website/blog (7.1%), Twitter (18.9%) and YouTube (8.7%) being the least used channels. The Chi Square test found a positive relationship between level of awareness and usage of online advertising. Based on the findings, it is recommended that to benefit from the power of 'spreadability' of online advertising, small

business owners/managers must move beyond having an online presence, to developing appropriate strategies to mitigate inherent challenges and intricacies of online advertising.

Keyword: Awareness, Usage, Online Advertising, Channels, Media, Small Business, Nigeria, Spreadability, TAM, NAM