

Nexus of Social Media Marketing and Small Scale Businesses' Performance in Buea, Cameroon

Nengieh Lizzie Wantchami

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication,
University of Buea, Cameroon.

Kingsley Lyonga Ngange

Head of Department, Journalism and Mass Communication,
University of Buea.

Babatunde Daphne-Carol Efosi

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication,
University of Buea.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the connection between social media marketing and small scale businesses' performance in Buea, Cameroon, by assessing the use of social media for brand and product awareness, sales as well as relationship building. 15 small scale business owners were interviewed through semi structured interview. The results identify a common increase in customers due to social media marketing. They equally reveal that, social media marketing has served as a tool in building brand awareness, customer relationships and reinforcing sales. Findings further indicate that for Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) operators who engage in social media marketing, the benefits far outweigh the cost as they have incorporated promotional strategies and even taken supplies to customers' door steps. In order to facilitate delivery to customers' door steps, this study recommends that government should facilitate the creation of a house numbering system to ease door to door supplies of goods purchased online. This study provides some indications for using social media platforms as an ideal method of marketing.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Small Business, Performance, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME) strategies, Customer Relationship, Buea, Cameroon.

INTRODUCTION

Every business seeks to increase sales while maximising profit. Increasing profit margin is therefore, the goal of every business and this requires a lot of input. Given that a business needs to persuade and win customers in order to increase sales, businesses need to create awareness about their brand name, existing goods and services, as well as create and reinforce relationship with customers. In order to create awareness about their brand name, products, services as well as create and maintain relationships, most businesses now advertise online. Cox (2012) asserts that social media plays a vital role in marketing and creating relationships with customers and with limited barrier to entry, small businesses are beginning to use social media as a means of marketing. Unfortunately, many small businesses struggle to use social media and have no strategy going into it. As a result, without a basic understanding of the advantages of social media and how to use it to engage customers, countless opportunities are missed (Cox, 2012). This study seeks to understand how small scale businesses in Buea, capital of the South West Region, Republic of Cameroon, have utilised social media marketing in enhancing their business activities.

According to Barefoot and Szabo (2010) social media marketing means using social media channels to promote a company and its products. Marketing from a small and medium size enterprise's (SME) point of view is a way to inform the customer about the firm, its products, and services; and to create and maintain customer relationships (Reijonen, 2010). Wind and Mahajan (2002) support that, digital channels can be used to create unique and positive experiences to customers, and build trust and relationships in the long term by mixing all aspects of products, service, brand, and communication – not just transactions. To elucidate, Kwak, Fox and Zinkhan (2002) found that product information requests over the web are positively related to online purchases. However, there is still little information and empirical research on how digital marketing channels can be used to boost customer relationships though Prohaska (2011) asserts that small firms should prioritise social media goals in managing customer relationships and marketing activities. Durkin, McGowan and McKeown (2013) have emphasized the importance of relationships with external stakeholders, especially with customers, as a main basis of small firms' competitiveness.

Social media can be very effective tools in helping small enterprises to reach their business goals (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Barnes, 2010). Small firms are generally at an advantage because their small size makes it easier to get close to customers and obtain valuable feedback about products/services (Gilmore et al, 1999; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Barnes, 2010). Such a benefit enables small businesses to take advantage of the marketing opportunities networking and word of mouth marketing provide. Owner/managers of small businesses do not only rely on their personal contact network, but they rely on the networks of their customers as well. Networking is a widely cited marketing activity for SMEs and is important during their establishment, development, and growth. However, small businesses often rely on word of mouth recommendations for new customers (Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). Word of mouth marketing provides small businesses with an opportunity to give customers a reason to talk about products, making it easier for word of mouth to take place (Cox, 2012). The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (2011) recognises all word of mouth marketing techniques as being based on the concepts of customer satisfaction, two-way conversation, and transparency. The association describes the basic elements of word of mouth marketing as: "Educating people about your products and services; identifying people most likely to share their opinions; providing tools that make it easier to share information; studying how, where, and when opinions are being shared; and listening and responding to supporters, detractors, and neutrals" (WOMMA, 2011).

Small businesses rely more on word of mouth validations to win customers (Stokes & Lomax, 2002). Today's economic system, distinguished by relationships, technology, and networks, tends to give support to the characteristics of SMEs (Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). Social media aid companies to connect with customers with the motive to build relationships and help to take advantage and understand better the needs of customer. Therefore, businesses should strive to ensure that their messages reach as many audience and customers as possible. To do this effectively, a business must ensure that they get visibility via social media network (Halligan, Shah, & Scott, 2009). Based on literature, often SMEs do not have a strategy when they start using social media which can erode time and effort employed in business (Eltayib, Bhimani, Gandhi & Kamdar, 2018). Nevertheless, Adegbuyi, Akinyele and Akinyele (2015) assert that it is essential that businesses recognise what goal they want to derive from social media usage. It is not sufficient to create a Facebook or Twitter page and post messages there weekly. Businesses must be active on these social media networks and to adhere, they should have some fundamental know-how on how to use them, including techniques to maintain and sustain the consumers (Eltayib, et al., 2018 & Adegbuyi, et al., 2015). Adegbuyi, et al., (ibid) further reiterated that in today's information and communication driven environment, it is apt

that small businesses understand Facebook, Twitter, and the techniques employed to use social media.

From a customer perspective, the Internet has given power to get up-to-date information, ability to more easily compare products and services, and to get in touch with marketers (Robins 2000; Coupey 2001). According to Stokes (2000), in small firms, marketing is used for immediate needs and little attention is paid to plans and strategies. SMEs direct their attention to sales in order to survive (Stokes, 2000). For all issues outside of advertising, such as customer satisfaction measurement and improvement and design of customer service and support, the sales function has a slightly greater influence (Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). Omondi (2017) asserts that social media marketing as a digital marketing technique indicates a great usage in SMEs and it impacts on SMEs' sales to a great extent. She acknowledges that the adoption of social media is high because it is a cheap technique of digital marketing, and also reaches many potential customers who are on social media. The results are consistent with the studies done by Srinivasan et al. (2016), Adegbuyi et al. (2015) and Jagongo and Kinyua (2013) who indicated that social media creates brand awareness that results in strong influence on customer acquisition and retention. Cesaroni and Consoli (2015) further acknowledge that the decision to adopt social network is inspired by the willingness of the entrepreneur to create a new business model, characterised by interactivity, openness to clients, collaboration and visibility.

One of the most prevalent areas in which a small business has problems is marketing (Huang & Brown, 1999). This is due to the inability to employ a marketer to carry out marketing activities for the business (Berthon, Ewing & Napoli, 2008). The SME owner/manager is often responsible for the performance of functions within an organisation, such as banking, purchases, advertising, and recruitment. They will often decide which marketing strategies to use because the use of specialists is rare and they do not often have a marketing manager as an employee (Berthon et al., 2008). SMEs face other challenges in business and these challenges actually hinder their expansion and survival. These challenges are applicable to SMEs in Buea, Cameroon, as well. Omondi (2017) highlighted that lack of digital media knowledge, lack of suitable digital marketing techniques, lack of finances and lack of time for planning and implementation were the biggest challenges that should be focussed on so as to improve digital marketing adoption. Agarwal, Erramilli, and Dev (2003) lament that the relatively smaller markets make it difficult for the small businesses to grow considering they need to attain higher sales in order to meet up with their growth propensity. This explains why even when the company places their adverts on social media, consumers find it hard to respond positively. Coulthard (2007) and Fatoki (2012) identify finance as a key restriction to the growth of small businesses. This is also made worst by the lack of effective financial markets. Long (2013), also adds that aside the lack of financial market, high interest rates, lack of collateral security, additional bank charges and lack of adequate financial assessment act as stumbling blocks to the growth of small businesses. Similarly, Li, Huang, and Tsai, (2009) ascertain that considering their small nature, small businesses tend to use cheap technology which also leads to less productivity. This leads to high cost of production and a fall in efficiency. For example, some small businesses in Buea are unable to use computers or even when they struggle to acquire one, they find it hard to upgrade their equipment. Also, some employed staff are not technologically savvy to manage their social media marketing platforms online. In particular, many small firms lack time and resources to update blogs, groups and other social networks (Nakara, Benmoussa, & Jaouen, 2012). Moreover, small enterprises have difficulties in effectively using the great amount of information achievable by social media. To be effectively used for marketing purposes, information should be systematically collected, sorted and organised. However, the majority of small businesses lack time and skills needed to perform

these activities (Miles, 2014). Hakala and Kohtamaki (2011) and Ngange, Enow, and Tanjong, (2012) noted that electricity power shortage is stifling many African countries. Without electricity power supply, many small businesses are unable to manage their operation and function efficiently. SMEs especially in Buea also suffer continuous lockdowns due to the socio-political crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon with its due effects on business output (Journal du Cameroun.com, 2019).

However, one solution to the marketing challenges faced by small businesses is social media (Nuha, Asmita, Ishita Ashok, & Twinkle, 2018). Social media enables small businesses to overcome the challenges of limited budget, lack of expertise, and positioning against larger competitors (Reijonen, 2010). Social media enables businesses to engage their customers. In a non traditional sense it enables customers to interact directly with other customers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) through electronic word of mouth.

Problem Statement:

SMEs are a means of economic survival for many African families owing to high rate of unemployment. Their existence and survival is therefore, of prime importance and owing to high competition in this sector due to the proliferation of so many of such businesses, need exists for SMEs in Buea to advertise their specific brand names. Also, owing to the lockdowns due to the ongoing socio-political crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, most SMEs in Buea are not fully functional and business is slow. This calls for strategies to maintain relationships with customers and tactics to improve on sales. Hence, the presence of social media and its marketing functions serves as a panacea for some of the challenges encountered and need exists to understand the influence of social media marketing on small scale businesses in order to develop policy by responding to the following pertinent questions:

1. In what ways do small scale businesses share adequate information about their products and services to their customers online?
2. How has the number of customers and sales of a brand or product increased due to the use of social media advertisements?
3. How has social media marketing affected relationship between small businesses and their customers?

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A qualitative design was used in this study as it focused on the lived experiences of the participants in their natural settings; it recognised the participants as knowers in their own lived experiences (Van Manen, 1997; Creswell, 1994). The purposive sampling technique was used in the recruitment of 15 participants basically small scale business operators in Buea who make use of social media platform to market their businesses. These participants included: owners of beauty salons, cosmetic shops, electronic shops and owners of poultries. This sampling method permitted the researchers to select individuals whose experiences were useful for the purpose of the study (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from 15 proprietors of small businesses in Buea, using the English language. A recorder was also used to record information and as a supporting method to the interviews. The interviews were employed to ensure that the same general areas of information are collected from each participant (Turner, 2010). Data was analysed using manual thematic analysis which according to Braun and Clarke (2006) is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. This method allowed the researcher to appropriately scrutinise the participants' point of view (Creswell, 1994).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There was great protection of the participants' identity and dignity and participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any point. (Orb, Elsenhauer & Wynaden, 2000, Banister 2007; Hammersley & Traianou 2012). The researchers' ensured anonymity by assuming pseudonyms (non-revealing of participants' real names and business names) and this did not give away the identity of the participants (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Section I: Social Media Use and Brand Awareness.

This section focuses on how the participants use social media, the benefits they derived and the challenges they faced. Below is a brief discussion on each of these with their findings.

Use Based on information placement

People use social media for different reasons and they place or post diverse information too. Findings reveal that small scale business operators use social media to display information like the services they render or products they sell, the price of their products, their location or contact details, their business logos and some even go as far as stating the quality of the product. Most respondents claim that placing information about their business online has created more awareness, brought in more customers (Srinivasan et al., 2016; Adegbuyi et al., 2015; Jagongo & Kinyua, 2013), boost sales and profits (Omondi, 2017) all the while eliminating the need for one-on-one advertising. The effects of social media marketing varied from one respondent to the other. While a greater majority agree to have had their desired effects from social media marketing, a negligible minority said social media had no effect on improving brand awareness.

Use Based on Benefits

Marketing on social media has its benefits, reason why it has become popular today. These researchers were interested to know the exact benefits small scale businesses derive from social media marketing. Some of the recurrent benefits listed vary from: an increase in sales and profits, a reduction in cost in terms of transportation to advertise, new found popularity, new and interesting interaction and relationships, confidence in the product and seller, to saving of time. One of the respondents noted that:

"It has improved brand awareness in that at the start of the business we had just very few customers but after online adverts, we gained many more customers both local and abroad..." (Interview with Participant 1, July 2019).

According to most small scale business owners, social media marketing has helped them to consolidate old customers while creating new contacts and hence, a bigger and better client base.

Challenges Faced in Using Social Media

Every business has its challenges and marketing on social media is no different. This study reveals that small scale businesses face varied challenges when they market online. Some business operators complain of poor Internet connection which prevent them from effectively doing what they want and at the time they want it done, thereby affecting their business operations. Also, participants reveal the challenge of customers' doubt about the authenticity of their products advertised on social media and the fear of being scammed. This stems from the fact that people are yet to fully trust online advertisement:

"Sometimes network is slow, so it hinders me from advertising always. Also, I face challenges because not everyone is easy to go with since everyone has their taste..." (Interview with Participant 3, July 2019).

Furthermore, criticisms and competition are also a source of challenge to marketing online. Participants reveal that they face competition from other businesses in the same line of trade. Criticism from clients is also recorded as a major challenge to some of these small scale business operators:

“At times, people give negative comments and criticise the brand while others feel it is a scam”... (Interview with participant 5, July 2019).

Section II: Effects of Social Media Marketing on Customer Retention and Sales

The aim of advertising is to make sales and generate profits. This section examines the effects of social media advertising on sales in two terms: customer retention and the promotion strategies used to make sales online.

Effects on Customer Retention and Sales

All 15 participants acknowledged securing and retaining customers from the marketing campaign they carried out using social media (Srinivasan et al., 2016; Adegbuyi et al., 2015; Jagongo & Kinyua, 2013). The researchers further inquired if the customers that were secured online played a role in winning other customers for the business. The findings reveal that customers who had encounters with social media advertisement and who made purchase referred their friends and peers to the business. This in turn increases the number of new customers and therefore, increased sales and turnover:

“Yes they have, they spread my adverts on their own social media platforms and through word of mouth...” (Interview with Participant 9, July 2019).

The findings indicate that social media marketing had a positive effect on customer retention and sales.

Effects on Promotion Strategies

Selling on social media comes with its own demands and expectations. The competition that exists online requires businesses to be innovative in order to stand-out. The researchers sought to know how small scale business owners use social media to generate sales by way of promotion. Participants revealed that they resort to giving out discounts during sales promotion periods:

“We usually organise promotion periods where we increase discounts and advertise on as many social media platforms as possible...” (Interview with Participant 12, July 2019).

Some participants highlighted that in order to increase sales through promotion, they focus on the appearance/packaging of the products since it is what is seen first, and this affects purchase decision. Also, offering a door to door delivery service helps boost sales:

“I improve on my packaging, making the product more attractive...” (Interview with Participant 15, July 2019).

“I offer my customers products at reduced prices and supply the products to their door steps...” (Interview with Participant 8, July 2019).

According to participants, implementing the above promotional strategies will affect sales positively and increase their customer base.

Section III: Establish the effect of social media marketing on the relationship between the brand and the customers

This section looks at the evolution of the business brand in terms of the relationship it builds with its customers through social media. The researchers examine the benefits small scale

businesses offered to new and loyal customers, the relationship in terms of trust for the brand or product and the relationship in terms of interaction between the business owners and their clients.

Benefits to New and Loyal Customers

Participants revealed that the benefits they offered to new customers centred on discounts in price, especially for loyal customers. Some participants however, had other methods which they preferred to use:

"I deliver the products to them myself and I give discounts to loyal customers..."
(Interview with Participant 5, July 2019).

Another participant preferred giving out extra sample after purchase and ensuring customers get their products delivered intact:

"Yes, like buy one of my products and get one free. I also make sure I get their desired product ordered intact and on time..." (Interview with Participant 6, July 2019).

Relationship in terms of Trust for the Brand

The researchers sought to know if customers who encountered the brand online trusted the brand after such encounters. The response was unanimous 'yes' as all respondents indicated that their customers trusted the brand especially after they delivered their first goods. Basically, the business operator's ability to deliver the exact same goods as seen online and ordered by the customers is a foundation stone to build trust. One of the respondents said:

"Yes they believe in what I put online because the products are legit and they turn out to like it when they place an order for it..." (Interview with Participant 4, July 2019).

"Yes they do because I supply exactly what I place or advertise online on my status..."
(Interview with Participant 2, July 2019).

From the above statements, it is evident that business operators have to earn the trust of prospective clients after which their results will speak for themselves.

Relationship Based on Interaction

The researchers were also interested to understand how social media has improved on the relationship between small scale business operators and their customers. The responses were varied. Some participants revealed that social media marketing has created a mutual relationship with their clients who have become more interactive and engaging as purported by Cesaroni & Consoli (2015), thereby creating some kind of bond between the clients and the business. Others said the relationships are more cordial and friendly now since they started online advertising. Other respondents indicated that social media marketing has helped them to build a trust worthy relationship (Wind et al., 2002) with their clients especially as they deliver the desired products:

"It has improved my relationship with my clients since we discuss as though we were in the same house when talking about the business..." (Interview with Participant 13, July 2019).

"It has built trust because customers request for and always get their desired products..." (Participant 4, July 2019).

The above statements show that social media marketing has had a good effect on improving the relationship between the brand or business and its clients.

CONCLUSION

Small scale businesses have created a nexus with social media marketing due to the social presence of customers in the Internet. In order to improve sales, profit as well as build trust with customers, small scale businesses in Buea have indulged in social media marketing. Findings of this study reveal that social media marketing, though profitable, is still to gain the trust and confidence of small scale business consumers in Buea. For SME operators who engage in social media marketing, the benefits far outweigh the costs. SMEs have incorporated promotional strategies and even taken supplies to customers' door steps. In order to facilitate delivery to customers' door steps, government should facilitate the creation of house numbering system which eases door to door supplies of goods purchased online. The challenges however, are eminent as the strategies are not well defined and there exist few experts to boost marketing efforts for these small scale business operators who basically manage their social media marketing efforts. Hence, workshops and training programmes should be organised to train owners/managers of SMEs on social media marketing strategies. Notwithstanding, social media marketing is worth adaptive for small scale businesses as findings reveal that it helps to boost sales, create mutual relationship between small scale businesses and customers, secure, retain and win more customers for these businesses. Customers who trust and like marketing efforts online, spread and otherwise share the ads to their friends and families thereby increasing the visibility of business brand and/or products marketed. The issue of trust is prevailing in this network as customers hardly trust marketing efforts online and claim it as scams. However, most small scale business owners have recommended supplying what customers request for intact and same as it has been advertised online as well as communicate effectively with their customers. Reviewing effective strategies on how small scale businesses can effectively utilise social media marketing to boost their services is essential to the survival of these businesses and a suggestion for further research.

References

- Adegbuyi, O.A., Akinyele, F.A. and Akinyele, S.T. (2015). Effect of social media marketing on small scale business performance in Ota-metropolis, Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Management*, 2(3), pp.275-283
- Agarwal, S., Erramilli, M. K., and Dev, C. S. (2003). Market orientation and performance in service firms: Role of innovation. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 17(1), 68-82.
- Barefoot, P. and Szabo M.T (2010) Brand new ventures? Insights on start-ups' branding practices. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 19(5): 356- 366.
- Barnes, N. G. (2010). Tweeting and Blogging to the Top How do the most successful companies use social media? *Marketing Research*, 22 (1), pp. 8-13.
- Banister, S. (2007). Ethical Issues and Qualitative Methods in the 21st Century: How Can Digital Technologies be Embraced in the Research Community. *Journal of Ethnographic and Qualitative Research*, 1(1): 1 - 10.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2): 77- 101. DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.
- Berthon, P., Ewing, M. T. and Napoli, J. (2008). Brand management in small to medium-sized enterprises. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 46(1), 27-45.
- Cesaroni F.M and Consoli D. (2015). Are Small Businesses Really Able to Take Advantage of Social Media? *The Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, 13(4): 257-268, available online at www.ejkm.com
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education*. London, Routledge.
- Coulthard, M. (2007). The role of entrepreneurial orientation on firm performance and the potential influence of relational dynamism (No. 18/07) (pp. 1-12). Melbourne: Monash University Faculty of Business and Economics.
- Coupey, E. (2001), *Marketing and the Internet. Conceptual Foundations*, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, USA
- Cox, S., 2012. Social Media Marketing in a Small Business. <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?Article=1012&context=cgthses>

- Creswell, J. (1994). *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Durkin, M., McGowan, P. and McKeown, N. (2013). Exploring social media adoption in small to medium-sized enterprises in Ireland. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 20 (4):716-734.
- Eltayib, N.H. E; Bhimani, A. M. C; Gandhi, I. A and Kamdar, T.S.A. (2018). The Effect of Social Media Marketing in Small Business Performance. *International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics*, 5(1):141-147, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com
- Fatoki, O. (2012). The impact of entrepreneurial orientation on access to debt finance and performance of small and medium enterprises in South Africa. *Journal of Social Science*, 32(2), 121–131.
- Gilmore, A., Carson, D., Donnell, A. O., and Cummins, D. (1999). Added value: A qualitative assessment of SME marketing. *Irish Marketing Review*, 12(1), 27.
- Hakala, H., and Kohtamäki, M. (2011). Configurations of entrepreneurial, customer and technology orientation: Differences in learning and performance of software companies. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 17(1), 64–81.
- Halligan B, Shah D and Scott D (2009). *Inbound Marketing: Get found using Google, social media, and blogs*. Vol. 1, John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Hammersley, M. and Traianou, A. (2012). *Ethics and Educational Research*, British Educational Research Association. Accessed January 1, 2014. www.bera.ac.uk/system/files/Methodological%20Paradigms.pdf
- Harrigan P. and Miles, M. (2014). From e-CRM to s-CRM. Critical factors underpinning the social CRM activities of SMEs. *Small Enterprise Research*, 21(1): 96-116.
- Huang X. and Brown A. (1999). An Analysis and Classification of Problems in Small Business. *International Small Business Journal* 18(1): 73-85. DOI: 10.1177/0266242699181004
- Jagongo, A. and Kinyua, C. (2013). The social media and entrepreneurship growth. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3 (10), 213 – 227
- Journal du Cameroun.com, 26/08/2019. Cameroon: Mass exodus from Anglophone regions as lockdown looms.
- Kaplan, A. M. and Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
- Kwak, H., Fox, R. J. and Zinkhan, G. M. (2002). What Products Can Be Successfully Promoted and Sold via the Internet? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 42, Jan-Feb, pp. 23-38.
- Long, H. C. (2013). The relationship among learning orientation, market orientation, entrepreneurial orientation, and firm performance of Vietnam marketing communications firms. *Philippine Management Review*, 20, 37–46.
- Li, Y.-H., Huang, J.-W. and Tsai, M.T. (2009). Entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance: The role of knowledge creation process. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 38(4), 440–449.
- Mangold W. G. and Faulds D. J. (2009). Social media: The New Hybrid Element of the Promotion Mix. *Business Horizons* 52(4): 357-365
- Nakara, W.A., Benmoussa, F-Z. and Jaouen, A. (2012). Entrepreneurship and social media marketing: evidence from French small business. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 16(4), 386-405.
- Ngange, K; Enow, B. & Tanjong, E. (2012). The Challenges of Power Generation (Electricity) on ICT Penetration in Cameroon and The Way Forward” in *African Journal of Contemporary Issues*, Vol. 12, No.1, June 2012, pp 185-197
- Omondi, O. J. (2017). Impact of Digital Marketing on sales growth of small and medium enterprises in Nairobi, Kenya. Research Project submitted to School of Business, University of Nairobi
- Orb, A., Elsenhauer, L. and Wynaden, D. (2000). Ethics in Qualitative Research. *Profession and Society*, 33(1): 93 – 96. DOI 10.1111/j.1547-5069.2001.00093.x.
- Prohaska, B. (2011). Social Media for the Collaborative Enterprise. *IT Professional*, 13(4), 64-63.
- Reijonen, H. (2010). Do all SMEs practice same kind of marketing? *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 17(2), 279–293.
- Robins, F. (2000). The E-Marketing Mix. *The Marketing Review*, 1(2), 249-274.
- Srinivasan, R., Bajaj, R. and Bhanot, S. (2016). Impact of social media marketing strategies used by micro, small and medium enterprises on customer acquisition and retention. *Journal of Business and Management*, 18 (1), 91 – 101

- Stokes, D. (2000). Putting Entrepreneurship into Marketing. *Journal of Research in Marketing & Entrepreneurship*, 2(1): 1- 16.
- Stokes, D., and Lomax, W. (2002). Taking control of word of mouth marketing: the case of an entrepreneurial hotelier. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 9, 349-357.
- Turner, D. W. (2010). Qualitative Interview Design: A Practical Guide for Novice Investigators. *The Qualitative Report*, 15(3): 754 – 760.
- Van Manen, M. (1997). *Researching Lived Experiences: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy*. Canada, The Althouse Press.
- Walsh, M. and Lipinski, J. (2009). The role of the marketing function in small and medium sized enterprises. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 16(4), 569-585.
- Wind, Y. and Mahajan, V. (2002), Convergence marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 16 (2), 64-79.
- The Word of Mouth Marketing Association - WOMMA (2011). *What is WOM marketing?* Retrieved September 24, 2014, from <http://womma.org/wom101/>