

Analysis of Guerrilla and Traditional Marketing Interface in Improving the Productivity of Organizational Marketing in Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria

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Abstract

This research aims at exploring and analyzing the integration of guerrilla and traditional marketing in small to medium scale enterprises in Nigeria with a case study of Marketing of Hotel Services in Owerri Imo State, Nigeria. For gathering data, two questionnaires were used for the integration of guerrilla marketing and the traditional marketing and productivity of organizational marketing. The research hypotheses were tested by correlation test, and all the hypotheses were verified. The sequences of priorities in productivity of organizational marketing were new methods of advertisement. There was a significant relationship between the integration of guerrilla marketing and the traditional marketing in the improvement of productivity of organizational marketing in the enterprises studied. Also, it was concluded that new communication technologies item with mean of 1.93, innovation and problem solving techniques with mean of 2.08, marketing budget item with mean 2.89 and new methods of advertisement with mean of 3.12 were first to fourth priority, respectively. Findings show that guerrilla marketing is complementary to traditional marketing. Hence will recommend GM as a paradigm and for hotel enterprises in Owerri, guerrilla marketing is the surviving technique to approach the unstable hostile business environment that they operate in.

Keywords: Guerrilla marketing, Conventional marketing, Buzz marketing, Viral marketing, Ambush marketing

1.0 Introduction

Marketing is essential for the organic growth of a company. Not surprising, firms spend millions of naira on marketing.

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Given that these consist of investments, marketing managers have the responsibility to optimally allocate their resources and demonstrate that these investments generate appropriate returns for their firms. A knowledgeable manager knows if pricing, advertisement or distribution is crucial for the growth of his business (Gupta & Steenburgh, 2008). Levinson, (1983) made the term "guerrilla marketing" known as a philosophy for small and start-up companies to successfully market their products and services with a small amount of money. He based the success of a marketing strategy on the use of non-traditional marketing channels, customer proximity, insistency and patience. Through the drastic technological development seen today and its complementary change in the advertising market, guerrilla marketing has developed into a marketing form that is mostly used for promotion and retention of customers' attention and interest. New forms such as "ambush" and "viral" marketing have evolved (Druing & Fahrenholz, 2008). Guerilla marketing distinguishes itself from other promotion tools by its surprise effect and it has become a very popular marketing strategy in recent times.

Casadesus-Masanell, *et al*, (2007), in their researches from strategy to business models and to tactics, state that the business model design involves assessments with respect to determining:

- (i) the identity of the market segments to be targeted;
- (ii) the benefit the enterprise will deliver to the customer;
- (iii) the technologies and features that are to be embedded in the product and service;
- (iv) how the revenue and cost structure of a business is to be designed (and if necessary, redesigned) to meet customer needs;
- (v) the way in which technologies are to be assembled and offered to the customers;
- (vi) the mechanisms and manner by which the value is to be captured, and how the competitive advantage can be sustained.

These issues are all interrelated. They lie at the core of the fundamental questions asked by business strategist, which is "how does one build a sustainable competitive advantage?"

Integration of guerrilla marketing and traditional marketing is approached not as a set of tools (a technology) for facilitating transactions or responding to change, but as a vehicle for fundamentally redefining products and markets in ways that produce sustainable competitive advantage for enterprises, (levinson, 2008).

About new methods of advertisement, Godes and Mayzlin (2007) report several other examples where companies promoted their products and services through word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing. Kumar, *et al* (2007) used a survey method to assess the value of word-of-mouth and referral. Zubcsek and Sarvary (2009), present that direct marketing (DM) which involves sending promotional messages to individual customers is increasingly used by marketers as a result of the explosive growth of customers' database. Most current methods used to calculate optimal budgets for such DM campaigns consider customers in isolation and ignore the word-of-mouth communication (WOM). When the customer base forms a network (as it is the case in telecom or social network databases), ignoring WOM clearly leads to traditional marketing budgets.

The current traditional marketing methods however, generally ignore word-of-mouth communication between customers (Vilanueva, *et al*, 2008). Although marketers have always known that WOM has a very powerful influence on customer decisions (Bass, 1969; Herr, *et al*, 1991; Van den Bulte & Joshi, 2007), until recently, they did not have much information about the individual communication patterns of consumers.

In this investigation, the role of integrating guerrilla and traditional marketing in improving the productivity of organizational marketing in enterprises in Nigeria is discussed with a case study of hotel marketing in Owerri considering the number of hotels spring-up now in the area.

2.0 Review of Related Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The term: "Guerrilla" first appeared during the war of independence in Spain and Portugal at the beginning of the 19th century.

It is a Spanish expression which can be translated as "battle". Guerrilla stands for a combat operation that was used by smaller groups that stood against a massive military force, (Levinson, 1998).

The term and the connected operations become famous through Ernesto Che Guevara Lynch la Serna (1928-1967), best known as Che Guevara, who used and defined this military tactics. He belongs to a small militia group which wanted to put their political concept through to the people. They were clearly in the weaker position and their only chance to achieve a successful revolution in Cuba was to fight the national military. Since Che Guevara and his followers did not possess as many resources, such as weapons, money, or fighters as their opponents, they based their operations on the surprise effect and on acts of sabotage. Due to their size, they had the advantage of being more flexible, having a quicker co-ordination and knowledge of the territory better. The use of unconventional weapons and activities helped them to destabilize their rivals and led them to their final success.

During the 1960's, the United States of America faced major difficulties in the Vietnam War. Even though Vietnam was theoretically much weaker, the USA Army was not able to bring the Vietnamese down. Especially the Vietcong force was unbeatable, because they used the Guerrilla tactics that destabilized the American forces constantly. The Vietcong's operations were similar to Che Guevara's activities. They also used the surprise effect, were much more flexible than their enemies fought on Vietnamese territory, and used unusual means. This was the first time American got to know the principles of Guerrilla, (Levinson, 2003, Levinson & Lauterslager, 2005). Guerrilla marketing is characterized by surprise effect, diffusion effect and low-cost effect. It is flexible in application and advocates for effective resources leverage. This phenomenon is what this study sets out to provide empirical evidence for.

The name Guerrilla originally describes a group that uses a violent approach to achieve the implementation of their belief and ideology. Then opponents are often a tremendous force consisting of more people and resources such as weapons or money. The Guerrilla fighter's only advantage is the fact that they only know where and when they will strike.

The original approach of Guerrilla marketing is as an alternative marketing strategy that suits small and medium sizes enterprises to act like guerrilla fighters have done in the past: hit valuable targets of large enemies by taking them by surprise.

The unexpected and unusual guerrilla marketing campaigns help smaller companies to successfully reach their target group, even though their bigger market competitors had a large marketing budget, more experience, and a better spread to advance a market by using traditional strategies (During & Fahrenholz, 2008). During and Fahrenholz (2008), posit that many small and medium-sized enterprise started with Guerrilla marketing and established their businesses creatively. Through constant growth rates they have the means to also afford traditional marketing tools to gain more and more market share, and continue to attack the market leaders.

Summary of the Guerrilla Marketing Principles

- i. Find a Segment Small Enough to Defend : Try to pick a segment small enough so that you can become the leader. ABC Transport is a true guerrilla. They concentrate on a small market segment and are its leader. Small is beautiful.
- ii. Psychological warfare: A guerrilla can take advantage of its smallness to make quick decisions. This can be a precious asset when competing with the big companies.
- iii. Flexibility and restlessness: Don't hesitate to abandon a position or a product if the battle turns against you. A guerrilla doesn't have the resources to waste on a lost cause. He should be quick to give up and move on in the small company, one person's hunch can be enough to launch a new product.
- iv. It has to be excitement and humorous. Make your customers remember you with smiling faces, that they will always desire to buy from you.

Guerilla versus Traditional Marketing

In order to understand the principles of guerrilla marketing performance, the significant differences between traditional marketing and guerilla marketing have to be identified. Referring to Levinson (2006), conventional advertising require a certain capital addressed for promotion plan while time, energy, imagination and knowledge assets are a primary investment in Guerrilla approach.

Big businesses with correspondingly substantial budgets are potential users of traditional marketing, which measure its success only by sales and number of responses or store traffic. Traditional marketers neglect future relationships with customers since the purchase is made by the customers.

It is concerned mostly about short-term value from marketing. In contrast, Guerrilla strategies are mostly oriented towards small or middle-sized firms with tiny budgets, and concerned that only the size of profits can measure what you are striving for. It looks for long-term relationship with the customers.

Gallagher, (2004) explains an explicit difference as: “what matters in guerrilla marketing is, rather than what the firm does to be successful; it is what it does to differentiate itself from its rivals and its success in reaching broader potential customers”. According to Levinson (2006), therein is the summary of the main differences between these two ways of marketing in the Table 2.1 below:

2.1: Differences between Traditional and Guerrilla Marketing

Traditional Marketing	Guerrilla Marketing
Primary investment is money	Primary investment is time, effort and creativity
Model for big business	Focus on small business
Success measured by sales	Success measured by profits
What can I take from the customer?	What can I give to the customer?
Mass media usage (direct mail, radio, television, newspapers)	Marketing weapons are numerous and most are free
Advertising works	Types of non-traditional marketing succeed
How much money do you have at the end?	How many relationships do you have at the end?

(Source: Levinson, 2006)

Around the globe-marketing experts, researchers, and academics are eagerly trying to find an all-embracing description of Guerrilla Marketing (GM), since no official definition of the term exist so far. Many explanations have thus been created and even though they vary in their wordings, they have the following characteristics of Guerrilla Marketing in common: creative, unconventional, surprising and efficient, (Levinson & McLaughlin, 2003, Levinson, 1998).

Guerrilla marketing is a marketing strategy in today's marketplace, predominately used for the marketing mix “p” promotion. It is a form of marketing which involves the consumer in the advertising experience. Guerrilla marketing campaigns display creative ideas dynamically with unconventional methods at places where advertising would be least expected. The aim is to irritate, fascinate, and animate the customer/consumer. The surprise–effect belongs to the root of the philosophy (During & Fahnenholz, 2008).

The use of the unconventional marketing approaches was something that is previously associated with small enterprises due to their limited budget; they had to find new ways. Nowadays when the competition is harsh, the trend goes towards large advertisers who also adopted the approach, since the positive aspects are more visible and the need for finding new ways of reaching the customer has increased (Belch & Belch, 2004).

Guerrilla marketing, as the name implies, gives an indication of controversy and warfare, since the name is associated with military tactics, but it should not be associated with a bloody battleground. It is more of a strategy that one uses in order to conquer a market through a well planned approach in a smaller scale. Enterprises use warfare tactics to fight on the battleground of today marketplace, which is the consumers' mind-where words and pictures are the weapons used and where the owner-manager of every enterprise acts as a general, (Garsombke, 1987).

Levinson (1984), claims that all kinds of innovative and eye-catching advertisements belong to the concept of guerrilla marketing. Accordingly, guerrilla marketing is described as being fancy, atypical, unusual, original, provoking, flexible, dynamic, innovative, creative, and humorous.

Ries and Trout (1986), for example, recommend to marketers to save costs by identifying market niches, creating a flat organizational structure and acting highly flexible. Despite different vistas on the phenomenon, all the definition of guerrilla marketing agree that the concept provides a solution on how to succeed in the competition for consumers' attention in advertising campaigns.

Egan, (2007), McAllister, and Turow, (2002) posit that Guerrilla Marketing is an umbrella terms that covers the various innovative approaches that marketers adopt in the marketplace to gain market-share and profit, namely: renegade marketing, covert marketing, diffusion marketing, under-the-radar marketing or vanguard marketing. Further, marketers developed several instruments which are applied under the roof of guerrilla marketing, such as ambush marketing, ambient marketing, sensation marketing, buzz marketing or viral marketing (Carter, 2003, Notarantonio & Quigley Jr., 2009, Hutter & Hoffmann, 2011a).

Guerrilla marketing is up to date a marketing strategy characterized by surprise-effect, diffusion-effect and low cost, using the instruments of flexibility, buzz marketing, viral marketing, sensation marketing, ambush marketing, ambient marketing and other related tools to gain advantage over competitors who are stronger in a tough and harsh economy. It is a dynamic, flexible, restless and provocative approach to marketing and in some cases unconventional and controversial without offence to the law and customers.

2.2 "Guerrilla Enters Marketing"

Conventional marketing practices and textbooks do not accommodate most of the characteristics of Guerrilla marketing. However, in tough and harsh economy, marketers began to improvise and search for other means of survival that does not infringe on others. It is under this condition of toughness that American marketing experts started looking for new approaches to gain the attention of customers. The consumers' behavior had changed and businesses had to come up with offers that fit their consumers' needs and not only their own. Consequently marketing experts had to find realizable concepts for businesses with limited resources. Something that makes one firm stand-out in the crowd, (Guerrilla Marketing Portal, 2005). The only promising way was to use an untraditional marketing approach that included attention and attack strategies in order to gain as much attention as possible and to weaken competitors considerably. Guerrilla philosophy was found to accommodate these desires, (Schulte, 2007).

2.3 The Philosophy of Guerrilla Marketing

Levinson (1983), defined the root of the idea in his book "Guerrilla Marketing", his publication provided not only an explanation of the essential marketing idea, but also a philosophy for small business owners who wanted to follow the Guerrilla marketing idea. He introduced new ways of advertising and presenting a business well with small budget, and based the success of marketing strategy on the use of non-traditional marketing channels, customer proximity, insistence and patience. A company should create as many points of contact with customers and prospects as possible in order to stay in their memory. Conrad Levinson is today the father of "Guerrilla Marketing" as his book has been translated into more than 40 languages.

Al Ries and Jack Trout (1983) wrote agreeing with Levinson, but improved on what he wrote. Like Levinson, Trout and Ries believed that Guerrilla marketing is best suited for small and medium-size enterprises. Trout pointed out that the market size also has to be manageable with the limited and available resources. Therefore they suggested specializing and investing in niche product and/or market niche. Theirs is that small and medium enterprises should adopt niche approach which will allow flexibility and change, surprise and diffusion at low cost.

Kotler, (1990) suggests that Guerrilla marketing should be adopted by market challengers that try to increase their own profitability by gaining more market share from other enterprises in the same industry. A competitive advantage over the challenged firm is the foundation for a good strategy but also involves high risks, especially when the potential gain is high. Kotler, et al. (2005), argue that many smaller financially weaker companies are now using an aggressive guerrilla attack. Such a campaign can even be a tool to fight the current market leader. Unlike Levinson (1998), Ries, Trout (1983), and Kotler (1990) believe that the main purpose of guerrilla marketing is to destabilize the opponent or best to destroy the competitors with the help of attrition tactics.

From the views of these guerrilla marketing philosophers, Guerrilla marketing is deeply understood and the principles made clearer for the study.

Guerrilla marketing is not a battle or physical combat per se, but a psychological battle that is fought and won in the minds of customers and consumers, partners and competitors through the segmentation of the population to serve, the targeting strategies adopted that result in the positioning of the firm's products and services in the mind of the customers and consumers for patronage.

Druing and Fahrenholz, (2008) found in their research result that financially strong companies use guerrilla marketing as a complementary tool to present the brand in a multimodal way. Smaller firms can make use of the cost-effective strategy to get the spotlight on their brand. Good co-operation with, for instance, the public relations department is essential to increase the guerrilla marketing effect enormously. They concluded in their research that guerrilla marketing would blend with the customers by finding ways to surprise them and interest them by putting the idea in the forefront, not the brand. The evolved guerrilla marketing form is now used by companies of all sizes.

Global players such as BMW use it, and start-up companies do so to create brand awareness, (Levinson, 2008). Many small and medium sized companies started with guerrilla marketing and established their businesses lucratively. Through constant growth rates, they have the means to also afford traditional marketing tools to gain more and more market share, which enables them to compete with the market leaders.

Wensen, (2008) asserts that one can win the battle for the consumers' attention by being smarter and more creative than his opponent, instead of spending more money for TV commercials than his competitor does. His definition of guerrilla marketing is a broad one and an unexpected brand program through alternative media. Guerrilla marketing includes, for example, viral marketing, ambush marketing, buzz marketing and also events, but guerrilla marketing is far more than the definition. It is a mentality too, because the mentality of thinking is outside the box and thinking for solutions for communications problems in a broader way, instead of thinking in terms of just TV commercials. Traditional advertising on TV, radio, print and even traditional outdoor advertising is not what is meant by guerrilla marketing. Guerrilla marketing is a way of thinking, (Gallagher, 2004).

Turkel, (2009) describes the evolution of advertising by discussing how it gets affected by technology and the importance of guerrilla advertising. The study presents guerrilla advertisement and uses alternative communication strategies to attract customer's attention. The more the impact of advertising on message gets larger, the more it draws the attention of the media. There is also a chance for worldwide advertising agencies to compare their innovative ideas besides the print media. In his thesis, he analyzed the different perspective of guerrilla advertising to highlight the necessity of guerilla advertising in Turkey.

Regina and Galer-Unti (2009), express some of the principles of guerrilla marketing configured to aid in health advocacy efforts. The basic tactics of guerrilla marketing are innovation and creativity instead of the status quo methods of advertising. Since 1984, Levinson's ideas have been reworked to illustrate how those in a variety of occupation can translate the principles of low-budget, aggressive marketing to aid in selling their products (Levinson, *et al*, 2001).

Hypotheses

- i. There is a significant relationship between the integration of guerrilla and traditional marketing and the improvement of productivity of hotel marketing in Owerri, Nigeria.

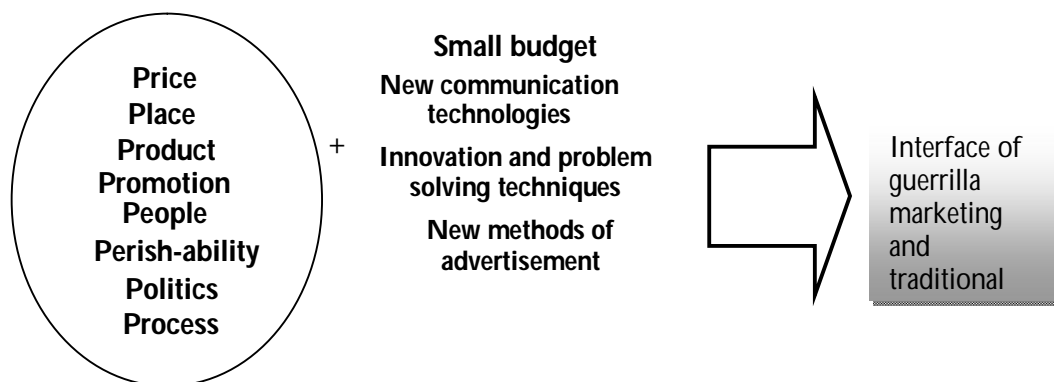


Figure1. Interface of Guerrilla Marketing and Traditional Marketing

- ii. There is a significant relationship between new methods of advertisement and the improvement of productivity of hotel marketing in Owerri, Nigeria.
- iii. There is a significant relationship between using innovation and problem solving techniques and improvement of productivity of hotel marketing in Owerri, Nigeria.
- iv. There is a significant relationship between using new communication techniques and improvement of effectiveness of hotel marketing in Owerri, Nigeria.
- v. There is a significant relationship between decreasing of marketing budget and improvement of effectiveness of hotel marketing in Owerri, Nigeria.

3.0 Methodology

This study applied the survey and descriptive research method; it used the correlation method to determine the relation between integration of guerrilla and traditional marketing and the improvement of hotel productivity in Nigeria. Consequently, two types of questionnaires were designed and distributed. One questionnaire was used for productivity of organizational marketing, while the other was used for integration of guerrilla marketing and traditional marketing.

For the evaluation of organizational productivity, 15 questions were stated, while for integration of guerrilla marketing and traditional marketing, 35 questions were stated. Time scope of the data collection was from January to March 2013. For reliability of the research, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used and the results of

the variables reliability are consistent with literatures (Levinson, 1984, 2008, Garsombke, 1987) that the integration of guerrilla and traditional marketing in the marketplace has significant impact on high productivity in marketing organizations both in terms of market share and in terms of profitability. Also, the study calculated the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all the questions in this research and it resulted to 0.846. If this number is higher than 0.7, then the reliability of the research is verified.

Based on the research hypotheses, it can be stated that independent variables are new methods of advertisement, innovation and problem solving techniques, new communication technologies, marketing budget and dependent variables, which is the productivity of organizational marketing. In addition, the relation between integration of guerrilla marketing and traditional marketing with new methods of communication technologies and marketing budget are explored and analyzed.

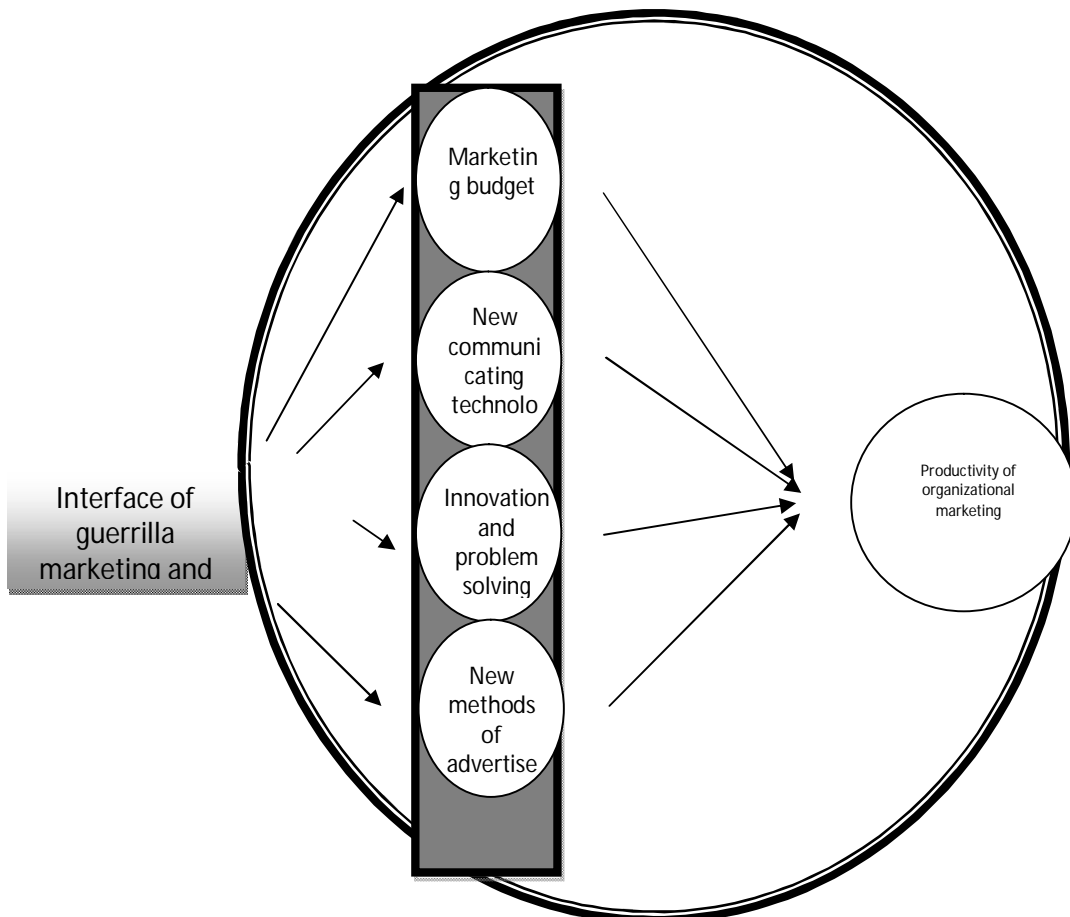


Figure 2: A Conceptual model (source: Author work, 2013)

3.1 Population and Sample

The target population is hotels in Owerri Municipal. The samples were selected from the target population. Owerri is the capital of Imo State and is the eastern heartland. It is so centralized that travelers to Port Harcourt, Calabar, Aba, Bayelsa, Uyo and other areas of South-east and South-south Nigeria, must pass through it.

The hotels provide lodging, food, rental, events management and the related services.

They have weathered series marketing environmental of storms and related business fluctuations, and the approaches or techniques adopted are worth assessing to determine the extent of use.

As a result the numbers of sample were 70, stratified random sampling was used. For determination of the sample size, the following formula was used:

$$N = \frac{(1-r^2)Z^2}{r^2 d^2}$$

Because of n = number of sample and $\alpha = 0.05$, then Z^2 ($\alpha/2$) equals $(1.96)^2$. Based on the data of initial sample, r equals 0.76 and degree of freedom equals 0.2. Therefore, after substitution of digits in the given formula, the number of samples gained was 70 and with the thought of raising the validity of these questionnaires, and possibly faulty ones among the questionnaires which will be returned, the number was raised to 90 and the questionnaires were done.

4.0 Findings

Data Descriptive Analysis

The numbers of samples were 70 managers and all of them were male of middle age. For normality testing of variables, the Kolmogrov – Smirnov test was used. The test results are shown to be consistent with literatures, (Asika & Osuagwu 1997, Deacon, *et al*, 1999, Gibb, 1990, Ramon, *et al*, 2007, Masanelli, *et al*, 2009).

By Pearson's correlation coefficient, the relation among new methods of advertisement, new communication technologies, innovation and problem solving techniques, and marketing budget are verified.

Due to the fact that the error level (0.000) is lower than the given error level (0.05), H_0 based on equality of variables priorities is rejected. Thus, the result of Friedman test shows new communication technologies item with mean 1.99 in the first priority, the innovation and problem solving techniques with mean of 2.04 in the second priority, marketing budget item with a mean of 2.87 in the third priority and new methods of advertisement item with mean 3.10 in the fourth priority of productivity of hotel marketing.

5.0 Conclusions

The research shows that there is a relationship between the integration of guerrilla marketing and the improvement of productivity of hotel marketing in Owerri, Nigeria. There is a significant relation between new methods of advertisement and productivity of hotel marketing. Therefore, the first secondary hypothesis is verified. There is a significant relationship between innovation and problem solving techniques and productivity of hotel marketing. Therefore, the second secondary hypothesis is verified.

There is a significant relationship between new communication technologies and productivity of hotel marketing. Therefore, the third secondary hypothesis is verified. There is a significant relationship between marketing budget and productivity of hotel marketing. Therefore, the fourth secondary hypothesis is verified. The mean of productivity of hotel marketing measurement shows sequentially new communication technologies item, marketing budget item, innovation and problem solving techniques items, and then the last new methods of advertisement item which influence the productivity of hotel marketing Owerri, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The author observes that the views on guerrilla marketing that come from the empirical findings in studying the marketing of hotels services in Owerri, are very similar to the theoretical frameworks on the phenomenon in terms of definitions.

Guerrilla marketing has a shorter frame of time in planning and execution, unlike traditional marketing. It can take place within a shortest time possible, (Levinson, 2003).

The researcher is of the opinion that more and more hotel marketers should start using guerrilla marketing if they want to survive the harsh and tough economic trends in Owerri, Imo State Nigeria. According to Ives (2009), it is believed that more and more marketers will start to use guerrilla weapons since the end customer have proven to be harder and harder to reach. Consequently, the empirical findings in this study confirm the same that there is a problem today with traditional marketing strategies; the public are fed-up, basically with repetitive advertising.

Guerrilla marketing orientation will assist every marketer solve the problem of customers blocking of marketing programmes. Levinson (1998) opined that a good way to reach the end customer without being blocked is to target the segment, using target marketing. The study has proven that guerrilla marketing is a more targeted approach than conventional marketing, which implies that it is in a smaller scale.

However a word of caution is that the enterprise operators should be mindful of ethical issues so as not to offend, otherwise all effort to market can backfire. They should be careful not to infringe on the law, in order not to commence a programme that will be counter-productive.

Every guerrilla marketer must know who his target audience is. It is a classical start of every marketing campaign. The company has to define the target customers properly for the best guerrilla design creation and to avoid ethical aspects. By knowing the customer, a focused strategy can be applied to encourage people to take an advantage of your offer.

Secondly, guerrilla marketers should think "outbox". Creativity is what guerrilla marketing requires from you. Make the customer remember you. Marketers always have to come up with new ideas to remind customers about their brand and protect the surprise effect of every guerrilla marketing activity. This aspect of guerrilla marketing fit the needs of today, which is stay away from uniformity and insist on creativity and flexibility.

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