

ICT ADOPTION IN EMERGING CONTEMPORARY MARKETING PRACTICES: THE CASE OF THE NIGERIAN PAINTS INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The growing awareness of firms about the deployment of information and communications technology continued to stimulate competitive advantage for them in the marketplace. This study investigated the numerous information and communications technologies deployed for products marketing in the Nigerian paints industry and also examined the degree of capacity in which ICTs were deployed in relations to contemporary marketing practices. This study considerably administered 240 questionnaire on paints manufacturing and marketing firms in Nigeria which resulted to 84.5% response rate in year 2014.

The outcomes of the analysis revealed that the telephone and e-mail were widely embraced for marketing in the Nigerian paints industry. It was also discovered that paints companies adopted ICT more in a reinforcing capability as against enhancing and transforming purposes. The study suggested that paints producing and marketing firms in Nigeria need to incorporate more of ICT facilities and utilize the various offers of electronic marketing for their daily operations and automations thereby improving firm's profitability and performance. More importantly, attention should be shifted on companies' capability to innovate and consequently introducing new ICT products and services in the market.

Keywords: *e-Marketing; ICT; Management; Nigerian; Paints industry.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The business environment today has been experiencing unprecedented changes and several companies are seeking diverse ways to sustain their competitive advantage which constantly force them to invent new ways of interacting, creating and delivering values to customers to increase customer loyalty. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is now being integrated by many establishments in a wide range and operations aspects. It has provided new ways to store, process, distribute and exchange information within companies, with customers and suppliers in the supply chain (Somuyiwa and Oyesiku, 2010).

More recently, the use of electronic gadgets for storing, analyzing and disseminating information is having a remarkable influence on virtually all areas of human lives and that of the nations at large. The rising use of ICT has necessitated the integration of different economic units in a spectacular way. This phenomenon is not only applicable in the developed economies of the world, but also developing nations, though the level of adoption and deployment differs.

ICT has emerged as an effective facilitator for development and a prime driving force to an impressive growth due to changing lifestyle patterns, better communication network and rapidly varying demand structure of consumers (Sindhi, Bhisham et al, 2011). It has also been increasingly used by virtually all business functions during the past decades in the developed nations to solve difficulties of all kinds in the business world (Brady, Saren et al, 2002) and has emerged as a new way of reaching out to the people at all levels. For much of this time, marketing practitioners have endeavoured to find the best ways to introduce ICT successfully into their domain which has enabled the comprehensive study of this development (Brady, Saren et al, 2002).

However, it was opined that ICT provides marketing with an extraordinary ability to target specific groups of individuals with precision and enable mass customization with one-to-one strategies by adapting communications and other elements of the marketing mix to consumer segments (Prasad, Ramamurthy et al,

2001). More importantly, the technological transformation is expanding the limits of what manufacturing companies can do faster than managers can in terms of exploring market opportunities.

Information and communications technology has revolutionized accounting, engineering, manufacturing, warehousing, marketing and logistics over the past decades. The application of ICTs to sales and marketing are the last piece in the enterprise information systems (Bondra and Davis, 1996). It is an acceptable management philosophy that information is a valuable resource which can enable business to navigate in the right direction to achieve its set objectives, attain a desirable competitive edge and to be administratively more efficient and effective.

On other hand, the Nigerian paints industry has been in existence for a number of years. The industry has gone through various levels of development from the manual based processes to more technologically advanced production methods. Although, the level of development in the sector is still low when compared to other countries with more advanced technical know-how. Countries like USA, Mexico and the United Kingdom have more developed paints making processes and as such derive more revenue from paints making.

About forty million litres of paints are produced and used in Nigeria annually (Paints Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, 2013), where decorative paints constitute 71% of the market share, Industrial has 19%, Automotive 6% and others have 4% of the market share (Frost and Sullivan, 2013). Industrial paints include wood finishes, marine and protective coatings. More so, automotive paints include automotive refinishes coatings while others include can, coil and powder coatings. Many new entrants get attracted to paints making business due primarily to inefficient regulatory practices as well as the attractive capital requirement.

However, it was affirmed that ICTs were systemically considered and incorporated into the marketing practices to take an active managerial role far beyond their traditional areas of competence and authority (Coviello, Milley et al, 2001; Coviello, Brodie et al, 2003). Since then, various researchers have used the Coviello's findings and other frameworks to examine the operationalization of ICT in marketing practice. Although initial studies during the 1990s showed a low incidence of e-Marketing adoption as more recent investigations have found that not only has there been an increase in the penetration of e-Marketing in firms, but that firms adopting it are also likely to show an improvement in marketing performance (Barwise and Farley, 2005; Brodie, Winklhofer et al, 2007).

However, E-Marketing (eM) involves the means of using the internet and other interactive technologies to create and mediate dialogue between the firm and identified customers which encompasses one-to-one marketing and allows for mass customization (Coviello, Milley et al, 2001). More so, it was suggested that the spelling of marketing should be changed to MarkITing to reflect the widespread use of ICT in contemporary marketing practice (Brady, Saren et al, 2002).

With the era of eM, customers and firms can easily network electronically and the interactive nature of technology allows customer's information to be individually treated regarding the products/services and to identify their changing taste and preferences in developing products/services in order to meet their needs. The eM can also serve as are placement for accustomed traditional relationship marketing where there is face-to-face interpersonal contact. The relationships formed in eM are dependent on technology to enable interactivity and perpetually substitute for face-to-face interpersonal contact.

Majorly, there are three roles of ICTs in any organization and these include inertia, application and change roles (Orlikowski, 2000). According to him, when ICTs are used to support current marketing efforts, they reinforce the status quo (inertia role), when ICTs are used to extend/improve existing marketing efforts, they enhance the status quo (application role) and when ICTs are used to redefine/drive the marketing efforts, they transform the status quo (change role).

Evidently, manufacturing companies now deploy ICT in their product marketing in order to keep hold of market share and ensure profitability in the face of increasingly stiff competition and product homogenization (Olomu and Irefin, 2016). Therefore, it is important to objectively and systematically examine the ICT tools deployed in marketing by the paints manufacturing companies in Nigeria.

Similarly, studies regarding the level of ICT on marketing and their proper usage in organizations in the Nigerian paints and coatings industry seem limited and in an attempt to fill this research void, this paper would examine the level of implementation of ICT tools within marketing-related functions. This paper is aimed at providing information on the forms of ICTs deployed in paints products marketing and the degree of their usage as well as their effectiveness. This study would significantly serve as a guide for investors and the management of the paints companies on how to integrate marketing strategies with information and communications technology and thereby contribute immensely towards realization of high sales turnover.

Section I introduces the paper; section II discusses the concept of information and communications technology as it relates the Nigerian paints industry as well as the literatures of some scholars; section III presents the methodology, analysis and conceptual model, while section IV concludes the paper.

II. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY: AN OVERVIEW

According to International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is a term used to describe technologies in manipulating and communicating information. More so, ICT refers to as a “diverse set of technological tools and resources used for communicating, creating, disseminating, storing and managing information. ICT has more recently been used to describe the convergence of several technologies and the use of common transmission lines to convey diverse data with communication types and formats. By and large, it underpins innovation and competitiveness across a broad range of private and public markets and sectors.

Notably, the vast increase in the capabilities and numbers of personal computers and the unprecedented changes brought about by the internet have driven an integration of computing technology and telecommunications as the two areas have moved from analog to digital and then to packet technologies. Internet has emerged to become the dominant data communications system whether as the “public Internet” or “managed Internet.”

ICT has become an integral and acceptable aspect of human endeavours which is increasingly important and it is expected that this trend will continue to the point that it will become a functional requirement for people’s work, social and living. This implies that it involves the application of principles to engage physical component in achieving an intended goal.

The growing prevalence of ICT in business has created opportunities for continuous two-way links with respect to products, services, information, processes etc. between companies and their individual customers, suppliers and other partners. The urge for increased linkage and networking had profound effects on the “structure, strategy and competitive dynamics of industries” (Butler, Hall et al, 1997).

This development has created catch-up opportunities for developing countries such as Nigeria to attain desired levels of development without necessarily ‘reinventing the wheels’ of economic growth (Obasan, 2011). This new technology has brought far-reaching revolution in societies, which has tremendously transformed most business scenes. Notably nowadays, ICT is not just about technology, but more about information transfer and communications.

Modern information and communications technologies have created a "global village," in which people can communicate with others across the world. For this reason, ICT is often studied in the context of how modern communication technologies affect society. However, ICT capabilities vary widely in the developed countries while in the developing countries, they may be less available and offer fewer capacities. Nevertheless, developing countries are catching up quickly by leapfrogging older generations of technology as well as creating solutions that suit their various needs which in some cases lead to lack of legacy infrastructure and subsequently ensures rapid modernization.

ICT Development in Nigeria

Technological innovation is seen as an important factor in the economic growth and development of many nations which Nigeria is not an exemption. The greatest indication that Nigeria has recognized the crucial role of technology led to the formulation of the Telecommunications and ICT policy, as well as the empowerment of an independent regulator for the sector.

The development of the ICT sector in Nigeria has proceeded with a focus on liberalization, deregulation and competition in service delivery. ICT policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria is an assignment undertaken in each of the domains that make up the sector. These are the broadcasting, telecommunications and information technology domains.

The realization of the importance of ICT in socio-economic development encouraged the Nigerian Government to set in motion strategies that would ensure the effective participation of the country in the new information economy. To accomplish this objective, the Nigerian government established the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) in 2001 to implement all policies related to the development and use of ICTs in the country.

The National Policy on Information and Communications Technology had earlier in 2001 been formulated and approved to address the issues relating to low level of ICT development in the country as well as the matters of access and utilization which are intimately linked to service availability and affordability. In Nigeria, the existence of Telecommunications Policy along with the ICT Policy is particularly remarkable.

Notably, the Nigerian ICT policy is a comprehensive document that embraces all the key components of the vertical, infrastructural and horizontal policies. Generally, ICT policy is categorized into vertical, infrastructural, and horizontal policies (Hafkin, 2002). The vertical ICT policy addresses sectorial issues and needs such as manufacturing, transportation, agriculture, commerce and oil. Infrastructural aspect in other hand deals with the development of national infrastructure that supports communications and linkages among the actors in the National Innovation System (NIS). Also, the horizontal aspect deals with the impact on broader parts of society such as freedom of information, tariff and pricing, privacy and security.

At the wake of 2000, the Federal Government of Nigeria embarked on an aggressive drive towards the provision of more efficient services in the nation through its privatization and deregulation policies. The policy thrives led to the establishment of National Telecommunication Policy in December 2001. The policy, among other things, recognized the need for the establishment of an enabling environment for deregulation and rapid expansion of the telecommunication services in the country.

The mission statement of the government was to use ICTs for Education, Creation of Wealth, Poverty Eradication, Job Creation, and Global Competitiveness. The policy objective was to develop globally competitive quality manpower in ICTs and related disciplines. It is also aimed at modernizing and rapidly expanding the telecommunications network and services which is anticipated to improve socio-economic development through internal integration of economic and social actors and thereby integrating Nigeria into the global telecommunications environment.

This entails developing a pool of ICT engineers, scientists, technicians and software developers. Consequently, attractive career opportunities will emerge in addition to development of Made in Nigeria software and computer components that can earn the nation some foreign exchange. The implementation of ICTs policy led to the adoption of Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) and its related components in Nigeria. After the Telecom policy was successfully initiated, the National Communication Commission (NCC) was subsequently established to implement the policy.

Following the release of a new telecommunication policy in year 2001, several Private Telephone Operators, Fixed Wireless Access Operators, Internet Service Providers and a Second National Carrier have begun operation in Nigeria. The activities have increased and promoted competition in the industry, resulting in exponential growth in the number of telephone lines. Within the first six months after the take-off of the GSM in Nigeria, more than 350,000 mobile lines were activated. The existing operational fixed lines rose from 450,000 in December, 2000 to 888,854 by March, 2004. At this time, mobile lines increased to 3.8 million (Akwan, 2005).

Recognizing the seemingly insatiable appetite of consumers for phone services, and the potentials of the Nigerian market, investors pumped in US\$2.110 billion into the sector by December 2002, US\$2.55 billion by June 2003, and over US\$4.0 billion by March 2004. The initial investment was just US\$50 million as at the end of 1999 which represented a percentage increase of over 8,000 and this led to ranking investment in the telecommunication sector second only to the oil industry. Of all the applications of ICTs, the use of mobile phones is on the increase, while internet usage is considered to rank next to phone usage, especially in Nigeria.

However, the awareness about the potentials of using ICT to transform the national economy is already evident among the policy makers and leaders of the organized private sector and Nigerian government has taken several steps to create an enabling environment to attract investment and ventures by entrepreneurs, but a lot still has to be done to ensure their sustenance.

The Nigerian Paints Industry: An Overview

The Nigerian paints industry is that section of Nigerian manufacturing sector which produces coloured liquid applied to a surface in order to decorate or protect it. Paint is the general term for a family of products applied to various surfaces such as wood, metal or stone to protect the surface from corrosion, oxidation and environmental weathering. It is a substance used as coatings to protect or decorate a surface (especially a mixture of pigment suspended in a liquid); dries to form a hard coating.

The Nigerian paints industry is a highly competitive in nature as there is free entry and exit of investors. The operating costs are relatively low, thus increasing the number and longevity of players that exist in the industry. With over one thousand players in the industry, it can be regarded to be saturated. Information gathered has it that many investors get attracted to paints production business primarily as a result of inefficient regulatory practices. This has inevitably led to the lowering of quality of products as most of the fraudulent players produce sub-standard paints products at relatively cheaper rate which enables them to sell at a lower price.

The industry is currently import dependent as over 70 percent of the raw materials are sourced from abroad but not until recently as the enactment of the local content law which gives directive to the major international oil companies to support the initiative that at least 60 percent of the materials needed by them are sourced locally in order to assist in the development of sustainable capabilities within Nigeria (Paints Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, 2013).

With raw material prices and tariffs expected to come down in the next few years, the organized sector's operating profit and margins should go up substantially. Notably, the demand for paint is relatively price elastic in nature and the industry majors have a vast dealership network and are required to maintain high inventory levels.

Another key feature of the Nigerian paints industry is the existence of various tiers characterized by criteria such as market share, turnover, product quality, reputation and so on. The industry operators in Nigeria can be classified into three broad categories: the first, second and third tiers. The first tier category constitutes

the major players which control larger share of the market and have been in operation for many years. Examples of paints companies in this category are Berger Paints, Chemical and Allied Products Plc. (CAP Plc.), Premier Paints Plc, DN Meyer Plc, International Paints West Africa Plc. (IPWA Plc.) etc.

The second category consist mainly the medium sized operators with less control of market share. The equities of companies under this category are being controlled by few private individuals while the third tier category comprises of companies with relatively larger customer patronage than their mid-tier peers which are characterized by lower price advantage but are restricted based on quality.

The Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) is the major regulatory body for the paints industry. They have been at the forefront of ensuring quality standards in the industry. It has made efforts to maintain minimum standards for paints manufacturing but challenged by large number of players in the industry. Such standardization has improved the overall quality level of paints made in recent times. It therefore bestows a responsibility on the lower tier companies to improve on their quality levels in order to compete efficiently.

The Nigerian paints and coatings industry is riding high in terms of growth noticeable in the automobile industry, new constructions in the housing segment and improving infrastructure throughout the country. The Nigerian paints industry operations are majorly into five segments: Decorative, Industrial coatings, Marine and Protection coatings, Automotive/Vehicle refinishes and Wood Preservers and finishes.

Empirical Literatures

ICT development and its effects on business activities have been in the forefront of scientific thinking in the last two-three decades (Salo, Alaojutsjarvi et al, 2005). Contrarily, Holland and Naude (1997) emphasized that the world is moving from the informational to the transformational stage, and thus an increased use of ICT by marketing should occur now and into the future. To buttress this assertion, it was argued that “most companies have experience installing computers in areas such as finance and production, where their ability to speed up production and eliminate waste can be measured accurately, but now as the paradigm is shifting towards the recognition that information is the most precious of modern corporate resources and its exploitation the key to competitive survival, the spotlight falls on marketing; what it is and what it should be doing”.

Coviello, Milley et al (2001) reviewed marketing literatures and recognized four schools of thought basically on the impact of the ICT and the interactivity on marketing practices. The first notable view was that ICT changes everything while the second school of thought believed that new ICTs are tools to support or augment traditional approaches to marketing and strategy. A third view is that interactive technologies offer basically a new channel to the market while the fourth school of thought is more holistic and believed that ICT-enabled interactivity offers firms different opportunities giving to their settings. Also, Coviello, Milley et al (2001) incorporated a general technology dimension in the marketing framework related to the different levels of ICT integration in the organization.

Coviello, Brodie et al (2003) concluded that while the application of ICT for marketing may not ‘drive marketing practice’, it may be seen as a boundary spanning function and could reflect the possibility “that information and communications technology’s ability to enable marketing practices is related to the role that ICTs play in the firm as a whole”.

Successful deployment of ICT requires integration not just of technology but also of technologists and other organizational functions into coherent and concerted strategic and operational approaches to offering and delivering on value propositions for customers (Fellenz and Brady, 2006).

Brookes, Brodie, et al (2000) suggested that progress has been slower than predicted because ‘learning by trial and error’ was seen as acceptable by marketing practitioners but managers enumerate various cognitive-affective responses to their firm’s efforts which at one extreme may include expressions of disappointment, pessimism and disbelief concerning their firm's investments in ICT for reinforcement purposes (Orlikowski, 2000).

In a qualitative study conducted, Brookes, Brodie, et al (2000) provided further evidence on the extent to which ICT are shaping marketing practices. About 49% of the firms surveyed proclaimed they still use ICT in a reinforcing capacity, with 31% stating that ICT are mainly used to enhance the status quo and 20% saying ICT are being used for transforming purposes. This conformed well to empirically study conducted in the hotel sector in Ireland which showed that 40% of firms see ICT as reinforcing the status quo, 47% are of the view that it enhances the status quo and 13% view ICT as transforming the status quo (O’Connor and Brady, 2006). This evidence once again indicates the low frequency with which ICT transform operations, but also confirms that firms are gradually moving beyond an ICT emphasis on reinforcement matters (Brady, Saren et al, 2002).

Brookes, Brodie, et al (2000) discovered that consumer goods producing companies are more heavily subjected or weighted to the use of ICT in reinforcing or enhancing roles, while business-to-business firms are slightly more heavily weighted towards the use of ICT in a transforming role.

III. METHODOLOGY, ANALYSIS AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The data for this study was obtained from a field survey conducted in 2014. The study covered states in the Southwestern Nigeria, and the selection was based on the due consideration that the Southwestern region of Nigeria has highest concentration of paints companies, while majority of paints firms in other regions depend solely on regular supplies from the southwest which are achieved through the effectual vast dealership networks they operate. The paper employed a structured questionnaire administered on senior officers of Marketing/Sales department or other related departments while paints manufacturing firms were randomly selected for the study. Sampled firms were drawn from the Nigerian business directories.

Albeit, paints manufacturing firms belonging to the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) Rev.3 code 15–37, were selected for the study. Paints firm’s selection was based on the definition of SME’s by the National Policy on Small and Medium Enterprises and the National Bureau of Statistics where small enterprises are categorized as those enterprises whose total assets (excluding land and building) are estimated above ₦5 million but not exceeding ₦50 million with a total workforce of above 10 but not exceeding 49 employees while medium enterprises are those enterprises with total assets (excluding land and building) above ₦50 Million but not exceeding ₦500 million with a total workforce of between 50 and 199 employees.

A total number of two hundred and forty (240) questionnaire were administered for this study and out of which two hundred and three (203) were retrieved and found suitable for analysis which eventually represented about 84.5% response rate.

However, the socio-demographic characteristics of the sampled paints firms were captured as presented in the table 1 below. The gender characteristics of respondents showed that 85.7% were males and 14.3% were females. About 4.4% had WASC/O Level qualification, 28.1% had OND/Professional certificates, 39.9% had HND/B.Sc., 18.2% had M.Sc./M.A, while 9.4% had Ph. D. as their highest level of qualifications. The table also shows that 43.3% of the respondents have less than 5years of job experience with companies, 33.1% had 5-9years, 19.7% had 10-19years and 3.9% had 20-30years of job experience.

About 43.3% of the respondents from the sampled companies were management staffs, while 32% were senior staffs, 15.3% were junior staffs, 6.9% were contract staffs while 2.5% of the respondents fell into other categories of staffs. The sampled staffs comprises of the CEOs/General Managers, Assistant Managers, Regional Managers, Marketing/Sales Managers, E-marketing Managers, Production Managers, Operations Managers, Brand Managers, Departmental Heads, Customer Service Representatives, Sales Representatives, etc. This was as a result of the diversities of the organizational strengths and sizes of the sampled paints companies which most times compel them to form different departments with different names based on their needs and capacities. The sampled staffs showed that they had a vivid understanding of their organizational marketing structures and better knowledge of their products.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents in the Paints Companies

Characteristics	Respondents	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex:		
Male	174	85.7
Female	29	14.3
Total	203	100.0
Highest Qualification:		
WASC/O Level	9	4.4
OND/Professional	57	28.1
HND/B.Sc.	81	39.9
M.Sc./M.A	37	18.2
Ph.D.	19	9.4
Total	203	100.0
Job Experience:		
<5years	88	43.3
5-9years	67	33.1
10-19years	40	19.7
20-30years	8	3.9
>30years	--	--
Total	203	100.0
Position:		
Contract Staff	14	6.9
Junior Staff	31	15.3
Senior Staff	65	32.0
Management Staff	88	43.3
Others	5	2.5
Total	203	100.0

Moreover, the firms were asked to indicate how long they had been deploying ICT for marketing purposes. Table 2 revealed that 52.7% of the sampled paints firms started deploying ICT for marketing in the last four years, while 44.6% also indicated that their ICT deployment was within the last 5-14 years and 2.7% of the firms deployed ICT between 15-24 years.

Table 2: Length of Deployment of ICT by Paints Manufacturing Companies

Periods of ICT Deployment	% of Number of years
Within the last 4years	52.7
Within the last 5-14years	44.6
Within the last 15-24years	2.7

These analyses showed that majority of the paints companies had been in business for a long while and might have attained a high degree of the use of ICT in their products marketing in order to face the challenges that could arise from the adoption of e-Marketing.

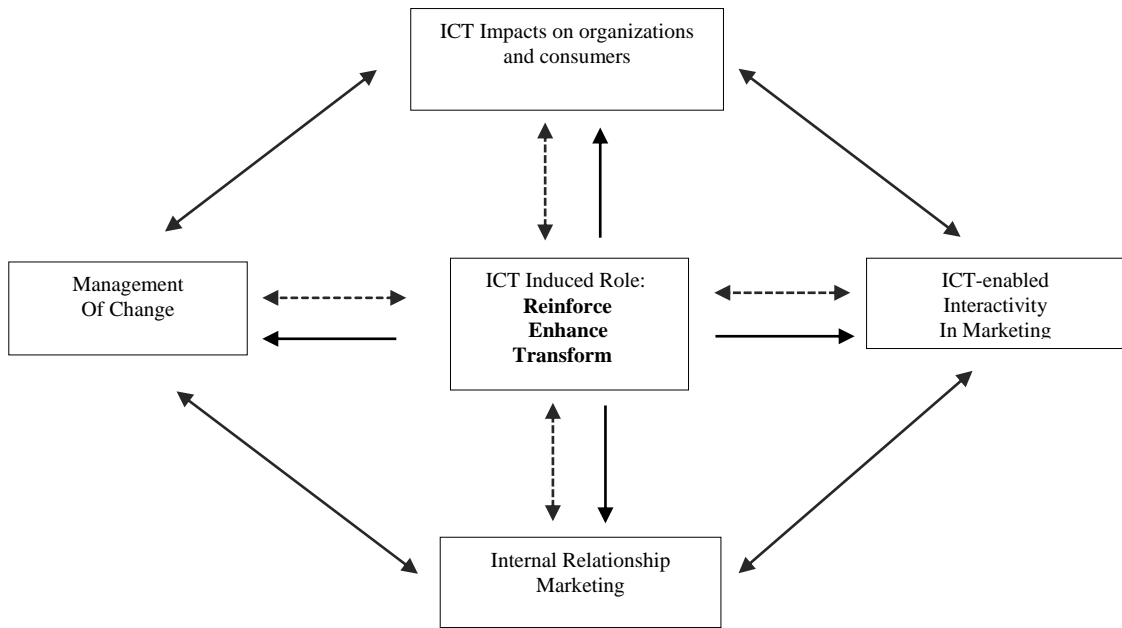
On the other hand, the sampled firms were asked to identify the various forms of ICT tools deployed for marketing purposes and rank the degree to which each identified ICT were utilized. This was measured using Likert rating scale of 1-5 max where the mean of 1 represents Never, 2-Seldom, 3-Moderate, 4-Often and 5-Very Often.

Table 3 showed that Telephone (3.97), e-Mail (3.68), Website (3.48), Computer/Laptop gadgets (3.12), and Social Media/ Networks (3.01) were ranked higher as mediums of ICT mostly deployed for marketing. However, other marketing tools/mediums were: Wide Area Networks, Local Area Networks, Wireless Access Protocol, Mass Media, Smart Phone Applications, Electronic Funds Transfer, Point of Sales, Electronic Data Interchange and Automatic Call Distribution were significantly lower or partly deployed. This corroborated with the findings of Barwise and Farley (2005) that managers or organizations who adopted Internet-related marketing tools found them being cost-effective, providing increased sales opportunities and leading to increased effectiveness of marketing activities.

Table 3: Extent of Deployment of Identified ICT Tools by Paints Companies

ICT Tools/Mediums	Mean Rank	Standard Deviation
Telephone	3.97	1.23
Electronic Mail (e-Mail)	3.68	1.35
Website	3.48	1.40
Computer/Laptop Gadgets	3.12	1.38
Social Media/ Networks	3.01	1.32
Wide Area Networks (WAN)	2.86	1.34
Local Area Networks (LAN)	2.77	1.35
Wireless Access Protocol (WAP)	2.45	1.38
Mass Media	2.41	1.35
Smart Phone Applications	2.35	1.44
Electronic Funds Transfer (ETF)	2.18	1.24
Point of Sales (PSS)	2.11	1.29
Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)	1.95	1.02
Automatic Call Distribution	1.53	0.96

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for the study



Adapted from Coviello, Milley et al (2001)

The above framework explains the relationships among organizations, ICTs and marketing. It shows that ICTs have moved from the back end of the business system to the front end, and they are now ‘disruptive force in the marketplace’ and thus is marketing now following technology. ICT is now a channel of marketing and it changes everything by helping organizations or firms to find their own ‘balance’.

Organizations are to manage the introduction of greater ICT-enabled interactivity within the context of management of change theories and practices, and with a clear strategic goal, such as to: reinforce, enhance or transform their status quo. Therefore, they could understand how the possibilities of improved external relationship marketing through ICT-enabled interactivity now impact their management of internal marketing relationships.

However, as shown in Table 3, Orlikowski’s (2000) classification was used to examine the extent to which ICT reinforces, enhances and transforms marketing practices in the Nigerian paints industry and the sampled paints companies further provided evidence on the extent to which ICT shapes marketing practices. About 37.3% of the sampled companies submitted that they adopted ICT in reinforcing capacity, while 34.5% stating that ICT was mainly deployed to enhance the status quo and 28.2% ascertained ICT were adopted for transforming purposes.

Evidently, this conforms well to the empirical study conducted by Brookes, Brodie, et al (2000) and it indicates the low frequency with which ICT transform operations, but also confirms that firms are gradually moving beyond an ICT emphasis on reinforcement matters (Brady, Saren et al, 2002). Similarly, this finding correlated with the assertion by Brodie, Winklhofer et al (2007) that the success of e-Marketing comes from the enhancement and support of existing marketing practices. This also has confirmed the conclusions that e-Marketing is “coming of age” and it is a consequence of ICT being integrated into current marketing practices (Barwise and Farley, 2005; Day and Bens, 2005).

Table 3: Marketing Efforts Engaged in by Paints Companies

Marketing Dimensions	Percentage (%)
Support Current Marketing efforts	37.3
Improve Existing Marketing efforts	34.5
Re-define/drive Marketing efforts	28.2

However, some of the management staffs such as Chief Executives, Marketing managers and Brand managers were given the opportunity to share their thought on how the industry would evolve in the coming years and various government policy measures that affect their operations. Most of them emphasized that more

ICT tools would evolve in the nearest future but that government should subsidize the availability of ICT tools for proper adoption and encourage end users.

Nevertheless, they observed that paints companies had been struggling with a lot of fundamental issues like poor delivery system, delay in management decision, huge government tax etc. which had limited their anticipated target overtime, majorly in the areas of meeting market demands leading to reduced profitability level. Also, some of the Chief Executives of the sampled paints companies affirmed that tremendous changes had been noticed since their companies started deploying ICT and these changes were evident as market growth rate had improved, expanded operating capacity utilization, improved gross earnings and encouraged customers' retention rate.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study has been able to investigate the various information and communications technology deployed in products marketing in the Nigerian paints industry. Also, the study ascertained the capacity to which ICT adoption and deployment for marketing activities in the Nigerian paints industry were based.

The outcome of the study revealed the ICT tools/mediums such as Telephone, e-mail, Website, Computer/Laptop gadgets and Social Media/ Networks were found to be predominantly deployed and integrated in marketing practices in the Nigerian paints industry. This could be as a result of the prevalent nature of mobile phones and increasing awareness of facilities available to users on handsets with easy access to electronic mails.

Evidences from the sampled companies provided that they engaged more in supporting current marketing efforts (reinforcing marketing practice) than improve existing marketing efforts (enhancing marketing efforts) and re-defining marketing efforts (transforming marketing efforts). This assertion conformed well to related empirical study conducted by Brookes, Brodie et al (2000).

The study concluded that information and communications technology adoption in paints products marketing in Nigeria does improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the decision-making process, but more can still be achieved if ICTs are properly embraced and deployed like in the developed economies like China and the United States of America. Adequate deployment of ICT in marketing management will lead to greater levels of comprehensiveness, more rapid, accurate and timely identification of opportunities for the paints companies in Nigeria.

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