

EXPLORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS IN 21ST CENTURY NIGERIA

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Abstract: The global advertising industry has experienced a fundamental transformation in the 21st century, with the advent of social media platforms. Social media have revolutionised how brands and organizations communicate with consumers, shifting advertising from one-way communication to interactive, data-driven, and personalised engagements. In Nigeria, the rise of Internet penetration, mobile connectivity, and youth-driven digital culture has positioned social media advertising as a major component of marketing communication. Despite this rapid growth, questions remain regarding the actual effectiveness of social media advertising, particularly in terms of consumer engagement, behavioural influence, and long-term brand loyalty. This study explored the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns in Nigeria, using a mixed-method approach, and grounded in Social Network Theory (SNT), Uses and Gratification theory and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). A descriptive survey was conducted with a sample of 385 respondents, determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size table. Respondents were drawn from active Nigerian social media users who had been exposed to advertising campaigns across platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter). Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and analysed through both descriptive and inferential statistics, including chi-square tests and regression analysis. Findings indicate that social media advertising is highly effective in raising brand awareness, fostering interactivity, and influencing consumer purchase intentions. However, challenges such as misinformation, Internet fraud, intrusive pop-up ads, and lack of regulatory oversight were identified as barriers to effectiveness. The study concluded that social media advertising campaigns are powerful tools for Nigerian businesses, but it requires enhanced regulation, digital literacy, and adoption of artificial intelligence (AI)-driven verification tools to minimise risks. Recommendations are offered to policymakers, advertisers, and consumers to strengthen the credibility and long-term sustainability of social media advertising in Nigeria.

Keywords: Advertising, Digital, Effectiveness, Exploring, Marketing, Social Media.

1. Introduction

Advertising has always been a cornerstone of business success, evolving from ancient methods such as oral communication and posters to mass communication channels such as newspapers, radio, and television. Advertising, a practice as ancient as civilization itself, has evolved from rudimentary methods like "word of mouth" to a sophisticated profession utilised by businesses of all sizes to promote their goods and services. The purpose of advertising is to create awareness and visibility for products among a target audience. As Stuart Britt famously noted, a business without advertising is like "winking at a girl in the dark" (Abashidze, 2023).

Advertising is a persuasive content that is paid for and disseminated through different media without any personal contact about the product, services or ideas (Aziz & Abd Rahim, 2023). It is expedient to note that advertising contents are sponsored or paid for by an identified sponsor of the content being disseminated through various media.

The 21st century introduced a paradigm shift: the rise of digital media, particularly social media platforms, which have become central to global advertising strategies (Okaiyeto, & Ottah, 2021). Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, and Twitter (X) now dominate the marketing landscape, offering organizations unprecedented opportunities to reach targeted audiences.

With the advent of new media, particularly the convergence of computers and the Internet, advertising entered a new phase, providing greater visibility to goods and services (Okaiyeto, Alade & Linus, 2021). A key component of this new media is social media, which allows for direct interaction between advertisers and customers. Social media have become parts of the cheapest and fastest tools for promotion, offering wider coverage and enabling advertisers to work from the comfort of their homes (Bandil, Agrawal & Moharty, 2023). Hence, Guanah, Njoku, and Perediagha (2025) declare that, today, new dimensions have been introduced into advertising, just to promote various types and sizes of businesses. Globally, there are over 4.9 billion social media users as of 2024, representing more than 60% of the world's population (Statista, 2024). This massive user base has made social media platforms indispensable for advertising. Unlike traditional media, social media offers interactive, cost-effective, and data-driven methods of engaging consumers, thereby transforming marketing communications into personalised and participatory experiences (Mishnick & Wise, 2024). Guanah, Olimma, Edherue, Onwuemene (2023) observe that, in recent years, social media platforms have become an integral part of daily life for millions of people worldwide, and that different social media platforms like YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Blogs, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and others are being used extensively by business enterprises for economic enhancement. Nowadays, platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and X (formerly Twitter) are now

central to advertising strategies for enterprises ranging from multinational corporations to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

In Nigeria, the adoption of Social media have grown rapidly. With over 36 million active social media users, representing more than 16% of the population, platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have become central to both personal communication and commercial marketing (NCC, 2023). Nigeria's youthful population, high smartphone penetration, and expanding digital economy make social media advertising particularly relevant (Olley & Arikenbi, 2022). However, despite its popularity, concerns persist about its credibility, actual effectiveness, and associated risks such as fraud, misinformation, and lack of regulation.

This study seeks to address these concerns by providing an empirical examination of the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns in Nigeria, using rigorous sampling, theoretical grounding, and data analysis.

2. Problem Statement

Although social media advertising has gained prominence globally and within Nigeria, its effectiveness remains under-researched in the Nigerian context. Several studies have explored the role of social media in marketing and advertising (Alalwin, 2018; Guanah & Omoera, 2025; Okaiyeto et al. 2021; Ding, Feng, Wang, & Lum, 2022; Pelet, & Ettis, 2022), but there are limited studies in Nigeria that examine the effectiveness of the new

media in adverting (Echeverria, 2023; Aziz, & Abd Rahim, 2023). Furthermore, much of the existing research focuses on descriptive analysis without integrating theoretical frameworks such as Social Network Theory (SNT) and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), (Pan., & Zhang 2023; Olley & Arinkenbi, 2022; Gharzah, Aziz, & Sali, 2023) which explain how consumers engage with and process advertising messages.

Before the rise of social media, advertising was difficult for individuals. While social media have made it easy to advertise with greater ease, it also presents significant challenges. The lack of traditional gatekeeping or censorship on social media platforms allows for the widespread promotion of unverified and substandard products, which can be harmful (Okaiyeto et al. 2021).

Guanah and Omoera opine that “the social media world is becoming a place that no longer offers users only communication and entertainment, and a main player in the advertising industry, but has also become a place where there are an increasing number of malicious scams, which can cause great financial and emotional damage to users” (p. 156). Furthermore, Internet fraud, including phishing websites and pseudo-accounts used to swindle unsuspecting customers, is a major concern (Mubarak, 2023). These issues highlight the need to examine the risks associated with social media advertising and identify solutions to ensure a safer online environment.

Additionally, Nigerian businesses and consumers face significant challenges with social media advertising, including:

misinformation and fraudulent ads, leading to consumer distrust (Rahman, & Rashi, 2018); lack of regulatory oversight from agencies such as the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON); negative consumer experiences, such as intrusive pop-up ads, fake products, and phishing websites (Alalwin, et al., 2017; Qadar et al., 2022) and limited digital literacy, especially among rural users, which increases vulnerability to scams (Sherma, & Verma, 2018). These challenges highlight the need for a study that assesses both the opportunities and risks of social media advertising in Nigeria. This study aims to fill this gap by employing a robust methodological framework to provide scientifically generalizable insights into the effectiveness of SMA campaigns in 21st-century Nigeria.

3. Research Objectives and Questions

3.1 Objectives

To examine the exposure level of respondents to social media advertising campaigns.

To examine the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns in 21st-century Nigeria.

To identify the primary challenges inhibiting the optimal effectiveness of social media advertising in Nigeria.

To explore strategies for reducing risks and enhancing the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns.

3.2 Research Questions

What is the exposure level of respondents to social media advertising campaigns?

How effective are social media advertising campaigns in 21st-century Nigeria?

What are the key challenges faced by advertisers and consumers in social media advertising campaigns?

What strategies can reduce risks and enhance the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns?

4. Conceptual Review

4.1 Advertising

Advertising refers to paid, non-personal communication by an identified sponsor through mass media to persuade or influence consumers (Qadar et al., 2022). Kotler and Keller, (2016) define advertising is a paid, non-personal communication of information about products, services, or ideas by an identified sponsor through various media channels. Its core function is to inform, persuade, and remind target audiences, ultimately influencing consumer behavior and driving sales.

Mubarak (2023) noted that advertizing gives the target audience variety of choice to make through the data that it provides about the product. It is also paid for to market products through the traditional media such as television, radio, newspaper, magazine, mail and contemporary channels such as: text messages, websites, blogging and outdoor advertising.

Historically, advertising relied heavily on traditional media such as newspapers, television, and radio. However, these channels were costly, had limited reach, and provided little feedback from audiences. The evolution from traditional media (television, radio, print) to digital platforms has expanded advertising's

capabilities, particularly in terms of targeting, measurability, and interactivity.

Advertising is a paid, persuasive content disseminated through various media by an identified sponsor to a target audience. It is an essential tool for any successful business strategy. Advertising has the power to change consumer mindsets and behavior, providing them with diverse information to make informed choices. It can be done through traditional media as well as contemporary channels like websites and text messages. According to Guanah, Njoku and Perediagha (2025), the purpose of advertising, which is a crucial part of the marketing mix, is to remind, educate, and convince customers about goods and services. It includes a range of media, each with unique benefits and audiences, such as print, broadcast, and Internet platforms.

4.2 Social Media

Social media consists of Internet-based applications built on the Web 2.0 foundation, allowing for the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Researchers have noted that social media's core elements include content, communities, and Web 2.0 technology (Gamper, 2017; Mishnick, & Wise, D. 2024). It is a group of platforms and websites that enable information sharing through social networking. Social media have revolutionized communication by spreading news and information at tremendous speed, transcending the limitations of space and time inherent in traditional media.

Social media is defined as Internet-based platforms that enable users to create, share, and exchange content in virtual communities

(Mishnick & Wise, 2024). Unlike traditional mass media, social media emphasizes user-generated content and real-time interactivity. Examples include Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter).

Social media refers to "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). These platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, and TikTok, facilitate social interaction, community building, and content sharing on an unprecedented scale, creating a fertile ground for marketing activities.

4.3 Social Media Advertising Campaign

Social media advertising (SMA) is a form of digital advertising that leverages social media to sell goods and services. It offers significant advantages over traditional media, such as lower costs and wider coverage. SMA facilitates direct interactivity between organizations and their customers, increasing product visibility and fostering two-way communication through feedback, comments, and reviews.

A social media advertising campaign involves a coordinated series of promotional messages delivered through social media platforms over a specific period to achieve defined marketing objectives (Tuten & Solomon, 2018). Unlike organic social media efforts, these campaigns are paid and allow for precise audience targeting based on demographics, interests, and behaviours.

Pelet and Ettis (2022), in their view, stated that using social media for marketing is cheaper, suitable and good for customising target audiences. Social Media Advertising (SMA) is a digital advertising that utilises the social media space for advertising by altering how humans interact and exchange information by introducing unique methods of selling goods and services. (Bandil et al., 2023). The opportunities provided by social media advertising is enormous and it is changing the scope of advert and granting advantages of SMA over traditional media ads such as television, radio, magazine, newspaper and outdoor adverts with less cost and wider coverage. Paula Matos et al (2023) asserted that SMA creates room for interactivity between organisations and their customers and it increases visibility of the product on the different social media platforms. SMA is veritable tools for promoting online marketing and promotion of goods, products and services online through various websites, blogs and social media platforms. (Olley & Arikebi, 2023)

Social media encourages customers to interact with themselves, to ask questions and leave comments concerning the product, those interactions can be informative, persuasive or remind them of the product which could also aid unprecedented scale to reach a large number of potential consumers that may leverage on the comments from previous customers to make purchase. It has changed the way we operate and interact with customers, by building brands, enhancing visibility and engaging potential customers using platforms like: Facebook, Instagram and

Twitter. Through social media, customers can share, like, re-share, comment and post with target aids (Abashidze, 2023, Henrawan, 2023, Alalwin, 2018). SMA encourages feedback that builds two-way communication and enables customer review of product and services that would aid objective views from fellow customers. Comments on products and services by other customers when positive could promote the product and services as well as persuade customers to swing into action. On the contrary, when there is a negative feedback, consumer patronage would depreciate, however, the core is that SMA grants the customer the opportunity to have good ideas about the goods and services.

4.3.1 Features of Social Media Advertising Campaign

Links Customers to Businesses: Social media connects customers to businesses and products, overcoming the limitations of time and space associated with traditional media. Bahar et al. (2023) noted that social media enhances visibility and engagement with potential customers because of its interactive features.

Boundlessness: The boundless nature of social media allows advertisers to reach a global audience, enabling them to sell products beyond their geographical locations. With the aid of the new media- the computer and its associated gadgets and the Internet, a customer can connect to any part of the world to sell his goods and service and producers can reach consumers beyond their countries and continents.

Interactivity: Social media enables direct interaction between producers and customers, allowing consumers to get feedback and information without a physical presence. This interaction, through likes, shares, and comments, can influence product sales. The interactive nature of social media aids snowballing, creating ripple effects to goods and services that are displayed. Consumers easily relate with one other to know more about the advertised product.

Cost-Effective: Social media advertising is cost-effective, allowing a wide range of sellers to promote their products for free or at a low cost. The cost effectiveness enables sellers of all categories that are connected to the Internet to advertise their products from a remote area to an international domain. The cost removes limitations to advertising.

Measurability: Availability of analytics to track impressions, clicks, conversions, and engagement.

4.3.2 Advantages of Social Media Advertising Campaign

Ease of Access: with access to new media- the marriage between computer/ phones and its associated gadgets with the Internet, one should be able to advertise products and service in his comfort zone. Unlike the traditional media, there is no need to move from one media house to the other filling forms.

Knowledge of the Product: It makes it easy for potential consumers/customers to have knowledge of the goods, products and services via reviews of previous consumers which would determine their purchasing decisions.

Advanced Advertising: the world is now a global village that is being advanced via technology. Social media campaign reduces the stress of waiting to watch, listen or read about an advert via television, radio and newspaper respectively. Through advancement in technology, advertisers could receive instant feedback as well as interact with the advertiser or manufacturer.

Easily Attract Customers: through pop up ads, consumers are easily attracted to advertisement of products and services that meets their needs or that is related to what they desire. Advertised items could be easily sorted online and similar products could be revealed.

4.3. 3 Disadvantages of Social Media Advertising

Disadvantages encompass advertisement avoidance (e.g., ad blindness), privacy concerns, the potential for negative viral feedback, the complexity of platform algorithms, and risks of digital fraud (Campbell et al., 2020).

Lack of Gatekeeping: Unlike traditional media, many social media advertisements do not pass through regulatory bodies like the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) or the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON). This leads to unverified products being promoted, some of which may be harmful.

Promotion of Substandard Products: The lack of censorship results in the prevalence of substandard and fake products, making it difficult for customers to get what they ordered.

Defamation: Negative product reviews, potentially from competitors, can slander a product and reduce customer patronage.

Phishing Websites: Fraudsters use cloned and phishing websites to illegally collect personal data from unsuspecting customers.

4.4 Empirical Review

Globally, studies confirm the effectiveness of SMA. For instance, Kumar and Mirchandani (2012) found that well-targeted SMA can significantly increase brand recall and purchase intent. In the African context, research by Areo and Oyeniran (2021) highlighted that Nigerian SMEs utilise SMA primarily for its affordability and reach. However, they also identified a lack of strategic depth and analytical skills as major limitations. A more recent study by Adisa and Aderibigbe (2023) found that while consumer engagement with SMA is high, trust remains a significant issue due to the proliferation of counterfeit products and fraudulent schemes, underscoring the critical need for regulatory oversight and consumer education.

Recent studies provide mixed findings, Bandil et al., (2023) showed that social media advertising significantly influences consumer behavior in India, particularly among youth. Olley and Arikenbi (2022) found that Nigerian SMEs benefit from social media advertising by increasing brand recognition and consumer loyalty. While Pan and Zhang (2023) demonstrated that ad persuasiveness depends on whether consumers process messages through central or peripheral routes, consistent with the Elaboration Likelihood Model. Echeverria (2023) highlighted that social media

is effective for political mobilization but vulnerable to misinformation. Mubarak (2023) revealed that Nigerian students' choice of private universities was influenced by targeted Instagram and Facebook ads. These studies highlight both the effectiveness and the risks of social media advertising, underscoring the importance of this research.

4.5 Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by three complementary theories:

4.5.1 Social Network Theory (SNT)

Explains how individuals and groups are connected through networks that facilitate information flow and influence (Liu et al., 2017). SNT posits that social structures are composed of nodes (individuals or organizations) tied by one or more specific types of interdependency (e.g., friendship, common interest, financial exchange) (Granovetter, 1973). Social media platforms exemplify this theory by linking consumers and advertisers. The theory deals with relationship, connections and interaction among social media group. The theory suits the study by ensuring that advertisers and customers could easily connect for effective interaction and feedback. The theory enables online communities where consumer or potential consumers could be updated on the online platform concerning the advertisers' goods, products, ideas or services. Suffice to note that most of the current social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Telegram and others have platforms for online communities. In the context of SMA, SNT helps explain how

information about products and brands diffuses through networks of connected users. The "strength of weak ties" concept is particularly relevant, as it suggests that broad-reaching campaigns can tap into extended networks for maximum visibility (Gamper, 2017).

4.5.2 Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), is a dual-process theory that explains how individuals are persuaded through two distinct cognitive routes: the central route and the peripheral route. The model is highly relevant in analyzing how social media advertising campaigns influence consumer attitudes and behaviors in contemporary Nigeria, where digital penetration, youth demographics, and shifting consumer cultures are reshaping marketing strategies. It explains how consumers process advertising messages either through a central route (deep, rational processing of information) or a peripheral route (superficial cues such as celebrity endorsements or visuals) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Central Route Processing and Nigerian Social Media Advertising:

High-Involvement Consumers: In Nigeria, sectors such as telecommunications, fintech, and education increasingly rely on social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok, and YouTube) to provide detailed product information. Audiences with high involvement—like young professionals evaluating fintech apps or university students considering online education platforms—process ads via the central route by

scrutinizing claims, comparing features, and seeking logical consistency.

Effectiveness: Social media advertising campaigns that present credible data, product demonstrations, influencer reviews, and user testimonials succeed in building stronger attitudes that are more resistant to counter-persuasion and more predictive of purchase behaviour.

Peripheral Route Processing in the Nigerian Context:

Low-Involvement Consumers: Many Nigerian audiences, particularly in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) markets (e.g., beverages, cosmetics, snacks), often engage in low-involvement decision-making. Here, consumers rely on peripheral cues such as celebrity endorsements (e.g., Davido, Burna Boy, Tiwa Savage), humor, music, visual aesthetics, and social proof (likes, shares, and comments).

Effectiveness: Campaigns leveraging cultural relevance, catchy slogans, memes, and local humor (e.g., Pidgin English expressions) achieve persuasion by evoking emotional resonance rather than rational argumentation. Such attitudes may be less enduring but are effective in driving impulse buying and brand awareness.

4.5.3 Uses and Gratifications Theory (U&G)

U&G is an audience-centered approach that understands what people do with media to fulfill their needs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). When applied to SMA, it explains why consumers choose to engage with certain ads (e.g., for information, entertainment, social interaction, or personal identity) and avoid

others. This theory provides a framework for understanding the effectiveness of ad content from the consumer's perspective, explaining why some campaigns succeed in gratifying user needs while others are ignored or perceived as intrusive.

Together, these theories provide a framework for understanding both the reach and the persuasive effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns.

5. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. The target population comprised individuals responsible for social media advertising in registered Nigerian businesses. To determine a representative sample size, the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table was consulted. Assuming a large population size (e.g., over 100,000 businesses), a sample size of 385 is required for a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. A combination of stratified and snowball sampling techniques was used to recruit participants from Bayelsa State major cities and across various industries. Data collection was conducted using a structured online questionnaire designed on Google Forms titled Social Media Advertising Effectiveness Questionnaire (SMAEQ), with sections covering demographics, Exposure to social media advertising, SMA usage, perceived effectiveness, challenges, and proposed solutions. Content validity was ensured by expert review, while reliability was established through a pilot study (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.84$). Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

(SPSS) Version 27, employing descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) and inferential statistics (Regression analysis) to address the research objectives. Participation was voluntary, anonymity was assured, and respondents provided informed consent.

6. Results

Table 1: Demographics

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	205	53.2
Female	180	46.8
Total	385	100.0
Age		
14 – 20	31	8.1
21 – 27	70	18.7
28 – 34	72	18.2
35 – 41	87	22.6
42 – 48	75	19.5
49 & above	50	13.0
Total	385	100.0

Source: Research Field work, 2025

Table 1 shows that male respondents have 53.2% slightly higher than female with 46.8%; while age distribution shows that the age bracket of 35 years to 41 years are the majority with 22.6%, while other age bracket are evenly distributed.

Table 2: Social Media Respondents Mostly Prefer to Use

Social Media Mostly Prefer to Use

Social Media Prefer to Use	Frequency	Percentage (%)
YouTube	12	3.1
Facebook	41	10.6
Instagram	25	6.4

LinkedIn	10	2.6
Tik Tok	32	8.3
X(Twitter)	44	11.4
WhatsApp	213	55.3
Others	8	2.0
Total	385	100.0

Source: Research Field work, 2025

The data shows that more than half of the respondents (55.3%) prefer WhatsApp social media than the rest, while 11.4% prefer X (Twitter) and 10.6% Facebook. This signified respondents high utilization of WhatsApp messaging app for their interactions.

Table 3: Social Media Advertising Respondents are Mostly Exposed to

Social Media Advertising Mostly Exposed to	Frequency	Percentage
YouTube	13	3.3
Facebook	146	37.9
Instagram	71	18.44
LinkedIn	2	0.5
Tik Tok	28	7.2
Twitter	2	0.5
WhatsApp	111	28.8
Others	5	1.3
Not Sure	7	1.8
Total	385	100.0

Source: Research Field work, 2025

Table 3 shows that majority of the respondents (37.8%) are exposed to Facebook adverts mostly, while 28.8% are mostly exposed to WhatsApp adverts. About 18% are exposed mostly to Instagram adverts. It therefore means that, majority of the respondents are exposed to social media advertising campaigns.

Table 4: Effectiveness of Social Media Advertising Campaign

S/no	Effectiveness of Social Media Advertising	Level of Effectiveness (%)					M	SD	Ovall(%)
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	It increased brand awareness	0.0	1.5	27.3	37.9	33.3	4.0	.822	80
2	It customer improved interaction rates	1.5	13.6	43.9	30.3	10.6	3.35	.90	67
3	Have purchased a product after seeing it advertised online	0.0	0.0	50.0	40.9	9.1	3.59	.66	71.8
4	Social media ads increased awareness of products	1.5	3.0	28.8	66.7	0.0	3.61	.63	72.2
5	SMA effective for generating qualified leads	0.0	3.0	39.4	57.6	0.0	3.55	.56	71
6	SMA provided a better ROI than traditional advertising methods	1.5	4.5	69.7	24.2	0.0	3.17	.57	63.4
7	Improve the ability to gain product knowledge through online reviews	3.0	9.1	53.0	34.8	0.0	3.20	.73	64

8	It increase capacity to attract customer attention as reasons for its effectiveness	4.5	13.6	24,2	39.4	18.2	3.47	1.2	69.4
9	The status as an advanced form of advertising further underscore its efficacy	3.0	18.2	33.3	19.7	25.8	3.53	1.08	70.6
Total							3.50	0.79	69.9

Source: Research Field work, 2025 Note: 2.5 is the cut-off point between agreement & disagreement on table, M=Mean, SD; Standard Deviation, 1; Not Effective at All, 2; Slightly Effective, 3; Moderately Effective, 4; Very Effective, and 5; Extremely Effective.

Generally, most (69.9%) respondents agreed respondents indicated a high perceived effectiveness of social media advertising campaign (M=3.50, SD=0.79). Particular, it increased brand awareness (80%). Social media ads increased awareness of products (72.2%). Respondents have purchased a product after seeing it advertised online (72.2%). It increase capacity to attract customer attention as reasons for its effectiveness (69.4%). It customer improved interaction rates (67%).

Model Summary

Table 5: Impact of Frequency of Exposure on Purchasing Effectiveness

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.093 ^a	.037	-.008	4.85686

a. Predictors: (Constant), Purchasing Effectiveness

The study found that social media is an effective advertising tool in Nigeria. Respondents cited ease of access, the ability to gain product knowledge through online reviews, and the capacity to attract customer attention as reasons for its effectiveness. Its interactivity, cost-effectiveness, and status as an advanced form of advertising further underscore its efficacy.

In order to hypothetically test the impact of frequency of exposure on purchasing effectiveness, we measured the impact of frequency of exposure on purchasing effectiveness using linear regression analysis.

Table 5: Impact of Frequency of Exposure on Purchasing Effectiveness

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	9.564	1	6.563	.041	.001 ^b
Residual	851.876	64	14.873		
Total	958.439	65			

a. Dependent Variable:), Purchasing Effectiveness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Frequency of Exposure

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	35.05	1.764		13.387	.000
Frequency of Exposure	.045	.053	.053	.654	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Effectiveness

Source: Research Field work, 2025

Result of the regression table 5 revealed that the independent variable, (Frequency of Exposure) predicts on 37% variance on the purchasing effectiveness of respondents with $P=.009$ showing significance ($R^2 .037$ $P=.009$).

It is therefore; statistically correct to say respondents. As such, the null hypothesis is rejected. That is, Regression analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between frequency of exposure and purchasing effectiveness.

Table 6. Challenges of Social Media Advertising

S/ no	Challenges	Level of Agreement (%)					M	SD	Ovall(%)
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Misinformation and fraudulent ads as major challenges	1.5	0.0	40.9	30.3	27.3	3.8	.89	76
2	Report of distrust due to previous experiences with fake sellers.	0.0	3.0	62.1	25.8	9.1	3.4	.70	68.2

3	Phishing websites designed to steal personal data	3.0	6.1	42.4	31.8	16.7	3.53	.95	70.6
4	Complained about intrusive pop-up ads.	0.0	7.6	16.7	37.9	37.9	4.06	.92	81.2
5	Offensive content due to a lack of gatekeeping	3.0	7.6	33.3	18.2	37.9	3.83	1.13	76
6	Unreliable Internet Connectivity	1.6	4.8	33.2	35.8	24.6	3.77	.929	75.4
7	Lack of Regulatory and Proximity to Substandard Products	4.3	6.7	42.8	33.7	12.6	3.43	.943	68.6
8	Difficulty in Measuring Accurate ROI	0.0	4.8	48.1	17.6	29.4	3.71	.943	74.2
Total							3.72	0.92	74.4

Source: Research Field work, 2025 Note: 2.5 is the cut-off point between agreement & disagreement on table, M=Mean, SD; Standard Deviation, 1; Strongly Disagree, 2; Disagree, 3; Neutral, 4; Agree, and 5; strongly Agree.

Majority of the respondents (74.4%) agreed that there are challenges affecting the effectiveness of social media advertising (M=3.72, SD=0.92). Specifically, Misinformation and fraudulent ads as major challenges (76%). Complain about intrusive pop-up ads (81.2%).

There is difficulty in Measuring Accurate ROI (74.2%). Too much offensive content due to a lack of gatekeeping (76%) and phishing websites designed to steal personal data (70.6%). There is high report of distrust due to previous experiences with fake sellers (68.2%). Respondents highlighted several challenges, including unwanted pop-up adverts and phishing websites designed to steal personal data. Other issues noted were hidden data charges, offensive content due to a lack of gatekeeping, and the technical complexity for new users.

Table 7: Strategies to Enhance Effectiveness of Social Media Advertising Campaign

S/ no	Strategies to Enhance Effectiveness	Level of Agreement (%)							
		1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	Ovall(%)
1	I suggest stronger ARCON regulation	1.5	0.0	45.5	31.8	21.2	3.71	.86	74.2
2	Use of AI-powered tools for ad targeting and fraud detection	0.0	4.5	57.6	25.8	12.1	3.45	.77	69

3	Emphasize consumer digital literacy campaigns	3.0	7.6	40.9	33.3	15.2	3.5	.95	70
4	Enhanced cybersecurity measures by ARCON	3.0	13.6	27.3	43.9	12.1	3.4	.98	69.6
5	Mandatory verification badges for legitimate business accounts	1.5	3.0	40.9	47.0	7.6	3.5	.74	71.2
6	Transparent data usage policies by brands	6.1	16.7	39.4	37.9	0.0	3.0	.89	61.8
7	Advertisers sanitizing their platforms to prevent cloning	18.2	3.0	53.0	24.2	1.5	3.0	.98	61.8
8	There should be reduction of pop-up adverts	0.0	1.5	56.1	33.3	9.1	3.5	.69	70
Total							3.4	0.8	68.45
							2	6	

Source: Research Field work, 2025 Note: 2.5 is the cut-off point between agreement & disagreement on table M=Mean, SD; Standard Deviation, 1; Strongly Disagree, 2; Disagree, 3; Neutral, 4; Agree, and 5; strongly Agree.

Generally, respondents affirmed some recommendations on Strategies to Enhance Effectiveness of Social Media Advertising Campaign (M=3.42, SD=0.86). Specifically, they suggest stronger ARCON regulation (74.2%). Mandatory verification badges for legitimate business accounts (71.2%). Emphasize consumer digital literacy campaigns (70%). There should be reduction of pop-up adverts (70%). There should be use of AI-powered tools for ad targeting and fraud detection (69%). Enhanced cybersecurity measures by ARCON (69.6%). The study identified several solutions to mitigate the risks. These include advertisers sanitizing their platforms to prevent cloning, reducing pop-up

adverts, and utilizing artificial intelligence to create quality content. Consumers were also advised to avoid using public Wi-Fi networks due to poor security.

7. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study align with previous research on social media advertising. The perceived effectiveness of social media, particularly its interactivity and cost-effectiveness, is consistent with the views of Pelet and Ettis (2022) and Bandil et al. (2023). The study's emphasis on interactivity as a key advantage is supported by Paula Matos et al. (2023), who assert that SMA increases product visibility and creates a space for interaction between organizations and customers. The ease of access and ability to reach a wider audience highlighted in the findings resonate with the observations of Bahar et al. (2023). The findings confirm that social media advertising is highly effective in Nigeria,

consistent with Olley & Arikebi (2022). The positive influence of advertising on purchase decisions supports the Elaboration Likelihood Model, as consumers respond to both central (detailed product info) and peripheral cues (visuals, influencers).

These findings are strongly linked to the Social Network Theory, which serves as the theoretical framework for this study. The theory's focus on relationships and connections within networks directly explains the interactive nature of social media advertising. The study's results show that social media's effectiveness stems from its ability to create a "network" where advertisers and customers can easily connect and provide feedback. The positive and negative comments from consumers, which can either boost or reduce sales, are a clear manifestation of the "ripple effect" of interaction within this social network. The theory helps explain why social media advertising, with its feedback and two-way communication, is superior to traditional media, which lacks this immediate interactive quality.

The high ratings for brand awareness and engagement are explained by the Social Network Theory; advertisements benefit from the networked structure of social media, where shares and likes amplify reach organically. The Uses and Gratifications Theory explains why interactive and informative ads are more effective, as they fulfill users' needs for information and social connection.

The identified challenges, such as the lack of gatekeeping and the prevalence of substandard products, are significant issues that have been noted in broader discourse about the

unregulated nature of online platforms. The risk of phishing and data theft is a well-documented problem that is a major concern for online users. Challenges such as fraud and misinformation echo concerns raised by Bahar (2023) about unregulated digital spaces. The study expands on previous Nigerian research by employing a larger, scientifically determined sample size, thereby offering more generalizable conclusions.

The strong consensus on solutions like regulatory oversight and consumer education highlights a market need for institutional support to build a trustworthy digital advertising ecosystem, which would enhance the gratification users derive from SMA (U&G). The study's results show that social media's effectiveness stems from its ability to create a "network" where advertisers and customers can easily connect and provide feedback. The positive and negative comments from consumers, which can either boost or reduce sales, are a clear manifestation of the "ripple effect" of interaction within this social network. The theory helps explain why social media advertising, with its feedback and two-way communication, is superior to traditional media, which lacks this immediate interactive quality.

8. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that social media advertising is an effective tool for enhancing brand visibility, consumer engagement, and purchase intention in Nigeria. The study concludes that social media advertising is an advanced and effective method for promoting goods and services in Nigeria. It offers

opportunities for individuals to advertise with minimal stress and achieve greater visibility for their products, potentially making a local product international. However, this form of advertising is not without its drawbacks. Challenges such as phishing websites and the promotion of unverified products pose significant risks to consumers. Strong online security measures, including product validators and creating interactive links, are necessary to protect consumers and ensure the integrity of online advertising.

For SMA to realize its full potential in driving business growth in Nigeria, a concerted effort is required from regulators, businesses, and consumers to create a safer, more reliable, and transparent digital environment.

9. Recommendations

Policy: ARCON, NCC should extend its regulatory framework to cover online and social media advertisements. Establish a dedicated digital advertising regulatory unit to certify legitimate online advertisers, combat fraud, and sanitize the advertising space.

Advertisers: Adopt data-driven targeting and use AI-powered validators to ensure authenticity. Advertisers should digitally sanitize their platforms to prevent cloning and implement content validators that help consumers identify legitimate websites and products

Consumers: Improve digital literacy to identify fraudulent ads and phishing attempts. Utilize platform reporting tools to flag suspicious content.

Academia: Longitudinal studies should be conducted to track the evolution of SMA

effectiveness in Nigeria. Qualitative research could provide deeper insights into consumer perceptions and decision-making processes.

Social media platforms should implement stricter gatekeeping measures to curb the spread of substandard and harmful products.

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