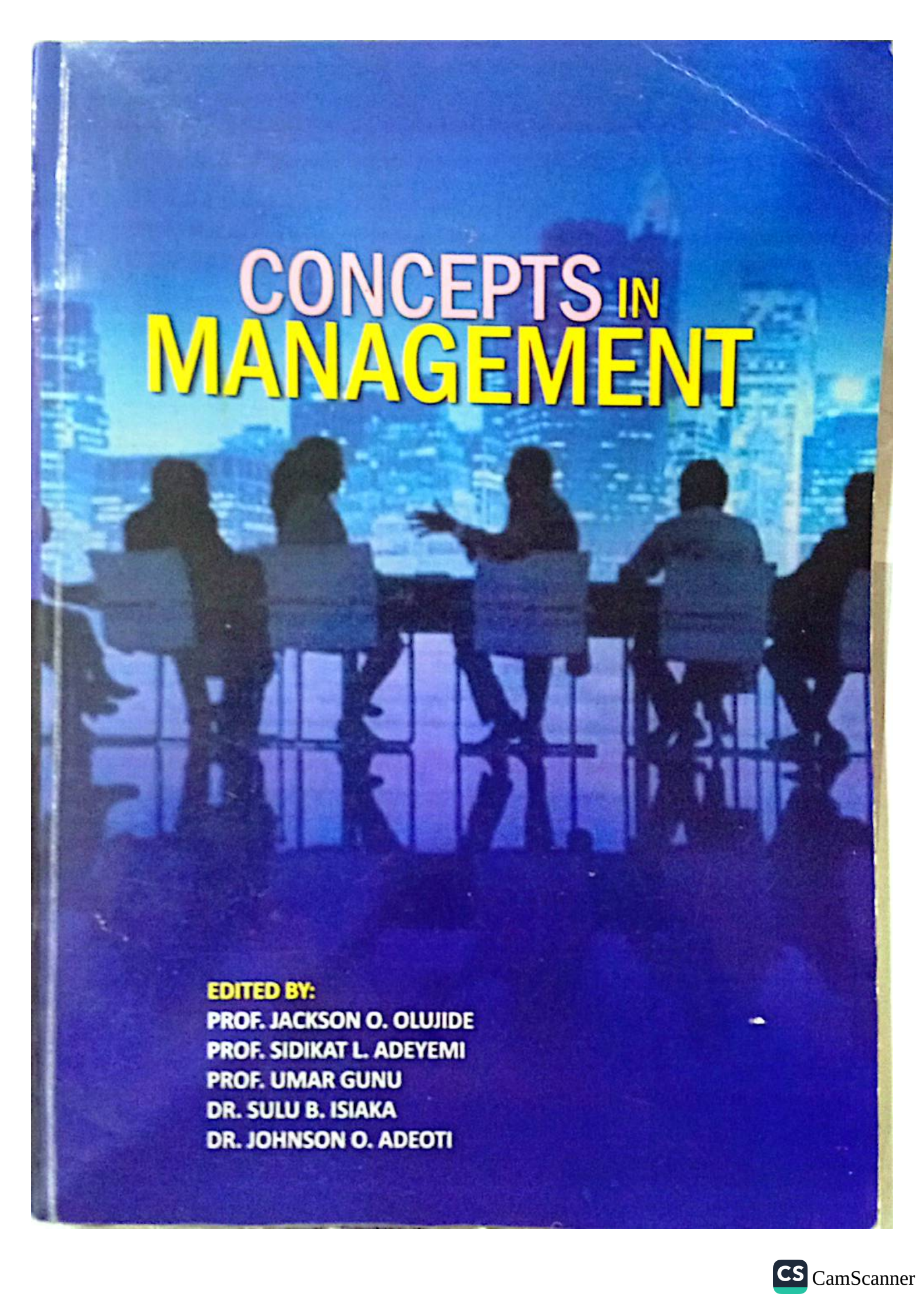


The background of the book cover is a blue-tinted photograph of a city skyline at night, viewed from a high vantage point. In the foreground, the silhouettes of five people are seated at a long table, looking out at the city. The overall mood is professional and modern.

CONCEPTS ^{IN} MANAGEMENT

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SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR



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Introduction

Opportunities provided by social media are daily expanding due to the array of social platforms available, the exponential rate of social communities' adoption and the uses netizens are putting them to. These provides opportunities also for organisations that seeks to constantly achieve visibility for their brands in the highly competitive market and hugely cluttered media environments to reach out and remain in touch with their target audience by adopting, participating and communicating with their consumers through social platforms, and thus, influencing their behaviours towards their products and the manner through which they buy the products.

The presence of social media has provided the media with marketing communication activities, as well as refining the channel for distributing products for organisations and, consequently, the way consumers buy products.

Marketing Communication Mix

Amstrong and Kotler (2005) described marketing as a social and administrative procedure by which people and gatherings acquire what they want through production and exchanging values with one another. In a business scenario, marketing involves the building and managing of profitable relationships with customers. Marketing communication mix involves organisations responding to changes in their environment using all the resources available towards attaining their aims and objectives in terms of sales, pricing and distribution (Olujide & Aremu, 2004). Retailers should be able to use various marketing communication mix in dealing with their customers. Armstrong and Kotler (2008) identified five marketing communication mix that can be used by business organization to create awareness and build customers' relationship. They include advertising, personal selling, sale promotion, public relation and direct marketing. All these components of the marketing communication mix can be implemented on the social networking sites.

Advertising

This is one of the essential components of marketing communication mix that is considered very important in the general marketing blend. This quality is as a consequence of the visibility and frequency in all the marketing processes of exchanging

information (Okgere, Agypong & Nijarku, 2011). Advertising can possibly educate general society and clients (both present and imminent customers) as regards the goods and services of an organization offers and more information can be provided to make positive purchase decisions. Social networking promotion enables organizations to discover new impending customers by utilizing clients' own mutual data to differentiate intrigue, instead of responsively paying attention on clients who seek certain term. Online networking promotions proactively focus important clients before they even begin their hunt. Social media sites are decent choice for advertisers due to the advance targeting options on alternatives, dependable change following, and predominance on cell phones (Sonny, 2015).

Sales Promotion

These are short time motives to persuade the buying or sales of goods or services (Amstrong&Kotler 2005). Sales promotions are devices used by most organisations including producers, distributors, agents, retailers and non-profit institutions. They are designed for final consumers, wholesalers and retailers, business customers and members of the selling team. Olujide and Aremu (2006) were of the opinion that if an organisation adequately compensates their sales personnel they will handle sales promotion activities efficiently and this will have a positive influence on the organizational performance. *Social networking sites are credible path for business to connect with their customers and advance deals. Businesses can offer social media users an exclusive coupon code to encourage them to buy from the organisation and can also set up their newest promotion on the customized page that new visitors see when they visit the organisation's website page (Susan, 2011)*

Publicity and Public Relation

Public relation is the management of relationships and communication to establish goodwill and common understanding between an organization and its publics (Arun&Meenakshi, 2012). Fill (2005) was of the view that public relations perform three major roles within the information processing programme of an organization. Firstly, the role of building goodwill and stimulating interest, second to assist in the marketing of the organization's products and providing ways by which relationships can be developed. Retailers can create proper awareness of their products through public relations.

Personal Selling

This is a done by the organization's sales team personally for the intention of making sales and creating customer interaction (Amstrong & Kotler, 2005). Personal selling is a very important tool of communication at major stages of the purchasing procedure, mainly in creating buyer's first choice, confidence and dealings. Businesses interact with their audiences on regular bases through Facebook page, Twitter account or Blogs and these audiences can be converted to customers.

Direct marketing

This has to do with the utilization of mail, fax, email or web to discuss, specifically with or request reaction or exchange from particular clients and prospects (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Direct marketing can be seen as something other than a specialized instrument, from various perspectives it constitutes a general showcasing approach; a mix of correspondence and dispersion channels all moved into one. According to Amstrong and Kotler (2014) direct marketing has to do with associating straightforwardly with carefully selected targeted audiences or individual shoppers, usually on a one-to-one interactive basis. Direct marketing has turned out to be more web based and web advertising is guaranteeing a quickly developing offer of showcasing spending and deals. It is advantageous, simple and private, from any area, customers can shop online at any time of the day or night. Similarly, business purchasers can find out about products and services without tying up time with salesmen. Direct marketing is a capable device for building customers connections and offers sellers a minimal effort, productive and fast option for achieving their business aims and objectives (Amstrong & Kotler, 2014).

The internet is becoming the most significant driver of key change for business and national government. Business organisations are already embracing the new shaggy of marketing communication.

Social Media Definition

This new medium called social media has turned out to be a distinct advantage in the way that individuals communicate with other individuals. It has given organization some interesting chances to improve and expand positive customer engagement (Manish, 2012).

According to Zarrella (2010) as cited by Christoph (2011) Social media is best considered in setting of the precedent modern media worldview. Traditional media, for example, TV, daily papers, radio, and magazines, are one way stagnant communicate advancements. On the off chance, if you disagree with something you perused in the daily paper, you cannot send the editorial staff instant input. New web advances have made it easy for any person to compose and above all disperse their own content. Online networking enables customers to associate with organizations rather than just being inactive and can focus on consumers, respond to their needs and wants. Using online networking, organizations can give attention to buyers, act in response to their necessities and put together progressing exchange. Online networking advertising enables organizations to put together new links with customers and speak with them, rather than transmitting a one-route message to individuals. Social media depends on a distinctive true conversation between persons about an issue of common interest (Malin & Alem, 2011).

Social media is seen as the online innovations individuals use to impart insights, encounters, knowledge, content, points of view and media themselves. It joins support fuelled by organize impacts, making social media stages nearly 'the most effective type of media yet made (Hinchcliffe, 2007). According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) social

media includes various applications available on the internet which builds on the mechanical and ideological foundation of the World Wide Web to empower the creation and exchange of content that is user produced.

In the same vein, Ivy (2015) looks at social Media is an accumulation of online correspondences channels dedicated to group based information, communication, content-sharing and corresponding effort. Sites and applications devoted to gatherings, microblogging, long series of informal communication, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis are in the midst of the distinctive sorts of online networking. Social media is an electronic and portable innovation to change correspondence into an intuitive exchange. Social media takes on a broad range of structures such as magazines, Internet consultation, weblogs, social web journals, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, pictures, video, evaluation and social bookmarking. With the world amidst an online networking revolution, it is more than obvious that social media like Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and so on, are utilized broadly with the end goal of communication. These form of correspondence can be with an individual or a gathering of people.

These days, the vast majority of the universal population particularly the youths are hooked on to the diverse social networking for keeping in touch with their peers. Social networking is a media for social collaboration as a superset beyond social communication. There are upsides and downsides to the operation of online networking. One most essential preferred standpoint is the web based contribution of knowledge and information in the midst of the distinctive gatherings of persons. This web based sharing of information likewise advances the extension in the relational abilities among the broad population particularly among the learners/students of educational foundations. There is likewise a flip side to the exploitation of social media sites. Now, such devices are misused by people which prompts obstruction into one's privacy. Such cases can prompt unsafe extents keeping in view the proper part of the operation of such media. The online networking instruments have mostly conveyed individuals close to each other especially those staying in distant places (Trishal, 2012).

However, in this day and age it has been seen that the vast majority of the business organizations likewise take part in person to person communication while advancing their products and services. Most often, the leader of the business groups tries to carry on a sound relationship with their esteemed customers. Social media platforms are presently observed as a promising process for exposure, which each product must embrace. Social networking sites as a means of advancement contributes through its promptness to a sound and direct connection amongst brands and their public in an online domain. This closeness offers people in general the capacity to be available, to convey, to impact and hold a more grounded position towards brands. Apart from utilizing social media sites to screen discussions about their industry, competitors and organizations are progressively connecting with their customers through the social Web to transmit messages about what they can offer. In fact, social networking is changing the way organizations convey their messages to targeted audience. Numerous social media sites that are accessible today are exceptionally cost-effective compare to conventional approaches, for example, email and web based publicizing. Blog entries and tweets empower organizations to put together groups, present quick input or help and showcase their products and services (Trishal, 2012).

Social media is the most current development that makes customers communicate through intelligent discourse among organizations, groups and people. It allows users to upload their own content and make it accessible to anyone. It is distinguished by its openness as there are no entrance barriers, and by its connectivity making use of contacts, resources and individuals, and allowing the quick formation of communities that can successfully communicate with one another (Mayfield, 2008). It also has to do with developing and sharing of content and other information via social networking sites by various forms of viral marketing (Othius, 2007).

Social media like blogs is an effective communication platform for businesses, it is used to increase the level of awareness about products and services that can be offered, this is connected to the statement that traditional marketing mediums are not yielding the desired results. Markets are growing and customers keep demanding for various needs and wants, making it a challenging task for most businesses (UK essay, 2003).

According to Belli (2011), a study conducted by Almeter Group in New York shows that organizations use social media to achieve various business objectives such as increase in sales. Businesses recognise the significance of social media as a communication tool that brings about two way communications between an organization and its stakeholders. This supports organization processes and aims including customers buying behaviour, product marketing cost control, market research, customer retention customer base expansion and sales and recruitment. Social media has been found to be an important tool used by business organisations in reaching their various customers.

Development of Social Media

The traditional means of advertising such as newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, and direct mail were the main approaches to inform people before now. These media makes focusing on particular purchaser with individualized messages exceptionally difficult (Scott, 2010). The way organizations inform their customers has changed essentially with the development of a communication tool known as social media. The development of social media can be traced back to the first email that was sent in 1971 over the ARPANET (Advanced Research Projects Agency Network), the world's first set of associated PCs that turned into the base of the present internet. That underlying email, and the millions sent after, gave the principal involvement with interfacing carefully and continuously, opening up a totally better approach to associate with our friends, family, partners and beyond. The next improvement came around in 1977 with the ascent of BBS (Bulletin Board Systems) or internet discussions that used web applications to oversee users created content to enable users to share, post and remark on specific subjects. This prompts the capacity to have other group exchange and association.

In 1985, America Online (AOL) was established and became one of the most famous early suppliers of internet connections. An extremely famous web-based social networking channel is blogging which started in 1997 and around the same time AOL text made its presentation enabling individuals to talk on the internet. After the innovation of blogging, online networking started to detonate in prominence. Sites like MySpace and LinkedIn picked up in the mid-2000s, and sites like Photobucket and Flickr encouraged

online picture sharing. YouTube turned out in 2005, making a completely new route for individuals to convey and share with each other across great distance (Richard, 2012).

By 2006, Facebook and Twitter both became accessible to users all through the world. These sites stay probably the most well-known social networks on the Internet. Various platforms like Tumblr, Spotify, Foursquare and Pinterest started flying up to fill particular long range interpersonal communication specialties. These days, there is a gigantic assortment of social media sites, and vast numbers of them can be connected to allow cross-posting. This makes a situation where users can attain the most extreme number of individuals without giving up the proximity of individual to-individual communication (Drew, 2013).

The development of social media has profoundly affected the way organizations relate with their targeted audience. Many promoting mediums and systems have been made, created and connected, however absolutely social media fulfil a number of these showcasing procedures in a surprisingly better way. Online networking is quickly distributed which gives the likelihood of keeping a "discussion" with the customer at the same time anticipating a more human face' (Hill, 2005). According to Mallin and Alem (2011), the balance in the blend of media utilized by organization is shifting and better approaches for conveying message is developing. Because of an expanding web infiltration in created nations there has been an advancement and selection of computerized assets, from versatile innovations to internet and online networking assets, for example, web journals, person to person communication, wikis and comparative sight and sound sharing services.

According to Grant (2010) as cited to by Christoph, (2011) was of view that since the development of the internet and the World Wide Web, numerous enterprises have been significantly disrupted. Various organizations got themselves unfit to contend in the light of the advanced age.

Importance of Social Media

Hugh (2011) stated that there are various things that can be had with regards to managing online networking, one of these is that it gives individuals the opportunity to expand their social presentation and thus wind up in a position that they can meet new individuals and therefore locate the world of people that they never knew existed. Today, there are increasing numbers of individuals that interact with one another on the internet more than whatever was thought possible. It is to the point that individuals dependent on these sites to stay aware of the most recent news from their online companions. As the days continue, these individuals are pulled in with significantly more extraordinary media outlets to interact with.

There are significantly more numbers of points of interest to social media than just on an individual level. A significant number of these long range informal communication sites are utilized by organizations to showcase their brands and increase their sales growth. This gets their brand and product out to a larger group of audience than ever before (Othius, 2007). There are points of interest that the business world can pick up from the utilization of this. One of these is to get new customers, many individuals don't

know about this, however in the long run this can be a capable showcasing instrument that will give an individual the opportunity to get the word out about a business.

Shopping is one of the fastest developing aspects of social media and this is where users and their partners can go on virtual shopping trips, communicating with each other as they look the web together utilizing a mechanical improvement known as shared browsing. Shared perusing enables all users in the connection to monitor where the experience goes next, once every one of the user consent to the following site page being chosen then they are altogether taken to the page at the same time (Hugh, 2011).

Online networking can be an effective instrument that can reunite families following quite a while of separation. One of the best cases is when was the last time you conversed with your sibling that is on the opposite side of the nation? With this type of media, you can discuss adequately. Without doubting this is an area of the web that is ready for advertising exercises and many organizations have as of now outfit the energy of online networking to propel their overall revenues. Some organizations have even begun to create whole showcasing divisions dedicated to what is called social marketing or friend advertising.

In social marketing a company may employ staffers to actively spread the company name or their latest offerings. This is an electronic picture of the whisper campaigns of days gone by. The only difference is that this is much more effective in reaching larger numbers of people, and results can often be seen in a matter of hours instead of days if one is were lucky (Hugh, 2011).

According to Silvia (2014) there's a considerable measure of reason with reference to why a specific organization needs online networking advertising and it will depend on various components like organization profile, the products, and the audience that it is taking into account. She identified the following as major importance of social media to the society:

- i. Online networking channel is a decent method for expanding an organization's reliability and goodwill which will give the said organization better branding. At the point when organizations can have discussions with their targeted audience, the outcome will be an exceptional measure of validity.
- ii. The lead era is additionally another reason for organizations to go for web-based social networking showcasing. Since the lead era serves an essential part for an organization's prosperity, at this point utilizing social media marketing for your brands and products enable you to connect your targeted audience.
- iii. Social media platforms likewise make it more demanding and more adaptable for organizations to draw in with their customers. One needs to put this on the top need list since customers engagement is exceptionally significant and this will enable the organization to hold its current customers and obviously increase the image of the organization.
- iv. Social networking channels are additionally in charge of creating an exceptionally effective activity for organizations' webpage. Organizations don't need to stress themselves since there's a considerable measure of online networking channels that will have the capacity to help them and would make it simpler for them to get for their site the important and quality movement that will be expected to advance their products and services.

- v. Apart from that, when organization advance their products through online networking channels, this will help them to increase their return on investment. This procedure will help the organization in expanding its transformation rate and benefit from return on investment.

The effect of online networking on organizations is profound to the point that if ones business does not have a site, blog, or even a Facebook page then one is behind every other person. Obviously, one can just expect how much has changed over the past ten years due to the web, Web 2.0 and social networking sites, but there is no doubt that the business world has changed (Saint, 2010). Online networking is a cost-effective tool that is utilized to join innovation and social cooperation with the utilization of words. These tools are ordinarily web or versatile based. A few that people know about include Twitter, Facebook, MySpace and YouTube. Online networking gives marketers a voice and an approach to speak with targeted audience, clients and potential buyers. It customizes the brand and spreads messages in a casual and conversational way (Laura, 2015).

Despite the importance of social media to the society at large, there are still quite a number of challenges it has on the society. Donna (2015) identified the following challenges of social media

- i. **Face to face connections are endangered:** A major benefit of social networking sites has turned around reaction that is likewise a major drawback of social networking: they cut or take out one – on – one socialization. In analysis of the self-governance managed by the virtual world, people are authorized to build a fantasy persona and can claim to be another person.
- ii. **Cyber bullying and crimes against children:** Use of social networking sites can open individuals to provocation or improper contact from others. Except guardians are determined to channel the Internet content to which their relatives are exposed to, kids could be open to explicit entertainment or other improper content.
- iii. **Risks of Fraud or Identity Theft:** Whether one likes it or not, the information you send on the web is available to practically any individual who is sufficiently shrewd to get to it. Most hoodlums require only a link of essential bits of individual data to make one life a bad dream and on the off chance that they successfully take your character, it may perhaps cost one beyond a reasonable doubt.
- iv. **Corporate Invasion of Privacy:** Social networking welcomes real partnerships to invade your protection and offer your personal data. On social media, the site is not the product, its customers are. These platforms run calculations that look for watchwords, web perusing propensities, and other information put away on your PC or social networking profile and give you messages that are peculiar to you. At the same time, one might be given the site permission to pass on information to outside sources except you particularly create settings that say no to do such.

Challenges Facing Traditional Media

Due to the advancement, business, work process, and the way organization communicate with their audiences have significantly changed. The traditional marketing media is faced with a lot of challenges. Melanie (2013) identified four challenges facing traditional media companies. They are:

- i. **Lack of Warm Leads:** The problem is that the sales representatives are chasing existing currency in their markets. Since most local media companies do not have a dedicated marketing or sales person helping to generate new and high quality leads. Sales representative are left with one option to drum up new business.
- ii. **Inconsistent Customer Revenue:** Not only are sales teams consistently chasing existing advertisers, they are constantly chasing the same sales too. Inconsistent ratings, circulation numbers and viewership make placing orders commonplace. Media companies know marketing currencies are being spent elsewhere in marketing but they are yet to figure out how to capture a larger portion of their clients marketing budgets
- iii. **No differentiation from other media companies:** For media organizations to get their fair share of the currency that are available in the market, they must be able to bring out clearly their product differential advantage compare to that of their competitors.
- iv. **Losing Money to Online Advertising and Marketing Services:** Newspapers, radio stations, cable TV, local TV among others have continued to lose share because their clients are investing money that they used to spend in traditional advert to online advert services that generate website traffic. This is where potential customers do their research before they buy. Sure traditional media companies sell online inventory that competes with alternative online channels, but it is not yielding desire results.

Social Media Sites

There are numerous Social Networking Sites present on the World Wide Web (WWW) today. The most prominent ones are LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and are the ones mostly used for businesses. These sites enable clients to make profiles and include individuals as friends, bring individuals with comparative interests together and furthermore enable them to make connections and build a social network. "A social network comprises of considerable number of individual friends, family and others with whom one offers a social relationship. Promoting on Social Networking Sites can be minimal effort and low cost. Business and organization are concentrating on the cost reduction in the current worldwide financial situation. Thus, this sort of promotion is a very helpful procedure in this financial circumstance. To compare with the traditional means of communication, the Social Network Advertising appears to consume more time to build up the viable profile and posts, and more opportunity to really execute these methods on a regular basis, yet it has low expenses for the business. Social networking sites are not only for the organization to communicate information to customers, but for

customers to also take interest in open free discussions with these organizations involved (Andrew & Jeff, 2012).

As of December 2012, Nigeria checks 56 million Internet users, the 33% of an aggregate populace of 167 million individuals. In August, 2013 the Business Day carried out a study about Internet and mobile clients in Nigeria, likewise clarifying the demographical purposes for these numbers: of the 115 million mobile telephone subscribers in the country, 35 million use their handheld devices to access internet data services. With a large youth population (one-third of the population is between the 10-24 years age bracket) and a growing middle class (39 million), Nigeria has a fast-growing number of the two classes which traditionally drive internet usage around the world (Guido, 2014).

According to Elise (2016) the following are the top social networking sites used as communication tools: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest, Tumblr, Vine, Snapchat, Reddit, Flickr, Foursquare, Kik, Yikyat, Shots, Periscope, Medium, Sound Cloud, Tindes, What App, Slack, Musical.ly, Blogs, Kik, and Peach.

The following are types of social media networks used in Shoprite Nigeria Limited:

Twitter

Twitter is the newest of the forms to keep in touch with friends and relatives around the world, although a recent study presented by the Harvard Business Review reveals that Twitter is not so much about connecting with friends, but broadcasting information (Schroeder, 2009). It's like a cross between a blog and a chat room. As explained by Pogue (2009), it is a website where you can broadcast very short messages to anyone who is signed up to receive them.

This tool was launched in August 2006 and grew popular within months asking users just one simple question: What are you doing? Messages can be sent via mobile text, instant messaging, or the web (About Twitter 2009). Twitter is more than a platform to disseminate information, it also provides opportunities to listen to conversation and gather information in real time. Twitter is an information network made up 140 characters messages called tweets. It is used by millions of peoples, organizations, and businesses to discover and share new information. Twitter users subscribe to receive tweets by following an account. Followers receive messages in their timeline that includes a feed of all the accounts they have subscribed to, these short, easy to read public message make twitter a powerful, real time way of communicating. These messages can be submitted by a variety of means, including text messages, mobile websites, or the website hosting the microblogs (Ivy, 2015).

Twitter is what you want it to be. It can be a business tool, a teenage-time killer, a research assistant, and a news source – whatever, there are no standards (Pogue 2009). But specialists are still attempting to make sense of how the web based informing administration will make money as it is seen as a non- natural promoting means. Twitter coming up as one of the Internet's fastest developing sites this year, it is still obvious if it will create in a lucrative business (Liedtke, 2009).

A large number of individuals promote their recruitment exercise, their counselling organizations, and their retail locations by using Twitter and it is very effective. The modern web users are fed up of TV promotion. Individuals today incline toward promotion that is speedier, less nosy, and can be turned on or off freely and Twitter is precisely that. In the event that you figure out how the nuances of tweeting work, one can get great promotional results by using Twitter (Paul, 2010).

Youtube

It is a video sharing practice. The rule of YouTube is truly basic; you can post and transfer videos to other individuals. YouTube empowers you to transfer a video and after that, put the URL as a connection on your site to send individuals to the video. One can likewise utilize the "embedding" code to make the video show up on your site or blog. Doing this is free and it will make ones site look extremely proficient. Likewise allowing various individuals to embed your video you will be creating viral marketing and these individuals will assist you to get the message out to other users. By subscribing to YouTube you get your own YouTube channel on which you can always inform individuals interested in your offerings. (Clapperton, 2009). Watching a video online requires commitment and interest, as such, shorter is better. Likewise your recordings must be extremely captivating. You should endeavour to engage the people connected to your video the whole period they are viewing your recordings. YouTubers are extremely touchy to product pitches, so the input additionally must be as non-commercial as could be expected under the circumstances. (Zarrella as referred to by Malin and Alem, 2011). Broadband video on the internet is experiencing an explosive development, and broadband video accumulation sites are seeing video utilization triple in 2008 (Matarese, 2009).

Under the slogan "Broadcast Yourself" YouTube enables individuals to effectively transfer and offer video clips on www.Youtube.com and over the web through sites, cell phones and email. YouTube transfers over 13,000 hours of new video every hour consistently. Its significance and popularity is such, that Barack Obama is being known as the main web-based social networking leader of the United States because of his campaign's YouTube technique (Fernando, 2009). The user created video site had a major influence in the 2008 US elections. Ordinary individuals thought of capable messages matching those made by advertising and public relations offices. None of this might have ever been conceivable in the predominant press where time is costly. Somebody with a \$50 camera can have more than a million watchers (Fernando, 2009). As stated by Steins and Stephens (2008), YouTube's 'exceptional advantages are that the distribution costs nothing and your potential customers are worldwide'.

Facebook

According to Clapperton as cited by Malin and Alem (2011) Facebook is the site that keeps social networking moving. It has more or less concurred with the social media networking revolution and is today the biggest informal community website to date in terms of numbers. It additionally has the most elements useful to the online networking advertisers.

Facebook started as a scholarly thought which is expected to keep graduated class of a school in contact with each other when they did not have room to keep in touch adequately. It soon spread past academic world as individuals without an email address finishing with ".edu" could in 2006 create their own account. Facebook enables organizations to have a public profile that has similar characteristics with individual profile. Users can associate with a page and move toward becoming fans. Pages can have open informing messages, programs, photographs, and custom applications. Basically Facebook is one of the more intricate social media sites; however it is very compensating when organizations have its qualities and shortcomings at the top of the priority list. It is therefore essential for organizations not to disparage the time and effort it will take to monitor the profile and pull together an online group.

Google+

Google+ is a social networking practice from Google. The venture is as of now in constrained release and one must get a welcome from Google or another Google+ member before one can join. The thought is really like other long range informal communication practices, yet Google endeavors to separate Google+ by permitting more straightforwardness in who you share with and how you associate. It likewise incorporates all Google benefits and shows another Google+ menu bar on other Google connections when you're signed into a Google account. (Marziah, 2015)

Google+ will make utilization of the Google internet searcher, existing Google Profiles, and the +1 button. Google+ new segments incorporate Circles, Huddle, Hangouts, and Sparks.

Circles: This is only a method for setting up customized groups of friends, regardless of whether they are based on work or individual exercises. As opposed to impart all updates to a crowd of people of hundreds or thousands, the service expects to customize offering to smaller groups.

Huddle: This is group chat rather than individuals sending separate SMS messages, Huddle can pool individuals together to make a gathering visit which will be private to outside watchers, not like Twitter.

Hangouts: This is simply video chat and texting. Only a few people know the things they can do with Skype, or Qik. The point Google+ is making is that you would prefer not to be accessible for chat, so when you venture into a "hangout," you're flagging your accessibility.

Sparkles: This is a proposal engine that finds fascinating Web things in light of one's interests. You can pick from classes of interest and share things you find with others in your stream.

According to Kristen (2013) one great thing about Google+ is the manner by which it is new. This enables you to take as much time as is needed, make sense of what you like about it and develop gradually. There are numerous influencers as of now on Google+, and with a littler group of targeted audience to connect with; you can create relationships with these influencers.

Blogs

The internet is the most significant advancement since the printing press. At this point blogs completed the study of Gutenberg that began by making proliferation not just possible but rather general' (Steins and Stephens, 2008). Blogs are the most recognized type of web-based social networking and are regularly referred to as online journals. They really present the starting of these technological innovations.

Online journals are an 'open-source smart social gathering' (Friedman, 2007) having a huge number of individuals composing and transferring their own content without any obstructions, making any sort of data flow adequately. Presently, blogging has entered the standard and had gotten to business organizations. This is now used as an additional business device; few organizations have received blogs both to get corporate messages to the general population and as an inner medium for staff. Specialists thought of it as a minimal effort, exceptional yield instrument that can deal with marketing, advertising, and increase an organization's profile yet those business bloggers are still minor (Alboher, 2007).

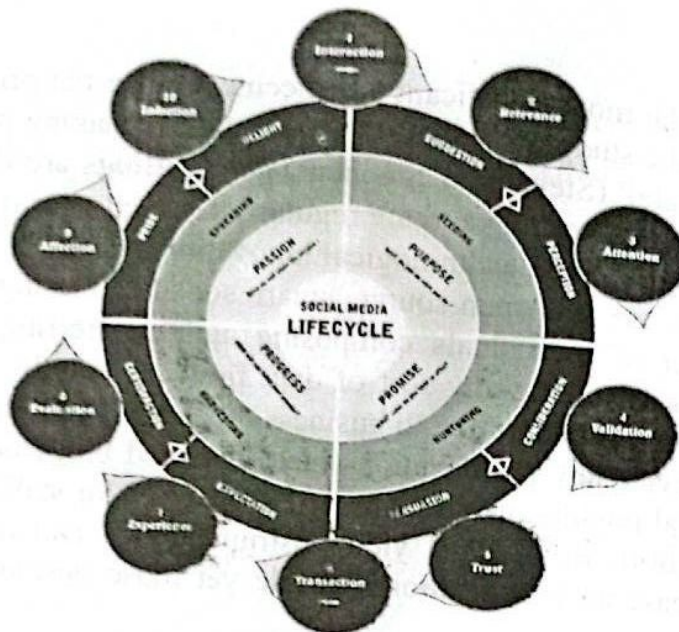
These online forum portals offer phenomenal advantages for organizations to connect with their customers by welcoming comments or talking about applicable issues or simply highlighting some valuable data that may be important for their clients and their commercial centre.

Blogs are not a place for the hard offer; these online entrances ought to be utilized to relate with clients in a "social" manner that empowers association. Blogs are consistently refreshed online journals that nearly anybody with a web connection can use it. Some group of audience, practically compare it to national daily papers. They may have just a single writer or offer a comparative arrangement in such a way that passages are posted in a reverse sequential order and could enable readers to remark on the posts. Blogs frequently concentrate on a particular subject or kind of topic (Ivy, 2015).

These sites are used by Shoprite Nigeria limited to reach and transact with their current and potential customers.

Social Media Lifecycle

The Social Media Lifecycle was developed by marketer Edwin Korver in 2014. It provides insight into the customer journey on Social Media platform and is directed to customers and transformation.



Source: Edwin (2014)

The Social Media Lifecycle is made up of four stages of growth. Each stage has its own particular elements, but to achieve full circle and benefit from mark ambassadorship, the general approach must be consistent all through the organization. The phases of the Lifecycle model include:

- **Phase 1: Seeding.** What are the problems of your target audience that the organization want to solve? Sow the seeds that start growing your social media efforts.
- **Phase 2: Nurturing.** Companies can nurture customers with what they need. If they share a common interest, persuasion is easier. Trust is important in this phase.
- **Phase 3: Harvesting.** When you have a relationship with your customers, keep them satisfied and you will harvest. Keep the expectations of the customer as high as you suggested in the first phase.
- **Phase 4: Spreading.** Harvesting is not just enough. Social media has the ability to get word spread. Strive for more than satisfaction for customers delight and they will spread the news.

The social media cycle is applicable to Shoprite Nigeria Limited because finding out the problems of target audience an organization or individual wants to solve is the key to achieving successful marketing. Shoprite Nigeria Limited finds out the needs of current and potential customers nurture them with what they need, keep relationship with customers and strive to satisfy them.

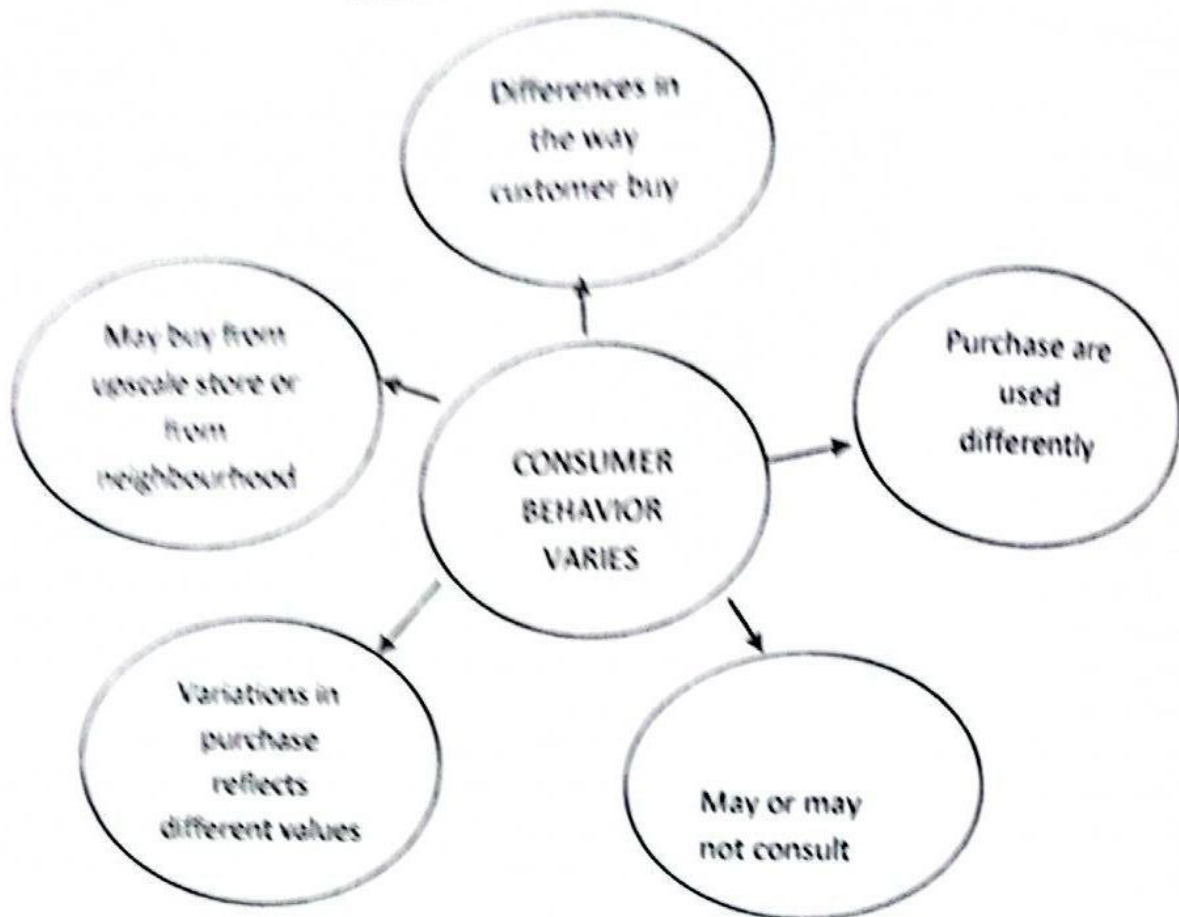
Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer buying behaviour is the way in which buyers act, functions, and respond to different circumstances involving the buying of goods or services or the acknowledgement of an ideal. The consumer buying behaviours process consists of a number of activities involving people and experiences (Lewison & Delzior 2000).

According to Charles, Joseph and Carl (1992), buyers' lives are in a steady condition of flux. As every generation develops and mature more, it might receive distinctive arrangements of qualities and ways of life than the past era. Charles, Joseph and Carl (1992) added that the behaviour of consumers is the investigation of the procedures the buyers uses to settle on what they buy, and additionally the utilization of the good and service bought. The behaviour of consumer also incorporates the examination of elements that influence buyer choice and usage of good or service. The capacity to make a good or service and to convince the market to purchase this offering rather than competitors' offerings depend on understanding the consumer purchasing procedures, and understanding the behaviour of consumer will decrease the level of uncertainty when developing a marketing mix.

Arun and Meehakshi (2012) stated that there is huge changeability in the way consumers purchase and utilize items. They may buy a comparative thing but use it for different purposes, a couple of customers will buy an item after a huge amount of consultations, whereas others will settle to buy an item in total isolation. Some individuals will purchase an item from upscale stores while others will purchase a similar item from a convenience store near their residence. Some may purchase an item that has an impression of their social standing where as others will purchase the item for absolutely useful reasons. The kind of behaviour that various customers display in buying and using similar items, and the different kind of attitude that the same customer display in acquiring different items, evaluates marketing to a discipline much more complex than the management of product. By investigating customers behaviour, it makes it clear to divide the market in new ways and serve them with different advancing mixes paying little heed to the likelihood that the aftereffect of the different showcasing blends might be the same.

Variation in Consumer Behaviour

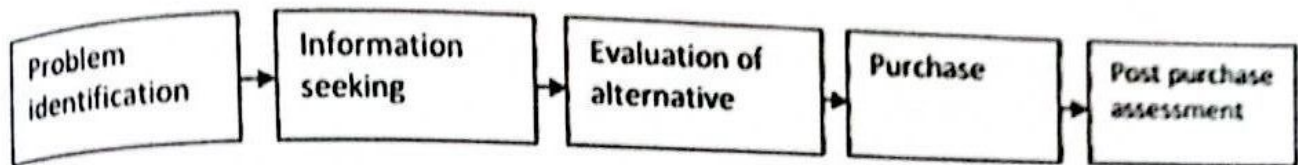


Source: Arun & Meenakshi, (2012)

Lios, Grady and Carl (2002) stated that customers could have an objective thought or physiological motive for buying a particular product. An objective thought is a conscious, logical deduction for buying a product or service. An objective thought comprises of service, period or monetary savings, quality, safety and healthy consideration and product dependability. A physiological motive is a sensation of knowledge gathered by a consumer through product usage. Physiological reasons for buying include love, reputation of someone, power, acceptance and social approval. Many buying decisions involve a combination of both buying motives. Successful sales people examine customers' rational and physiological reasons for buying in a particular circumstance. They recommend the characteristics and benefits of a product that best fit those reasons.

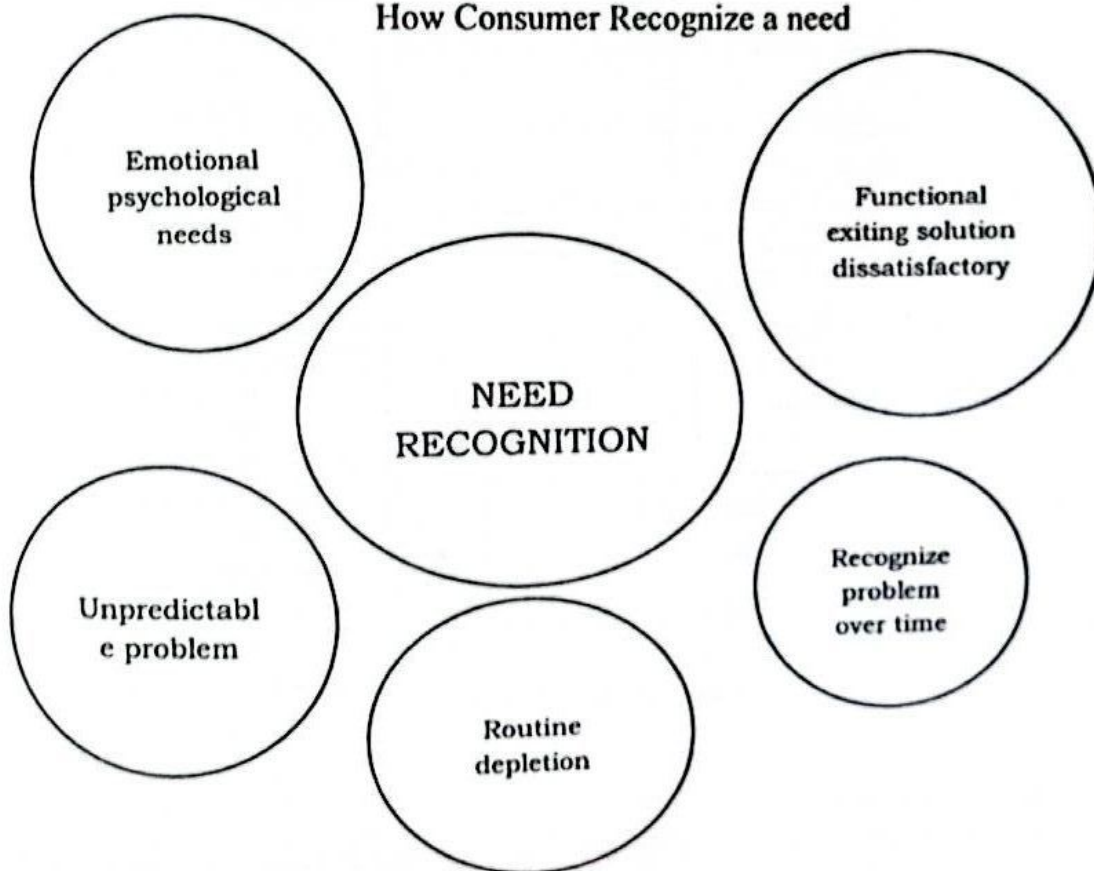
The Consumer Buying Process

By knowing how consumer buys, the marketers can allocate a marketing budget and direct efforts to the stages in the processing that affect consumer's buying behaviour. Arun and Mecenakshi (2012) stated that the purchasing procedure is segmented into different stages of Problem identification, Information seeking, Evaluation of alternatives, Purchase and Post purchase assessment of alternatives. This is shown in a diagram below:



- i. **Problem identification:** making decision starts with identification of problem existing. The problem might be practical such as a low speed computer or a small house. The marketers will have to present the benefits of the product in such a way that the consumer will feel that the product they are currently using is not the best. Marketer must also stress the benefit of the product in a way that the consumer will become uncomfortable not having the product that can perform such function.

How Consumer Recognize a need



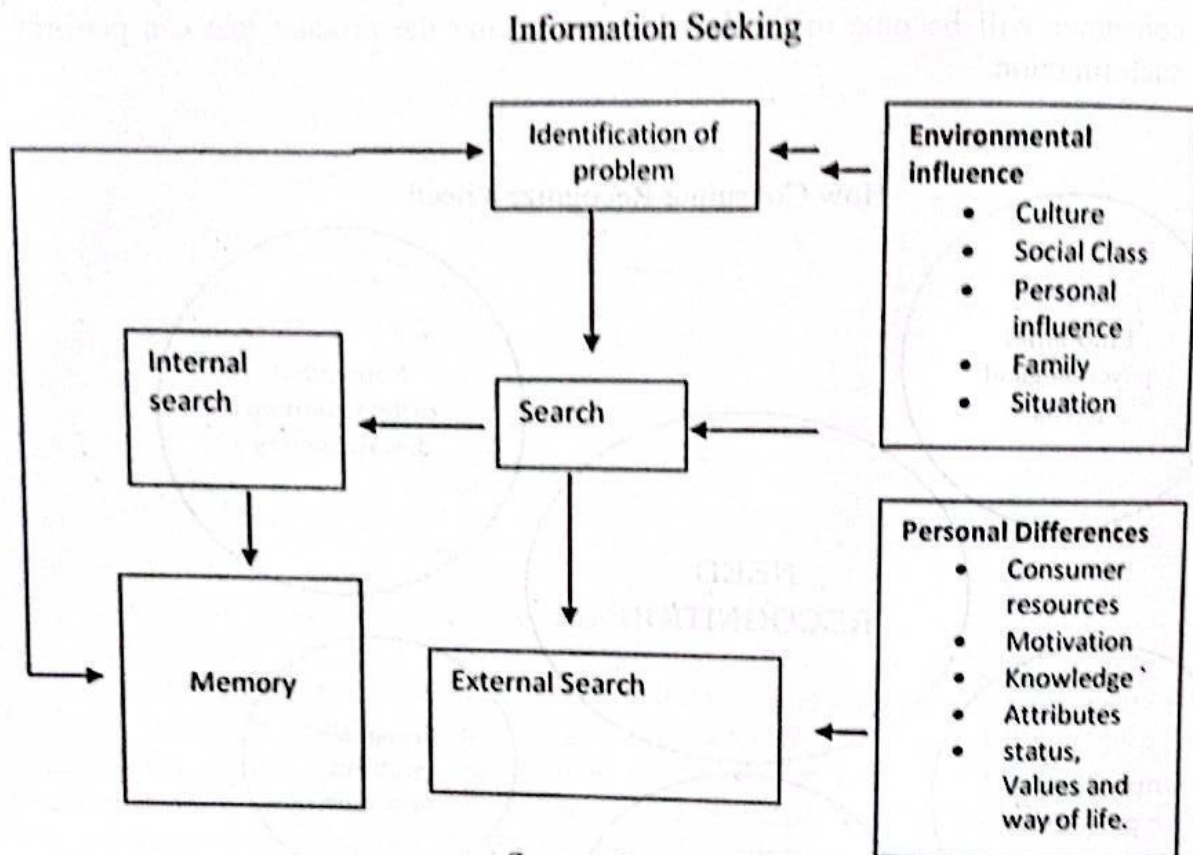
Source: Arun & Meenakshi (2012)

- The problem identification could happen over a stated period of time, for example having a big house with many rooms could be a necessity for a large family over many years.
- The identification of problem could come up as a result of regular consumption, for example, fuel for car, or other such regular requirement in a household
- Problems not known, for example, a car having a mechanical fault

- The identification of problem could began by emotional or psychological wants, for example, personality.

ii. Search for Information

The customer, after identifying the need for an item, search for options that could fulfil this need and assess these options depending on the different decision criteria.



Source: Roger (2005)

iii. Evaluation of alternatives

The assessment procedure might be done in a careful manner and coherently at times, for instance, shopper durables. If there should be an occurrence of convenience products, which are bought for one-shot consumption, the assessment might be less. Periodically, it might be impulse purchasing as well. Assessment requires outlining and use of appropriate criteria.

iv. Purchase and post-purchase

Purchase and post purchase evaluation, once the buyer has focused on the right decision, he purchase the item. The item can be bought from retail locations, on the web or dowel by phone or acquired specifically from the organization. The purchase procedure itself includes a few more decisions. It includes decisions about the place and method of

procurement instalment terms and conditions, conveyance of the item, guide on how to use the item, and so forth. Marketer can work on each of these procedures to find out sources of competitive advantage. Marketers can either lead those exercises themselves, or they may utilize middlemen to carry out these tasks. The market needs to deal with the customers amid this significant period in their relationship. After a customer has purchased an item, he is confronted with what is called cognitive dissonance; he does not know whether he has purchased the correct item. A customer feels uncertain about his decision in light of the fact that during the time spent choosing a brand, he has rejected other brand (Arun&Mecenakshi, 2012). Organizations should attempted to reduce the feeling of cognitive dissonance, by promoting and given customers assurance through letters and visits that they have purchased the correct item and the most ideal approach to guarantee that the customer does not experience psychological disharmony is to guarantee that the brand gives the desired result.

Social Media Factors that Influences Consumers Buying Behaviour

Buyer choice to purchase a specific item does not happen in a vacuum. There are several individual and social factors that strongly influence consumers buying behaviour. The following are factors that could influence consumer buying behaviour using social media:

Awareness: The targeted audiences get to know a product through advertisement. This is a very difficult stage because, there is no assurance that the targeted audience will know about the product after they see the advert. Consumers see several adverts every day but will just recall the brand of a little part of the products (Robert & Gary, 1961). According to Triple (2016) wanting individuals to know about what you can offer, social media is a credible source of creating awareness. As long one can use social media appropriately, one can get the message out through sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Reach: It involves the aggregate number of various individuals or family units exposed, at least once, to a medium amid a given period. Reach ought not to be mistaken for the quantity of individuals who will really be exposed to and consume what is publicized. It only involves the quantity of individuals who are exposed to the medium and thus have a chance to see the advert on the web. Reach might be expressed as a complete number, or as a small amount of a given populace. As stated by Parsons (2013) when talking about promotion and marketing technique today the conversation would not be complete without considering the utilization of online networking to reach out to customers.

Interaction: It entails the utilization of two-way communication platform to enable purchasers to interact with an organization directly. Despite the fact that this exchange can happen face to face, in the most recent decade, it has progressively occurred only online through email and web-based social networking sites. Interacting with customers through social media sites can influence consumer buying behaviour. According to Alex (2015) when we think about interaction on social media it is about how one uses networks like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to create a great customer experience.

Attention: According to Kendra (2006) attention has to do with how we actively process specific information in our environment. It is the channeling of the mind, in clear and distinctive frame, of one out of numerous questions or lines of reasoning, or involving withdrawal from a few things keeping in mind the end goal to bargain successfully with others. To grab customers attention using social media, the content of the message should give details the why and how it is of great value to the customer (April, 2016).

Persuasion: It is a procedure directed at changing individual behaviour towards some programme, thought, object or other people with the use of written or verbal words to communicate messages, feelings or understanding or combination of them. Social media is a two way communication; it can be used to persuade potential and current customers to buy a product or service.

Influencer: It is the way toward building relationship with specific individuals that can help create awareness for your product or service. This lies upon having something very good to offer your potential clients, and group of audience. It additionally relies on building an incredible relationship with the influencer too. In the present social web, there are three important ways influence can greatly affect your business: compose a blog entry/article about the product, sharing information about the product in the social media accounts and asking customers to make post on their site (Eric, 2012).

Follower: According to Vangie (2016) on Blogs, Twitter and other social media sites, a follower is a person who subscribes to receive your posts. Marketing on social media works only if there are fans or followers. To get followers via social media sites, one must be steady, recognize the need of the targeted audience and should be a fervent online networking citizen (Jayson, 2016).

Evolution of Retailing

The world at first witness the appearance of retailing in the pre 1850s when the Yankee Peddlers, Bartering, Trading Posts and General stores were set up. The first departmental shop was set up in 1851 by the name of F and R Lazarus Company in the U.S. Within the period of 1860 and 1900, chain stores and before time brand stores dominated the scene. In 1952, the first super market was open in New Jersey (Big Bear) (Admin, 2010).

Successful retailing is a complex understanding over the years, the myth has grown that if you are qualified or trained for any specific field you can make it in retailing. After all, retailing is neither art nor science, its sheer common sense. While common sense is not enough to survive in the competitive world of retailing. The days when rules of thumb were sufficient to run a successful retail business have long since disappeared (Lewison & Delozier, 2008). According to Arun and Meenashri (2012) a retailer is required to have both marketing and operational abilities. He needs sympathy to comprehend customers' necessities yet he must be indifferent not to let customers' anguish about the offers of the producer's items and it is the maker's obligation to make the correct items for the clients.

Judy (2000) stated that advances in innovation like web, had helped make retailing a much more difficult task and promoting field lately. How business is being conducted and the way retailing is done recently is witnessing fundamental changes. According to

country report on retailing in Nigeria (2014), the growth of international chains, for examples Retail Superstores like Shoprite and Artee Industries Limited's Spar is changing the scene Internet retailing is growing as the scene Internet retailing is developing as the quantity of social media tools is expanding and security fears are being facilitated through the sale of goods and services to consumers, these consumers interact freely with the retailers and had made retailers to have huge amount of information about consumer behaviour (Arun & Meenakshi, 2012).

Kotler and Armstrong (2005) stated that most retailing is done in retail locations, recently non-store retailing has been developing substantially speedier than store retailing. Non-store retailing involves selling to final customers via direct mail, inventories, phone, the web, home shopping shows, home and offices, face to face contact, vending machines and other offering medium. Euro monitor International's retailing in Nigeria (2004) reports that non-store retailing in Nigeria is witnessing development that was fuelled by the fast growth, in the last five years, of the web retailing channel, which recorded current retail esteem development of 33% in 2013. The use of computer and the internet web is growing rapidly in Nigeria. Specifically, trust, which has been a challenging task for web retailing, is enhancing among purchasers, who have been acquainted with electronic instalment strategies when shopping and through their banks. The retailing segment in Nigeria keeps on extending, with esteem deals expanding clearly in 2013 and speedier than real GDP. The development is being fuelled by the expansion in the span of the Nigerian populace (especially in urban territories), rise in the dispensable income among a few sections of the populace, and the drive by a few retailers to "modernize" retailing. They also offer understanding into key patterns and improvements driving the business. It evaluates all retail channels to give insight understanding. Platforms which incorporate hypermarkets, grocery stores, discounters, convenience stores, blended retailers, health and beauty retailers, dress and footwear retailers, furniture and outfitting stores, DIY and hardware shops, strong merchandise retailers, relaxation and individual products retailers.

Role of Retailing

The role played by retailing sector is enormous, there are roles the retailer will want to play within their store. Retailers may allocate task to quite a number of people within their organization keeping in mind the kind of customer they want to attract. Daniel (2013) identified five most popular role played by retailers:

- i. **Destination:** The retailer utilizes the destination classification to take a position of authority in the market. The destination class imparts the retailer's sense of duty regarding meeting the particular needs of buyers.
- ii. **Routine:** This is intended to help with building the objective customers' image of the retailer. A routine class fills in as a connection between the retailer and the shopper.
- iii. **Preferred routine:** This routine is used to help characterize the retailer as the preferred choice by providing stable standard of products to the buyers. This is the trusted retailer that purchasers go to when they attempt to fill particular

- needs for example, one that is focused on having best-quality deliver in the market.
- iv. Seasonal/occasional: An occasional/incidental part for a classification is centred on particular event. Retailers regularly put a lot of accentuation on events by expanding their selections
 - v. Convenience: The comfort part is designed for filling impulse needs. This classification system ordinarily assumes a critical part providing benefit and margin upgrade through things like the ready-to-eat meals in the shop and the chilled single serve refreshments at the checkout lines.

Abey (2015) was of the view that retailers play a very important role as a conduit between producers, middlemen, suppliers and consumers. In this specific circumstance, they perform different tasks like sorting, breaking bulk, holding stock and certain extra services.

- i. **Sorting:** Producer provides one or an assortment of product and might want to sell their whole stock to a couple of purchasers to decrease costs. Final consumers would want to get various kinds of products and services from which they can select from and most of the time purchase them in little quantities.
- ii. **Breaking Bulk:** Breaking bulk is a function that is carried out by retailer. The word retailing is gotten from the French word retailer, signifying 'to cut a piece off'. To decrease transportation costs, producers and wholesalers will transport large quantity of their product, which are then shared by the retailers in smaller amounts to meet individual consumption needs.
- iii. **Holding Stock:** Retailers additionally offer the tasks of holding stock for the producers. Retailers keep in reasonable stock that allows instant availability of the item to the buyers. It keeps price stable and empowers the producer to control production.
- iv. **Additional Services:** Retailers make it easy for manufacturers by delivering services that make it convenient for consumers to buy and use their products. Giving product assurance, after-sales and managing consumer objections are a portion of the service that enhances the real product at the retailers' end. Retailers additionally offer credit and contract services to the customers to empower them to purchase an item now and pay for it later.

Retailing Definition

Retailing is the task performed by retailers which is related to the sales of goods and services to definitive consumers. Organizations conduct survey to know customer position towards their product yet the customers genuine goals are shown just amid the way toward purchasing in retail stores (Arun & Meenakashi, 2012). Kimberly (2015) was of the view that retailing is the manner by which manufacturers of product or service get them to the buyers. Retailers get their goods from the producer, which transforms commodities into a final item. They likewise purchase the producer's items from intermediaries, known as a distributor. This organization combines the items

from around the globe and repackages them for simpler promotion and transaction. Retailers are the last stop of the store network. Retailers make profit by raising costs well over their cost of work, facilities and distribution. Everybody along the store network does similar thing. Retailers can here and there make profit in the event that they sidestep the distributors and buy directly from the manufacturing plant. Some large retailers sometime fabricate well known things themselves.

According to Admin (2010) Retailing has to do with any task that involves selling directly to a person or end user. Retailing has been the most dynamic and alluring segment of the most recent decade, whereas the retailing business itself has been available for a number of years, retailing sector in the present day has changed significantly. It is the most recent movement that has been seeing crowds of players jumping into it.

Classification of Retail Stores

There are two broad categories of retailer stores, namely store based retailers and non-store based retailers.

Retail Stores

Retailer stores come in different shapes and sizes, different forms of retailing has continued to emerge each day. Kotler and Armstrong (2014) identify the following as the top types of retail stores.

Speciality Stores: They deal with limited product offering with a profound combination, for example, attire stores, sporting-goods stores, furniture stores, flower vendors and book stores.

Departmental Stores: They deal with a few product offerings commonly attire, home furniture and house hold merchandise with each line worked as a different office monitored by expert purchasers or merchandisers.

Super Markets: They are big departmentalized stores, self-service stores that deals with food and non-food products.

Convenience Stores: They are generally little stores situated close to where people reside, open long periods of time seven days a week and providing a restricted line of high turnover convenience items at marginally higher costs.

Discount Stores: These are standard stock sold at reduced costs with lower margins and higher volumes

Off-price Retailers: They offer commodities purchased at a much lower price than retail price frequently left over products, over runs and irregularly gotten at lessened costs from producers or other retailers.

Superstores: They are usually very big stores that are intended to meet customer's total prerequisites for routinely bought food and non-food products. As of recent, there is rapid development of superstores that are actually giant speciality stores. They include stores in the extent of plane sheds that carries a profound variety of a specific line.

Non-stores Retailing

Non-store retailing is a type of retailing in which sales are made to shoppers without utilizing physical stores. The non-store retailers are identified by the method they use to reach their clients, for example, marketing directly, selling directly and vending machines or e-tailing. Most non-store retailers present customers with the comfort of purchasing 24 hours per day, seven days a week and conveyance at area and time of their choice. Non-store offers are presently developing at an advanced rate than offers in retail locations. Non-store retailing today represents over 15% of all the purchases of consumers, and it might represent more than 1/3 of all offers before the century is over. The high development rate is basically because of the development of electronic retailing. Electronic retailing (additionally called e-tailing and Internet retailing) is a retail arrangement whereby the retailer and consumer interact with each other via an intelligent electronic system. After an electronic exchange linking the retailer and customer, the customer can arrange stock specifically through the intuitive system or by phone. The stock is then conveyed to the client's address (Saumyaa, 2007).

Smriti (2015) classified the following stores as non-store based retailers:

- i. **Direct Selling:** Direct offering is a retail channel for the appropriation of product and services. There is no permanent retail store. In direct offering there is an immediate contact of the retailer with his definitive customers. It is exceptionally an intelligent type of retailing.
- ii. **Mail order:** It is a retail system in which offerings are conveyed to the customers through a list or letter. Such retailing is appropriate for specialty product. The purchaser puts in a request for the desired product with the dealer through a phone call or website. Online method of payment alternatives have made shopping from home simple.
- iii. **Tele Marketing:** It is a type of retailing in which the products are publicized on TV. Insights about the product as to its physical appearance, value, guarantee, how to use it and so forth are said and clarified. Telephone numbers are given so that customers can make a call and make request for the product.
- iv. **Automatic Vending:** This is a type of non-store retailing in which the products are pile up in a machine and apportioned to the customers when they deposit money. Vending machines are set at suitable and busy areas like air terminals, shopping centers, working spot and so forth. This machine fundamentally contains products like chocolates, snacks and beverages.
- v. **Electronic retailing:** It is as well called e-tailing or internet retailing. It is a retail system in which product are offered to the customers through the net. The customers can assess and buy the products from their homes or office place. This sort of retailing is picking up significantly in recent years.

According to Laura (2015) e-tailing is the use of equipment like computers and the internet to sell a variety of products and services online to the world. It opens up various doors for organization and provides a larger number of individuals to sell the products to.

This can bring about increase in profits and reduction in costs. The web site can also bring about opportunities of improved and cheaper products.

Distribution Strategy

Distribution strategies involve making available product where and when consumer want it. According to Jim (2015) distribution is accomplished by utilizing at least one or more outlets, including:

Retailers

- Distributors/Sales Agents
- Direct (e.g. by means of online business)
- Wholesalers

He added that a distribution chain can be viewed as all the firms through which an item passes through from the point of making it to the point of consumption. From the definition of retailing, one can see that a product may pass through some stages before it finally reaches the consumers. The organizations partaken in each phase of distribution are called intermediaries. Intermediaries specializes in selling; they have the contacts, understanding and skills to function which implies that more sales can be accomplished than if the manufacturer attempted to run a business operation itself. Retailers are agent of distributing goods and services to final consumers. Shoprite works hand in hand with many local and International suppliers; they buy in bulk from these suppliers and sell directly to the final consumers.

Electronic Commerce

The retail industry is experiencing a major change driven by advanced technologist. Innovation is changing the way individuals shop and how retailers work. Electronic commerce has opened up more opportunities for retail marketers to provide tailored experiences for their customers (Cooper, 2015). Retailers now make use of electronic commerce in dealing with their customers in today's competitive environment. Electronic commerce otherwise known as e-commerce business is the purchasing and offering of products and services or the transmitting of currency or information over an electronic system, essentially the internet(Margret, 2005). Sales and distribution on e-commerce take place as either business-to-business, business-to-consumers, consumers-to-consumers or consumer-to-business. E-commerce is facilitated by a range of digital technologies for example, web interchanges through sites and email and additionally other computerized media, for example, wireless or cell phone and media for conveying computerized TV, for example, link and satellite. E-commerce between companies can be considered from two points of view: 'offer side' from the viewpoint of the offering company and "buy-side" from the point of view of the purchasing company (Dave, 2009). The offer side e-commerce includes utilizing the internet to promote goods and services using a number of platforms such as social media.

According to Dave (2009) there are four major forms of online presence for offer-side e-commerce and they includes:

- i. **Transactional e-commerce sites:** These allow buying of items on the internet. The platform likewise support organizations by giving data to customers that want to buy offline, these incorporate retail stores, travel locales and internet banking practices.
- ii. **Services-oriented relationship-building web sites:** It makes available information to encourage buying and creating relationships.
- iii. **Brand-building sites:** It makes available information that can help a brand. Their primary focus is to help the brand by building up an online support for the brand.
- iv. **Portal, publisher or media sites:** Provide data, news or delight about a number of issues. Portal deals with gateway of data. This is data both on the site and through connections to different sites.

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