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CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IN THE NIGERIAN NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE INDUSTRY

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Abstract
The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of content marketing strategy on customer engagement. The study adopted the survey research design method. The study made use of a sample size of 274 staff from some selected firms in the Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry in Lagos State, Nigeria. Descriptive statistics (frequency tables, percentages) were used to analyze the questionnaire response background profile and also to reveal the pattern of responses from each of the constructs in the sub-scale. Multiple regression analysis was employed to analyze the relationship between the components of content marketing and customer engagement. Findings showed that the change in customer engagement was brought about by the variables of content marketing in the Nigerian Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry. Which implies that there is a significant relationship between information quality and customer engagement; content marketing channels have a significant relationship with customer engagement; there is a significant relationship between content co-creation and customer engagement; message source credibility has a significant relationship with customer engagement. The study concluded that content marketing strategy has a significant positive effect on customer engagement in the Nigerian Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry. The study recommended that to maintain brand credibility an enterprise must enable co-creation of content with the customers.

Keywords: Content Marketing Strategy, Information Quality, Content Marketing Channels, Content Co-Creation, Message Source Credibility

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between sellers and buyers is undergoing a key transformation. E-commerce and social media have given buyers extraordinary unused control to inquire about items, costs, notorieties and conclusions more than once some time recently they indeed conversation to the vender. To compete in this buyer-empowered showcase, business-to-business firms have been constrained to reconsider how they advertise and offer their items and

administrations. It appears that one of the objectives of every marketing program is to create leads that drive revenue. Traditionally this job has been more of an art than a science, with marketers depending majorly on intuition and experience to capture the attention of prospects and turn them into sales. Now that content is king, firms are changing their focus to developing subject matter that will capture the customer's attention and serving it up in compelling formats at just the right time.

A company working in modern market conditions, in order to improve its results, has to adopt effective advertising policies, analyze competitors' actions and investigate the needs of consumers and consumption trends (Išoraitė, 2013). Content marketing is a descriptive kind of marketing that provides customers with valuable information, when they are interested in receiving it, and to engage them positively. This enables it to break through the advertising clutter that consumers ignore or view skeptically, while it gently persuades prospects and helps buyers and the public. Substance plays an imperative portion in advanced promoting since imaginative, great and important substance can drive customer's engagement (Ahmad, Musa & Harun, 2016). Indeed, in case substance promoting may show up to be a later advancement in promoting hone, truly it's basically a unused procedure to communicate the same data that clients have continuously needed almost items and administrations. Its power has been exponentially improved with today's social media platforms and other devices. The relevance of information technology developments in Nigeria Non-Alcoholic Industry cannot be underestimated due to its role and inevitability in the committee of nations.

Vital and persuasive contents seen by customers seem to enhance the confidence of customers in consuming beverages. But, in recent times the Nigerian Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry has been operating in a tough phase. These days substance promoting isn't fair a alluring thing, it's a must-have. In addition, it is basic to form up-to-date substance. Naturally, this cannot be normal substance, but it should be reliable, high-quality substance. On beat of that it has got to be profitable sufficient to supply the client with benefits that can fulfill his needs and desires in course of interaction. A relevant aspect of content marketing is also defining the target group, which is intended to receive the content of the message. This in turn builds the need to create and later share out such information that will introduce the customer into the brand, product or service area, which is the subject of the message. Customer engagement is nothing else but a transition from one direction campaigns (relations) to a strategy based on a dialogue with the client. Customer engagement defines, identifies real, specific needs of customers. By assumption it also encourages the customer to interaction, to real, active involvement in the development of its product or service, brand (Taylor, 2012).

In Nigeria, content marketing has been a great source of aid for business promotion and advertising for those who really know how to utilize it. Unfortunately for some

business owners, they still don't have the idea of how effective content marketing can drive sales to their brand. However, the firms that have utilized this strategy, appears to have been able to record outstanding results. With rising digital technologies paying attention on getting content faster and more effectively to end users across diverse platforms and devices, the long-held belief that content is king is gaining more attraction in a world where behaviour of digital nations are defining how brands position their strategies. But the creation of social media platforms and irregular behaviour of digital populace brought with them the challenge of sifting via an avalanche of information that is obtainable at any given time. How is a content designer then able to gain and sustain attention? It comes down to just one thing: a content marketing strategy tailor-made for a particular audience.

The Nigerian Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry most times face the challenge of the growing populations they serve, distributing healthier products, modifying customer habits and adapting to energy costs and raw material. In addition, their factories and supply chains must be environmentally friendly. To face these rising challenges, they must be competitive and responsible without compromise. Competition on a global scale means maximizing and maintaining your performance, productivity, quality and flexibility, whilst efficiently managing costs. The beverage market is a global one, and a growing one. This means greater opportunities, but also greater challenges. Despite the fact that content marketing is widely used in practice, it is still quite a new concept in the scientific research area. Therefore, the study aims to examine the effect of content marketing strategy on customer engagement in the Nigerian Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry.

Some firms in Nigeria are one hard nut to crack especially when it comes to content marketing. There are different ways to spread information about a company, but they all require considerable time and expenses. Best of these processes are done by those who skillfully, clearly and briefly provide their company's information to customers in a convenient and reasonable way. Lack of the marketing experts' ability to make certain the trustworthiness of information makes the informative content negligible. Bombarding customers with advertising content is becoming less and less effective. The human brain becomes resilient not only to the number of outdoor messages, but also the more or less classic forms of display. There are more and more advertisements, but the number of them noticed by customers are dropping.

If a company does not have the technological capacities required to analyze and understand customer behaviour and meeting them on virtual platforms, the co-creation of content will be hindered. Content marketing is a huge challenge, as it requires a long-term strategy and objectives set in a measurable way. Yet firms have been slow to acclimatize to the varying landscape, and they are losing out in the fight for new customers. A lot of firms still market in the old way, aimlessly bombarding customers and prospects with common brochure-ware, product pitches, and

banner ads. Increasingly this strategy is falling short. Marketing materials are usually overlooked and firms continue to miss vital customer-growth and return-on-marketing targets. Marketers must move ahead of traditional pay-per-click ad models or face tougher executive examination of their digital marketing programs. Content marketing has been studied in a variety of industries since its inception in 2001 (Wang, Malthouse, Calder, & Uzunoglu, 2017), including consumer durables (e.g. BMW; Wakefield, 2012), packaged foods (e.g. Thornton's; Davis, 2016), and services (e.g. Fitness First; Wright, 2016). Limited studies have examined content marketing and none has addressed the effect it may have on customer engagement in the Nigerian Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap in knowledge.

Research Hypotheses

H_1: There is a significant positive relationship between information quality and customer engagement

H_2: Content marketing channels has a significant positive relationship with customer engagement

H_3: There is a significant positive relationship between content co-creation and customer engagement

H_4: Message source credibility has a significant positive relationship with customer engagement

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Marketing Strategy

Content Marketing Institute (2015) described content marketing as a strategic marketing technique focused on creating and sharing valuable, relevant, and reliable content to attract and retain a clearly-defined audience– and eventually to create profitable customer action. Gagnon (2014) highlighted that the creation of a content-based marketing program is more than the creation of virtual promotional advertisement. Therefore, organizations need to find and create content that effectively add to the selling of products. Furthermore, this content should position the company in the most exclusive way in order to engage potential customers. This process is seen as a kind of dialogue that leads to sales and new business creation for a firm. Gagnon (2014) opined that substance utilized in substance- based promoting programs is characterized as a base of substantive, sensibly objective data, created by or for a firm.

Construction of the advertising message based on the useful content is the next generation of branding (Aušra & Rūta 2016). Chasser & Wolf (2010) discovered that customers are not only more responsive to the content-based ads, but also content marketing builds an opportunity for them to bypass traditional advertising. Content Marketing is described as any marketing that deals with the design and sharing of media and publishing content in order to gain and retain customers. Content marketing consist of newsletters, blogging, guest blogging on other websites, case studies and white papers, posting and sharing on social media websites, participating in online discussions on social media and other vital information sources.

Substance promoting is all approximately locks in shoppers with the things they really

need, in a way that serves brand's objectives and standards, instead of fair attempting to jam logo into their fringe. It is getting the precise clients you need, rather than a unclearly characterized demo. It is attentively providing the knowledge they want, instead of trying to divert them from the one they came for. It is the development of advertising itself into something more efficient, more effective and much less odious. Content marketing embodies a company's core brand elements. It uses a range of media formats such as text, audio, presentations, video, photographs, e-books and infographics to tell a company's brand or firm's story. It can be read on a range of devices such as computers, smartphones, tablets etc. Automation and semantics can aid to facilitate, filter and reveal hidden treasures, but it is the consumer touch –wise selection and consideration of content – that will generate a truly novel and engaging brand experience for customers to discover, enjoy and share.

One of the major similarities in all the diverse ways of looking at Content Marketing is that the consumer experience and the needs, and questions of people and the so-called target audiences are at the centre. A constant usage of vital content runs like a thread through all company's marketing activities. Good content is essential everywhere so using it in a smart way is crucial. Content Marketing is not all about creation and distribution of valuable and relevant content. If it were artists, cinematographers, etc., would be marketing experts. Content Marketing is a specific way of solving the customer acquisition problem by explicitly exhibiting value to prospects and leads, in an effort to emotionally fascinate them long enough that they are involuntarily attracted to the value proposition posited by the content marketer.

Content marketing is not about products, attributes, feeds and speeds or sales pitches. It is focused on what your products, services or solutions help your customers to achieve. Patrutio & Baltes (2016) expressed that substance advancing may be a essential parcel of advanced exhibiting. The reason is that the foremost parcel of any firm's progressed displaying got to be built on recognizing the client and its needs, by doing this companies can secure accept and make a customer-firm relationship. Substance promoting procedures include the utilization of advanced stages such as blogs and social systems where tall quality substance is displayed to the customer. The substance displayed on these stages as well as through other media is what makes esteem for the clients and will offer assistance undertakings draw in, change over and hold them. Substance showcasing ought to look for to be instructive, engaging and accommodating; a confirmation of substance showcasing is in the event that the substance itself makes a difference gathering of people unravel an issue indeed in spite of the fact that they never conclusion up buying a item or benefit (Moran, 2016).

Moran (2016) posit that content marketing should possess four properties; *credibility, differentiated, targeted* and *measurable.* Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege & Zhang (2013) asserts that because of consumers' ability to filter content to what appeals to them, enterprises must adapt communication

strategies to fit inbound messages and create customer value. Content is a way of providing information which enables the customer to engage in a certain brand (Malthouse et al., 2013). The only reason for customers to visit a certain web page is not to purchase products but also to seek information about, for example already purchased products, through content provided on the page.

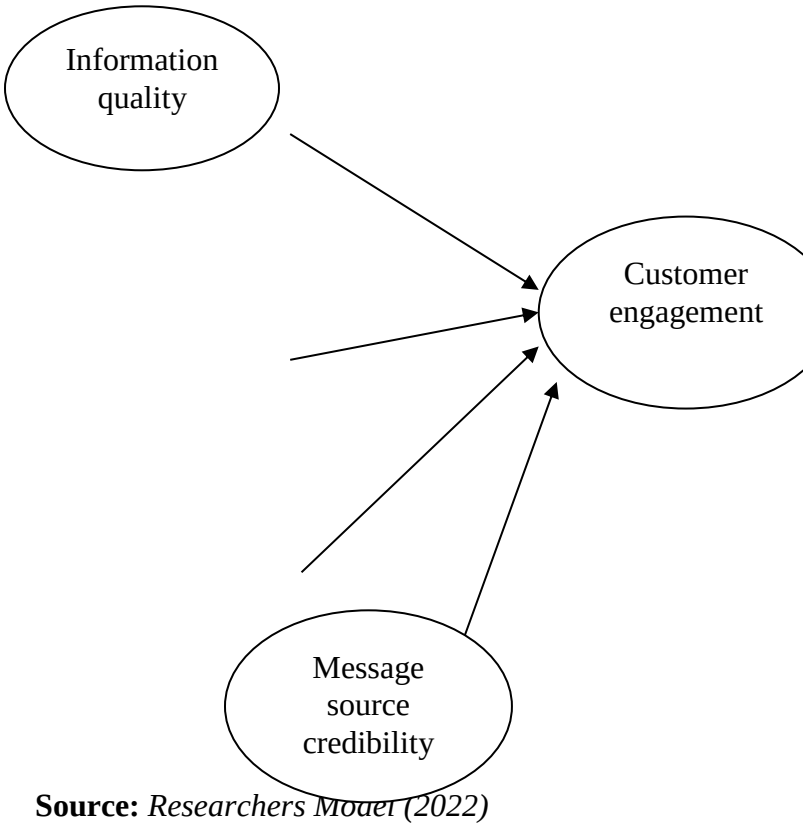
Lieb,Kirchner & Szymanski(2012) state that content marketing is the marketing of attraction. It's being there when consumers need you and seek you out with relevant, educational, helpful, compelling, engaging, and sometimes entertaining information. Lieb, Kirchner & Szymanski, (2012) define co as a term referring to the of content for marketing puterized channels, it allu nce that dwells on properties of the brand or advertiser claims (e.g., we eat extent controls from a (social media channels, sy tance showcasing is an umbrella term for numerous showcasing groups cultivating client intuitive through substance. Cohen (2011) opine that content marketing provides customers with valuable information to support purchase decisions, enhance product usage and entertain them while attaining organizational goals without being overtly promotional. Content marketing's main attributes are: Embodies a company's core brand elements; Uses a range of media formats such as text, video, presentations, eBooks, photographs, audio and infographics to tell your brand or firm's story; Can be read on a range of devices including computers, smartphones, tablets, etc.; It is shared through owned, third party and social media platforms; Provides quantifiable results via the use of suitable calls-to-action and promotional code (Cohen, 2011).

Conceptual framework

Independent variables

Dependent variable

Content marketing strategies



Source: *Researchers Model (2022)*

Information Quality and Customer Engagement

Information quality is defined as the persuasive strength of arguments embedded in an informational message (Bhattacherjee & Sanford 2006). It refers to the value of the information perceived by the recipient (Cheung, Lee & Rabjohn 2008). From the standpoint of IAM, information quality as a central cue plays an important role in

informational influence (Sussman & Siegal 2003) and is found to have an impact on information adoption (Zhang & Watts, 2008), attitude change (Teng et al., 2014) and behavioural intentions (Zhu et al., 2016; Cheung et al., 2008). Several studies argue that information quality influences the attitude of message recipients in the context of online environment (Cheung et al., 2008).

Users search for information that is supported by valid and strong arguments (Cheung, Luo, Sia & Chen, 2009). To make sure that the online review is valid, users evaluate the quality of information embedded in the comment (Heinrichs, Lim & Lim, 2011). Information quality can be measured in terms of accuracy, timeliness, completeness, relevance, and consistency of the information provided (DeLone & McLean, 2003). Heinrichs et al., (2011) argues that measuring information quality by these dimensions is preferable because these attributes facilitate sharing the information in online environment. Some researchers (Rowley, 2008; Wulf, Schillewaert & Muylle, 2006; Ružkevičius & Guseva, 2006) focus on the content and information quality as one of the factors determining the attractiveness of websites or other virtual products to the consumer that afterwards can affect consumer confidence, satisfaction and loyalty. Unique and valuable content starts to be a main concern task for firms (Gagnon, 2014; Creamer, 2012; Rose, 2014) that aim to draw the attention of consumers.

The increasing relevance of content quality produced preconditions for content marketing to become a different marketing discipline. The use of valuable content in advertisement is one of the basic ways to get benefits and successfully compete with other participants in the market (Aušra & Rūta, 2016). Moreover, it can help to improve the effectiveness of different advertisement forms. Researchers (Ružkevičius & Guseva 2006; Chasser & Wolfe, 2010; Gagnon, 2014; Abel, 2014; Creamer, 2012; Schuinanii, Wangenheim & Groene, 2014) emphasize the importance of content quality, mentioning a variety of features, which the quality should possess in order to stimulate consumer interest and beneficial actions. These features which comprise of relevance, informative, reliability, value, uniqueness, emotions and intelligence, can be understood as a separate content marketing element. In literature the relevance of content is perceived as usefulness of information for a consumer (Lin, Zhou & Chen, 2014; Chasser & Wolfe, 2010; Abel, 2014).

In order to ensure reliability, companies should carefully evaluate data processing procedures and use appropriate techniques (Ružkevičius & Guseva, 2006). Reliability determines correctness of information whereas adequacy of information is determined by completeness (Chasser & Wolfe, 2010). Lin et al. (2014) support this opinion by saying that the reliability of content is also a vital factor in determining the value of communication. Aušra & Rūta (2016) suggested that content creation should be implemented through the functional and emotional values. By implementing and succeeding in this objective, firms can attain high conversion into sales rates (Limba & Jurkutė, 2013). Gagnon (2014) assert that the

quality of content is tailored to the needs of potential customers and shows them how a product proposed by a specific firm can help in solving customers' problems.

Ružkevičius & Guseva, (2006) perceive valuable content as an ability of the given content to comply with the consumer's aspirations, goals and interests. Aušra & Rūta (2016) opined that this aspect is primarily dependent on the users' needs and interests which are constantly changing. Firms using content exclusivity can win the battle for customer's attention in the competitive online space (Aušra & Rūta, 2016). Gagnon (2014) opined that unique content could be foreseen as a positioning strategy of the firm in order to become a distinctive and desirable market participant in comparison to its competitors. Secondly, the distinctive content cannot only attract the attention of customers, but also share the word of mouth about the firm's unique skills (Gagnon, 2014). Aušra & Rūta (2016) opined that the uniqueness of content is achieved through the detailed analysis of competitors, creativity and innovation.

Abel (2014) contended that content-based marketing programs need to adopt smart content. Smart content is not limited only to one goal, i.e. one technology and one output. Smart content can have an ability to be readable by humans and processed in machines and technology. Intelligence, properly integrated into content-based marketing programs, helps professionals to present content to potential customers, to draw their attention and encourage them to make actions that are useful for a company (Aušra & Rūta, 2016). Some authors (Creamer, 2012; Ludwig et al., 2012) believe that in order to make influence, content marketing should have accountability.

Content Marketing Channels and Customer Engagement

Marketers have distinguished three different types of offline and online media activity: paid media, owned media and earned media (Puro, 2013). Puro (2013) further explain that paid media, commonly known as advertising, refers to the media activities that a company generates. Owned media refers to the media activities that the company generates in channels that it controls, such as press releases, brochures and customer magazines. Earned media refers to the media activities not created directly by the company. The content of earned media can be generated for example by customers in the shape of word-of-mouth, or by journalists in the case of traditional media publicity (Stephen & Galak, 2012). Recent research has suggested that earned media could have a greater impact on customer actions than paid media (Stephen & Galak, 2012).

Trusov, Bucklin & Pauwels, (2009) found on their research on word-of-mouth versus traditional marketing that word-of-mouth referrals (i.e. earned media) have a strong impact on new customer acquisition. In addition, they suggest that this type of earned media can have larger and longer lasting effects than traditional marketing activities (Trusov et al., 2009). With owned and paid media, a company can achieve the same benefits than with earned media if it generates interesting and properly targeted

marketing content (Puro, 2013). The current media is filled with traditional product and service marketing messages which urge the customer to acquire the marketed product or solution. Content marketing is a way to stand out from the masses. Instead of pushing the potential customer towards the purchase with aggressive marketing, a company can provide the target audiences interesting content which generates additional value.

This kind of marketing changes the perceptions of the company and generates a stronger brand (Puro, 2013). Thus, the effect with content marketing is similar than with earned media. In addition, interesting content is effective in brand building, regardless on the kind of media used. The content can be communicated for example through the company website, newsletter or customer magazine, but also via TV, radio or print advertising. When a company is able to provide useful and insightful information regarding a certain field, challenge or issue, it doesn't matter whether the message is non-commercial or branded. The content itself matters. Effective content marketing provides answers and insight on the challenges that the target audience might face regarding a certain topical issue (Puro, 2013). The communicated content educates, inspires and gives guidance on the selected issues. The purpose is to profile the company as the thought leader on these issues and thus strengthen the brand.

Different channels often have different roles in the content marketing strategy and multi-channel presence create stability in the turbulent digital world where one channel rises and other falls in a matter of months (CMIa, 2016). Website is often the channel that is considered as the main hub for content marketing. Creating content is useless unless the content is found by the public. If the content is on the company's website the company should maximize the chances that the content would be found. Singh, Veron-Jackson, & Cullinane, (2008) stated that blogs are more authentic, because the message can be connected to a specific person which in this case is the writer. They also mention that blog is an effective platform when it comes to sharing knowledge and experiences with customers. Sharing knowledge and educating customers is one of the objectives of content marketing and this makes blog a great channel to publish content. Blog is also an easy way to optimize the website for great search engine results since it can include a vast number of keywords without making the website look too complex just like Rosen & Purinton (2004). Podcast is a media file that is in the form of audio or video and is distributed online and listened on computers or handheld devices (Jham, Duraes, Strassler & Sensi, 2008).

As mobile based marketing increases companies have found a new way to engage their customers – mobile phone applications, mostly known as "apps". Companies have developed branded apps to support their brand message and to benefit their customers. Bellman, Potter,Treleaven-Hassard, Robinson & Varan (2011) found out that using branded apps has a convincing impact and it increases interest in the brand. Results show that the product category makes no

difference, but the content of the app does – the use of informational and user-centered apps shifts purchase intention by encouraging to personal connections with the brand whereas game-like apps focus attention on the phone instead of the content and thus don't necessarily bring wanted results. In direct mobile marketing the marketing message is pushed to the consumer, but apps make the consumer voluntarily download the content and become influenced by the brand.

Social media are used both as a content platform as well as promoting the content that is elsewhere. Content marketing and e-mail newsletters gain mutual benefits from each other since e-mail newsletters are a good way to spread the content to the customers and content marketing gives relevant and versatile building blocks for the newsletters. In other words, content marketing utilizes advertising and direct marketing tactics to build traffic to the hub. Even though the focus in content marketing is in owning the content platforms there is no reason why for example product use tutorials on YouTube wouldn't be considered as content marketing. For example, a Finnish cosmetics brand Lumene uses YouTube as a video platform to tell its customers about the products and to provide tutorials on different make-up looks and this is a great example of educational content (YouTube, 2016).

In all chosen media channels, it is crucial that the content is friendly for all screen types (PC, tablet, mobile). Budíková (2014) opine that mobile responsive design for content will become a necessity in the near future. This is no surprise since in 2015 Google announced that more Google searches take place on mobile devices than on computers in 10 countries including the US and Japan (Google Inside AdWords 2015). If the website is not mobile friendly the company might miss a great share of its website visitors.

Content Co-creation and Customer Engagement

Content creation is the key component in content marketing and understanding how content can be used in engaging customers is central to the development of an effective content marketing strategy (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). Davis (2012) argues that the core of content creation is what the audience wants and needs – there are times when the content doesn't even have much to do with the products that the company sells. One way of creating fascinating content is telling stories. Woodside (2010) argues that the best way to persuade someone is to tell a compelling story. Mangold& Faulds (2009) emphasize the importance of good stories in marketing communications, because they create vivid memories that are likely to be repeated in both social media and traditional word-of-mouth. Stories affect people on emotional level and they make people come back for more (Olenski 2015). Companies don't have to create a fictitious story since often they have plenty of them already.

As a consequence, companies are finding new ways to reach out to customers and increasingly exploring the opportunities of building value for and with the consumer in order to build a competitive advantage. The digital revolution has left consumers with

more choices that yield less satisfaction and top management with more options that lead to less value.

As a result, the process of content co creation is shifting from firm and product- centric to being customer- centric. Additionally, companies are starting to realize the challenges in fully grasping the needs and expectations of their customers. As a result, to this, the educated customers of today are becoming more concerned in the process, as marketing efforts are co-created between the organization and the customer. Today consumers interact with suppliers in each step of the purchasing process. This process should and are via the concept of content co-creation encouraged as a means of learning for both parties. This interaction makes it possible for companies to interact with consumers in ways not previously possible and at the same time consumers feels more empowered (Payne et al., 2008).

As a response to the current paradigm shift, content marketing is a concept that is becoming highly used by marketing professionals. It strives to develop content that the customer willingly wishes to engage in and take part of. The content is editorial in its form, and can be distributed through several different platforms, such as magazines, blogs, videos and social media entries. The content should entertain and not clearly allude to purchase in the short run (Barregren & Tegborg, 2013). Consumers can share information with each other through networking. These new premises render the traditional firm-centric approach insufficient, why firms must take new measures for content creation. The shifted role of the consumer allows for value to be created in a new dimension, namely customer–to-customer, rather than the traditional firm-to-customer (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004a).

Vargo & Lusch (2006) stated that co-creation of value is desirable as it cannot help firms identify customers' needs and demands, and adapt their front –end processes accordingly. As the internet has significantly transformed the business environment, it has also enhanced the opportunities for content co-creation. Virtual communities are key components of the many companies' strategies of co-creation as it enables communication. The internet as a platform for co-creation renders three main differences between virtual and physical engagement of customers. First of all, in virtual environments the customer is active rather than passive. Secondly, virtual interaction is two way, continuous and focuses on social and experiential knowledge. Third, the scope of audience is broadened to include both current and potential customers in the virtual environment whereas traditionally communication has occurred primarily with existing customers (Sawhney et al, 2005). Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2004a) emphasize that through creating unique experiences together with customers, the firm can remedy the fact that consumers increasingly chose the cheapest alternative.

The objective for customers engagement in a dialogue with each other is for them to share knowledge and information as well as create a sense of membership and thus, a loyal

community on the other hand, the dialogue taking place between the customer and the expert is focused on creating a communication flow where learning is the main objective (Spena, et al., 2012). Firms have conducted risk analyses internally, but have not communicated the outcome as this has not been demanded by consumers. However, consumers are becoming more informed and aware of risks and can assess potential risks themselves. Consequently, consumers are demanding firms to disclose information, regarding both risks and benefits in order to remain credible in a co-creation environment. By actively communicating risks and benefits associated with a product or service, the firm can build a trustful relationship with their customers (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2013). It is essential in a co-creation process for customers to feel a sense of trust towards the organization with a combination of both transparency and risk benefited assessment, an organization is more likely to co-develop trust.

Message Source Credibility and Customer Engagement

Marketers are increasingly adopting editorial-style storytelling to replace traditional advertising to enhance the appearance of objectivity and message credibility (Songming & Mart, 2015). Editorial credibility, once the sole province of traditional media, is now being bought and paid for by the brands themselves. As the lines blur between news and marketing messages a brand, not all consumers will be able to distinguish a news organization's story about a brand from the brand's own stories about itself (Songming & Mart, 2015). The Facebook stream and the Twitter feed have brought the numbing sameness to all content on the Internet. An increasing amount of today's information and content on the Internet is a result of and the output from content marketing (Songming & Mart, 2015).

The assessment of media or information credibility requires appropriate ways of operationalizing credibility with multi-layered, complex constructs. Prior to the digital age, there was research comparing audiences' perceptions of the credibility and trustworthiness of different forms of traditional communications such news, advertising, publicity, advertorial, and product placement, aiming to know how to effectively persuade audience (Songming & Mart, 2015). Songming & Mart, (2015) observed that since the late 1990s when the Internet became a new environment for providing information and content for people, the concept of credibility or trust has received considerable attention. Hilligoss & Rieh, (2008) conducted a study to identify a framework with common aspects of credibility assessment regardless of media, type of information, and environment of information use.

Their theoretical frameworks and research methods for testing trust or credibility of traditional media or non-media settings, could be extended to examine content marketing. It has long been recognized that the attributes of a message source can affect attitude and one of the highly researched attributes is the credibility of the source (Methaq, 2011). Methaq (2011) stated that

the three components of source credibility are expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Goldsmith, Lafferty & Newell (2000) stated that when the company is the source, attractiveness is a less applicable descriptor compared to when a person is considered as a source. Thus, they contended that the tri-component model of expertise, attractiveness and trustworthiness works well only when the source credibility refers to a person (endorser) as the information source. And when the company is the source, trustworthiness and expertise are its suitable attributes.

In a computer credibility research, credibility is interpreted as believability (Tseng & Fogg, 1999). The authors point out that credibility has two dimensions: The trustworthiness component of credibility attracts the perceived goodness, morality of the source or `well-intentioned', `truthful', and `unbiased'. The expertise component of credibility captures the perceived knowledge and skill of the source, or `knowledgeable', `experienced', and `competent'. They continue by pointing out that credible individuals are believable people; credible information is believable information. Credibility is a perceived quality, described by phrases, such as `trust the information', `accept the advice', `believe the output'. However, both quantity and availability of information creates anxiety about its credibility, as people are not sure who is responsible for information and how believable it is (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008). Due to the great amount of information, consumers filter information by using various criteria, such as credibility. It is defined as the professed ability and motivation of the message source to produce correct and truthful information (Li & Zhan, 2011).

Customer Engagement

Zailskaite-Jakste & Kuvykaite (2012) opined that customer engagement is strategic factors for business development which help firms to maintain and establish a competitive advantage, also help to forecast the future direction of company for effective planning. It shows the importance of engagement strategy that company should feature to enhance organization ability. Patterson et al; (2006) indicated that the elements of customer engagement included idea (Vigor & Absorption), emotions (Dedication), and behavior (Interaction). It is quite similar to the concept of Vivek et al., (2012) which consists of three elements, but there is a different dimension namely idea (Enthusiasm), emotions (Conscious participation), and behavior (Social interaction).

Thus, the concept of engagement is a key to stimulate business success. It is a way to build a lasting relationship with the customer to brand. Furthermore, it also builds customer's long-term pride towards organization, employees, brand and product. According to the research Measuring customer engagement in services brand research (Noonark, 2011) found that customer engagement has a significantly relationship to customer response include loyalty and word-of–mouth. This reflects that when the customer engagement has increased, loyalty and word-of–mouth will be increased as well. Importantly, the concept of

engagement has been constantly evolving. Certainly, when the market conditions have changed, a form of engagement has changed inevitably. The emergence of new media, such as Website, Google, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter or MySpace, can diffuse the communication channel for global trading.

Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić & Ilić (2011) viewed customer engagement (CE) as a psychological state that originates by virtue of interactive, co-creative consumer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g., a brand) in focal service relationships. It originates under a particular set of context dependent situation creating differing CE levels; and exists as a dynamic, iterative process within service relationships that concrete value (Pontus & John, 2017). CE plays a central role in a homological network governing service relationship in which other relational concepts (e.g., involvement, loyalty) are precursors and/or consequences in iterative CE processes. It is a multidimensional concept subject to a context- and/or stakeholder-specific expression of vital cognitive, emotional and/or behavioral dimensions (Pontus & John, 2017). This definition explains customer engagement as a psychological state which occurs as a result of interaction with e.g. a brand, extending beyond individual transactions, meaning that CE extends beyond binary interactions thus it is not limited to a specific situation, behavior or context (Brodie et al., 2011).

Hollebeek (2011) defines brand engagement as the level of a specific customer's motivational, brand-related and context-dependent state of mind attributed by exact levels of emotional, cognitive and behavioral activity in direct brand interactions. The meaning of “direct brand interaction” is a consumer's interaction with a particular brand should be direct contact-based interaction, in comparison to indirect brand interaction connoting observing brand via mass communications (Hollebeek, 2011). Cognitive activity is a consumer's level of focus and engrossment in the brand. Emotional activity can be a consumer's level of brand related pride or inspiration. Lastly behavioral activity connotes a customer's level of willingness to interact with a product.

Theoretical Review

Substantive Theory

Substantive theory, best known via the writings of Jacques Ellul and Martin Heidegger, contends that technology involves a new type of cultural system that restructures the entire social world as an object of control (Macharia, Mike, Ondabu & Kepha, 2015). This system is attributed by an expansive dynamic, which in due course overtakes every prêt-technological enclave and shapes the whole of social life (Gray, Matear & Matheson, 2000). The instrumentalization of society is thus a destiny from which there is no escape other than retreat. Only a return to simplicity or tradition offers an option to the juggernaut of progress. Something like this view is demonstrated in Max Weber's pessimistic conception of an "iron cage" of validation, although he did not expressly connect this projection to technology (Howells &Tether, 2004).

Ellul makes that connection explicit, debating that the technical phenomenon" has become the defining attribute of all modern societies despite political ideology (Macharia, et al 2015). "Technique," he opines, "has become autonomous. Heidegger agrees that technology is persistently overtaking us. We are involved, he claims, in the revolution of the entire world, ourselves included, into "standing reserves," raw materials to be used in technical processes. Heidegger asserts that the technical reform of modern societies is entrenched in a nihilistic will to power, a deprivation of man and being to the level of mere objects (Gray, et al., 2000). This apocalyptic vision is frequently dismissed for attributing absurd, quasi-magical powers to technology. In fact, its basic claims are all too believable. The substitution of "fast food" for the traditional family dinner can serve as an example of the unintended cultural outcome of technology. The unity of the family, ritually reaffirmed each evening, no longer has a similar locus of expression. No one believes that the rise of fast food "causes" the fall of the traditional family, but the relationship is certainly relevant (Howells & Tether, 2004). An "instrumentalist" might reply that well prepared fast food gives a nourishing meal without needless social complications. This objection is blind to the cultural consequence of technology.

Instrumentalist theory treats "eating" as if it were simply a matter of ingesting calories, while all the ritualistic aspects of food consumption are secondary to this biological need. In using a firmly functional viewpoint, it has been ascertained that eating is a technical operation that may be done with more or less efficiency (Howells & Tether, 2004). This instance can stand for a host of others in which the change from tradition to modernity is judged a progress by a standard of efficiency intrinsic to modernity and alien to tradition. Macharia, et al (2015) stated that the substantive theory of technology tries to make us aware of the chance of this construction, or rather, its cultural attributes. The subject is not that machines have "taken over," but that in deciding to use them we make many unwitting cultural choices. Technology is not simply an avenue but has become an environment and a way of life. That is its "substantive" effect. It seems that substantive theory could barely be farther from the instrumentalist observation of technology as a sum of neutral tools.

Empirical review

Rancati & Niccolo (2020) examined content marketing metrics. To understand how Italian firms perceive content marketing and measure its effects on firm performance, they administered an online questionnaire to the marketing manager of a sample of 1,000 Italian firms. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions divided into two sections: the first, consisting of 5 multiple choice questions, allows them to obtain general information about the sample. The second, consisting of 15 questions measured by a Likert scale, analyze: 1) the use of CM and how marketers rate the effectiveness of their firm’s use of CM; 2) the main goals of CM strategies; 3) the major tactics used by Content Marketers to achieve goals; 4) the amount of the total marketing budget for CM and 5) the

knowledge and use of the four categories of metrics previously examined. The initial response rate to this survey was 18% (180 firms). To increase the number of respondents, a follow-up was sent out. The final response rate was 20% (202 firms). Results show a good use of CM between Italian companies. 79% of the sample has claimed to know and use tools of CM in carrying out their activities. The study concluded that CM has taken a leading role in the marketing studies. Companies are still too anchored to a reductive vision of CM that qualifies CM simply as a tool to publish and share content and not as a major component for value creation. The study recommended that content marketing managers should 1) abandon the idea of CM as merely being a simple tactic to publish and share content; 2) begin to carefully plan CM strategies, using human resources dedicated particular to this activity; 3) increase the use of economic-financial metrics (i.e. lead generation and sales metrics) to properly assess the impact of CM on value creation.

Accenture Global Consumer Survey (2020) found that Thai people are flexible in choosing brand—they change brands very easy and ready to change brands all the time. 75 percent of Thai consumers said that customer experience is important factors as well as price of product. Moreover, 80 percent of Thai consumers switch brands immediately when the product does not meet expectations and 56 percent of them are concerned about security and do not trust the product (Chingnoi, 2020). In the context of online trading, consumers access seller through texts. So, the most important strategy for creating attention to product of consumer is to provide a good content to build consumer brand engagement, it will lead to purchase intention in the future (Vivek et al., 2019).

Content marketing is one of the best strategies used for stimulating online engagement and has emerged simultaneously with the rise of social media. It is the new trend in today's marketing world and was used generally in business to increase profits (Tucker, 2013). From the result of Content Marketing Institute research (2013) found that, 91 percentages of B2B (Business to Business) respondents use content marketing. It shows that content marketing is a powerful tool for the company. In the last 2-3 years, content marketing has been used widely for solving problems. Although content marketing is a strategy that has long been used in the business world, but in this age, it is becoming increasingly important when it comes integrated with Social Network, it became a hugely powerful tool that marketers need to use in their company.

Duc Le (2019) examined the use of content marketing in both customer and corporate business sectors in China. Qualitative interviews were carried out with three different experts and representative of firms engaging and going to execute their content marketing strategy. The findings of the study have verified the theories correct. The three interviewees' firms operate in three notable business industries, yet discovered similar positive results when employing content marketing. The study concluded that content marketing is a success proven strategy. It was

recommended that there should be more research to be done to investigate further in this new topic as this thesis can only provide a limited level of knowledge about content marketing and its application.

Puro (2019) examined substance showcasing and the noteworthiness of corporate branding in Finland. The objective is to consider the noteworthiness of a solid brand, why companies utilize substance showcasing in brand building, and what the objectives, anticipated results, seen benefits and comes about are for companies' substance promoting speculations. The hypothetical portion gives the essential scholarly investigate data for the observational dialog that takes after. The empirical part of the study was done with one-on-one in-depth telephone interviews, semi-structured, which are executed with five customers of Calcus Kustannus Oy, which is the main focus of the study. The turnover of these chosen firms varies from 23-75M€, and they operate majorly in the Finnish B2B market. The selected interviewees are in charge of the marketing decision making. The findings show that a strong corporate brand is very relevant for the growth and success of the firm, and that firms use content marketing in brand building because it enhances brand equity effectively. With content marketing, organizations pursue to improve their brand credibility, brand awareness and brand loyalty by disseminating interesting and value creating content. In addition, increasing the expert and though leader status is viewed to be very relevant. Content marketing is perceived to be more effective in brand building than traditional marketing; hence companies will increase its role in their marketing plans in the future.

Milhinhos (2015) inspected the effect of substance showcasing on states of mind and buy eagerly of online customers in Spain. Its objective is to get it how to utilize substance promoting to drive change, by understanding client states of mind and buy deliberate towards substance. An in-depth study of existing theories and exploratory primary study was developed in other to achieve these objectives. The exploratory study was attributed by a survey experiment with online customers. Participants were open to the elements to stimuli of content marketing tested according to their attitudes and purchase intention. The point was to get it the impact of two distinctive substance promoting strategies: User-generated substance and Recordings & Instructional exercises on demeanors and buy eagerly and how they connected with substance complexity. The comes about appear that substance promoting in commercial item pages is noteworthy in driving client demeanors and buy eagerly. Consumers are not encouraged by a particular content marketing tactic, unless that content has a firm level of complexity. In that case, Ur-Generated Content becomes a significant tactic in product pages, however VT is not.

METHODOLOGY

A survey research design method was adopted for the study. It helps to ensure that the resultant sample sufficiently represent the population. Thus, findings from these are expected to be

generalized to the entire population. The population was made up of 868 staff of selected nonalcoholic beverage firms. The list of the eight selected beverage firms was presented in table1.

Table 1: List of Selected Beverage Firms in Lagos State Nigeria

SN	Beverage Firms	Staff
1	Bobo Food & Beverages	98
2	Coca cola Nigeria Ltd	117
3	Crown Drinks Ltd	89
4	Limca Bottlers Plc	112
5	Nigeria Bottling Co. Plc	111
6	Seven-up Bottling Company Plc	98
7	Vita malt Plc	120
8	Nestle Nigerian Plc	123
Total		868

Source: Human resources management department of each firm

The required sample unit of staffs to be captured was determined by using Yamane's (1968) sample size determination formula. A total number of 274 respondents were selected from the non-alcoholic beverage firms in Lagos State. The stratified random sampling technique was adopted for this study. This method involves a process of dividing the target population into mutually exclusive/ non-overlapping homogenous groups which is called strata. A validated structured set of questionnaires was used for this study, which constitute the primary instrument for data collection.

For the purpose of this study, the content validity method was used. In order to validate the instrument for data collection, sets of the structured questionnaire was given to some experts in the for validity. Consequently, adjustments and corrections were effected to ensure that they elicit the desired information.

To establish the reliability of the instrument, a test-retest method was adopted. This pre-test enabled the researcher to detect certain irregularities that could have hampered the validity of this study. The instrument was administered to a group of employees in the non-alcoholic beverage industry in Lagos State within the interval of two weeks. Since the results from the two tests showed some similarity, this suggested that the questionnaire was reliable. Measurement of the model reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (CA) based tests. CA provides an estimate of the indicator inter correlations, an acceptable measure for CA is 0.7 or higher. CA provides an estimate of the indicator inter correlations, an acceptable measure for CA is 0.7 or higher, while bellow 0.7 connotes week reliability (Seckaran, 2003). From table 2 below, it was reported that the reliability coefficients are above the 0.7 benchmark. Favorable reliable scores were obtained from all items in general. The

estimation reported acceptable internal consistency.

Table 2 Reliability coefficients of study constructs

Dimension of study constructs	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient
Information quality	4	0.763
Content marketing channels	4	0.756
Content co-creation	4	0.811
Message source credibility	4	0.781
Customer engagement	4	0.814

In order to meet the research objectives of this study, all valid responses were assessed using simple percentage and multiple regression analysis. Simple percentages and multiple regression analysis were adopted to establish the nature of relationship between content marketing and customer engagement. Multiple regression analysis was adopted for the aim of ascertaining the strength of relationship that exist among the variables, determine to what extent content marketing accounted for change on customer engagement, as well as to test the statistical significance that exists among variable respectively. All analysis was done using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) software version 23. Therefore, the following model specification was developed;

$Y = F(X)$

$CE = \beta_o + \beta_1 IQ + \beta_2 CMC + \beta_3 CC + \beta_4 MSC + \varepsilon$

Therefore:

CE= Customer Engagement

IQ= Information Quality

CMC= Content Marketing Channels

CC= Content Co-creation

MSC= Message Source Credibility

Results of Data Analysis

Out of a total of 274 copies of questionnaire distributed to the various staffs that made up the selected sampling element, within Lagos State, 265 were successfully retrieved of which a total of 259 was seen to be suitable for analytical purposes representing the entire sample size.

Table 3: Frequency Analysis of Respondents Profile

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender:		
	Male	125	48
	Female	134	52
	Total	259	100
2	Age Range:		
	15-20 years	30	12
	21-30 years	88	34
	31-40 years	94	36

	41years and above	47	18
	Total	259	100
3	Marital Status:		
	Single	112	43
	Married	147	57
	Total	259	100
4	Educational Qualification:	45	17
	WAEC/GCE/NECO	86	33
	OND/NCE	98	38
	HND/B.Sc	30	12
	Master	259	100
	Total		
5	Status in Organization:	165	64
	Junior staff	73	28
	Senior staff	21	8
	Management staff	259	100
	Total		

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Content Marketing Strategy and Customer Engagement

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.182	.320		-3.691	.000
	Information quality	.180	.037	.165	4.921	.000
	Content marketing channels	.088	.035	.078	2.544	.012
	Content co-creation	.391	.039	.388	10.048	.000
	Message source credibility	.399	.042	.386	9.602	.000

a. Dependent Variable: customer engagement

The general form of the equation to predict CE = $\beta_o + \beta_1 IQ, \beta_2 CMC + \beta_3 CC + \beta_4 MSC + \varepsilon$

CE= -1.182+ (0.180×IQ) + (0.088×CMC) + (0.391×CC) + (0.399×MSC)

Table 5 Fitness of the Model

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	226.917	4	56.729	1150.262	.000[b]
	Residual	12.527	254	.049		
	Total	239.444	258			

a. Dependent Variable: customer engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Message source credibility, Content marketing channels, information quality, content co-creation

Table 6Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.973[a]	.948	.947	.2221

a. Predictors: (Constant), Message source credibility, Content marketing channels, information quality, content co-creation

Discussion of Results

Table 3 indicated on the gender composition of the respondents representing 48% of the sample were males while 52% were females. The age bracket of the respondents indicates that 30 of the respondents being 12% were within the age bracket of 15-20years of age; 88 of the respondents representing 34% falls within the age bracket of 21-30 years of age, 94 of the respondents representing 36% falls within the age bracket of 31-40 years of age and lastly, 47 of the respondents being 18% of the sample were above 41 years of age.

The marital composition of the respondents reported that; 112 of the sample respondents were single being 43%. While 147 other respondents being 57% were married. On the educational background of the sample, it was reported that 45 respondents representing 17% being WAEC/GCE/NECO holders, it was indicated that 86 respondents representing 33% being OND/NCE holders; 98 respondents being 38% of the sample size were HND/BSc holders of sort; while 30 other respondents being 12% were post graduate degree holders. The managerial profile composition of the respondents indicated that 165 making up 64% were junior staff; 73 being 28% were senior staff; while 21 representing 8% being in the managerial cadre level.

Table 4indicated that information quality which is the first variable has positive effect on customer engagement (ß = .165, P<0.05). In furtherance, the test of hypothesis indicated in table 4 showed that there is a significant relationship between information quality and customer engagement (0.000 < 0.05).This is in agreement with several studies that argue that information quality influences the attitude of message recipients in the context of online environment (Cheung

et al., 2008). Users search for information that is supported by valid and strong arguments (Cheung, Luo, Sia & Chen, 2009). To make sure that the online review is valid, users evaluate the quality of information embedded in the comment (Heinrichs, Lim & Lim, 2011). This implies that the use of valuable content in advertisement is one of the basic ways to get benefits and successfully compete with other participants in the market.

Table 4 showed that content marketing channels which is the second variable has positive effect on customer engagement (ß = .078, P<0.05). Furthermore, the test of hypothesis in table 4 showed that content marketing channels have a significant relationship with customer engagement (0.012<0.05). This further supports CMIa, (2016) assertion that different channels often have different roles in the content marketing strategy and multi-channel presence create stability in the turbulent digital world where one channel rises and other falls in a matter of months. This indicates that companies have developed branded apps to support their brand message and to benefit their customers. Furthermore, table 4 showed that content co-creation which is the third variable has the highest positive effect on customer engagement (ß = .388, P<0.05). In furtherance, the test of hypothesis in table 4 showed that there is a significant relationship between content co-creation and customer engagement (0.000<0.05).These findings are consistent with Holliman & Rowley, (2014) assertion that content creation is the key component in content marketing and understanding how content can be used in engaging customers is central to the development of an effective content marketing strategy. Holliman & Rowley (2014) suggest that successful content includes both static contents forming web pages and dynamic rich media content, such as videos, podcasts, user-generated content and interactive product selectors. This implies that by combining access and transparency, the customer's ability to make informed decisions is enhanced.

Furthermore, table 4showed that message source credibility which is the last variable has positive effect on customer engagement (ß = .386, P<0.05). In furtherance, the test of hypothesis in table 4 reported that message source credibility has a significant relationship with customer engagement (0.000<0.05). This finding agrees with Methaq (2011) finding that it has long been recognized that the attributes of a message source can affect attitude and one of the highly researched attributes is the credibility of the source. This shows that message source credibility determines whether consumers adopt the message and have an impact on their decision-making process.

Table 6 shows that change in customer engagement which was brought about by the variables of content marketing strategy was 95% as indicated by the adjusted R^2 value. This implies that the independent variables explain 95% of the variability of the dependent variable. The *F*-ratio in table 5 tests exhibited that content marketing strategy statistically significantly predict customer engagement, $F = 1150.262$, $p<0.05$.

This implies that the regression model was a good fit of the study.

Implications for research, practice and/or society

Thy study findings will support the ability of managers to make certain the trustworthiness of information in order to avoid informative content to become negligible. The study will help companies to understand that technological capacities are required to analyze, understand customer behaviour and meeting them on virtual platforms. Since content marketing is a huge challenge, as it requires a long-term strategy and objectives set in a measurable way, the study will help firms to acclimatize speedily to the varying landscape, and how they can win the fight for new customers. It is hoped that the findings of this study will assist the management of firms in designing contents that will enhance customer brand engagement and to apply these benefits to achieving organizational goals.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, content marketing strategy has a significant positive effect on customer engagement in the Nigerian Non-Alcoholic Beverage Industry. There is a significant relationship between information quality and customer engagement. Content marketing channels have a significant relationship with customer engagement. There is a significant relationship between content co-creation and customer engagement. Message source credibility has a significant relationship with customer engagement. Based on the findings, the study recommends thus; to maintain brand credibility an enterprise must enable co-creation of content with the customers. Content creation should be implemented through the functional and emotional values, thereby making firms achieve high conversion into sales rates. Website shouldn't be information overload, but it should consist of all the information that the consumer wants to know in a suitable way. Companies seeking to implement content-based marketing programs successfully should understand content wider and have to place emotional and entertaining elements that excite customers. To ensure brand management in virtual space, there is need to provide new, relevant information, to maintain regular contact with the customer and to encourage them to become a part of a community trademark.

Suggestions for further research

The domain of this study was limited to the non-alcoholic beverage industry in Lagos State, Nigeria. Therefore, further study should include other industries in the country. The study was limited to four components of content marketing strategy (information quality, content marketing channels, content co-creation and message source credibility), further research should be conducted on other components of content marketing strategy.

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