

MARKETING SUCCESS: THE IMPERATIVE OF BRAND CAMPAIGN**GEORGE Crystabel Benibo**

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Abstract

This paper examined the relationship between brand campaign and marketing success. The specific objective of the paper was assess of the role of brand campaign in stimulating outcomes such as brand awareness, increase in number of new customers and customer retention. The discussion centred on the conceptualisation of brand campaign as a unique construct with distinct characteristics that focus on products, rather than brand. The Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (AIDA) model, was adopted as the theoretical foundation in the paper and was considered useful in espousing the nature of relationship between brand campaign and marketing success. The paper recognises and emphasises the role of brand campaign as an imperative for driving marketing success. By emphasising brands, organisations can enhance the attainment of brand awareness, increase in number of new customers and customer retention. The paper recommends that firms should engage brand campaign with a focus on advancing creative content and engaging customers to ensure brand success.

Keywords: Brand campaigns, marketing success, telecommunication firms, AIDA model

Introduction

The evolution of industries is often marked by high competition and dynamism, accompanied by challenges and failure of some companies (Akintaro, 2024). This has raised concern about the efficacy marketing over the years; and has shaped the business landscape of firms (Akintaro, 2024; Okonji, 2022).

Nigeria is the largest market in Africa, and one, driven by high level of innovation and competition. These factors are daunting for companies, and have over the years impacted the well-being of many firms, and led to occasions of financial losses and eventual takeovers (Akintaro, 2024). To succeed and effectively thrive as a brand within the Nigerian market, firms must advance ways of enhancing their marketing success.

El-Sayed (2022) reports that markets have grown increasingly competitive in recent decades. This follows the emergence of social media platforms which have enhanced promotion activities and enabled a more convenient and cost-effective approach to identifying and engaging customers. However, these platforms have also led to crowding of online spaces, further complicated the challenge of visibility and marketing success of most organisations (El-Sayed (2022).

Marketing success as Grant et al. (2014) opined, is a long-term commitment, and one that often begins with the reputation and character of the brand itself. This view corroborates the assertions of Varadarajan (2010) that marketing today draws not just on usefulness or quality of products, but also on the company or brand itself. This also agrees with the observation that a brand that can sell itself, is also able to sell its products (Brexendorf et al., 2015).

Brexendorf et al. (2015) also opine that brand campaign offer more than just the advertisement of a product; but also offer background and story of the product. Hence it is more engaging and provides a context for emotional attachments; facilitates avenue through which identities and ideologies are reinforced, and significantly impact marketing success.

Research abounds with content that identifies advertising as key to marketing success (Kotis & George, 2011; Madeja & Schoder, 2002; Harrigan et al., 2012). However, most of these studies, hardly address the unique implications of brand campaign outside the broad concept of advertising.

Beverland et al. (2010) posits that by selling a brand, a company offer customers reassurance in the form of trustworthiness and integrity; and in that way, stakes its credibility. This reiterates the position that brand campaign is an effective way of creating customer loyalty as customers are offered a “face” behind products. This paper was thus designed to enrich knowledge on the specific nature of brand campaign and its role in marketing success.

Literature Review

AIDA Model

Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (AIDA) model (Lewis, 1898) espoused brand engagement approaches for effective marketing outcomes (Briggs et al., 2016). The model emphasises the need for strategies to begin with creating awareness. Brands have to be recognised before customers can identify with them (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). AIDA model flows from awareness to action stage, through related stages of interest and desire, and argues these as a means of creating engaging content that drive interests of the audience. AIDA model proffers related activities and programmes that are specific to each stage, breaking down overall marketing success into effective application and accomplishment of these stages (Briggs et al., 2016). The model as proposed by Briggs et al. (2016) is presented in fig 1.

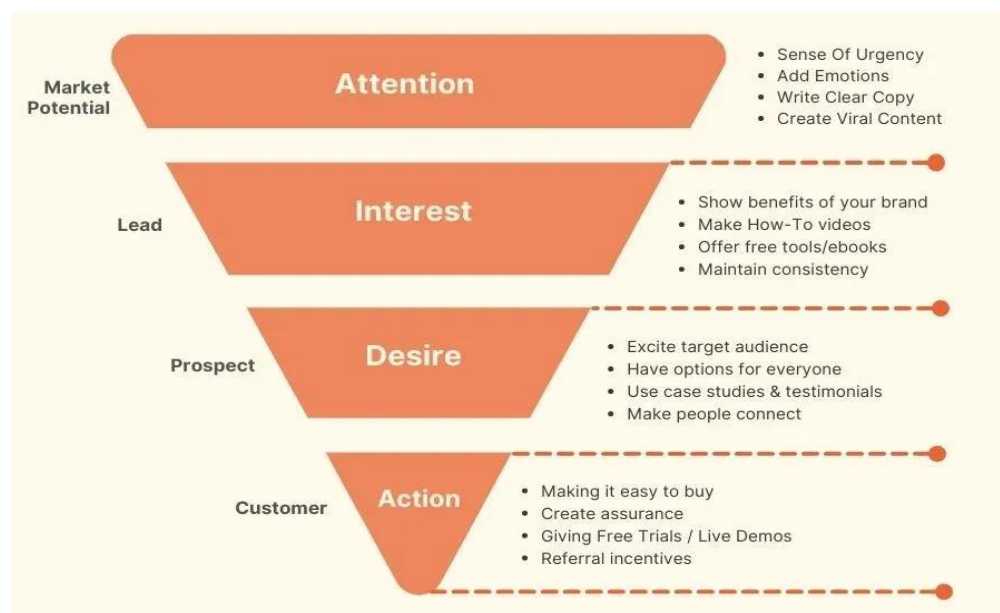


Fig. 1: The AIDA model

AIDA model was adopted and considered suitable for this paper as a theoretical foundation because it reinforces the imperative for brand campaign, emphasizing the brand and the product at all four stages, and as a basis for effectively engaging customers. AIDA model thus, provides clarity in terms of the structure it offer, outlining the necessary actions that are critical to marketing success (Briggs et al., 2016; Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014).

Concept of Brand Campaign

Brands represent the identity of an organisation (Lee, Lee & Wu, 2011). They mirror the organisation's values and ideologies and are central to its image (Story & Hess, 2010). Bowden and Mirzaei (2021) posit that brands play a key role in how consumers perceive a company, and also shape the organisations' relationship with other businesses. Brands are thus strategic marketing tools.

Story and Hess (2010) asserts that the role of brands in advancing marketing goals cannot be overemphasised, because they offer a background to products (Bianchi & Andrews, 2018). According to Bianchi and Andrews (2018), a good brand, highlights an organisation's values and reinforces its position concerning the satisfaction of its customers. Thus, the concerns and goals of brand campaign, go beyond just promoting sales, but focus on attracting and developing customer relationships through the reassurance of trustworthiness and commitment to quality.

Brand campaign refers to various activities, strategically advanced in line with driving the market objectives of a brand (Evans et al., 2006; Bianchi & Andrews, 2018). These activities vary substantially, from the use of social media, to email marketing and even to the use of brand ambassadors, all given to creating awareness and improving the market position of a brand and its products (Evans et al., 2006; Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004).

Story and Hess (2010) posits that customers do not only buy products; they also subscribe to the philosophy and ideologies of a brand. This is as Evans et al. (2006) state that brand campaign focus on positioning the brand or firm strategically to ensure its competitiveness and effectiveness in the market. Evans et al. (2006) observed that the effectiveness of brand campaign is gauged by the extent to which it engage the audience, and stimulate or influence buying behaviour.

Concept of Marketing Success

Hamari and Huttunen (2016) describe marketing success as fundamental to business survival, continuity and growth. This is because success in marketing provides economic support for survival and fuel business growth. When brands are successful in marketing, they are empowered to retain existing customers and advance their economic interests in other spheres of their markets.

Hamari and Huttunen (2016) however, identify challenges that militate against marketing success, including poor communication of marketing content, lack of synergy in the marketing process, and inefficiency of marketing channels. For example, inability of firms to identify or offer products that match customer expectations due to a lack of knowledge or data on customer characteristics or preferences is a challenge to marketing success. Astuti et al. (2018) argue that to succeed, firms must be dynamic in their marketing approaches; they must adapt their systems to align with prevailing practices and also ensure that products align with emerging market conditions.

Marketing success describes a brand's effectiveness in connecting with its target audience and driving sales and revenue (Eldahasheh et al., 2021; Dash et al., 2021; Mohammad, 2019). According to Yasmin et al. (2015), marketing success is key to the development and growth of brands. Dilham et al. (2018) notes that successful brands have good knowledge of their markets and advance products that are suitable to the needs of its audience or context.

Marketing success is traditionally considered as a concept with many indicators. In this treatise, we use brand awareness, number of new customers and customer retention rates to represent marketing success.

Brand awareness

Brand awareness describes consumers' familiarity and recognition of a particular label or category of products (Eldahasheh et al., 2021). Brand awareness marks not only consumers' ability to recognise, but also points to their recall of previous experiences with the brand. Hence, brand awareness could be negative or positive. Negative in terms of unpleasant experiences, stories or even rumours about the brand, and positive based on pleasant experiences and stories about the brand (Eldahasheh et al., 2021).

Ebrahim (2019) argue that brand awareness shape consumers' perception and disposition toward a brand and as such, impacts their buying behaviour. This agrees with Story and Hess's (2010) view that brand awareness increases the firm's customership and strengthens relationships with stakeholders.

New customers

The number of new customers for a particular brand, is such that identifies with the Convert and Action stage of the RACE model (Chaffey, 2010). This is because, apart from a brand Reach, and awareness, the number of new customers demonstrate the brand's marketing success in convincing these groups take action in terms of purchasing its product. Chaffey (2010) emphasise that the significance of brand awareness in building the customer base of the brand.

Al-Hawary and Aldaihani (2016) argue that brand visibility enhance consumers' purchase and contributes to the competitiveness of the brand. Eldahasheh et al. (2021) affirmed that as a measure of marketing success, number of new customers reflects a brand's reach and the extent to which its marketing activities, are effective in advancing knowledge, recognition and also of convincing or converting potential customers into actual customers of the brand's products.

Customer retention

Al-Gharaibah (2020) described customer retention as the organisation's ability to keep and sustain its customers. It is the extent to which customers engage in repeat buying, and demonstrate satisfaction or attachment to a brand (Al-Gharaibah, 2020). Customer retention is considered a substantial measure of marketing success as it indicates the extent to which value is sustained over time.

Eldahasheh et al. (2021) posits that customer retention provides the organisation with an economic base, from which it can maintain its operations and drive its goals. Thus, customer retention is a strong indicator of customer satisfaction, and hence willingness to continue with the brand (Eldahasheh et al., 2021). Bianchi and Andrews (2018) on the other hand, argued that customer retention is underpinned by the customer's level of trust and identification with a brand.

Brand Campaign and Marketing Success

Researchers identify brand campaign as key to creating awareness and reinforcing brand visibility (Akar and Topcu, 2011; Carvalho & Fernandes, 2018; Morgan, 2012). However, as Briggs et al. (2016) argue that brand campaign is useful not only for creating awareness, but also for clarifying the nature of a brand or product. This is because brand campaign is often designed to portray and reinforce the brand's good and attractive qualities, and that way, focus on convincing consumers, and influencing their choices (Briggs et al., 2016). One of the ways this is achieved is by developing advertising content designed to sell, not only the brand's products but also the brand itself. Janice et al. (2017) showed that brand campaign lead to increased brand awareness, improved sales, and increased visits to stores and online pages.

Approaches to brand campaigns vary, depending on the target audience of the brand (Briggs et al., 2016). Brand campaign should focus on the peculiarities of a market, and structure their contents to suit the concerns of such the market. This way, its message is more specific and detailed in terms of connecting with its target audience.

Briggs et al. (2016) also affirm that reaching the audience is only the beginning of the process, the action of interacting and convincing consumers about the value of a brand, is often hinged on exploiting satisfaction gaps that are latent or prevalent in the market. Hence, firms are strategic in their efforts to drive positive outcomes, shift the narrative about their brands and ensuring their standing in the market. (Carvalho & Fernandes, 2018; Janice et al., 2017).

Brand campaign and brand awareness

Brand campaign as stated earlier, approach the concerns of awareness from two perspectives (Briggs et al., 2016). First is the objective of spreading a message, and ensuring that the target audience is informed and acquainted with the knowledge of the brand and its products. Second, is the objective of clarifying possible erroneous assumptions, reports or rumours of the brand, and ensuring that the organisation tells its side of the story. As such, brand campaign provide a means through which brands reshape their image in the consumers' minds (Hollebeek, 2011; Briggs et al., 2016).

According to Briggs et al. (2016), effective campaigns are such that not only reach the target audience but such that are educative, informative and clear concerning the content of the message. Thus, from the foregoing, one could argue that campaigns are imperative to marketing success as they push the organisation's position in its market and at the same time, address rumours and counter negative reports, possibly spread by rival organisations.

Brand campaigns and number of new customers

Hollebeek et al. (2014) opine that one of the major goals of brands is growth. This can only be achieved when brands can enter new markets, and acquire new customers. The number of new customers a brand acquires, contribute directly to its sales and revenue; hence, is considered a primary objective of campaigns.

Briggs et al. (2016) stress the need for campaigns to proffer solutions to particular challenges, specifically targeting a variety of the target audiences' concerns, including the pricing and accessibility of the products. Boisen et al. (2018) argues that customers should be able to identify a brand and its products as a viable and suitable alternative, or solution to their satisfaction gaps.

Brand campaign and customer retention

Carvalho and Fernandes (2018) notes that brand campaign not only extends a brand's reach, but also reassure consumers of the brand's commitment to serving them and of the correctness of their decision in choosing the brand. Carvalho and Fernandes (2018) emphasize the need for firms to imbibe a culture of re-evaluation and reassessment, especially of their relationship with consumers, and the extent to which products can be repackaged or developed in a manner that enrich consumers' experiences. Li et al. (2021) identified this as one of APPLE's strategies in ensuring customer retention; the development of new features, or attributes in existing products and services in ways that stimulate excitement and present the brand as creative in their approach to customer satisfaction. This reinforces the brands' image of innovativeness and can be considered a powerful technique in the retention of existing customers.

Conclusion

This paper espoused the relationship between brand campaigns and marketing success. Drawing on the AIDA model as the theoretical foundation, literature was reviewed on the conceptualization of brand campaigns and its unique application as a marketing approach and strategy in driving the success of brands, especially in the areas of customer retention, brand awareness and the number of new customers.

A dominant position from the review points to the imperatives of brand campaigns in building and strengthening the brand's position in its market. This is because it guarantees, customer retention, creates and reinforces the extent of brand awareness on one hand and catalyses the number of new customers for the brand. Given these outcomes, it is the position and conclusion of this paper that brand campaigns as marketing strategies are effective in ensuring and advancing the marketing success of the brand.

Recommendations

The recommendations of this study, follow the outcome the literature review on the relationship between brand campaign and marketing success. These recommendation are based on evidence in literature, and not based on a primary research. That said, the paper recommends as follows:

- i. Brands should emphasize creative approaches in their products offerings, even to existing customers as a way of enriching their service experiences, and also maintaining their interest in, and loyalty to the brand.
- ii. Brands should make efforts ensure that campaign content and messages focus not only on coverage and audience reach, but also emphasize the brand as well; and ensure that clarifications are offered in line with dispelling rumours and negative reports and thus creating a more positive and engaging image for the brand.
- iii. Brands should focus on entering new markets, ensure that they grow through acquisition of new customers, through their use of campaign platforms and mediums that are actively utilised by various demographic groups within their markets.

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