

BRAND CAMPAIGN AND MARKETING SUCCESS OF MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between brand campaign and marketing success of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to assess the role of brand campaign in the outcome of marketing success in terms of customer retention, brand awareness and customer acquisition. The study employed a descriptive research design and adopted a quantitative methodology which supports the positivist philosophy. Data were generated from 20 management staff from 4 Global Systems for Mobile (GSM) telecommunication companies in South-South Nigeria, using structured questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha test with all coefficients observed to be substantial (where $\alpha > 0.70$). The test of hypotheses was carried out using the t-statistic of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The study found that brand campaign significantly contribute to marketing success through customer retention, brand awareness and customer acquisition. Thus, this study concludes that brand campaign has significantly positive relationship with marketing success; and recommends that management of telecommunication firms (GSM service providers) that seek improved marketing success (customer retention, brand awareness and customer acquisition) should reinforce brand campaigns that resonate with their audiences.

Keywords: Brand awareness, brand campaign, customer acquisition, customer retention, marketing success

Introduction

The mobile telecommunications industry represents one of the most dynamic and strategically significant sectors of Nigeria's national economy. It accounts for a substantial proportion of the nation's non-oil gross domestic product and serve as a critical enabler of digital transformation. Characterized by rapid technological innovation, expanding broadband infrastructure, and increasing smart phone penetration, the industry has experienced unprecedented growth, boasting over 220 million active mobile subscriptions as of 2024 (Nigerian Communications Commission, 2024).

The industry is dominated by major operators such as MTN Nigeria, Airtel, Globacom, and 9mobile and remains highly competitive and price sensitive. This compels operators in the industry to differentiate themselves through aggressive marketing and robust brand engagement initiatives. These initiatives often encompass loyalty programmes, influencer marketing, social media campaigns, and immersive digital experiences aimed at cultivating deeper customer relationships and sustaining competitive advantage.

Marketing success, as Grant et al. (2014) opine, is a long-term commitment, and one, that very 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 the usefulness or quality of products, but also on the company or brand itself. This also agrees with Brexendorf

et al.'s (2015) observation that the brand that can sell itself, is also able to sell its products. Brexendorf et al. (2015) asserts that brand campaign that resonate with the target audience is crucial to a firm's health and capacity to embed or connect with the audience. Brand campaign, according to Ritz et al (2019) is a practice, structured in line with driving a brand's marketing and economic interest.

Alkhawaldeh et al. (2017) argue for brands to be more flexible and responsive in their choice and application of marketing strategies. This follows Beverland et al.'s (2010) observation that adoption and utilization of brand campaign in line with the peculiarities of the market, creates a more adaptive stance where, organisations can easily apply and reinforce brand engagement features that align with the particular needs or concerns of their market.

Beverland et al. (2010) notes that, brand engagement strategies such as brand campaign provide a more integrated approach which not only promote the brands and products, but also facilitates a framework in which customers are able to connect with and establish quality relationship with the brand. Thus, following scant research on the relevance of brand campaign to marketing success, particularly in developing economies, this study examined the relationship between the variables in the context of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.

The main purpose of the study was to ascertain the relationship between brand campaign and marketing success of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria. The specific objectives were to:

- 1) Examine the relationship between brand campaign and brand awareness of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.
- 2) Ascertain the relationship between brand campaign and customer acquisition of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria
- 3) Determine the relationship between brand campaign and customer retention of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.

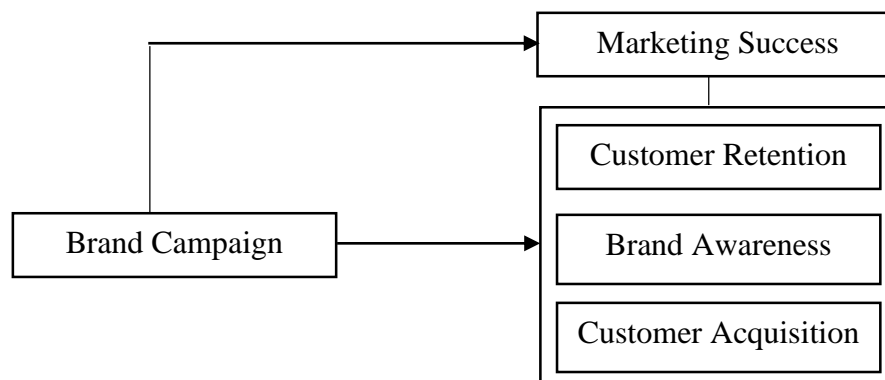


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework of relationship between brand campaign and marketing success.

Source: Cheung et al. (2019); Eldahasheh et al. (2021).

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation for this research is the Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (AIDA) model of Elias (1898) which espoused brand engagement approaches for effective marketing outcomes (Briggs et al., 2016). AIDA model emphasises the need for strategies to begin with creating awareness in potential customers as well as inviting them to try out the brand's products (Fortenberry & McGoldrick, 2020). Brands have to be recognised before customers can identify with them (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). AIDA model proffers related activities

and programmes that are specific to each stage, breaking down overall marketing success into effective accomplishment of the stages in the model (Briggs et al., 2016).

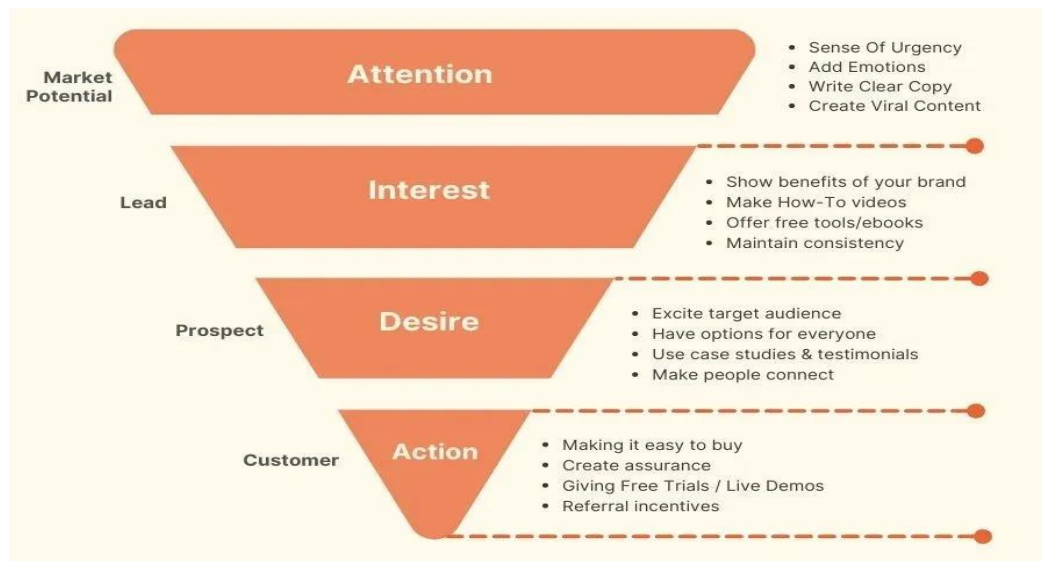


Fig. 2: AIDA model

Source: Briggs et al. (2016).

AIDA model is considered an adequate baseline theory for this study because it reinforces the imperatives for brand engagement strategies, emphasizing the brand as well as the product at all four stages, and as a basis for effective customer engagement. AIDA model thus, provides clarity in terms of the structure it offers, outlining actions that are critical to marketing success (Briggs et al., 2016; Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). The application or adoption of the AIDA model as a theoretical foundation in this research, is also such that borders on its usefulness in understanding the extent to which brand campaign enable firms create and establish their presence in their markets, advance their position and ensure that customers are aware of their unique products.

Concept of Brand Campaign

A brand represent a firm's identity, as it reflects the firm's values, ideologies and its image (Lee et al., 2011; Story & Hess, 2010). Bowden and Mirzaei (2021) posits that brands play a key role in how consumers perceive a company; and also shape business-to-business relationships. Hence, are considered as strategic tools in selling products. The role of brands in advancing marketing goals of organisations cannot be overemphasised (Story & Hess, 2010); they offer a background, described as a story to its products (Bianchi & Andrews, 2018).

According to Bianchi and Andrews (2018), a good brand highlights the organisations values and reinforces its position with regards to customer satisfaction. Thus, the concerns and goals of brand campaign, extend beyond selling or promoting sales, but focuses on attracting and developing customer relationships through reassurance of trustworthiness and commitment to quality.

Marketing Success

Marketing success describes the extent to which activities aimed at advancing a brand or its products, are effective in yielding outcomes such as improved awareness and knowledge of the brand, and customers acquisition and retention (Becker & Jaakkola, 2020; Rahman, 2021). It is the quality of engaging customers in a way that is profitable.

Forces et al. (2019) posits that marketing success is crucial to the survival and progress of organisations. This is because success in marketing provides economic support for survival and fuel business growth (George, 2024). However, Nuseira and Aliumahb (2020) observe that success in marketing is anchored on alignment between customer expectations and the firm's offerings. There is therefore, a need for firms to understand their customers, and adapt their products to align with their expectations and demands (Barreda et al., 2015).

Marketing success is a concept with several financial and non-financial metrics. In this study however, we adopt the non-financial measures of customer retention, brand awareness and customer acquisition. This is based on the argument that financial measures are not the best forms of assessing marketing success, considering that marketing's role mostly involve long term goals (Ateke & Nwulu, 2018).

Customer retention

Customer retention describes a situation where customers return for further business whenever they have need for the offerings of a firm (Ateke & Amangala, 2020). It is the result of exceeding customers' expectation, so that they become delighted and desire to build a relationship with the brand. Customer retention also describes the extent to which a brand effectively engage and retain current customers. According to Lee et al. (2011), customer retention demonstrates the brand's capacity consistently satisfy or offer substantial value to customers; such that ensure their preference and continuity with the brand.

Evans et al. (2006) posits that customer retention illustrates the firm's commitment not only to promote its brand to attract new customers, but to also meet the needs and expectations of current customers. It is in this vein, essential for the well-being and effectiveness of the organisation, as high customer retention can is a sign of marketing success. Evans et al. (2006) argue that retention also strengthens customers' identification and quality of relationship with the brand.

Brand awareness

Brand awareness is the extent to which a brand is recognized and uniquely stands out for customers, based on its distinct symbolisms and artefacts (Ephriam, 2019). Brand awareness drives customer behaviour and disposition toward an organisation; and enriches customers' relationship with the organisation (Yang et al., 2020; Jang et al., 2021).

Meerman (2010) argue that brand awareness shape customers' perception of organisations and condition buying behaviour. This agrees with Ephraim's (2019) position that one of the major concerns of marketing is to mould and influence customers' interpretations and perceptions of their products, as this impacts their trust for the organisation and purchase of its products.

Customer acquisition

A larger proportion of a typical marketing budget is allocated to customer acquisition efforts due to the need for firms to replenish customers that may be lost (Ateke & Amangala, 2020). Customer acquisition reflects the organisations capacity for reach and effective marketing. It demonstrates the extent to which the brand is engaging and is able to attract new purchases (Rehman, 2020). New customers are those groups that are recent purchasers and are most likely just informed or aware of the brand's services (Anwar & Jalees, 2020).

Cho (2020) posits that in highly competitive markets, brands constantly seek innovative ways of advancing their products, and winning over customers from rival brands. New customers contribute to revenue and are also potential repeat customers, who in the long-run, could be

loyal and create financial stability for the organisation. Cho (2020) noted that the capacity to consistently reel in new customers, is an indication of the organisations capacity to thrive and remain relevant in their competitive environment.

Brand Campaign and Marketing Success

Customer engagement has drawn considerable attention from a wide range of researchers in marketing (Gupta et al. 2018), economics (Zaborek & Mazur 2017), and hospitality management (Rather et al. 2022). Such vast interest is not surprising, due to the consequences of customer engagement, such as positive word of mouth (Oliveira Santini et al. 2020).

The positive impact of customer engagement on the performance of firms (Ho et al. 2020) have prompted researchers to analyse a wide range of relationships concerning customer engagement (Harmeling et al. 2017), or peer engagement behaviour (Lin et al. 2019). Accordingly, a considerable body of knowledge has been advanced. In recent years a number of studies (Srivastava & Sivaramakrishnan, 2022; Hollebeek et al. 2021; So et al., 2016) have conducted studies in the customer engagement domain.

For instance, Waithata et al. (2014) in a study that examined the effect of marketing strategies on marketing success and as such, growth of small businesses in Kenya, observed that the combination of various marketing strategies significantly and positively influence growth of SMEs. Similarly, Kostis and George (2011), investigated the role of pricing strategies on marketing success of industrial service, and reveal that penetration pricing and skimming pricing relate to company's marketing and corporate strategy.

Also, Ramsey (2012) examined how adoption of internet-based technologies (IBTs) and customer relationship management (CRM) activities as marketing strategies, impact marketing success of SMEs in Ireland. Findings showed that to varying extent, SMEs adopt relatively simple IBTs to improve their communication and information management capabilities and to create competitive advantage through e-CRM; thus, advancing outcomes of success in sales and customer growth.

In lieu of the results of the studies reviewed, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between brand campaign and customer retention of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between brand campaign and brand awareness of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between brand campaign and customer acquisition of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.

Methodology

The descriptive research design is considered suitable for this study as it has been described as useful in the assessment of relationships between two or more variables. The population of the study consisted 4 telecommunication firms categorised as Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) service providers and listed on the directory of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC, 2025). This is considered small, hence the study adopted a census approach. Study units however comprised 20 management staff drawn from key functions within each of the 4 GSM service providers. The data collection instrument adopted in this research was structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured in two parts; Part A focused on the demographic profile of respondents, while Part B focused dimensions of brand campaign and measures of marketing success. Presented in Table 1 is the result of test of reliability of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Reliability Result

Dimensions/Measures	Indicators	Pilot Alpha Coeff.	Study Alpha Coeff.
Brand Campaign	4	0.827	0.929
Customer Retention	4	0.899	0.947
Brand Awareness	4	0.917	0.977
Customer Acquisition	4	0.893	0.903

Survey data. 2025

Data Analysis and Results

The results of the analysis, and the findings of the study are presented in this section. Evidence for the study, draws on the data generated from the instrument used to collect primary data – the structured questionnaire. Results are presented using a univariate summaries and a SEM model.

Table 2: Summary for the measures of marketing success

	Brand Campaign	Customer Retention	Brand Awareness	Customer Acquisition
N	20	20	20	20
Mean	0	0	0	0
Std. Deviation	3.1875	3.3000	3.3250	3.3750
Skewness	1.17785	1.23704	1.20607	1.32908
Std. Error of Skewness	-.131	-.272	-.189	-.255
Kurtosis	.512	.512	.512	.512
Std. Error of Kurtosis	-1.967	-1.941	-1.788	-2.006
	.992	.992	.992	.992

Source: Survey data. 2025

The summary for the distribution for the variables of the study, brand campaigns and the measures of marketing success, as presented on table 2. The result illustrates the outcome of the variables as prevalent, thus substantial as features of the GSM telecommunication companies. Results indicate that all four variables, brand campaigns (x 3.1875), customer retention (x = 3.3000), brand awareness (x = 3.3250) and customer acquisition (x = 3.3750) are evident in the actions and activities of the telecommunication companies, and can therefore be considered attributes of the companies.

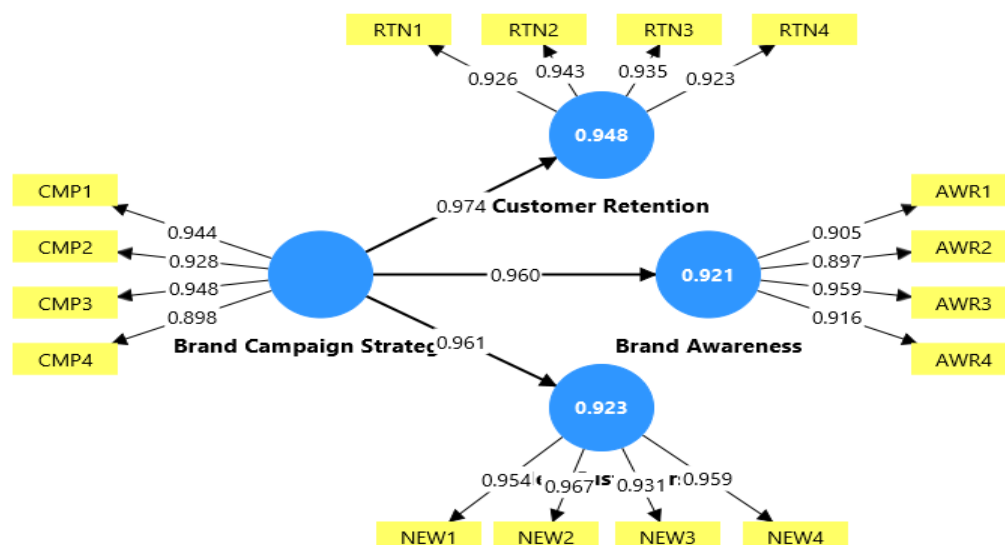


Fig. 1: Result for relationship between brand campaign and measures of marketing success

Source: Survey data. 2025

The result of the tests, affirms to the significance of the effect of brand campaign strategies on the outcome of customer retention ($\beta = 0.974$ and $P = 0.000$), brand awareness ($\beta = 0.960$ and $P = 0.000$) and customer acquisition ($\beta = 0.961$ and $P = 0.000$). The result suggests that brand campaigns play key roles in the extent to which the GSM telecommunication companies are able to effectively engage their customers, drive awareness about their product and service offerings and also draw in new customers. The result shows that brand campaigns thus contribute positively toward the organisations marketing activities and the extent to which they are able to drive their presence and position within the context of the mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria. Based on the result, all three related null hypotheses on the relationship between brand campaigns and the measures of marketing success are therefore rejected as the findings show as follows:

- i. There is a significant relationship between brand campaigns and customer retention of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.
- ii. There is a significant relationship between brand campaigns and brand awareness of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.
- iii. There is a significant relationship between brand campaigns and customer acquisition of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the test shows that brand campaign significantly impact customer retention of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria. This findings indicate that the relationship between brand campaign and customer retention appears to be more dominant compared to that of the relationship between brand campaign and brand awareness, as well as that of brand campaign and customer acquisition. This corroborates the view of previous scholars (Anwar & Jalees, 2020; Cho, 2020), on the extent to which brand campaign drive recognition and allow for improved engagement outcomes, particularly when centred around customer needs.

The findings also shows that brand campaign significantly impacts brand awareness of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria. This demonstrates the substantiality of the role of brand campaign in enabling awareness and stimulating interest in the activities and products of firms, thus resonating with the observations of Evans et al. (2006). At the same time, findings from the test for the study also shows that brand campaign significantly impacts customer acquisition of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria. The findings were observed to reiterate the position of previous scholars (Cho, 2020; Lee et al., 2011) substantially affirming to the imperatives of brand campaigns in the outcome of marketing success.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Following the outcome of the analysis, and the findings of this study, it is concluded that the relationship between brand campaign and customer retention of mobile telecommunication firms is significant and positive as brand campaign contribute toward enhancing customer retention of telecommunication firms. Also, the relationship between brand campaign and brand awareness of mobile telecommunication firms is revealed to be significant and positive as brand campaign contribute toward improved outcomes of brand awareness of telecommunication firms.

Furthermore, the relationship between brand campaign and customer acquisition of mobile telecommunication firms is revealed to be significant and positive as brand campaign contribute toward the attraction of new customers to telecommunication firms. In line with this

position on the relationship between brand campaigns and the measures of marketing success, the study recommends that management of mobile telecommunication firms in south-south Nigeria should focus on strengthening and reinforcing existing brand campaigns to improve their customer retention rates, enhance brand awareness and attract new customers.

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