

GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM



**A STUDY EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A
MARKETING TOOL FOR EVENTS:
A CASE STUDY OF EIB**

BY

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CANDIDATE DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and hard work and that no part of it has been presented for another M.A in this institution or elsewhere

.....

Theresa Kwadzie

.....

Date

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was supervised by me in accordance with the guideline on supervision of dissertation laid down by the Ghana Institute of Journalism

.....

Dr. Lawrecia Agyepong

.....

Date

DEDICATION

.Dedicated to my late mother, Mrs Beatrice Kwadzie

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to God Almighty for His grace and mercy and for seeing me through this programme.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Lawrenica Agyepong, who took time of her busy schedules to review, criticizes and offer valuable contributions to enrich the work. My profound gratitude to Hon. Maxwell Kofi Jumah and Mrs Mawusi Nudekor Awity.

Much love and appreciation to the Kwadzie's family

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry in Ghana by focusing on EIB. The study adopted the mixed method approach and sampled the views of 70 staff members with a questionnaire via the judgmental sampling method. Findings showed that all respondents agreed that the firm use social media to promote its events. The findings suggest that the reason for adopting the use of social media for event promotion is based on it being a new trend and more effective. On the issue of benefits of adopting the use of social media respondents extremely agreed that that social media increased brand awareness, increased brand loyalty (cost-effectiveness and faster in reaching wider audience. Respondents agreed with the statement that social media created the platform for better customer satisfaction. The study concludes that in its bid use social media to promote and manage its event the organisation must consider all the possible problems that would come with it to deal with it ahead of time in order to stay competitive and ahead of its competitors. It was recommended that a team has to be set up equipped with the necessary information and know-how solely in charge of responding to comments, enquiries and questions on social media. Also, since social media sites can be exploited for the information it provides on consumer behaviour with regards to their purchasing intentions, research further suggests that businesses should incorporate social networking sites into their business model or promotional mix

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List of Acronyms

EIB	Excellence in Broadcasting Network
ROI	Return on Investment
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
SWOT	Strength, weakness, opportunity and threat
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
WOM	Word-of-mouth

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

In today's technology driven world, social networking sites have become an avenue where retailers can extend their marketing campaigns to a wider range of consumers (Sinclair, Clinton & Vogus, 2011). Chi (2011) on his part defines social media marketing as a "connection between brands and consumers, [while] offering a personal channel and currency for user centered networking and social interaction."

Safko (2012) suggests that social media is a much more effective way of marketing than conventional ways. Safko (2012, p5) further states that the consumer no longer trusts corporate messages; consumers "want their information from people they know, have a relationship with, and share a bond with through trust." Moreover, "social media marketing is all about listening first, understanding the conversation, and speaking last" (Safko, 2012, p6). As a result, social media is widely used at events.

The tools and approaches for communicating with customers have changed greatly with the emergence of social media; therefore, businesses have to learn how to use social media in a way that is consistent with their business plan (Mangold and Faulds 2018). This is especially true for companies striving to gain a competitive advantage. This review examines current literature that focuses on a retailer's development and use of social media as an extension of their marketing strategy. This phenomenon has only developed within the last decade, thus social media research has largely focused

on (1) defining what it is through the explanation of new terminology and concepts that makeup its foundations, and (2) exploring the impact of a company's integration of social media on consumer behaviour. This paper begins with an explanation of terminology that defines social media marketing, followed by a discussion of the four main themes found within current research studies: Virtual Brand Communities, Consumers Attitudes and Motives, User Generated Content, and Viral Advertising.

Although social media marketing is a well-researched topic, it has only been studied through experimental and theoretical research; studies never precisely describe the benefits retailers gain from this marketing tactic. In reviewing the rich plethora of multi-disciplinary literature, Cox(2010) argues that most are focusing on describing what social media marketing is as well as examining what factors affect consumer behaviour relative to social networking. Despite the initial progress made by researchers, development in this area of study has been limited. It I as a result of these issues that this study is to be conducted by providing a deeper understanding of the long term promotional gains retailers obtain from social media marketing.

1.2 Statement of problem

According to Zinnbauer and Honer (2011) in its early stages, social media focused on the individual. But it is increasingly serving as a platform for commercial activity and to personalize a company's relationship with its customers, prospects, and partners. The impact of social media globally plays a vital role not only in easy and fast communication, but linking business to business together, finding lost ones, chatting, sharing pictures and videos to the world and most importantly it has really been an essential tool in job creation and boosting the economy of many countries (Zeng, Li and Dou, 2009).

Muñiz and Schau, (2007) stated that the event industry in particular has found social media as one of the most effective means of reaching customers. Online event promotion is not new, but it is continually changing and becoming more complex as social media and technology evolves. Nonetheless, it is not fraught with challenges, there are other marketers, adds, issues with taste and preference and other issue which clouds the use of social media but nonetheless marketers still use it in their pursuit to reach quick and wider audience. Based on the aforementioned issues the this study as been embarked on to determine the extent to which social media serves its purpose as being an effective platform for promoting and marketing of events.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry in Ghana by focusing on Excellence in Broadcasting (EIB) Network.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

Based on the general objective of the study the following specific objectives of the study has been designed for the research;

- a. To determine how social media is used in promoting social events in the event management industry
- b. To identify the benefits associated with the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry

- c. To investigate the challenges of using social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry
- d. To discuss measures to ameliorate the challenges identified by the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry.

1.4 Research questions

Based on the research objectives the following are the research questions the study seeks to find answers to;

- a. How is social media being used in promoting social events in the event management industry?
- b. What are the benefits associated with the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry?
- c. What are the challenges associated with the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry?
- d. What measures can be adopted to enhance the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry?

1.5 Significance of the study

Research on the implications of social media, especially within the fields of communication and journalism, has hardly addressed the proliferation of information technologies and the surge in new users. Most of the recent studies have been broad in focus, examining the most popular social media sites and briefly examining their

potential (Todi, 2008; McGrath, 2008; O'Connor, 2008; Subrahmanyam, 2008; Gumpert, 2007).

This study seeks to contribute to research in the field of communication and journalism relative to event management as a marketing tool. Taking a more focused approach this study examines the role social media platforms like Facebook have on actual marketing of events.

The study further provides the path for marketers and other events management firms in Ghana to appreciate the potential of social media as a marketing platform. Further the recommendations made will guide the firms in dealing with challenges associated with the use of social media

1.6 Scope of the study

The study is limited to employees and management of Excellence in Broadcasting (EIB) Network, which is located in Accra. The EIB Network is an event management organisation that manages annual music concert shows in Ghana. Key among these concerts is the "Ghana Verse Naija" event which brings together artists from different countries to perform.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The main limitation of the study was time factor which restricted the sample size and the scope. This means that the data gathered are largely representative of the experiences of one of the many event companies in the country, although they could be used to infer partially on the benefits of social media platforms on the work of events companies in the country.

1.8 Organisation of study

The project is organized in five chapters as follows:

- Chapter one covers the introduction. It contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and the organization of the remainder of the chapters.
- Chapter two is the review of existing literature in the area of the study.
- Chapter three spells out the research methodology used in the conducting of the research and data collection.
- Chapter four presents the results and analyses of the main findings of the study.
- Chapter five contains summary, conclusions and recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter presents a review of theoretical and empirical literature regarding social media marketing and its contribution to event management. The chapter begins with theoretical literature that explores marketing theories and the connect with social media. In later sections, the chapter presents empirical literature on the subjects of interest.

2.1 Marketing theory

Two of the main customer-driven marketing theories necessary for any company are the marketing strategy and the marketing mix. The strategic plan defines the company's overall mission and objectives which will then summarize the strategy and marketing mix (Kotler, 2011). When marketing a company needs to come up with a marketing strategy which consists of “the marketing logic by which the company hopes to create this customer value and achieve these profitable relationships. The company decides which customers it will serve (segmentation and targeting) and how (differentiation and positioning). It identifies the total market and then divides it into smaller segments, selects the most promising segments, and focuses on serving and satisfying the customers in these segments” (Kotler, 2011:48). Then, guided by the marketing strategy the company will design a marketing mix made up of factors

under its control, these include – product, price, place and promotion, known as the four Ps (Kotler, 2011:48). (See below figure 2. The Four Ps of the Marketing Mix).

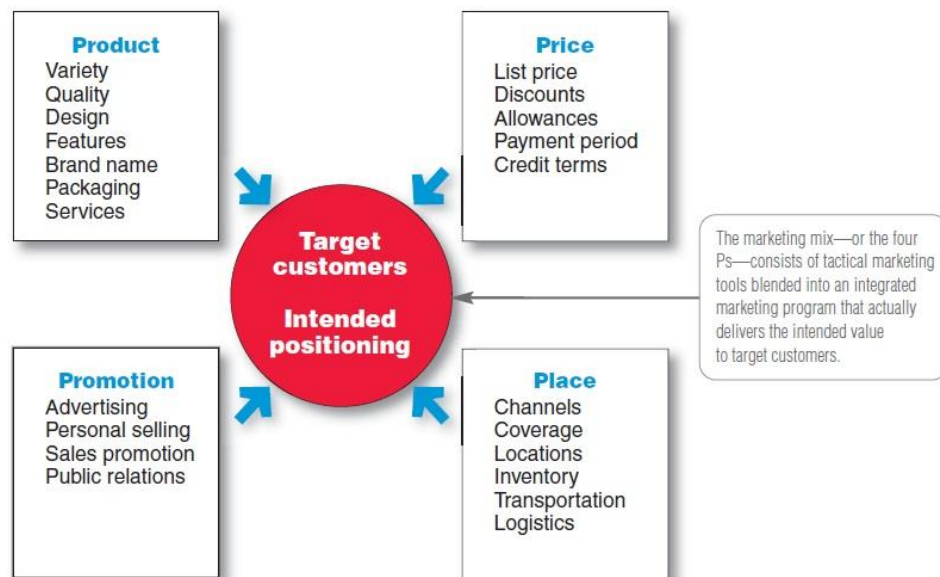


Figure 2.1. The Four Ps of the Marketing Mix (Kotler, 2011:52)

Defining Social Media

To consider social media as a marketing tool a retailer must understand every aspect of it. Social media cannot be understood without first defining Web 2.0: a term that describes a new way in which end users use the World Wide Web, a place where content is continuously altered by all operators in a sharing and collaborative way (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). “It is much more to do with what people are doing with the technology than the technology itself, for rather than merely retrieving information, users are now creating and consuming it, and hence adding value to the websites that permit them to do so” (Campbell et al. 2011, 87). Web 2.0 has evolved from simple information retrieval to interactivity, interoperability, and collaboration (Campbell et al. 2011).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 61) define social media as “a group of Internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content.” Sinclair and Vogus (2011, 294) cite O’Reilly’s (2005) definition: “social media is a broad term that describes software tools that create user generated content that can be shared.” However, there are some basic features necessary for a website to meet the requirements as a social network website: the site must contain user profiles, content, a method that permits users to connect with each other and post comments on each other’s pages, and join virtual groups based on common interests such as fashion or politics. (Gross & Acquisti, 2005; Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Winder, 2007; Boyd & Ellison, 2007 as cited in Cox 2010).

The phrase social networking sites’ is often used interchangeably with social media. However, social media is different because it allows participants to unite by generating personal information profiles and inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010, 63). Thus, social media is the environment in which social networking takes place and has altered the way in which consumers gather information and make buying decisions.

Consumers’ Sentiment toward Marketing (CSM) is a factor consider by researchers to measure how well consumers will perceive social media marketing. CSM is defined as a concept which refers to the general feelings that consumers have for marketing and the marketplace (Lawson et al. 2001as cited by Mady 2011). An individual’s perception of the overall marketplace plays a major role in whether or not they are motivated to partake in consumption activities (Mady 2011). In order to create a

successful marketing campaign via social media, a consumer must be open to the technology. Consumer technology readiness is defined as “people’s propensity to embrace and use new technologies for accomplishing goals in home and work” (Parasuraman, 2000 as cited by Mady 2011, 195). Consumer technology readiness is important for retailers to remember when marketing on social networks because if their intended target market does not use social media, is not familiar with it, or perceives it negatively, then their social media marketing will be unrewarding. Analysis of technology readiness can determine if marketing via interactive advertising would be a good fit for a retailer’s target market.

The Innovation Adoption Process (IAP) is another instrument that provides information on a consumer’s acceptance of new technology. The IAP is the progression through which an individual goes through the innovation-decision process (Rogers as cited in Mady 2011). Five steps make up the process: knowledge of the innovation, forming an attitude toward the innovation, deciding to adopt or reject the innovation, implementation of the innovation, and confirmation of the decision (Mady 2011). Knowledge of IAP can help marketers obtain a social media marketing campaign that is fulfilling.

Social media has advanced from simply providing a platform for individuals to stay in touch with their family and friends. Now it is a place where consumers can learn more about their favorite companies and the products they sell. Marketers and retailers are utilizing these sites as another way to reach consumers and provide a new way to shop. “Technology related developments such as the rise of powerful search engines, advanced mobile devices and

interfaces, peer-to-peer communication vehicles, and online social networks have extended marketers' ability to reach shoppers through new touch points" (Shankar et al. 2011, 30).

Shopper marketing is a new concept that has emerged, creating a new touch point for the interactions between businesses and consumers. Shopper marketing is "the planning and execution of all marketing activities that influence a shopper along, and beyond, the entire path of purchase, from the point at which the motivation to shop first emerges through purchase, consumption, repurchase, and recommendation" (Shankar et al. 2011, 29). Perceived fit is an important factor for retailers to consider for shopper marketing; perceived fit is the amount of similarity between an extension product category and existing products affiliated with the brand (DeVecchio and Smith as cited in Cha 2009).

The more people perceive shopping services on social networking sites as useful and easy to use, the more likely they are willing to shop for items on social networks (Cha 2009). Providing shopping services on social networks can provide business growth for retailers due to the diversity of consumers who use social media sites. The wide range of consumers utilizing social networks means that most target markets can be reached (Cha 2009). This provides an effective platform for retailers to promote their brand and products to potential consumers. According to Shankar et al. (2011), shopper marketing can join forces with shoppers to improve products, create clear messages, identify promoters, and serve as a connection to in-store activities, thus demonstrating the importance of social media within a retailer's marketing plan.

Advancements within social media sites have created consumer communities that are defining new ways in which companies and customers can interact with one another to share information on brand products. For example, virtual brand communities are creating a computer-generated space for consumers and retailers to connect with one another via marketing.

Virtual Brand Community

A main topic being studied involving social media as a marketing tool is Virtual Brand Communities (VBC). “VBC can be described as aggregations of consumers that occur on the internet because of their interest in some brand or product” (Muniz and O’Guinn as cited in Georgi and Mink 2012, 3). Specifically, a brand community is a group of people who share the same interest in a particular brand or product (Casaló, Favián and Guinalú 2008). Overall, VBC’s are “the site[s] of complex brand meaning creation and consumption efforts” (Muñiz and Jensen Schau, 2007). Casaló, Favián and Guinalú (2008) found when a member is trusting of the VBC that they are part of, it increases their amount of participation, and consumers who have a positive participation experience are more loyal to the brand.

Trust is a central aspect to guarantee the VBC’s survival. Cha (2009) concludes that security is a major factor affecting a consumer’s opinions toward social networking sites and can ultimately impact trust. Since VBCs depend on individual users’ participation, both group unity and awareness can strengthen users’ satisfaction with a VBC (Casaló, Favián and Guinalú 2008). The study done by Casaló, Favián and Guinalú (2008) demonstrates the powerful sway VBC and an online interaction between consumers can have on their buying behavior.

Studies also found that within these VBCs many new forms of social interactions are taking place such as Electronic Consumer to Consumer Interaction (eCCI), which are interactions between consumers of e-services (Georgi and Mink 2012). The chance to mingle with other people is a fundamental part of the consumer experience and social networking sites have become a way in which consumers can interact with one another and retailers (Georgi and Mink 2012). Because of eCCI, consumers are playing a more dominant role in influencing each other with their consumption decisions. Georgi and Mink (2012) came up with the concept of electronic consumer to consumer interaction quality (eCCIq).

They found that seven factors contribute to the success of eCCIq. These include content, security, hedonic (meaning the emotional aspects of consumers' interactions with products), quality, atmosphere, convenience, and social. An example of eCCI (which is any interaction between consumers of e-services) is when a consumer posts a question about the fit or color of a product displayed online and another consumer answers the question. This eCCI event would presumably be of high quality if the question is answered by another consumer quickly, correctly, and in a friendly manner. This example of an interaction between consumers involves some of the factors associated with eCCIq such as social and convenience, thus making it an eCCIq occurrence.

Consumers feel more engaged with products and companies when they have the option to submit feedback (Mangold and Faulds 2009). Accordingly, it is important for retailers to be aware of the quality of their social media presence even when

consumers are the creators of their marketing because it is increasingly influencing how consumers shop. Companies need to be aware of the variety of factors that affect their social media presence such as a consumer's social identity online.

Some VBC research focused on the concept of social identity and group norms as an aspect that strongly influences online groups' buying behavior. The nature and culture of social media groups affect the ways members of such groups interpret and attach meaning to brands and products (Muñiz and Jensen Schau, 2007). Group norms represent the set of shared goals, beliefs, and values that the group members follow. Social identity refers to the values and beliefs that influence group related behavior (Zeng, Huang, and Dou 2009). Community members within a strong social group were more likely to have group intentions to accept advertising in online communities (Zeng, Huang, and Dou 2009). For instance, if a Facebook group is centered on luxury brands, then ads pertaining to high-end products are more relevant to members of the VBC. Some members consume ads more easily by accepting the meanings in which they contain, while others interpret the ads by attaching meaning to the brand represented based on their own experiences (Muñiz and O'Guinn as cited in Muñiz and Jensen Schau, 2007).

Moreover, VBC members value ads that are relevant to the theme of their community. Muñiz and Jensen Schau (2007) found advertising and branding produce discouragement of the intended meaning of the ad in order to serve the meaning of the distinct group, in this circumstance the brand community. A VBC can alter or manipulate the true meaning of an ad by the way it displays or uses an ad for branding. Many times, VBC's change the meaning of an ad by the way it is presented

on the community forum. A VBC can alter an ad to conform to the theme of its community, therefore the ad's true meaning gets lost. An individual's identity within social media combined with the social community's customs affects the way in which people perceive ads presented on social media. Community customs can be affected by users' cultural backgrounds as well.

Pookulangara and Koesler (2011) used the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to look at the impact of culture on social media. TAM highlights the role and procedures connected to perceived usefulness and perceived ease of technology. TAM suggests that the factors that determine perceived usefulness will not influence perceived ease of use and the factors that influence perceived ease of use will not influence perceived usefulness (Pookulangara and Koesler 2011). The researchers used TAM to find out if an individual's cultural background affects perceived ease and perceived usefulness in order to discern users' behavioral intention towards social media. More specifically, the researchers used TAM to determine if an individual's cultural background influences how they will interpret a message, event, or idea presented to them through a social networking site. This was done through a conceptual framework in which the researchers created a research model using TAM.

Based on the research model, Pookulangara and Koesler (2011) conclude that culture does in fact influence how individuals act and perceive an event on technology based applications, such as social media. This means that an individual's cultural or ethnic background will influence how they will interpret social media and its content. "Social networking has allowed the evolution of new culture where it is no longer

shaped by just individual values and ideologies, but also by new rituals and communication tools in the social space of Web 2.0” (Pookulangara and Koesler 2011, 352). Retailers need to be conscious of the importance of culture when utilizing social media, since social networks are a merging of different cultures and the creation of new online cultures (Pookulangara and Koesler 2011). In addition, cultural backgrounds and traditions may factor into the formulation of a consumer’s opinion and attitude towards a brand or product.

Consumer Attitudes/Motives

It is vital for retailers and marketers to be aware of the factors that affect consumer attitudes and motives because consumers are increasingly creating content about brands, something previously controlled solely by companies (Heinonen 2011). As a result, current research has examined what aspects of social media sites affect consumer attitudes and motives. Chu (2011) examined the link between Facebook brand related group participation, advertising responses, and the psychological factors of self-disclosure and attitudes among members and non-members of Facebook groups. The study determined that users who are members of groups on Facebook are more likely to disclose their personal data than nonmembers are. Chu (2011) explains group participation and engagement with online ads requires a higher level of personal information because users openly reveal their connections with Facebook groups and promote brands or products when they pass on ads to their friends. “Facebook groups provide channels that consumers deem useful when seeking self-status in a product category, as does passing on viral content about brands to their social contacts” (Chu 2011, 40).

Chu (2011) also found that users who are Facebook group members maintain a more favorable attitude toward social media and advertising. Users who have more positive attitudes toward advertising are more likely to join a brand or a retailer's Facebook group to receive promotional messages. Based on this result, Chu (2011) suggests that a link exists between consumers' use of and engagement in group applications on a social media sites. The relationship between consumers' use of and engagement with group applications influences the rate and effectiveness of advertising on social media, particularly Facebook. Generally, as Chu (2011) notes, Facebook's college-aged users have the most favorable attitudes toward social media advertising and are the largest growing demographic, which suggests that social media sites are a potentially rich platform for online advertising campaigns, especially for companies with a younger target market.

Cox (2010) also investigated the correlation between age and attitude and found that social network user attitude toward online advertising formats (i.e. blogs, video, and brand channel or page) differed to some extent across age groups. She explains that users who fall in the 18-28 age brackets had strong positive attitudes towards blogs, video, and brand channel ad formats. This was because users' found these ad formats to be eye catching, informative, and amusing. The 35-54 age groups preferred ad formats on video and brand channels because they found them to be more eye catching, informative, and had better placement within the online page layout. Overall, online advertising formats with positive attributes are welcomed by users; however, ads that are intrusive or interfere with online social networking activities, such as pop up, expandable, or floating formatted ads were disliked by network users (Cox 2010).

According to Chi (2011) users perceive advertising differently depending on the social network, which suggests user motivations for online social networking may play a vital role in defining consumer's responses to social media marketing. As mentioned previously in the explanation of Pookulangara and Koesler's (2011) study, the technology acceptance model (TAM) was also used by Harris and Dennis (2011). Harris and Dennis (2011), however, used TAM as a loose framework that combined trust and the factors associated with TAM (i.e. perceived enjoyment, ease of use, and usefulness). The TAM determined that consumers, specifically students, hold a hierarchy of trust when using social media such as Facebook.

Student's trust 'real' friends, then Facebook friends, followed by expert blogs and independent review sites and lastly celebrities and e-retailer sites (Harris and Dennis 2011). Di Pietro and Pantano (2012) conducted further research using the TAM to discern that enjoyment is the major factor that influences consumers to use social networks as a platform for assisting in their buying decisions. They found that the fun provided by Facebook, as well as the opportunity it provides users to ask for suggestions in an easy and entertaining way, motivates individuals to pay more attention to the products promoted on Facebook. "Facebook promotes a consumer to consumer approach, exploited by consumers to share experiences and create a common knowledge on products and services; on the other, it provides managers a direct channel for communicating with clients through a business to consumer approach" (Di Pietro and Pantano 2012, 20). Retailers can improve their Facebook page appeal by adding games, contests, and interactive applications, which can attract more users (Di Pietro and Pantano 2012).

However, retailers also need to be educated on consumer's attitudes when it comes to social media marketing. A deeper understanding of how consumers perceive social marketing will help ensure marketing strategies are effective. Consumer activities of consumption, participation, and production are not related to just one motivation according to Heinonen (2011), who concluded that consumer activities are a combination of a variety of motivations. The classic notion of individuals as mere consumers is outdated; consumers can now be seen as active producers of business value because user generated content is reducing the influence of traditional marketing tactics (Heinonen 2011). Awareness of consumer's motives is important because it provides a deeper understanding of what influences users to create content about a brand or store.

User Generated Content

“While social media provides never ending avenues for communicating, it is the individuals who serve as the influencers not the technology” (Gonzalez 2010, 23). User generated content produces social currency for marketers because it helps define a brand. User generated content describes “the sum of all ways in which people make use of social media, usually applied to describe the various forms of media content that are publicly available and created by end users” (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010, 61). Therefore, social currency is when individuals share a brand or information about a brand (Zinnbauer and Honer 2011). Social currency greatly affects brand performance and is a concept that can be linked to Bourdieu's (1977) and Coleman's (1988) idea of social capital. Social capital is shaped on a personal level and occurs in the relationships among individuals (Zinnbauer and Honer 2011).

Furthermore, the amount of an individual's social capital depends on the size of the network of connections that the user can successfully mobilize (Bourdieu as cited in Zinnbauer and Honer 2011). An individual's connections can potentially aid in developing brands into an essential part of customers' social interactions via social networking. "Translating [Bourdieu's] theory into today's world of exponentially increasing social interactions on the internet, social currency can also be understood as the entirety of actual and potential resources available to a brand from its presence in social networks and communities" (Zinnbauer and Honer 2011, 51).

There are six components of social currency: affiliation, conversation, utility, advocacy, information, and indemnity (Zinnbauer and Honer 2011). Social currencies come from interactions between consumers and are usually beyond the direct control of a firm (Zinnbauer and Honer 2011). Through their empirical study, Zinnbauer and Honer (2011) establish that although social currency consists of six different components, brands do not rely on all of them to facilitate brand loyalty among users. It was discovered however, that what made a brand successful was being an essential part of people's daily lives. When a brand becomes integrated into a consumer's daily life, it enables consumers to connect, interact, and benefit from likeminded brand users, and thus, the likelihood of consumer generated advertising for a brand increases (Zinnbauer and Honer 2011).

Consumer Generated Advertising (CGA) is a form of user-generated content, which refers to specific instances where consumers create the brand, focused messages with the purpose of informing, persuading, or reminding others (Campbell et al. 2011). Muñiz and Jensen Schau (2007) and Pehlivan, Sarican, and Berthon (2011) use the

term vigilante marketing to describe CGA. Vigilante marketing is defined as “unpaid advertising and marketing efforts, including one to one, one to many, and many to many commercially oriented communications, undertaken by brand loyalists on behalf of the brand” (Muñiz and Jensen Schau 2007, 35). Campbell et al. (2011) state that today, traditional marketing is coexisting with CGA. Retailers need to be aware of this because CGA can positively support traditional marketing or it can negatively impact and undermine it. Cheong and Morrison’s (2010) research supports the previous statement by explaining how the lack of research on the credibility of both positive and negative user generated content (UGC) highlights the need for retailers to be conscious and study UGC to completely understand its influence. Consumers are taking part in a diverse array of activities such as consuming content, participating in discussions, and sharing knowledge with other consumers, to contributing to other consumers’ activities (Heinonen 2011).

Pehlivan, Sarican, and Berthon (2011) chose a grounded theory approach to compare CGA with Firm Generated Advertising (FGA), specifically for the large well-known Apple Corporation. They found that CGA differs from FGA because each type of ad (CGA or FGA) elicits different discussion content surrounding the ad. Consumers express appreciation for FGA, but found CGA to be more entertaining causing consumers to talk about the ad more (Pehlivan, Sarican, and Berthon 2011). Cheong and Morrison’s 2008 study was similar; they examined the difference between UGC and producer generated content (PGC), which refers to content created by marketers of products, by interviewing college students. Overall, the study found that consumers hold more trust in product information created by other consumers than information generated from manufactures. Consumers’ read other consumers’ opinions to

decrease their risks and obtain pre-purchase information; therefore, other consumers' information emerges as more important than advertising, thus, individuals who post UGC become opinion leaders (Cheong and Morrison 2008). Another study that centered on CGA was conducted by Taylor, Strutton, and Thompson (2012); like the fore mention studies, their research indicates that consumers trust CGA over ads produced by companies and the more entertaining the ad the more it will be passed on.

Taylor, Strutton, and Thompson (2012), found however, that social media users' message sharing behaviors are also attributed to the need for self-enhancement. When consumers perceive an online advertisement to be consistent with their identity, they are more likely to share the message with others because it is representative of who they are and what they like. Thus, "advertisers should consider the symbolic and self-expression properties of their online ads and match them to targeted consumers' self-concepts" (Taylor, Strutton, and Thompson 2012, 13). In other words, the marketing of a company needs to share similar characteristics with its target market's interest. All of the findings from these studies show the significance of CGA and its impact on online marketing.

Muñiz and Jensen Schau (2007) note that a lot of CGA is created quickly and spreads via e-mail without revealing who made it or if it is official corporate content. Therefore, brand managers now have to consider how to react when their brand is talked about by consumers (Campbell et al. 2011). Muñiz and Jensen Schau (2007) argue CGA is relevant to companies because it provides proof of consumer perceptions of brands and their feelings towards the brand. They also argue that CGA

is important because they are prime examples of persuasive marketing messages from brand loyalists. Moreover, CGA is only going to increase in frequency. Marketers have underestimated the possible consequences of interactive marketing on the Internet by not considering the influence consumers gain from CGA (Deighton and Kornfeld as cited in Pehlivan, Sarican, and Berthon 2011).

Zhang, Jansen, and Chowdhury (2011) specified that businesses should have a brand presence on many different social media sites to increase their consumer audience. “Research has shown that exposure to electronic word of mouth (eWOM) messages can generate more interest in a product category than can exposure to information produced by marketers” (Birkart and Schindler 2001 as cited in Zhang, Jansen, and Chowdhury 2011, 161). Today, consumers are more knowledgeable of the products they consume due to the internet empowering them to gain access to information thus, creating active co-producers of value (Zhang, Jansen, and Chowdhury 2011). Consumers as co-producers of value can provide companies with a large amount of return on investment because it is increasing brand awareness, which signifies the importance of eWOM in today’s marketing world. “Social media such as Facebook allow target consumers to become message senders by passing on ads to friends, connecting them to the advertisers explicitly, or commenting on the ad and having those comments passed along viral channels” (Interactive Advertising Bureau 2009 as cited in Chu 2011, 32).

Additionally, businesses are realizing the need to create their own brand presences on social media not only to control some of its brand marketing, but also to stay informed and keep track of the consumer-generated content surrounding their brand.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) state that although companies cannot directly control consumer to consumer messages, they do have the ability to influence the conversations consumers partake in surrounding their brand.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) correspondingly state that consumer's capacity to communicate with one another restricts the amount of control companies have over the content and distribution of data. Social currency gained through UGC can and should be managed by companies. Firms must carefully lessen risks involved as their brands become an essential part of the larger communities found within social networks (Jones et al. as cited in Zinnbauer and Honer 2011). Viral advertising is a way in which brands are becoming a vital part of social media. As more and more consumers look to Facebook groups as trusted sources of information and opinions, new opportunities arise to build consumer-brand relationships and viral advertising platforms (Chu 2011).

Viral Advertising

Viral advertising has become a way in which retailers are marketing and providing more information on their brands or products. A viral approach to online advertising has a major advantage because communication is more targeted to a brand's intended consumer (Bampo et al., 2008). This can be attributed to the fact that "viral communication affords the marketer a greater degree of creative license through a message delivery medium that is more intimate and personalized, thereby increasing the likelihood of reaching hard to get audience members" (Bampo et al. 2008, 274). Viral advertising is "unpaid peer to peer communication of provocative content originating from an identified sponsor using the Internet to persuade or influence an

audience to pass along the content to others” (Porter and Golan as cited by Chu 2011, 31). Viral advertising differs from UGC because an identified sponsor is associated with the ad, thus signifying the origin of the ad and who created it. Numerous studies of viral advertising have found that humor, sexuality, stealth, and positive experiences are relevant factors that contribute to the success of viral advertising.

Golan and Zaidner (2008) studied viral ads from large companies. They applied Taylor’s six-segmented strategy wheel to conduct a content analysis of 360 viral ads. They found that humor and sexuality are the main advertising factors used to attract consumers to viral ads, and if consumers are entertained by the ads, they are more likely to share or pass on the ads to their friends and family. Golan and Zaidner (2008) also discovered that ads placed in the right location could produce word of mouth that can sometimes last for years. Ferguson (2008) investigated ad campaigns from larger well-known companies and measured the amount of consumer response to analyze how viral marketing strategies affect return on investment. Through their research, both Ferguson (2008) and Chu (2011), however, found viral marketing campaigns are not always effective or desirable for companies because many group members hesitate to pass on viral ads to their Facebook friends. It was also concluded that many users simply ignore online viral ads.

Kelly et al. (2010) determined that three factors influencing ad avoidance online: interruption of task, perceived clutter on the Internet sites, and negative past experiences with Internet advertising. “Research shows the believability of trustworthiness of the medium influences how the consumer views the credibility of the information offered” (Moore and Rodgers as cited in Kelly et al. 2010, 17). Based

on this study, the majority of ads featured on social networking sites are not relevant to consumers, and they only notice ads when it annoys or entertains them. It has become clear that advertisements that provide entertainment are usually liked and accepted which reconfirms the results of some previous studies.

Because social media provides a new stage for brand marketing and consumers are actively contributing to the communication by marketing brands, businesses have become creative when trying to gain control of their marketing (Chi 2011). Tactics such as viral stealth marketing described as “a marketer’s attempt to fly below consumer radar by recruiting brand pushers to pose as consumers” has become a new way in which marketers are trying to control social currency (Kaitkati and Kaikati as cited in Golan and Zaidner 2008, 961). When companies use viral stealth marketing they attempt to gain currency in the form of consumer to consumer recommendations, which are argued as the strongest of all consumer activities (Kaitkati and Kaikati as cited in Golan and Zaidner 2008). Viral stealth marketing strategies are designed to inspire consumer-to-consumer communication about a brand or product. Consumer to consumer communication is the dominate force for distributing messages created by advertisers; for that reason retailers need to look at marketing in a whole new way and include social media marketing within their business plan (Golan and Zaidner 2008).

Pavlou and Stewart (2000) came up with another approach to measure the effectiveness of a company’s participation in interactive advertising. One set of measures focuses on media choice, information search, and attention to the processing of information. The second set of measures focuses on the effects of

consumers' using interactive media (Pavlou and Stewart, 2000). Retailers can keep track of the type of information users of interactive media seek, which can determine the information that consumers find most useful when assessing a product (Pavlou and Stewart 2000). This is a key concept for retailers to consider when factoring in how responsive consumers will be to their promotional and marketing strategies placed on social media. "The reciprocal communication between marketer and consumer will make it difficult to isolate the influence of anyone advertising exposure; this means that the focus of advertising evaluation will need to shift from a focus on outcomes to a focus on both process and outcome"(Pavlou and Stewart 2000,74). Ultimately, the role of the consumer has changed and it is important to measure how consumers interact with online ads in order to create successful social media marketing campaigns.

2.2 Events-a definition

According to Yeoman, Robertson, Ali-Knight, Drummond and McMahon-Beattie, (2004) events were originally a celebration of ceremony and ritual – and were a reflection of a culture and a community. This is echoed by McDonnell, Allen and O'Toole (cited in Yeoman et al 2004, p54) who state that they are "specific rituals... or celebrations that are consciously planned and created to mark special occasions... it is impossible to provide a definition that includes all varieties of events." However, Getz, (1997) points that there is an increasing interest in "unique leisure and cultural experiences". Festivals are a good example of how community and culture are brought together (Jepson and Clarke, 2015, p20) and "provide authenticity and uniqueness" (Yeoman et al, 2004, p32) for their consumers.

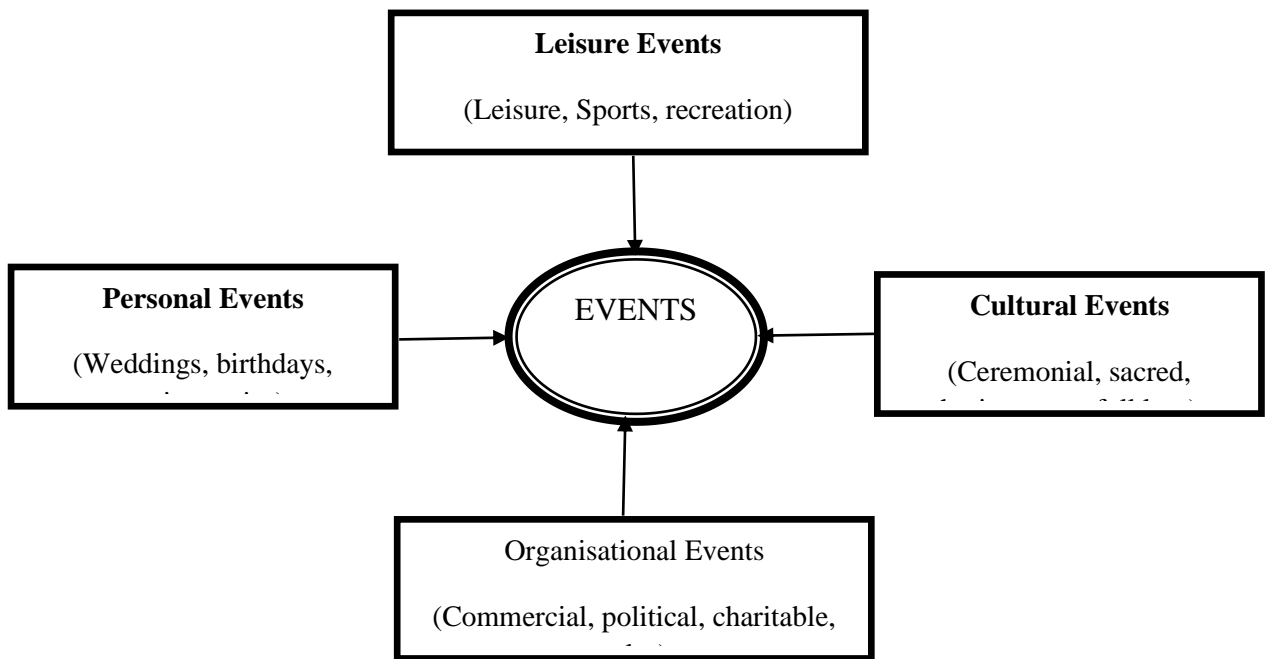


Figure 2.2: A Suggested Categorisation of Special Events (Shone and Parry, 2013)

As stated by Shone and Parry (2013, p7) events can be grouped into four broad categories based on the concept of events having leisure, cultural, personal or organisational objectives.” Shone and Parry (2013) further suggest that most events, if not all, would overlap into more than one category. For example, commercial music festivals, which have become “a hugely popular phenomenon” (Bowdin, Allen, O’Toole, Harris and McDonnell, 2011, p23) could overlap into other categories, such as cultural and leisure. This is strengthened by Getz (2012, p40) who states that “any event can fulfil multiple functions, facilitate similar experiences and have many meanings attached to it.”

UK festivals can be divided into single-theme and multi-theme events (New Leisure Markets, 1995). An example of a single theme festival could be a folk festival. Preston (2012) suggests that festivals play an important role in the sharing of

experiences, they perform a “serious social function” and they allow attendees to represent “expressions of identity and community.” Furthermore, Preston (2012, p38) states that before the ease of communication through global networks “festivals provided common and shared experiences... festivals break down barriers, making it effortless to enjoy social congress.” Therefore, if festivals have social ease and experience at their core then marketing is potentially a tool to get this message out there.

2.3 Benefiting from using social media marketing

The route for companies to start benefiting from social media marketing started when “In 2007, Facebook finally let organizations create brand pages. It was touted, essentially, as free marketing access to Facebook’s growing audience of highly desirable young adults” (Con 2015). This led to a scenario where “Brands realized how powerful social marketing could be and began investing in bigger teams and more thought-out social strategies” (Con 2015). This made it possible for customers to communicate back to the companies and that two-way communication created a big opportunity, which caused the brand owners to react and start using social media as a major customer service channel (Con 2015).

It has been echoed by some authors that social media platforms increase reach and reduce costs by providing three areas of advantage for customers”(Watson et al. 2002; Sheth & Sharma 2005, in Nadaraja & Yazdanifard) and within these three advantage areas we can recognize and support what Con said about brand owners starting to use social media as a major customer service channel.

The three advantage areas being “the marketing firm can provide unlimited information to customers without human intervention, social media marketing firm can create interactions by customizing information for individual customers that allow customers to design products and services that meet their specific requirements, social media platforms can allow transactions between customers and firms that would typically require human contact” (Watson et al. 2002; Sheth & Sharma 2005, in Nadaraja & Yazdanifard). Now when “every day 864 million people around the world check Facebook” (Peterson 2015), it is not a surprise that “social media networks are just new channels for your brand’s voice and content” (DeMers 2014).

2.4 Measuring the profitability of social media marketing

When in 2007 Facebook allowed organizations to create brand pages it was enough for companies to just reach their audience and get a message in front of them and that was already regarded as a success and as a small return on investment (ROI), while the investment was small as well (Con, 2015). “As the social networks continued to grow and mature, social marketers also became more sophisticated“(Con, 2015) and so it became necessary to figure out a way to calculate a ROI for social media marketing. When talking about calculating and collecting some kind of data to be measured from doing social media marketing another method in addition to ROI has to be looked at and that method is KPI (key performance indicators).

When measuring ROI you are nearly always measuring something in financial terms, like increased revenue, cost savings, or cost avoided as a result of an investment but you should also consider KPIs – numerical “key performance indicators” like conversions or new registrations, also the intangible value of having a presence in

specific social channels (Evans, 2010:141). This is supported by Zarrella as well; “The actual metrics you’ll use to measure your accomplishments toward a goal are called key performance indicators (KPIs).

For in-stance, if one is trying to increase your reach on Twitter, your KPI could be followers, and your stated goal should include an exact number of followers” (Zarrella, 2010:221). There are systems available that will help a company to actively monitor Twitter for mentions of a company’s products or services and ascertain the social influence of those talking about them, this will help in prioritizing a company’s response effort which is decidedly not free (Evans, 2010:128). Then in accordance to what Zarrella said before about the KPI being for example followers on twitter, Evans states also that the data collected about the twitter mentions of a company that “This data translates directly into meaningful key performance indicators (KPIs), too: The number of mentions on Twitter, positives versus negatives, average influencer rankings, and mean response time are all examples of KPIs.” (Evans, 2010:128).

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion the chapter has established that social media is an indispensable platform for organizations to use in promoting its events. As a result of the reach of social media it would be easy to reach a wider audience as compared to traditional means of marketing events.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the method followed to achieve the objectives of the research. The researcher conducted interviews and administered questionnaire at Excellence in Broadcasting Network (EIB) in order to acquire a more accurate and concise data for the work.

3.1 Research design

The descriptive research design was deemed best method for gathering data for this study. This research design consists of the processes for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative data (e.g., experiments, surveys) (Creswell and Plano, 2011; Erzberger and Prein, 1997). This approach to research is to describe and analyse the relationship between a given set of variables. The descriptive research design in this study, involved the use of quantitative data.

Quantitative data includes close-ended information such as that found to measure attitudes (e.g., rating scales), behaviours (e.g., observation checklists), and performance instruments (Bryman, 2006). The analysis of this type of data consists of statistically analysing scores collected on instruments (e.g., questionnaires) or checklists to answer research questions or to test hypotheses.

The quantitative data for this study was mainly collected through a survey of staff of the EIB Network. The data focused on the benefits obtained and the challenges

encountered from the use of social media for event promotion. In addition, the data collected focused on the measures to be adopted to enhance the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry. .

3.2 Population

A research population is a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics. All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have a common, binding characteristic or trait (Sutherland, 2008). The population consisted of all staff and members of EIB which were 89, as these persons were collectively responsible for using social media to promote the events that the company had for each calendar year.

3.3 Sample and sampling procedure

A sample can be defined as a subject or sub group of a population which must be a true representative sample of a large population (Nortey, 2011). This study was conducted during business hours of staff and for that matter, the technique used to draw the sample had to be non-probability based. The study therefore sample respondents who were available using convenient sampling and selected those who were well aware of the social media strategies that were used by the organization more often. Using convenience and judgmental sampling techniques, the sample size for the study consisted of fifty (50) respondents who were all staff and management members. The sample size of the study would constitute 5 senior manager, 15 supervisors/ middle managers and 30 common staff members.

3.4 Instrument

A questionnaire is a group or sequence of questions designed to elicit information upon a subject, or sequence of subjects, from an informant (Ekwonwa, 2007). A structured questionnaire was adopted, because it has a mixed sequence of both the open and closed-ended approach to asking question. This approach allows respondents to answer questions predetermined by the research and at the same time the freedom to answer in their own words and provide greater qualification in their response with regards to how social media is helping the organisation promote its events.

3.5 Data collection procedure

Prior to the presentation of the questionnaire a trial survey was conducted with five colleagues who filled and submitted a draft copy of the questionnaire. This was to provide an opportunity to identify any potential difficulties with the contents or administration of the survey and also to assure the reliability of the results, since it was done to closely match the intended survey respondents in terms of their work activities, skills and knowledge.

The questionnaires were distributed to staff members when they first report to work in the morning and it was retrieved during noon time. The views of management members was also sought whilst working their various offices. However, before then a sample of the questionnaire and an introduction letter was sent to the corporate head of EIB for vetting and approval to proceed with the research. The corporate head then assigned the head of marketing to work with the researcher to ensure that all the data needed was gathered.

3.6 Data analysis procedure

The data collection would be conducted through personal contact. Majority of the questionnaire especially those completed by the staff members was censored and all uncompleted questionnaires were removed by the researcher to ensure that all questionnaires had been properly filled.

The data was then organized and summarized in a more convenient way to make it simpler to interpret. The research adopted Microsoft Excel spread sheet to tabulate frequency tables and percentages in the data analysis. The use of tables and charts provided an effective analysis of data in the light of research objectives.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This section of the study presents the data obtained from the field work and conducts an analysis of the findings. Further the study compares to existing literature to determine the extent to which the findings are similar or otherwise.

4.1 Gender of respondents

Per the requirements of the research question the respondents provided their gender as tabulated as follows;

Table 4.1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	19	28
Female	31	72
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

As noted in Table 4.1 above, 31(72%) female staff members and 19(28%) male staff members of the company participated in the study. Moreover, being a marketing company it was not unusual that there were more females than males since females according to Carrabis (2019) do better in terms of marketing company products and services than their male counterparts.

4.2 Age of Respondents

The ages of the staff members as displayed reflects a young staff with only 7(14%) above 45 years. Moreover, most of these persons above 45 were in the managerial positions. These results are displayed in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Age distribution of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-25	9	18
26-35	24	48
36-45	10	20
45 years and above	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

As can be observed in Table 4.2 above, 24(48%) respondents were in the age category of 26-45. Marginally following are 10(20%) respondents between the ages of 36-45 years. Next, 9(18%) were 18-25 years whilst their senior counterparts were aged above 45 years (7=14%). Studies such as McQuerrey (2019) have argued that having a young and vibrant staff members is key and relevant in staying competitive. However, having persons who are older and have the relevant industry experience is key to maintaining competitive advantage because they are assumed to have a more knowledge in traditional business skills and are able to appeal to the older generation. More importantly they do not rush in taking business decisions (McQuerrey, 2019).

4.3 Educational background of respondents

The study required the respondents to provide their educational background. This is because some research (Guerard, 2016) has suggested that the educational background to an extent influences the responses to research questionnaire and understanding of issues in general. The results on the educational background of respondents are shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Educational background of respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Basic Education/ incomplete/O'level	-	0
A 'level/SSS/SHS	-	0
Diploma/ First/ Second degree	31	62
Professional	14	28
Others	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

From Table 4.3 above, a majority of respondents(31), representing 62% of the sample, have attained Diploma/ First/ Second degree in various disciplines including finance, marketing, public relations, business management. and project management. Meanwhile, 14 (28%) respondents possessed professional qualifications in ACCA, ICA and LCM. Five (5)(10%) of the respondents indicated that they had other educational background including certificates in project management, entrepreneurship and marketing management.

4.4 Length of working

The working length to a great extent influences on their understanding of the market, customers and work demand. As seen a good number have however been with the company for less than 10 years. Details in the table reflects the length of working of staff members of the company;

Table 4.3: Length of working

Years	Frequency	Percentage (%)
3 years and below	9	18
4-7 years	21	42
7-10 years	14	28
Above 10 years	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

It is indicated in the table that a majority of 21 (42%) respondents have been with the firm for a period of 4-7 years. Following were 14(28%) respondents which has served the company for a period of 7-10 years. Next, 9 (18%) respondents indicated that for the past 3 years they have been working with the company under study. Meanwhile, only 3 respondents have been with the company for above 10 years. It is important to note that EIB has been in operation for about 15 years. Respondents were asked about the length of work experience because staff members who had spent a longer time with the company would have gained more experience with the use of social media to promote the events of the company.

4.5 Use of social media to promote events

In pursuance of the objectives of the study respondents were required to indicate if the company uses social media to promote its events. All respondents as reflected in the table admitted that social media has become an important marketing tool;

Table 4.4: Use of social media for event promotion

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	50	100
No	0	0
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

4.6 Social Media Platform

The research required the respondents to indicate the social media platforms used by the company in promoting its events. Response obtained are noted below;

Table 4.5: Social Media Platform

Platform	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	42	25
Whatsapp	50	29.8
Twitter	37	22.0
Youtube	14	8.3
Instagram	14	8.3
Pinterest	-	0
Linkedin	-	0
Snapchart	11	6.6
Other		
Total	168	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

From the responses the main social media used by the company is WhatsApp which was marked by 50(29.8%) respondents. Respondents noted that this is because more people have WhatsApp than they have Facebook. Also, according to respondents WhatsApp is relatively cheaper as compared to that of the other platforms used in the marketing of events. Especially compared to traditional means of marketing events. Next, 42(25%) respondents were of the view that Facebook was a platform that the company relies on to market the events of the company.

Respondents were quick to add that Facebook is a very important platform in marketing of events because it is more interactive and reaches audience beyond the country and this is an important aspect because their event is a cross country event (Ghana, Nigeria and other southern African countries). Twitter followed suit with 37(22%) respondents. Respondents explained that twitter does not cost as compared to the previously mentioned one but more of the youth are on Facebook and with the WhatsApp package because of the interactive nature.

Responses showed YouTube and Instagram both had 14(8.3%) marks as being marketing platforms used by the company. These last two can all be linked to Facebook and WhatsApp. In recognisance to the findings of the study Paquette (2013) notes that ‘the tools and approaches for communicating with customers have changed greatly with the emergence of social media; therefore, businesses must learn how to use social media in a way that is consistent with their business plan. This is especially true for companies striving to gain a competitive advantage’. The results suggested that the EIB Network had been heavily involved in promoting their events with social media in order to reach more clients and gain some kind of competitive advantage in the market.

4.7 Effectiveness of social media platform

The study sought to determine the extent to which the social media platform used was effective in marketing the events of the company.

Table 4.6: Effectiveness of social media platform

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very effective	28	56
Effective	14	28
Neutral	1	2
Ineffective	7	14
Very ineffective	-	0
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

From the responses obtained a majority of 28(56%) staff and management members of the company affirmed that the platform used (in this case Facebook, WhatsApp, twitter, YouTube and Instagram) was very effective. This position was complimented by 14(28%) other staff members who avowed that it was effective.

On the opposite side were 7 (14%) respondents who argued that it was ineffective and hence need for improvement. Meanwhile, 1 (2%) respondent remained neutral on the issue. Safko (2012) is cited by Sproul (2018) as suggesting that social media is a much more effective way of marketing than conventional ways.

Safko (2012, p5) further states that the consumer no longer trusts corporate messages; consumers “want their information from people they know, have a relationship with, and share a bond with through trust.” Moreover, “social media marketing is all about

listening first, understanding the conversation, and speaking last” (Safko, 2012, p6).

As a result, social media is widely used as marketing events and at events as well. In

some cases live events are transmitted via Facebook.

4.8 Motives for adoption of social media platform

To help in achieving the study objectives respondents were asked to indicate the motives behind the use of the previously stated social media platforms for the promotion of events.

Table 4.7: Motives for adoption of social media platform

Motive	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Modern and new trend	50	41.7
Competitor activities	17	14.2
Cost effectiveness	39	32.5
Stakeholder's decision	14	11.6
Others	-	0
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

As can be observed all 50 (41.7%) respondents were of the view that society is in the era of social media and hence it is the new trend and that among other reasons is why the company adopts social media in marketing its events. Next, 39(32.5%) respondents considered social media to be more effective and hence that is the motive for which it was adopted by the company. According to 17(14.2%) respondents another motive is birthed from competitor activities whilst 14(11.6%) argued that the reason for the adoption of social media is as a result of stakeholders' decision.

4.9 To identify the benefits associated with the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry

Respondents were asked to indicate their opinion with statements on the benefits associated with the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry.

Table 4.8: Benefits associated with use of social media

Benefits	EA	A	N	D	ED
Increased brand awareness	39	11			
Improved brand loyalty	37	10	3		
Cost-effectiveness	43	7			
Faster than other means	38	10	2		
Creates the platform for better customer satisfaction	27	16	7		

Source: Field Survey, 2019

First, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that social media increased brand awareness in the event management industry. Generally, respondents extremely agreed with that the statement (Mean = 1.22, SD = 0.419). Further analysis of results showed that all respondents, representing 100% of the sample, agreed or extremely agreed with the statement. No respondent disagreed with the statement.

Additional analysis also showed that out of the respondents who agreed with the statement, 31 respondents had basic education, 14 respondents had secondary

education and 5 respondents had graduated with a diploma, first degree or second degree.

Next respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that social media increased brand loyalty in the event management industry. Generally, the results showed that the respondents extremely agreed with the statement (Mean = 1.32, SD = 0.587). Further analysis of results showed that 47 respondents, representing 94% of the sample, agreed or extremely agreed with the statement whereas 3 respondents, representing 6% of the sample remained neutral or undecided. No respondent disagreed with the statement. Additional analysis showed that out of the respondents who agreed with the statement, 29 respondents had basic education, 14 had secondary education and 4 respondents had graduated from tertiary institutions.

Again, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that the use of social media in the event management industry was cost-effective. On average, the results showed that all the respondents extremely agreed with the statement (Mean = 1, SD = 0). Further analysis of results showed that from this distribution of responses, 31 respondents who agreed to the statement had basic education, 14 respondents had secondary education and 5 respondents had graduated from tertiary institutions.

Respondents were then asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that the use of social media in the event management industry was beneficial because social media was faster than other means. Generally, the respondents extremely agreed with the statement (Mean = 1.08, SD = 0.396).

Further analysis of results showed that 48 respondents, representing 96% of the sample, agreed or extremely agreed with the statement whereas 2 respondents, representing 4% of the sample, remained neutral or undecided on the statement. In addition, out of the respondents who agreed with the statement, 31 respondents had basic education, 13 respondents had obtained secondary education and 4 respondents had graduated from tertiary institutions with diplomas, first degrees or second degrees.

Finally, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that the use of social media in the event management industry was beneficial because social media created the platform for better customer satisfaction. Generally, respondents extremely agreed with the statement (Mean = 1.36, SD = 0.776). Further analysis of results showed that 41 respondents, representing 82% of the sample, agreed or extremely agreed with the statement whereas 9 respondents, representing 18% of the sample, remained neutral or undecided on the statement. In addition, out of the respondents who agreed with the statement, 23 respondents had basic education, 13 respondents had secondary education and 5 respondents had graduated from tertiary institutions with diplomas, first degrees or second degrees.

From the results obtained, it can be deduced that social media had advantages for the company and its event promotion. Specifically, the results suggested that the use of social media in event promotion was beneficial in form of increased brand awareness and loyalty, ensuring cost-effectiveness, efficiency and better customer satisfaction.

4.10 Impact of social media on Marketing Material

The views of the respondents was sought to determine if the adoption of social media has had an impact on the marketing material of the company.

Table 4.9: Impact of social media on Marketing Material

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	47	94
No	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

As indicated a good number of 47(94%) stated that it has impacted on their marketing materials in terms of branding. They noted that in these times there is reduction in print adverts and an increase in social media advertising and in social media advertising there is the need to have a strong brand for it to have the impact one needs. Opposing this view were a menial 3 who argued that the use of social media has not impacted on the marketing material of the company. Shankar et al. (2011) observes that social media has advanced from simply providing a platform for individuals to stay in touch with their family and friends. Now it is a place where consumers can learn more about their favourite companies and the products they sell. Also, marketers and retailers are utilizing these sites as another way to reach consumers and provide a new way to shop.

According to Shankar et al. (2011) technology related developments such as the rise of powerful search engines, advanced mobile devices and interfaces, peer-to-peer communication vehicles, and online social networks have extended marketers' ability to reach shoppers through new touch points".

4.11 To investigate the attendant challenges of using social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry

In this section, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements relating to the challenges of using social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry.

Table 4.10: Challenges associated with employing social media in promoting events

Challenges	EA	A	N	D	ED
Too costly	3	7	9	13	18
Time consumption	-	7	8	14	21
Lack of knowledge to develop a social media strategy	-	-	1	25	24
Too many promotion on social media which is capable of distracting target market	6	9	7	10	18
Lack the human resource to effectively promote events on social media			9	14	31

Source: Field Survey, 2019

First respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that using social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry was too costly. On average, respondents seemed to be neutral or undecided on the statement (Mean = 3.22, SD = 1.183).

Further analysis of results showed that 10 respondents, representing 20% of the sample, agreed or extremely agreed with the statement whereas 31 respondents, representing 62% of the sample, disagreed or extremely disagreed with the statement. This left 9 respondents, who made up 18% of the sample, who remained neutral or undecided on the statement. Furthermore, of the respondents who disagreed with the statement, 19 respondents had basic education, 9 respondents had secondary education and 3 respondents had obtained tertiary education.

Next, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that the use of social media in the event management industry was a challenge because the use of social media is time consuming. Generally, the results showed that respondents seemed to remain neutral or undecided on the statement (Mean = 3.42, SD = 1.05). Additional analysis of results showed that 7 respondents, representing 14% of the sample, agreed or extremely agreed with the statement whereas 35 respondents, representing 70% of the sample disagreed or extremely disagreed with the statement. This left 8 respondents, who represented 16% of the sample, who remained neutral or undecided on the statement. Out of the respondents who disagreed with the statement, 21 respondents had basic education, 11 respondents had obtained secondary education and 3 respondents had graduated from tertiary institutions.

Again, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that the use of social media in the event management industry was a challenge because it prevented firms from developing a communication strategy. Generally, the results showed that the respondents disagreed with the statement (Mean = 4, SD = 0).

Further analysis showed that all the respondents, representing 100% of the sample, disagreed or extremely disagreed with the statement. Additional analysis showed that of the respondents who disagreed with the statement, 31 respondents had basic education, 14 respondents had secondary education and 5 respondents had graduated with tertiary education.

Furthermore, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that the use of social media in the event management industry was a challenge because too many promotions on social media had the capability to distract the target market. Generally, respondents remained neutral or undecided on the statement (Mean = 2.96, SD = 1.34). Further analysis of results showed that 15 respondents, representing 30% of the sample, agreed or extremely agreed with the statement, whereas 28 respondents, representing 56% of the sample, disagreed or extremely disagreed with the statement. This left 7 respondents, who made up 14% of the sample, and remained neutral or undecided on the statement.

Finally, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement that the use of social media in the event management industry was a challenge because social media lacked the human resource to effectively promote events. The results obtained showed respondents disagreed with the statement (Mean = 3.82, SD = 0.388).

Additional analysis of results showed that 41 respondents, representing 82% of the sample, disagreed or extremely disagreed with the statement. This left 9 respondents, who made up 18% of the sample, and remained neutral or undecided on the statement.

Furthermore, out of the respondents who disagreed with the statement, 26 respondents had basic education, 10 respondents had secondary education and 5 respondents had tertiary education.

The results obtained here suggested that respondents were disagreed that their use of social media to promote their events had serious challenges. The respondents disagreed that using social media to promote the events of their company was too costly, took too much time and distracted their target due to the plethora of social media options. In addition, the respondents indicated that they did not lack the knowledge to develop social media strategies and did not have any challenges with meeting the human resource requirements that social media required for the promotion of their events.

4.12 Dealing with challenges

To conclude the research questionnaire and to aid in achieving the fourth objective of the study respondents were required to provide solutions to the previously stated challenges.

Table 4.11: Challenges associated with use of social media to promote events

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Improve social media presence	16	32
Monitor social media activities	15	30
Social media team	9	18
Cut down costs	10	20
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

As shown in the table a good number of 16(32%) advocated for an improvement in the social media presence of the event organising firms. Next, after improving social media presence the respondents suggested that the organisation monitors' social media activities in order to determine which event or activity has generated lots of traffic. It was further suggested by 9 (18%) respondents that the organisation develops a social media team who would solely in charge of monitoring social media activities of the organisation and respond to enquiries by the customers. Finally, it was suggested by 10(20%) that the organisation should endeavour for the organisation to cut down cost of promoting events on social media platforms.

The results obtained suggested that respondents felt that certain specific strategies could enhance the benefits that they received from using social media to promote their events. These strategies included enhancing their social media presence,

monitoring social media activities, and constituting a regular social media team, which can manage the costs involved in using the social media services.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to summarise the key findings of the previous chapter, conclude and make recommendations for the study.

5.1 Summary of findings

The study first sought to determine whether social media had been used to promote events in the industry, using the EIB Network as a case study. In addition, the study also sought to highlight the benefits and challenges associated with of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry, and also highlight some measures that could be used to enhance the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry.

The results obtained showed that social media was used widely in the industry, especially for the EIB Network. Social media sites like WhatsApp (50=29.8%) Facebook (42=25%), Twitter (37=22%), Youtube and Instagram 14(8.3%), were among the most popular social media sites used by the company and for the industry implicitly.

Furthermore, the results obtained showed that social media offered industry players some benefits when used as a marketing tool, and the EIB Network had been benefitting from such benefits. Respondents extremely agreed that that social media increased brand awareness in the event management industry (Mean = 1.22, SD = 0.419), increased brand loyalty in the event management industry (Mean = 1.32, SD =

0.587), was cost-effective (Mean = 1, SD = 0), was faster than other means (Mean = 1.08, SD = 0.396), and created the platform for better customer satisfaction (Mean = 1.36, SD = 0.776).

However, regarding the challenges of using social media as a marketing tool, respondents disagreed that the EIB Network was experiencing any significant challenges, although it could not be the same for the industry. Respondents remained neutral and disagreed in some cases, that using social media as a marketing tool was too costly (Mean = 3.22, SD = 1.183), was time consuming (Mean = 3.42, SD = 1.05), hindered the development of a communication strategy (Mean = 4, SD = 0), distracted the target market (Mean = 2.96, SD = 1.34), and required a lot of human resource (Mean = 3.82, SD = 0.388).

Finally, on the strategies to be adopted to maximize the benefits of using social media as a marketing tool for EIB and for the industry at large, most respondents (32%) felt that improving social media presence was the lead strategy that the EIB Network and the industry at large should employ. Respondents also felt that event management companies and the EIB Network itself could conduct monitoring of social media activities (30%), constitute social media teams (18%) and cut down costs where necessary (20%).

These findings are consistent with the widely accepted view in the literature that social media is beneficial as a marketing tool for firms (Watson et al., 2002; Sheth & Sharma, 2005; DeMers, 2014).

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion both the literature and the findings has shown that social media is has become the new phase of event management and an indispensable tool in advertising reaching far and wider than the traditional tools. It is worth noting that the world is fast changing a result of technological advancement. Hence it is imperative that organisations reforms their events promotion approaches in order to reach a wider audience in a short time yet incurring minimum cost. However, in its bid use social media to promote and manage its event the organisation must consider all the possible problems that would come with it to deal with it ahead of time in order to stay competitive and ahead of its competitors.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations have been made;

It is important that the organisation designs a very clear and easy to understand promotions so that other promotions on social media does not overwhelm the organisations' promotion

Events management firms must shave teams equipped with the necessary information and know-how solely in charge of responding to comments, enquiries and questions on social media. Also the team is to monitor activities on social media and determine which platform is most effective.

Also, since social media sites can be exploited for the information it provides on consumer behaviour with regards to their purchasing intentions, research further

suggests that businesses should incorporate social networking sites into their business model or promotional mix.

The study further recommends that to stay relevant the event organisation organisation needs to keep up with the changes to ensure that they will be noticed by consumers, reinforcing the fact that more research would be valuable to the event organising organisation.

The same message should be sent across all social media platform to ensure uniformity of message for effective feedback by customers and the general public. Efforts must be made to ensure that the content is suitable for the intended targeted audience or customers.

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Appendix

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Research Questionnaire

These questionnaires are intended to collect data that will help the researcher to conduct a study evaluating the effectiveness of social media as a marketing tool for events: a case study of EIB. The exercise is for academic purpose only. Whatever information you give will be kept confidential. Please, complete this questionnaire with appropriate answers with brief reasons or tick where necessary.

PLEASE TICK (✓) OR WRITE WHERE APPROPRIATE

Demographic requirements

1. Gender of Respondents

- a. Male []
- b. Female []

2. Age of Respondents

- a. 18 - 25years []
- b. 26-35years []
- c. 36-45years []
- d. 45 years and above []

3. What is the highest educational level you have attained?

- a. Basic Education/incomplete/O' Level []
- b. A' Level/SSS/Senior High School []
- c. Diploma/ First/ Second Degree []
- d. Professional []

e. Others (specify)_____ []

4. Length of working

a. 3 years and below []

b. 4 – 7 years []

c. 7 – 10 years []

d. Above 10 years []

**Objective one: To determine how social media is used in promoting social events
in the event organising industry**

5. Does the firm use social media to promote its events?

a. Yes []

b. No -----if No kindly discontinue-----[]

6. If yes which social media does the firm use most in promoting its events?

a. Facebook []

b. WhatsApp []

c. Twitter []

d. YouTube []

e. Instagram []

f. Pinterest []

g. LinkedIn []

h. Snapchat []

i. Other _____ []

7. How effective do you consider this platform?

- a. Very effective []
- b. Effective []
- c. Neutral []
- d. Ineffective []
- e. Very ineffective []

8. What informed management to have chosen the identified social media sites?

- a. Modern and new trend []
- b. Competitor activities []
- c. Cost effectiveness []
- d. Stakeholder’s decision []
- e. Others (specify)_____ []

Objective two: To identify the benefits associated with the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry

Using the following key kindly identify the benefits associated with the use of the social media sites

Extremely agree Agree Neutral Disagree Extremely Disagree
 5 4 3 2 1

Benefits	EA	A	N	D	ED
9. Increased Brand Awareness					

10. Improved Brand Loyalty					
11. Cost-Effective					
12. Faster than other means					
13. Creates the platform for better customer satisfaction					

14. Has the use of social media had an impact on your other marketing material?

a. Yes []

b. No []

Please explain your response: _____

Objective three: To investigate the attendant challenges of using social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry

Using the following key kindly identify the challenges associated with the use of the social media sites

Extremely agree Agree Neutral Disagree Extremely Disagree
5 4 3 2 1

Challenges	EA	A	N	D	ED
15. Too costly					
16. Time consumption					
17. Lack knowledge to develop a social media strategy					
18. Too many promotions on social media					

which is capable of distracting target market					
19. Lack the human resource to effectively promote events on social media					

Objective four: To discuss measures to ameliorate the challenges identified by the use of social media as a marketing tool in the event management industry.

71 What measures can be taken by the firm to improve its use of social media to promote its events?

Appendix B: EIB NETWORK

