

Internet as an effective tool for modern educational and business administration

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Abstract

This paper presents the effectiveness of Internet in the promotion of academic institutions and local business in Enugu through website development and its services. The three organizations chosen for the study were Doma internet services Ltd. Abakpa, Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu and Information and Communication Technology unit of the department of Urban and Regional Planning, Enugu State university of Science and Technology, Agbani, Enugu. In the qualitative study carried out in these three organizations, data collections were made by direct observations, filling of structured questionnaires and interviews. 20 chosen respondents were interviewed in each of the organizations to examine the objectives that organisations achieve with websites, what drives the development of websites of organizations and the effectiveness of the website development. 3 respondents out of the 20 chosen respondents were the members of the management of the selected unit and the research questions in Table 5.7, Table 5.8 and Table 5.9 were directed strictly to the members of the management. The work revealed the effectiveness of web site in advertisement, effective communication, administration, business transaction and the creation of awareness on the existence of an organization locally and internationally.

Keywords: Administration, Communication, Internet, marketing, Website.

1. Introduction

The Internet is quickly becoming the preferred channel of communication by millions of people all over the world and in business it is a fast, global and inexpensive way of reaching customers. The need for internet is constantly increasing and obviously dominating other means of written communication. It is also the fastest and most reliable means of delivery of written mails. The postal services of delivery of hard copies are gradually being replaced through delivery of letter through e-mail (Lurie, 2006).

1.1 Brief historical background of internet

The Internet originated from Advanced Research Projects Agency NETwork (ARPANET), which started to develop in 1969 in order to connect computers at American research institutes all over America. The ARPANET developed as independent multiple networks to the Internet (Barry, M. L. et. al. 2009).

Today, the Internet as a marketing medium is on its way to become the easiest and most cost effective way to global marketing. No other medium has, even at its inception, offered this promise (Silverstein, 2008).

1.2 Aims and Objective of the study

The aim of this study is to examine what propels the development of websites of organizations with the objective of determining the effectiveness of the website development with respect to administration and business development.

2. Literature Review

This section critically evaluates the research questions that are relevant to the studies. The most relevant research questions are reviewed.

2.1 What objectives do organizations have with websites?

Different organizations may have different marketing objectives for establishing and maintaining a website (Berthon et al, 1998). Zinkhan (2002) believes that the ultimate goal for a firm is to offer quality service to the customer and through the automation of some the areas of services, a firm can have a good time management. Lim and Wem (2002) stated that there are major savings in the use of internet for data entry and instant transfer and this saves time and cost. According to Day (1997), the purpose and aims of the site must be thought through with the utmost concern and attention in order to create an effective website.

Most organizations tend to advertise through the internet to authenticate their products and services and a great proportion of the marketing is profit-oriented which infers that different marketing objectives tend towards profit-making. Before organizations invest the time and resources to create a website, it is important to understand for what reasons they want a Web site (Lederer & Childers, 2006).

2.2 How are the websites of organizations developed?

Darlington (2005) stated that in order to conduct marketing activities through the web, the website must be developed in order to attract visitors. According to the United States Department of Labor (2013), the booming of web site industry is being propelled by businesses wishing to use their website to sell products and services to customers. Angelides (1997) opined that the Internet-based organizations first need to focus on communication in order to market your products and services.

2.2.1 Website Establishment

Developing a website is an exciting challenge and there a number of factors to consider during the process. When an organization decides to establish a website, it needs to determine if it will have its own server where the Web site is placed or hire place from an Internet Service Provider (ISP). There are different types of ISPs and some offer different services, speed and technical support. If a company envisages a website with little traffic, it could be a good idea to rent a space with an Internet Service Provider (Cormier and Tran, 2009).

2.2.2 Website Design

Lederer & Childers, (2006) stated that the first thing a company has to be done is to register a domain name which defines the company and gives it an administrative control within the internet whenever the company considers establishing a website. Cormier & Tran (2009) believes that the website design must be carefully considered since competitors are only a click away on the Internet.

2.3 How do organizations assess the effectiveness of their Web site?

A website is effective when both the users and the owners achieve goals for the site. The web is much easier to measure than many other marketing communication efforts (Berthon et al, 1998).

Digital marketing communications is specifically linked to corporate branding and it is in support of personal selling. It has begun attracting the interests of both practitioners and academics owing to its effectiveness (Deeter-Schmelz & Kennedy, 2002; Michaelidou et al., 2011).

Measurement of the success of a website can give organizations valuable information that helps them in reaching more customers. Data on how visitors use a Web site, what attracts the visitors and why they return to a site can help an organization to manage and expand its site. These kinds of data are often available in electronic documents called access logs (Lederer & Childers, 2006).

3.0 Study area

The three organizations chosen for the study were Doma internet services Ltd. Abakpa, Enugu, Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu and Information and Communication Technology unit of the department of Urban and Regional Planning, Enugu State university of Science and Technology, Agbani, Enugu.

4.0 Research methodology

This section gives the explanation of the tools and methods used in the determination of the success of the internet system as an effective tool for academic and business administration. In the qualitative study carried out in these three organizations, data collections were made by direct observations, filling of structured

questionnaires and interviews. There are 3 research questions completed by 20 chosen respondents in form of questionnaires. The research questions in Table 5.7, Table 5.8 and Table 5.9 were directed to the members of the management only.

5.0 Data Presentation and Analyses

This section presents and analyses the empirical results of the study. Table 5.1 is the general respondent information for Doma internet services Ltd. Abakpa, Table 5.2 is the general respondent information for Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu, while Table 5.3 is the general respondent information for Information and Communication Technology unit of the department of Urban and Regional Planning, Enugu State university of Science and Technology, Agbani, Enugu.

Table 5.1: General Respondent information for Doma Internet services, Abakpa

Biometric details	5	4	3	2	1
Age	Above 50 years -	45-49 years -	40-44 years 03	30-40 years 06	Below 30 years 11
Sex	Male 11	Female 09			
Education	Ph.D 01	BSC/HND 04	NCE/ND 04	WAEC/SSCE 11	FSLC -
Occupation	Student 15	Civil Servant 04	Artisan -	Business man 01	others -

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

Table 5.2: General Respondent information for Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu

Biometric details	5	4	3	2	1
Age	Above 50 years -	45-49 years 02	40-44 years 04	30-40 years 13	Below 30 years 01
Sex	Male 08	Female 12			
Education	Ph.D -	BSC/HND 11	NCE/ND 08	WAEC/SSCE 01	FSLC -
Occupation	Student Trainee 02	Doctor/Nurse 14	Auxiliary Nurse 02	Business man 01	Others 01

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

Table 5.3: General Respondent information for Information and Communication Technology unit of the department of Urban and Regional Planning, Enugu State university of Science and Technology, Agbani, Enugu

Biometric details	5	4	3	2	1
Age	Above 50 years -	45-49 years -	40-44 years 03	30-40 years 06	Below 30 years 11
Sex	Male 06	Female 14			
Education	Ph.D 02	BSC/HND 16	NCE/ND 01	WAEC/SSCE 01	FSLC
Occupation	Student 15	Civil Servant 04	Artisan -	Business man 01	others -

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

Table 5.4: Research Question 1

How long have you been using Internet in this organisation?	Doma Internet Services Ltd	Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu	ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT.
0 – 2 years	4	1	2
2 – 3 years	3	2	2
3 – 4 years	1	5	2
4 – 10 years	8	11	13
10 – 20 years	4	1	1
No of Respondents	20	20	20

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

From Table 5.4, 40% of the respondents from Doma Internet Services Ltd. confirmed that they have been using internet services between 4 years to 10 years, 55% of the respondents from Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu confirmed that they have been using internet services between 4 years to 10 years and 65% of the respondents from ICT Unit, URP, ESUT. Enugu confirmed that they have been using internet services between 4 years to 10 years. Those who have been using internet between 4 years and 10 show the largest proportion of the respondents in each organisation.

Table 5.5: Research question 2

Is Internet significant to modern business and academic administration?	Doma Internet Services Ltd	Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu	ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT.
Yes	18	14	19
No	1	1	0
Cannot say	1	5	1
No of Respondents	20	20	20

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

From Table 5.5, 90% of the respondents from Doma Internet Services Ltd. confirmed that Internet is significant to modern business and academic administration, 70% of the respondents from Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu confirmed that Internet is significant to modern business and academic administration while 95% of the respondents from ICT Unit, URP. ESUT confirmed that Internet is significant to modern business and academic administration. No respondent from ICT Unit, URP. ESUT agreed that internet is not significant to academic administration. It is evident from Table 5.5 that those minute proportion (1%) are those who could not say whether internet is significant or not.

Table 5.6: Research Question 3

How often do you access the organisation website?	Doma Internet Services Ltd	Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu	ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT.
Once a month	2	3	1
Once a week	1	2	1
Thrice a week	3	1	1
Daily	11	13	14
Cannot Say	3	1	3
No of Respondents	20	20	20

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

Table 5.6 shows that many organisations now make use of internet daily in modern academic and business administration, 55% of the respondents from Doma Internet Services Ltd. confirmed that they access internet daily, 65% of the respondents from Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu confirmed that they access internet daily while 70% of the respondents from ICT Unit, URP. ESUT confirmed that they access internet daily.

Table 5.7: Research Question 4 (Website Objective)

What objectives do the organisation has with website?	Doma Internet Services Ltd	Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu	ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT.
Well-thought decision	Yes	Yes	Yes
Primary Objective	Communication	Communication	communication
Advertisement and Recognition	Yes	Yes	Yes
Specific Objectives	create awareness of the organisation, increase the number of customers for browsing, and installation of antivirus for infected customers computers.	Communicating the doctors and nurses for vital signs and doctors consultation, protection of the laboratory results of patients, and for revenue protection.	facilitate online application for admission, application for transcripts, posting of e-payslips to members of staff, online confirmation of payment of tuition fees, registration of courses for those who pay tuition fees, create awareness, reputation and for revenue protection.

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

From Table 5.7, it was a well-thought decision of the members of each of the management to establish websites. The specific objective of Doma internet services Ltd is to create awareness of the organisation and increase the number of customers, the specific objective of Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu is to improve customer services and for revenue protection while the specific objective of ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT is to facilitate online registration, create awareness, reputation and for revenue protection.

Table 5.8: Research Question 5 (Website Establishment)

How are the websites of the small companies developed?	Doma Internet Services Ltd	Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu	ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT.
Rented a space in ISP	Yes	Yes	Yes
Perceived advantages with own server or ISP	Economical	Economical	Economical
Designer	Designed by the owner of the organisation.	Designed by the IT Engineer of the organisation.	Designed by the ICT unit Team of the organisation.

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

From Table 5.8, the website of Doma internet services Ltd was designed by the owner of the organisation, the website of Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu was designed by the IT Engineer of the organisation, while the website of the ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT was designed by the IT unit Team of the organisation.

Table 5.9: Research Question 6 (Website Effectiveness)

How do these organisations assess the effectiveness of their website?	Doma Internet Services Ltd	Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu	ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT.
Traffic Reports	Yes	No	Yes
Online surveys	No	No	No
Bulletin boards	No	No	No
Customer Identification	No	Yes	yes
E-mail marketing list	Yes	No	Yes
Other	Feedback through phone and in person	Feedback through phone and in person	Feedback through phone and in person

Source: Researchers field survey (2016)

From Table 5.9, the effectiveness of the website of Doma internet services Ltd is assessed through traffic reports, e-mail marketing list, and feedback through phone and in person. The effectiveness of website of Annunciation Specialist Hospital, Emene, Enugu is assessed through customer identification and feedback through phone and in person while the effectiveness of the website of the ICT Unit, Dept. Of Urban and Regional Planning, ESUT is assessed through traffic reports, customer identification, e-mail marketing list and feedback through phone and in person.

6 Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter presents the conclusion drawn from the research in the three organisations and recommendations that will help to improve subsequent researches or further studies.

6.1 Conclusion

It can be concluded that website development is significant for the creation of awareness of the organisation, increase the number of customers, improve customer services, facilitate online registration in academic institutions, and for revenue protection.

6.2 Recommendations

From the research, the following recommendations were made.

- There should be the creation of an online brochure that will help potential clients, customers, and partners learn about your organization or academic institution.
- Provision of online products and services information to drive local sales of your products and services.
- Development of links that can earn affiliate commissions for sales and marketing through the design of sites to generate search engine for all products, services and courses for academic institutions.
- Regular upgrading and updating of the websites through the internet service provider.

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