

Leveraging Social Media Word-of-Mouth for Marketing Communications in the Nigerian Book Publishing Industry

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Abstract: *The marketing aspect of book publishing is essential to the publishing industry's survival in the digital markets. Although there have been efforts to improve marketing methods in Nigeria's book industry over the past several years, the reality is that marketing in the country has not received the maximum amount of attention. In addition to establishing marketing units to entrench innovative marketing practices, there has also been a shift towards business-to-consumer (B2C) marketing as publishers establish online presence by setting up websites to distribute and promote their books, in conjunction with other digital platforms. However, there is a knowledge gap on how Nigerian book publishers use social media for marketing communications, particularly the function of social media word-of-mouth in this context. In light of this, this study reviews the literature on the roles of social media word-of-mouth and social media advertising in the marketing communication strategies of book publishers. The results show that word-of-mouth marketing on social media, one of the most popular types of marketing communication, has established itself as a valuable source of information that consumers can use to make their purchasing decisions, based on favorable testimonials of other customers. On the other hand, there is the issue of unfavorable remarks or reviews that might prove to be counterproductive, necessitating the use of social media advertising as a method for participating in online communities and having one-on-one interactions with individual community members by specifically targeting them with social media messages.*

Keywords: book publishing, business-to-consumer, consumer behavior, social media word-of-mouth, social media advertising

1. Introduction

Since the beginning of publishing in Nigeria in the early colonial era, there has never been any point in history that the marketing side of book publishing has been adjudged to be crucial to the survival of the industry as it is in the contemporary digital markets. Christopher (2010) contends in an analysis of the role of marketing as a strategy for attaining competitive advantage that publishing a book is a waste of time if people do not get to buy and read it. But, as the scholar demonstrates, the reality in Nigeria is that marketing has not been adequately explored in pursuit of sustainable growth by publishers. Based on the traditional 4Ps of marketing (product, pricing, place and promotion) Christopher (2010) argues that the Nigerian publishing is limited by a narrow range of published books (product) which affects the price

that can be charged for these products. On place and promotion, she opines that book publishers need to leverage digital technology to distribute their products to consumers as well as create as much awareness as possible about the availability and value of these products through cost effective promotions.

Over the years there have been spirited attempts to strengthen marketing practices in Nigeria's book industry. According to Uche (2015), several publishing houses now have a specific department with responsibility for all marketing initiatives, including advertising and promotion. Some businesses refer to the department as sales/marketing since in some firms the marketing and sales departments collaborate closely. In their study, Igbinovia and Egbodofu (2015) revealed the ways of creating awareness for published books by Nigerian publishers, noting that adequate book marketing and publicity strategies increase book sales and subsequently profit in publishing firms. Similarly, the adoption of digital publishing innovations such as digital hardware, digital book formats, e-promotion and e-commerce has been established by Ifeduba and Christopher (2018). Also, the use of social media for marketing by book publishers' sales and marketing staff in Nigeria was reported by Igudia and Ogunsina (2021).

Beyond setting up marketing units to entrench contemporary marketing practices, there has also been a shift towards business-to-consumer (B2C) marketing as publishers create online presence by setting up websites to distribute and promote their books, in concert with other digital platforms. Scholars like Ifeduba and Christopher (2014) have documented some aspects of the web-based marketing experience of book publishers, just as Igudia and Ogunsina (2021) have demonstrated that social media is used by these publishers for book marketing. However, there is a dearth of knowledge on how book publishers in Nigeria leverage social media for marketing communications, especially the role of social media word-of-mouth in this context. On this basis, this study aims to undertake a review of the existing literature on the roles of social media word-of-mouth and social media advertising in the marketing communication practices of book publishers as well as chart an agenda for future research.

Research questions

- i. What makes social media word-of-mouth suitable for marketing communication in the book publishing industry?
- ii. How can book publishers leverage on strategy using social media advertising for marketing communications?

2. Research Methodology

A comprehensive examination of the marketing literature is done, especially in connection to the book publishing sector. With the aid of the document analysis approach and readily available secondary data, the current state of the technologies utilized for social media marketing communications in the publishing industry is explored, and the general profile of the Nigerian publishing sector is established.

3. Conceptual Review

Marketing Communication for Publishing Development

The production of needed books and their successful end-user marketing and sales are essential features of a thriving publishing sector. However, excerpts from Uwalaka's (2000) study show that book publishing in Nigeria was beset by several issues in the 1975–1995 period, leading

to a significant drop in publishing performance. The observed lopsidedness in the nation's book publishing operations is even more concerning. According to Uwalaka, educational books make up over 80% of publishers' and booksellers' main activity in the country's publishing sector, thus showing a limited book publishing scope. Commenting on Uwalaka's (2000), Christopher (2004) argues that publishers need to adopt creative, digitally-driven marketing to move the industry forward. In a different study, Christopher (2010) noted that handling the issues of the Nigerian book industry from a marketing perspective is crucial to achieving publishing business growth and development. To put it another way, publishing development built on a marketing orientation is the solution to the survival and growth of the country's book publishing industry.

Christopher (2010) emphasizes that publishing involves book production, book pricing, book distribution, and book promotion in her analysis of the book marketing mix. She emphasized the value of marketing communications, arguing that the publisher's promotion strategies play a significant role in convincing the target audience to accept the book being offered to them. In the simplest terms, promotion function in the marketing mix relates to how to convince potential buyers to buy books through effective marketing communications.

The Consumer Decision-making Process in Book Buying

Consumer decision-making involves the actions people take when making purchases of goods or services (Kerin et al, 2022). According to Leemans and Stokmans (1992), buyers go through six steps before making a choice to buy a book. They aver that the first step in the process is realizing the need or desire for a book. This could be motivated by things like individual hobbies, referrals from friends or family, or a desire for knowledge or enjoyment. When a need is identified, customers, according to Leemans and Stokmans (1992), conduct information searches to learn more about the books that would satisfy their requirements. Customers may assess numerous sources at this time to get much details. The third stage of the process is the evaluation of alternatives, where consumers assess the available books based on their criteria such as price, quality, and features. Consumers may also compare the different books to determine which one offers the best value for money. After evaluating all available options, buyers move on to the fourth and fifth stages, where they decide which book to buy and actually make the purchase. As explained by Leemans and Stokmans (1992), this choice may be influenced by a number of variables, including brand loyalty, individual tastes, and prior interactions with similar products. In the last stage, consumers do a post-purchase evaluation to determine whether their choice was satisfying and whether they would make the same option again.

Without a doubt, the decision-making process used by consumers when purchasing books is intricate, so it is not unexpected that it has been studied from a variety of angles using a variety of frameworks, including; exploration of trends of consumer behavior in the purchase of schoolbooks in India (Madan and Tandon, 2022), identification of the primary factors that determine the purchase of fiction novels in the UK (Leito et al., 2018) and the identification of the factors linked with impulse book purchases (Martins & Lins, 2022). In all of these studies, the critical role of information dissemination to ease the product search efforts of consumers was evident. The onus, therefore, is on businesses to recognize the information-seeking behavior of consumers in online markets and put in place effective digital and social media marketing communications to sync with this reality.

Marketing Communications and Consumer Behavior in the Digital Media Landscape

According to Fill (2009), there has been a shift from traditional advertising (driven by the need to build brand awareness) to marketing communications, in which, in addition to building brand awareness, there is a heightened strive to prompt call-to-action. From this perspective, it could be explained why marketing communications combines advertising with other promotional elements such as direct marketing, digital marketing, sales promotion, publicity/public relations, personal selling, in what is popularly known as integrated marketing communications (Belch & Belch, 2018). With this shift, Fill (2009) argues that the communication mix has extended considerably, with the capabilities to offer more communication solutions that entail; i) building brand awareness, ii) influencing consumer behavior through call-to-action. Fill goes further to state that, with respect to influencing consumer behavior, marketing communications tools are used extensively to assist consumers through the decision-making process in a number of ways. The first usage is to inform or make potential customers to be aware of a product's availability, how and when to use the product. Beside informing, marketing communications is used by firms to help customers in differentiating a product from competing products. Apart from enabling differentiation, there is the function of persuasion, which refers to persuading customers to purchase products or to behave in new ways. As explained by Fill (2009), the persuasion role of marketing communications is not limited to product purchase but could also be instrumental to prompting a behavior such as visiting websites, engaging in word-of-mouth communications, and requesting for brochures.

As mentioned by Belch and Belch (2018), digital marketing is one of the elements of the promotional mix. As the nerve of digital marketing, the Internet has considerably impacted on consumer behavior (Fill, 2009). The findings of a study by Pires et al. (2022) demonstrate that customers utilize more than one digital channel at each stage of the purchasing decision process. The scholars claim that internet-based technologies offer digital channels that let businesses interact with customers in new ways. According to Pires et al. (2022), this framework enables businesses to enhance customer communication, recognize the preferred channels for each stage of the customer journey, and improve resource allocation to various channels. They acknowledged social media as one of the platforms used by businesses to connect with, and engage in conversation with consumers. They also noted that businesses' use of social media in marketing communications enables them to maximize interaction, provide accurate product information to customers based on personalized product recommendations derived from the customer's profile, and suggest on-trend products. In sum, Pires et al. (2022) aver that all of these approaches have an impact on customers' purchasing decisions.

Social Media Word-of- Mouth in Marketing Communications

Social media word-of-mouth is defined as a type of user-generated content (UGC) by Raji (2017). The researcher identifies Word-of-Mouth (WOM) on social media as one of the most common forms of marketing communications. In addition, social media WOM is said to be closely related to electronic WOM because both terms refer to a certain marketing communication strategy that involves motivating customers to spread brands or viral messages online. Extant research, according to Raji (2017), indicates that word-of-mouth (WOM) comprises both positive and negative words communicated on social media to customers, including prospective, present, and former clients of a product or firm. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are a few examples of social media platforms for disseminating consumer evaluations, reviews, and usage experiences of a product to numerous customers.

There a number of examples of studies on the effective usage of social media word-of-mouth in marketing communications. One of such, conducted by Adetunji et al. (2018) on Malaysian

automobile businesses, demonstrates that brand owners use firm-created content (FCC), such as Facebook posts, Tweets, and YouTube videos, as a way of mitigating potential adverse impacts of social media word of mouth. In addition, these firms use social media advertising (as a form of FCC) as a channel for engaging with their customers and delivering information and promotional materials to them. Another example is a study by Zolkepli et al. (2023) on the factors that influence consumers' purchase of health supplements on social media. One of study's key findings is that consumers prefer to find out about other users' experiences on social media platforms before making their own purchases. It is also well-established that the messages in social media adverts and their sales pitches have an impact on customers' choices of health supplements. The researchers highlight the value of social media advertising in encouraging customers to make purchases or exhibit interest in a certain good or service. As seen in these two examples, social media advertising can be used to either strengthen positive social media WoM or moderate the negative version of it.

4. Theoretical Background

The decision making of consumers can be explained from the perspective of cognitive theory which is based on the presumption that people use and process information that emanates from external or internal sources. According to the Social Cognitive Theory, people's environment and other personal factors (like cognitive, affective and biological events in their lives) impact on how they process information and the kind of decisions they make with the information received (Bandura, 2009). Essentially, cognitive theory is founded on an information-processing, problem-solving and reasoning approach to human behavior. In the words of Fill (2009:132), "the cognitive orientation considers consumers to be adaptive problem solvers, people who use various processes to reason, form concepts and acquire knowledge". He further states that a variety of factors, such as an individual's personality, perception, learning, attitudes, certain contextual influences, and circumstances specific to their buying situation, determine how they process information. From a marketing perspective, Fill (2009) highlights the significant role perception plays in how consumers process information. He claims that people's perceptions, organization, and interpretations of marketing messages are a reflection of their past experiences. Because of this, the researcher advises marketers to employ marketing communications to provide products in a frame or conceptual bundle that consumers or buyers will easily recognize. This argument is predicated on the idea that perception is crucial to the assessment and selection of products.

A number of previous studies illustrate how the social cognitive theory provides the foundations to understand how consumers making buying decisions. One of such is Chen et al's (2017) use of the social learning theory (a variant of the social cognition theory) to explain how the rise of social commerce has altered consumers' buying decisions, resulting in a sharp rise in the number of individuals utilizing such platforms. Another example is offered by Li and Hua (2022), who show that in the context of online buying, customers mostly obtain information through social learning during the decision-making process. They demonstrated how brand managers and retailers may create a more successful interactive environment based on this knowledge to encourage consumers' favorable attitudes about their brands on digital marketing platforms. The cited instances demonstrate that people are active participants who gather and interpret information relevant to their unique situation when acting as customers looking for products to satisfy their specified needs.

5. Empirical Review

RQ 1: How does social media word-of-mouth work as marketing communication tool in the book publishing industry?

Margolis (1984) lists word-of-mouth as the most frequent reason for reading a specific book, with book reviews coming in a distant second from the standpoint of traditional publishing. The expert contends that word-of-mouth might be supported because it shows an evolving communication chain connecting the book to an ardent reader. According to Margolis (1984), the use of word-of-mouth marketing is standard practice in book promotion. Book publicity specialists typically distribute advance reading paperback copies of the books (months before their release date) to people who were considered social, influential, and good talkers in order to spread the word and make the books one of the most talked-about by the time they are published. In the era of digital-led publishing, conversations about books circulate across a number of platforms, including blogs, online reviews, social media posts, etc. Nelson (2016), for instance, shows how blogs have developed into a platform for extensive discussions that play an increasingly important part in setting trends, reporting news and opinion, and creating buzz in the book industry. Additionally, Criswell and Canty (2014) describe social media marketing as a mechanism for leveraging ongoing discussions to create buzz and word-of-mouth about the books being marketed, ultimately influencing people to buy the books. Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006) in their study on the impact of word-of-mouth on book sales conclude that online user reviews have replaced and complemented other means of business-to-consumer marketing, as well as offline word-of-mouth communication about books. The study confirmed that consumer content in the form of reviews has an impact on online book sales and, consequently, the financial success of the book publishing industry.

However, some concerns have been expressed about the credibility of reviews in online platforms dedicated to books. For instance, Hu et al. (2011) studied the management of online reviews using a discretionary manipulation proxy, which revealed that fraudulent review manipulation is a significant issue in online book stores. On the basis of this, they issued a warning to all customers who use online book reviews to make their purchasing decisions and urged them to read the reviews in greater detail to avoid falling victim to manipulations. Despite these issues, book review platforms continue to be digital avenues for conversations about books that act as sources of knowledge for selecting books to buy, as shown in Matthews (2016), Thelwall (2017), and Luțan and Bădică (2022).

RQ 2: How can book publishers leverage social media word-of-mouth by using social media advertising for marketing communications?

Aslam et al. (2011) delved into the positive and negative effects that word-of-mouth marketing has on customer purchasing decisions. While the findings showed that word-of-mouth influence had a significant impact on people's decisions to buy any goods, regardless of their age, marital status, or gender, one significant drawback of electronic WOM for businesses is that, as UGC, it may take on a negative dimension that spirals out of the company's control. Given the researchers' express strong views on the positives of word-of-mouth marketing in assisting marketers, the onus, it seems, is on businesses to devise how to moderate content generated by online users with firm created content (FCC). According to Raji et al. (2019), firm-created contents are a type of social media communications that brand owners issue on social media to consumers who are followers or fans of their brand pages, accounts, or channels on social media. FCC includes materials that are posted by brand owners on fan pages of their

brands on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube. In terms of its function, FCC serves as a marketing tactic for boosting brand recognition, recall, and image on social media platforms by the brand owners themselves. By leveraging FCC businesses are able to navigate the uncertain terrain of a word of mouth-based marketing context.

Indeed, researchers' interests have been concentrated on how to strategically use social media word-of-mouth to spread the message while minimizing its disadvantages. According to Raji et al (2020) advertising is one of the most popular types of brand-related FCC that is shared on social networking sites. The scholars highlight the use of advertisement to inform, raise brand awareness, offer value, enhance brand image and market share, and increase profitability in businesses. Additionally, they opine that advertising can be a source of satisfaction and quality that extends to the marketed brand. Moreover, advertising is a valuable resource for learning about the grade, as well as the actual and symbolic qualities, of brands. To sum up, Raji et al (2020) show that advertising plays a vital role in shaping consumers' perception about brands which goes a long way in determining whether a brand is favorable or not.

On how firms use social media advertising to mitigate the negative impact of social media word-of-mouth, Cho and Park (2019), mention that with the digital revolution having remarkably changed marketing practices, advertisements are now more interactive, personalized, data-driven, and accountable. They point out how social media advertising has developed into a crucial instrument for marketers to establish genuine brand discourse and form enduring bonds with consumers. One of the key aspects of the new digital advertising environment is that the forced, one-sided exposure-oriented commercials of the past have given way to interactive, voluntary, action-oriented adverts that users may interact with in real time. The advertisements can be programmed to target consumers as well. These adjustments result in an interactive one-on-one message dissemination that not only supports but also balances the collaborative content creation in social media word of mouth. In other words, as part of the collaborative effort, firms can participate actively in conversations in online communities, and they are also able to converse one-on-one with each of the members of these communities by targeting them with social media advertising messages.

6. Discussion

The search, selection and purchase of books in an online environment, as this study reveals, is marked by extensive search efforts, with consumers relying greatly on the comments, testimonies, and experiences of other consumers about the publishing brands and products under consideration. For this reason, the role of social media word-of-mouth was identified as crucial in determining the choices made by consumers with respects to the books they buy. However, social media word-of-mouth, by its nature a user-generated content, may not absolutely serve the best interests of publishing firms, since there could be possible fallouts from negative word-of-mouth. So, while word-of-mouth on social media may have proven to serve as good marketing tools, it is expedient for publishers to have some measure of control of the narrative about their brands by deploying social media advertising.

It is affirmed in this study that the consumer decision-making process is a central part of the book buying process. As elaborated by Fill (2009), involvement plays a vital role in understanding the workings of the consumer decision-making process. As the scholar explains, "purchase decisions made by consumers vary considerably, and one of the factors thought to be key to brand choice decisions is the level of involvement... a consumer has with either the product or the purchase process" (Fill, 2009:173). In other words, the consumer decision-

making process is largely influenced by the types of consumer involvement with the products to be purchased. However, a look at the literature reveals a slew of positions on the involvement level of book products from the perspective of consumer behavior, with some scholars (for example, Gu et al, 2012 and Liu et al, 2020) positing that the book is a low-involvement product, while others (Hasan & Rahim, 2008, Umeda et al, 2009 for example) argue in favor of the book as a high-involvement product. The preponderant position, from the viewpoint of consumers' perceived risk is that books are largely viewed as high-involvement products. According to Fill (2009), perceived risk is related to the uncertainty of a purchase by a buyer and the outcomes that will result from the decision to purchase the product. The risk factor prevails as a consequence of the buyer's limited or no experience of the product. In such situations, it is argued that marketers should provide consumers with adequate information that will help them make the right purchase decisions and assure them of getting the desired outcomes. In particular, Fill (2009) stress the need to adopt a rational marketing approach that deploy messages or information that are evidence-based.

Consumers are likely to be quite involved in selecting books that meet their needs. More so, they want to minimize the risk of investing money, time, and effort in selecting books to buy for reading. Thus, consumers typically take the time to read reviews, contrast various publications, and conduct their own research as a result of the aforementioned considerations. They could also seek recommendations from their friends, family, or internet communities (Sinha & Swearingen, 2001). Besides, books are additionally categorized as credence or experience products (Lis and Berz, 2011). As explained by Keisidou et al. (2011), experience products are goods that need to be used in order to judge their quality. Since acquiring experience products is perceived as having a significant amount of risk (Wirtz, 2006, cited in Lis & Berz, 2011), Pitsaki (2008) argues in favour of marketing communications focused on branding the publisher, the author, and their books.

Book publishers are open to using a wide range of marketing communications platforms, including social media. As the current study reveals, word-of-mouth via social media is a pillar of the marketing communications or promotional structure of publishers. Put in another form, word-of-mouth is a cornerstone of social media marketing. Previous studies demonstrate the role of word-of-mouth in the usage of social media to boost the marketing performance of book publishers. Mohammed et al (2021) established the positive impact of social media marketing on customer purchase intention in bookstores in Kurdistan, which indicates that undertaking social media marketing by bookstores significantly influence customers to buy books. Also, Nguyen & Tran (2019) showed that book retailers and publishers can use social media to connect with both domestic and foreign customers to expand their market reach. In essence, publishers and book retailers are able to engage with customers, streamline transactions, generate sales, offer services and support, and increase brand equity and customer engagements.

Moreover, Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006), in their examination of the effects of word of mouth on book sales, concluded that online user reviews have become an important source of information to consumers, thus strengthening electronic word-of mouth communication as a tool for evaluation of product quality. The study by Brian Lee and Li (2018) on how online word of mouth affects the dissemination of information goods in digital markets further supports the use of electronic word-of-mouth as an information bank for evaluating product quality. Online word-of-mouth, in the words of Brian Lee and Li (2018), has two effects: i) allowing customers to evaluate the product's quality prior to purchase through online reviews, ii) promoting the spread of information on customer demand and product popularity, which

may have an impact on product diffusion. Overall, Brian Lee and Li's (2018) research demonstrated that online word-of-mouth (WOM) in information product marketing has a considerable impact on decisions about product pricing and advertising, particularly those involving budgets and channel selection.

The double-edge characteristics of word-of-mouth via social media emerged in the review of past research in this study. This denotes the acknowledgement of both positive and negative effects that word-of-mouth marketing has on customer purchasing decisions. While the positive effects are considered desirable, the negative effects are undesirable and could cause serious harm to brands if not effectively managed through strategy. So, the crucial issue remains how firms manage and leverage negative mouth-of-mouth on social media. This, without doubt is a Herculean task, in light of Williams and Buttle's (2014) revelation that suppressing negative word-of-mouth (nWOM) is considered significantly more important than promoting positive WOM. Apart from monitoring the media for negative comment on a day-to-day basis, Williams and Buttle (2014) notes that when negative feedbacks are encountered, the PR department swings into action disseminating counter arguments in alliance with pro-corporate media and journalists. A similar view on the role of company reputation in mitigating negative word-of-mouth communications was expressed by Rahmani et al. (2021) who argued that as unfavorable word-of-mouth spreads quickly and is difficult to contain, mitigation steps are required before adverse consequences arise. Such mitigation steps, as highlighted by Zinko et al. (2021), entail responses that contain an explanation, an apology, and a promise to resolve the conflicting issue or issues. These mitigation efforts, as claimed by Zinko et al. (2021), were found to positively affect purchase intention in the study they conducted on how hotel companies respond to unfavorable online reviews. An earlier study by Hersetyawat et al. (2020) also reported that firm mitigation actions can minimize the impact of unfavorable electronic word-of-mouth on repurchase intention.

There are also evidences of previous studies on the imperative of managing negative word-of-mouth communication on social networks. For example, Kucukemiroglu and Kara (2015) conclude from their study that opinion-seeking users who have close friends they can trust will be more likely to actively engage in social media word-of-mouth marketing and recommend products to their peers. Thus, they point out that social networking platforms should be considered as an important part of an integrated marketing communication strategy, and that targeted advertising efforts should be undertaken for individuals who express their opinions frequently.

The aforementioned assertion by Kucukemiroglu and Kara (2015) brings to bear the role of focused communications as a strategy in mitigating the adverse impact of social word-of-mouth. in sync with this, Suharyanto and Rahman (2022) suggest the 4C strategy that companies can use to deploy social media word-of-mouth marketing campaigns successfully. One of the Cs is context, which refers to how companies use a strategy, such as social media advertising, to communicate with audiences. From a practice-led viewpoint, Knoll (2016); Chaffey and Smith (2017) highlight how firms use social media advertising to retain power and control in online collaborative conversations, including; reaching out to people who have a favorable opinion of their brand or products by using targeted social media advertising, make use of social media influencers who have a sizable following and can aid in the dissemination of favorable messages about the brand, and utilizing social media analytics to continuously track conversations about brand name and products. In all, these strategies underscore the value of businesses utilizing social media to initiate and shape their own conversations through focused communications.

7. Conclusion

In recent years, the use of social media for marketing communications by book publishers has grown in importance, and this trend is also visible in the Nigerian market. The findings of this study demonstrate that Internet-based marketing communications have a major impact on how consumers search for, choose, and purchase books. It is evident that as one of the most common forms of marketing communications, social media word-of-mouth has proven to be an important source of information that consumers can take advantage of to make purchase decisions based on positive reviews of other consumers. However, on the flip side, there is the problem of negative comments or reviews that could prove to be counter-productive. Yet, businesses use social media advertising as an interactive one-on-one message dissemination channel that not only supports but also balances the collaborative content generation in social media word of mouth in order to reduce its potential negative consequences. This means that businesses can actively engage in discussions in online communities and can also have one-on-one interactions with each community member by specifically targeting them with social media advertising messages.

Overall, this study advances the current understanding of how social media are used in the Nigerian publishing sector for book marketing communications. This study sheds light on the potential of social media as a marketing tool and determines the function of social media advertising in this context by investigating the precise ways in which word-of-mouth on social media effects the purchase behavior of book buyers. To provide a more thorough knowledge of these patterns, future study might broaden the empirical dimensions of book buyers' purchasing behaviors. The study's findings will be beneficial to publishers, authors, and marketing specialists who want to effectively advertise their books in the digital era. These stakeholders can utilize word-of-mouth marketing to reach and interact with their target audience on social media by understanding the potential and difficulties of social media for book promotion.

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