

## **EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC MARKETING PRACTICES ON SALES PERFORMANCE OF YOUTH LED ENTERPRISES IN NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

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### **Abstract**

*Statistics show that in Kenya, three out of five businesses owned or managed by youth fail within the first three years of operations and those that continue, 80 percent fail before the fifth year. Marketing communication through conventional tools may be costly for such enterprises hence increasing their failure rate. An alternative is cheaper methods for marketing example e-marketing. However, the youth led enterprises may not be utilizing the media as expected. This study hence examined the effect of electronic marketing practices on sales performance of youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population was the 3,363 registered youth led enterprises in Nakuru County and 385 respondents were sampled through stratified random sampling. A structured pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics that included frequency distribution and chi-square were used to analyze data while multiple linear regression analysis was employed to test the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The study found that there is a high level of adoption of e-marketing practices among youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya. It also established that online buying, e-advertising and social media communications have some effects on sales performance of youth led enterprises but only social media communication has a significant influence. The study recommended that youth led enterprises should increase the use of online buying, e-advertisement and social media communication as they enhance sales performance.*

**Keywords:** *E-marketing, Online buying, E-advertising, Social media communication, Sales performance*

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### **I.INTRODUCTION**

In Kenya the youth who are of 15-35 years of age comprise about 38% of the estimated population of 40 million (Odhiambo, 2013). The youth make the bulk of the supposedly most economically active segment of population and form more than 50% of the total unemployed persons. Over one million youth enter into the labor market annually some having either dropped out of school, completed O-level and not enrolled in any tertiary institutions. A further 155,000 join the labor market annually after completing training in tertiary institutions. This means that a total of over 1.3 million new employment opportunities have to be created annually to meet this demand. Research has shown that the skills acquired by the college and university graduates often do not meet the expectation of employers as they want experienced employees (Odhiambo, 2013).

The Government of Kenya saw the need to develop measures and strategies to reduce the rate of unemployment and encourage skill development among the youth. The government first established the Youth Enterprise Development Fund initiative in 2006, to address the rate of unemployment among the youth in Kenya. The Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) was established in order to provide loans to lend enterprises initiated by the youth attract and facilitate investment for youth enterprises, market products and services of youth enterprises and provide business development services and employment for the youth. This would increase the economic opportunities for the youth and also participation in nation building through enterprise development and strategic relationships.

In 2013, the Uwezo fund was launched which is a flagship programmed for vision 2030 aimed at enabling women, youth and persons with disability access finances to promote businesses and enterprises at the constituency level, thereby enhancing economic growth towards the realization of the same and the Millennium Development. The fund seeks to expand access to finances and promote women, youth and persons living with disability led enterprises at the constituency level. It also provides mentorship opportunities to enable the beneficiaries take advantage of the 30% government procurement preference through its Capacity Building Programme. The Uwezo fund is an avenue for incubating enterprises, catalyzing innovation, promoting industry, creating employment and growing the economy of Kenya.

In today's technology driven world online networking sites have become an avenue where entrepreneurs can extend their marketing campaigns to a wider range of consumers. E-marketing is one of many marketing tools that is more affordable and efficient that young entrepreneurs can use to communicate with their customers (Paquette, 2013). It has the potential to be more personal and engaging compared to other communication alternatives as whereas marketing generally broadcasts messages about a product or service, e- marketing provides the opportunity for a two way conversation as interaction with customers is continuous. Customers can be able to communicate and react to the messages about the enterprise in ways that weren't possible a decade ago (Racine and Schnagl, 2013).

The rapid rise of e-advertising and social media communication has captured the attention of marketers and consumers on a global scale and together with a rapidly changing marketing communication environment young entrepreneurs now confront new challenges in terms of the understanding of consumer behavior and consumption patterns in the new millennium. Electronic marketing hence brings with it powerful opportunities for young entrepreneurs to engage with consumers, enhance market reach, reduce the cost for customer search and build wider market coverage (Bond, Ferraro, Luxton & Sands, 2010).

According to Communications Commissions of Kenya (CCK) 25% of the Kenyan population are internet users. Kenya also has one of the highest internet penetration rates in Africa and emerging markets currently at 25% and growing at a rate of over 17% annually (Business Daily, 2016). There was an increase in internet penetration in Kenya from 38.8% in 2014 to 54.2% in 2015 (Economic survey, 2016). Nakuru County became the first county in Kenya to establish a free Wi-Fi connection to enable resident's access free internet. Nakuru joins cities like Kigali in Rwanda and Tshwane in South Africa as the three cities in Africa with free access to Wi-Fi access for its residents. The free internet service covers 52% of the town's central business district and it's collaboration between the County Government and the State House Digital Team (Njoroge, 2014). This will in turn enhance online buying activities in the county. Young entrepreneurs can use free internet to improve their sales performance through the adoption of electronic marketing practices. The young entrepreneurs will be able to market their products and services online through a variety of electronic marketing platforms. Since Nakuru County residents have access to free Wi-Fi, the study will be able to investigate how the youth led enterprises are utilizing internet services i.e. e-marketing and its effect on the sales performance.

E-marketing means using digital technologies such as websites, mobile devices and social networking to help customer reach, create brand awareness and also sell products and services online. E-marketing is a subset of e business that utilizes electronic medium to perform marketing activities and achieve desired marketing objectives for an organization

(Jaiswal, 2006). E-marketing enables one to establish an online media presence on the major media platforms thus creating a shareable content and advertorials, enabling one to cultivate customer feedback through surveys and contests (Strauss & Frost, 2012). E-marketing provides a low-cost way for businesses to reach a large number of users and gain brand recognition. Since business and social networking websites already have large established online communities' youth enterprises can gain exposure by simply joining these websites. Organizations can create custom e-marketing media profiles, and then build their own communities within these sites by adding users as friends or followers. Enterprises can attract users by posting frequent updates and providing special offers through their e-marketing media profile pages (Strauss & Frost, 2012). E-marketing when implemented can lead to an increase on the return on investment which can far exceed that of traditional marketing strategies (Schewe, 2010).

An online media presence is a necessity for many customer-driven enterprises as it gives the impression of a more immediate connection between the customer and the seller. Moreover, campaigns spread through electronic media are believed to have more resonance because they are usually discovered through links shared by trusted sources. The rich data available through electronic media may allow advertisers to target their message to very specific audiences, providing the potential for better results (Strauss & Frost, 2012). E-marketing offers many platforms to organizations that seek to reach or market themselves to more customers. This study will therefore aim at unraveling these platforms and clarify whether they can be beneficial to the youth led enterprises. The study will also investigate the different services offered through e-marketing and how receptive customers are to the platforms offered by e-marketing which includes e-advertising, online buying and social media communication.

## **II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- (i) To examine the effect of online buying on sales performance among youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya
- (ii) To establish the effect of e-advertising on sales performance among youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya
- (iii) To investigate the effect of social media communication on sales performance among youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya

## **III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

The study tested the following hypotheses:

- (i) **H<sub>01</sub>**: Online buying does not have a significant effect on sales performance of youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- (ii) **H<sub>02</sub>**: E-advertising does not have a significant effect on sales performance of youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya
- (iii) **H<sub>03</sub>**: Social media communication does not have a significant effect on sales performance of youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya

## **IV. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Online Buying and Sales Performance**

E-marketing uses the internet as a platform that enables consumers to move from time and location based purchasing behaviors to non-temporal and non-location based behavior through online buying of products and services reducing the transaction costs thus increasing efficiency and enhancing performance (Banerjee & Dash, 2011). O'Brien, Marakas & Behl

(2012), defined online buying as the process of selling, delivering, servicing and paying for products and services transacted on an online inter-connected global market-place of customers supported by the world wide networks of business partners. Online buying has moved from simple Web store fronts to interactive marketing capabilities that provide a personalized shopping experience for its customers, customer relationship management and supply chain management.

Marketing, sales, and business activities done through the internet provides businesses an opportunity to act independently off their physical environments. The cost and administration of these activities are much fewer and much easier. The spread of online buying and administration of many business activities such as sales, marketing, and promotion in electronic marketing environments has eliminated lots of business costs such as rent, lighting, heating, cooling, decorating, stationary leading to a significant influence on the performance of an organization (Gules, Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011).

Online buying offers considerable opportunities for large and small firms across to expand their customer base enter new products and rationalize their businesses by competing in the global economies. Small and Medium Sized Enterprises have generally been slow to adopt and evaluate online buying. SMEs have failed to reach the levels of adoption required to realize the benefits associated with online buying during formative stages of the enterprises. Many SMEs are unaware of the potential of online buying to enhance their business operations which they consider not applicable to the products and services (Wanjau, Macharia & Ayodo, 2012).

An approach to measuring the influence between users of online buying provides multiple benefits. Firstly, customers online are provided a number of high quality and personalized reviews of a product from trusted sources to convince them to buy. Secondly, a company producing a product gets customers direct and detailed responses. This enables the organization to predict market trends. Thirdly, through online buying, the organization can identify opinion leaders with high influence and maximize the effectiveness of marketing based on the network surrounding opinion leaders (Young & Jaideep, 2007).

According to Nielsen's 2011, Online Retail Report demonstrates the impact social media communication has in the online buying of products and services, with 1.5 million adults now shopping online and 46% of them aged 18 and above. The consumers who already shop online are now purchasing more items. They also begin to shop online more frequently, as they become comfortable with the process and outcomes (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

Online buying has enabled the emergence of new ways to reach customers for example online shopping, creation of online collaborations and partnerships (e.g. a person with a large online presence advertises their products and customers who buy using the link provided get discounts). Online buying has isolated trade barriers such as distance, time and geographical location as entrepreneurs are able to reach a wider customers base, which has the potential to increase sales revenue (Kareem, Owomoyola & Oyebanji, 2014).

The study used a survey research design in collecting the data from respondents and simple random sampling procedure to select a sample that represented the entire population. The study population was three hundred and fifty tours and travel firms and found out that the majority of Tour and Travel firms (96.7%) had adopted online buying in their daily transactions. However, from the research it was noted that there is low use of online buying in marketing (Wanjau et. al. 2012).

### **E-Advertising and Sales Performance**

Marketing professionals who are involved with promoting goods, services, ideas or messages are adopting electronic advertising as a marketing technique because it has shown to be innovative and useful (Strauss & Frost, 2012). According to Agnihotri, Kothandaraman, Kashyap and Singh (2012), e-advertising has the ability to affect all parts of the sales process no matter the organization's products or services. Many businesses in progressive markets are adopting electronic advertising as the newest form of marketing communication; therefore, many are recognizing it as viable, low cost public relations and marketing tactic. According to the Corstjens (2012), the early adopters who have implemented electronic advertising are "well placed for new opportunities". The low prices of electronic communication decreases the cost of displaying online advertisements compared to the cost offline advertisements (Mun & Yazdanifard, 2013).

A study by Mun & Yazdanifard (2013) indicates that nowadays people have become more dependent on the internet which has led to the expansion of online advertising in turn drastically serving as a channel for marketers. The study also indicates that online advertising increases efficiency of matching consumers and retailers, delivering promotional messages to the consumers in return reducing advertising cost and increasing sales revenue. Viewers are moving to online advertising because of comfort, flexibility and the interactive nature compared to offline dimensions of access.

A study examined the impact of social media on customer perceptions of marketing information. Traditional internet sources of marketing information were compared to web sources that included customer blogs. This study found out that popularity of blogs can be attributed to the formation of spontaneous relationships between the blogger and readers compared to a more formal framework of an online magazine. Any opinions expressed in a blogs are perceived as personal and hence are adopted more openly while in online magazines the same opinions seem biased. Marketers should choose to go with blogs with established credibility to generate the right kind of publicity and reach their target audience (Thevenot, 2007).

According to Onyango (2016,) the implementation of e-marketing strategies has assisted cut flower firms improve their financial performance, led to increased market share, increased sales volume, attract higher prices and acquire new markets. This is because advertising through digital platforms has enabled cut flower firms expand their customer base by reaching a broader customer base and fulfilling customers' needs.

According to O'Brien, Marakas and Behl (2012), companies use e-advertising to send targeted and personalized banner ads, email promotions to customers. Through e-advertising companies are able to offer shopping incentives to the consumers for example coupons, discounts, special offers and vouchers for other web services and sometimes to other online retailers at linked websites. This develops the customer database and increases market reach.

According to Beier & Eisenbeiss (2015), companies monitor the shopping behavior of their consumers in their online stores. This facilitates the creation of individualized banners through a method called re-targeting. The companies use data from two large scale field experiments and two lab experiments to show that personalization may substantially enhance banner effectiveness and impact on timing and placement factors. E-advertisement through personalization increases click-through especially in the early stages on a consumer's buying-purchase decision. At this stage, the banners with a high degree of content personalization are

highly effective when a new consumer has visited the website although loses its effectiveness when time passes before the consumer's last visit. The medium degree of content personalization banners are found to be less effective but persistent. The medium degree of content personalization banners outperforms high degree of content personalization banners over time. Content personalization increases the click-throughs of online stores by measuring the response to the online display banner advertisements such as immediate responses (clicks) and late responses (view-throughs).

Muola (2017) investigated the effect of marketing strategies on sales performance of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in Kenya. The researcher was able to conclude that promotional strategy has no significant effect on sales. Employment of promotional strategies helps to keep customers informed of what an enterprise offers and where to find the product or service hence has no significant effect on sales performance.

Geçtil and Daştan (2013), investigated the effects of social media-focused information & communication technologies on business performance via some mediating variables. These mediating variables are marketing-based outputs and costs. In this context, a survey was conducted on 152 advertising and communication agencies operating in Turkey that were selected through convenience sampling method. A research model was developed and the proposed relationships were tested using structural equation modeling via AMOS. The empirical findings indicate that the social media marketing-focused information and communication technologies have a significant effect on the business performance via the mediation of marketing-based outputs and costs.

According to Baltas (2003) there has been an explicit shift in the advertising strategy that favors deriving behavioral response from selected target audiences over providing exposure to many audience groups. These trends increase the importance of a banner's ability to induce direct responses and emphasize the problem of effective creative design and media planning. Tracking direct response results on the internet is simple since response information is electronically captured and reported through the ad serving process as well as by tracking visitors' activity once they have reached a site.

### **Social Media Communication and Sales Performance**

The 2001 bursting of the web bubble caused a massive shift in how information is communicated that is from being static, information boards to websites which have become increasingly dynamic and interactive through social media platforms (Taylor, 2014). Social media communication is a form of e-marketing that provides platforms and websites to promote a product or service and various social media networks in order to achieve marketing communication and branding goals (Kaur & Singh, 2017).

Social media communication primarily covers activities involving social sharing of content, videos, and images for marketing purposes (Kaur & Singh, 2017). It has become more common with the increased popularity of websites such as Twitter, Face Book, and YouTube (Kaur & Singh, 2017). According to Taylor (2014), social media had a massive penetration of 70.2% in the US, 74.6% in Europe and 60.6% in Asia among internet users and thus cannot be ignored as a marketing tool.

A study by Chan & Guillet (2011), evaluated their websites and their availability on social media. Twitter with 56.7% was the most used by the industry followed closely by Face Book at 53.7%. However, Face Book is a preferred option by hotels possibly because micro

blogging allows limited word usage and functions. The biggest use of these websites is to advertise special discounts being offered by the hotel. YouTube, Flickr, and Trip Advisor follow Twitter and Face Book in usage by hotels at 38.8%, 26.9%, and 23.9%, respectively. According to the study the primary function of YouTube was to show commercials of the hotel properties and their unique characteristics, while Flickr was used for posting pictures of the hotel interiors. Hotels also relied on Trip Advisor for customer feedback and 75% of the hotels provided personalized responses to the reviews posted. The other forms of social media are largely untouched (Chan & Guillet, 2011).

The Nielsen New Zealand 2010 Social Media Report revealed that 44% of the respondents have published opinions specifically about products, services and brands, while nearly two million New Zealanders wanted their fellow internet users' opinions and information about products, services and brands. The most important thing, 37% declared that they made a purchase based on these online opinions. For marketers, New Zealanders' interaction with online word-of-mouth communication is going to rise in coming years since social media plays an important role in decision making process.

The Pew Research Center (2010), classifies five generations: Millennials (ages 18-33), Gen X (ages 34-45), Baby Boomers (Ages 46-64), Silent Generation (65-73), and G.I. Generation (ages 74 and older). Each generation has unique consuming habits. Millennials remain the largest group of adopters of social media, despite wider acceptance of the Internet across generations, some professionals still express doubt as to whether or not social media is a viable marketing tactic and business function no matter the generation of their target audience (Thompson & Gregory, 2012).

A significant influence in the adoption of social media marketing is the age of the professional making the adoption decision. According to Gules et al. (2012), research is unclear which demographic information affects the adoption rate of social media. The only research that seems to be clear is that younger people are more likely to adopt social media than older people (Gules et al. 2011).

Other than age, gender is a significant demographic in analyzing the adoption of social media marketing. The Pew Research Center (2010), found that females are more likely to use Face Book than males. In 2013, 76% of women used Face Book while only 66% of men use Face Book. Young women are also checking their profiles more often than young men. Approximately 33% of young women check their social networking sites several times a day compared to 24% of young men.

An empirical study by Hailiang (2010), on broadcasting in online social networks of artists' activities and music sales used artists' marketing activities on MySpace as an example. The study collected artists' activity stream data from MySpace and combine it with the sales rank data from Amazon. The study revealed that an artist's network size plays a crucial role in moderating the effect of social networking activities on sales. For the artists with many friends, broadcasting activities on MySpace have a significant impact on music sales; this, however, is not true for the artists with only a few friends. Finally, we observe that the relationship between MySpace activities and sales ranks can be nonlinear with the possibility of over-marketing.

According to Gonsalves (2009) report from 2007 to June 2009, Dell has generated a total of \$2 million in direct sales of refurbished systems and \$1 million in indirect sales of new systems from their Twitter presence @DellOutlet. Twitter is becoming such an effective marketing tool that advertising startups like Ad.ly and Sponsored Tweets have signed up thousands of Twitter users and paid them up to \$10,000 per tweet for sending advertising messages to their Twitter followers (Learmonth 2010).

When the influences of social media focused information and communication technologies on marketing-oriented outcome are analyzed, it is revealed that this technology positively affects brand recognition of the company and customer loyalty to products and services. Businesses try to create a link between their customers and products or services through promotion, marketing communication, customer satisfaction, and many different activities. Businesses execute marketing-focused activities in social media environments where quick transfer of information, instant feedback, and broad areas of influence are considered. Studies in the literature have identified low-level positive relationship between being market-focused and performance (Stelzner, 2011).  
respectively.

## **V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population comprised of the 3,363 registered youth led enterprises in Nakuru County (Nakuru County, 2016). The sample size determination formula for infinite populations (Godden, 2004) was adopted to determine the sample size for this study as follows;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times P (1 - P)}{E^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample Size for infinite population

Z = Confidence level at 95% (Standard Z value 1.96)

P = Population proportion assumed to be 0.5 (50%)

E = Margin of Error at 5% (0.05)

NB: q = 1-p

Hence the sample size of the study will be;  $n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05^2} = 385$

Stratified random sampling technique was then employed to select 385 respondents from the target population. A structured pre-tested questionnaire whose Cronbach Alpha coefficient was computed at 0.7 was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics that included frequency distribution and chi-square were used to analyze data while multiple linear regression analysis was employed to test the relationship between electronic marketing practices and sales performance.

## **VI. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Electronic Marketing**

The study sought to establish whether youth led enterprises in Nakuru County practice electronic marketing. Majority of the respondents 89.09% indicated that their business organizations practice electronic marketing while only 10.09% of the respondents indicated that they don't practice electronic marketing. This is an indication of high level of adoption of electronic marketing practices among youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya. These findings conform to the study carried out by Onyango (2016) that the influence of digital

marketing strategies cannot be overlooked as adoption of e-marketing plays an important role in performance of organizations thus giving them a competitive edge.

The respondents were further requested to indicate whether they combine traditional and electronic marketing practices. All the respondents, 100% indicated that they combine traditional and electronic marketing practices. This study agrees with the findings of Shima & Varfan (2008), that a successful marketing plan is one that combines both traditional marketing strategies and e-marketing strategies.

The respondents were asked about their opinion on the use of e-marketing practices as compared to traditional marketing practices. Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that e-marketing was much cheaper, easier, and more effective as compared to traditional marketing practices. This supports the study by Adede, Kibera & Owino (2017) that organizations incurred reduced marketing costs due to adoption of e-marketing strategies that is, the organizations were able to advertise, communicate and sell their products and services cost-effectively and received feedback on performance.

The study sought to establish platforms that youth led enterprises use for electronic marketing. The study established that majority 96.93% of the youth led enterprises social media platforms such as Face Book for e-marketing. The study further established the following platforms were used for e-marketing by youth led enterprises; 81.29% use E-mail marketing, 36.39% use search engines (i.e. Google), 25.85% use websites, 4.08% use You Tube. The study results infer that youth led enterprises have highly adopted various platforms for their e-marketing, social media platforms being the most popular. This infers that the most commonly used platform by youth led enterprises is social media communication. Onyango (2016) found out that cut flower firms are using the following e-marketing platforms social media, e-mail marketing, e-advertisements, websites, mobile applications, short text messages, and digital displays which enhance performance which conforms to this study.

### **Extent of Use of E-Marketing Platforms**

The study sought to establish the extent of use of e-marketing platforms by youth led enterprises. The study findings are illustrated in the Table 1.

**Table 1: Use of E-Marketing Platforms**

Extent of use E-Marketing Platforms	5 Freq (%)	4 Freq (%)	3 Freq (%)	2 Freq (%)	1 Freq (%)	X <sup>2</sup>	P>CHSQ
Search engines	72 21.8%	115 34.8%	82 24.8%	25 7.6%	-	56.449	<0.0001
E-mail marketing	116 35.2%	163 49.4%	10 3%	5 1.5%	-	252.259	<0.0001
Websites	50 15.2%	93 28.2%	120 36.4%	29 8.8%	2 .6%	154.878	<0.0001
You Tube	1 .3%	35 10.6%	100 30.3%	35 10.6%	123 37.3%	175.048	<0.0001
Social media platforms	273 82.7%	9 2.7%	10 3%	2 .6%	-	722.909	<0.0001

Key: 5 = Very large extent 4 = Large extent 3 = Moderate extent 2 = Small extent 1 = No extent, Freq = Frequency, %= Percentage.

The study sought to establish the extent that youth led enterprises use various e-marketing platforms. A majority of 34.8% ( $\chi^2 = 56.449$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) of the respondents confirmed that they used search engines while a high of 49.4%, ( $\chi^2 = 252.259$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) opted for Email marketing. These numbers were among the highest among the respondents considering that a majority of 36.4% ( $\chi^2 = 154.878$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) and 30.3%, ( $\chi^2 = 175.048$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) used websites and YouTube respectively to a moderate extent. These numbers were however overshadowed by use of Social Media platforms where the largest majority of 82.7% ( $\chi^2 = 722.909$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) of the respondents said that they use social media networks to a very large extent. The study concurs with Odhiambo, (2013) who indicated that use of e-marketing platforms as a marketing tool for their businesses is slowly catching up though the move has been very gradual. In Kenya there is a large demographic of tech-savvy and eager adopters of technology (Ayodo, 2017).

### Response on Electronic Marketing Practices

The study also established the response of youth led enterprises towards electronic marketing practices. The study findings are illustrated in the Table 2.

**Table 2: Electronic Marketing Practices**

Electronic Marketing Practices	SD Freq (%)	D Freq (%)	N Freq (%)	A Freq (%)	SA Freq (%)	$\chi^2$	P>CHSQ
There is high awareness of electronic marketing	13 3.9%	9 2.7%	7 2.1%	236 71.5%	65 19.7%	582.424	<0.0001
People have high trust of electronic marketing	53 16.1%	69 20.9%	37 11.2%	133 40.3%	38 11.5%	95.333	<0.0001
E-marketing is more credible than other approaches in marketing	30 9.1%	73 22.1%	43 13%	119 36.1%	65 19.7%	70.97	<0.0001
There is high interest level on electronic marketing in the firm	13 3.9%	7 2.1%	8 2.4%	199 60.3%	103 31.2%	435.03	<0.0001
Electronic marketing is an important tool to the firm	7 2.1%	4 1.2%	7 2.1%	116 35.2%	196 59.4%	457.667	<0.0001
Electronic marketing is easy to use	13 3.9%	30 9.1%	31 9.4%	196 59.4%	60 18.2%	337.364	<0.0001

Key: SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Freq = Frequency, %= Percentage

The study sought to establish the level of agreement by respondents on various statements on electronic marketing practices in youth led enterprises. 71.5%, ( $\chi^2 = 582.424$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) of the respondents agree that there is a high awareness of electronic marketing and that the level of trust among people in electronic marketing is high (40.3%,  $\chi^2 = 582.424$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ). this was further supported by the fact that electronic marketing is more credible than other approaches in marketing which was agreed to by 36.1% of the respondents ( $\chi^2 = 70.97$ ,

P<0.0001). 60.3% ( $\chi^2 = 435.03$ , P<0.0001) and 59.4% ( $\chi^2 = 337.364$ , P<0.0001) of the respondents agreed that there exists a high level of interest on electronic marketing in firms and that electronic marketing is easy to use respectively. Further to that finding is that 59.4% ( $\chi^2 = 582.424$ , P<0.0001) of the respondents strongly agreed that electronic marketing is an important tool to the firm. The study results infer that most of the youth led enterprises have a high interest and high awareness of electronic marketing. The study concurs with those of Geçtil and Daştan (2013) who found out that electronic marketing is perceived to be effective and can be considered an effective marketing tool.

### **Online buying**

The respondents were asked whether their organizations conduct online transactions. Majority of the organizations 96.66% indicated that they conduct online transactions while only 3.33% of the respondents don't conduct online transactions. The results infer that online buying is common among the youth led enterprises which conforms to the study by Wanjau, et al. (2012) that majority of the tours and travel firms have adopted electronic media in their daily transactions.

The study sought to establish whether organizations practice online buying. All 100% the respondents indicated that they practice online buying. This is an indication that online buying is greatly used by youth led enterprises and conforms to the study by Mourtada and Salem (2011) that the penetration of online technologies and buying processes is soaring in the Africa region, Kenya is not an exemption.

The study sought to establish the preferred modes of payment for online buying. The study findings are summarized in the Table 3.

**Table 3: Payments Methods for Online Buying**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Credit Card	33	10.00
Pay pal	5	1.51
Cash on delivery	330	100.0
Debit Card	12	3.63
M-Pesa	330	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study sought to find out what kind of payments youth led enterprises prefer for online buying. All 100% the youth led enterprises prefers Cash on Delivery and M-Pesa. Those enterprises which preferred Credit Card were 10%, Debit Card 3.63% while only 1.51% preferred PayPal. The results indicate that the most preferred kind of payments youth led enterprises prefer for online buying are Cash on Delivery and M-pesa. Some respondents also indicated that they use other forms of mobile payment such as Airtel money.

### **Responses on Online buying**

The study sought to find out the online buying practices that are used by the youth led enterprises. The study findings are illustrated in the Table 4. The study sought to establish the extent of agreement on various statements on online buying practices that are used in youth led enterprises. A majority of 78.5% ( $\chi^2 = 721.909$ , P<0.0001) of the respondents agreed

that they normally quote their prices using online enabled facilities. This was further supported by the fact that 85.2% ( $\chi^2 = 895.879$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) of the respondents who strongly agreed that payment of goods or services are done via online buying platforms and receipts for payments given to customers through online facilities (49.7%, ( $\chi^2 = 210.939$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ).

**Table 4: Online Buying Practices**

<b>Online Buying Practices Used by the Organization</b>	<b>SD Freq (%)</b>	<b>D Freq (%)</b>	<b>N Freq (%)</b>	<b>A Freq (%)</b>	<b>SA Freq (%)</b>	<b>X<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>P&gt;CHSQ</b>
We normally quote our prices using online buying enabled facilities.	6 1.8%	7 2.1%	12 3.6%	259 78.5%	46 13.9%	721.909	<0.0001
Negotiations on price with our customers are done online	53 16.1%	104 31.5%	77 23.3%	74 22.4%	22 6.7%	56.576	<0.0001
Payments for goods or services is done online	1 .3%	1 .3%	3 .9%	44 13.3%	281 85.2%	895.879	<0.0001
Receipts for payments are given to customers online	8 2.4%	53 16.1%	38 11.5%	164 49.7%	67 20.3%	210.939	<0.0001
We receive orders from customers through online buying platforms	1 .3%	15 4.5%	30 9.1%	231 70%	53 16.1%	538.121	<0.0001

Key: SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Freq = Frequency, %= Percentage

70% of the respondents also agreed that they receive orders from customers through online buying platforms. Most of these findings conform to those of Wanjau, et al. (2012) who found out that many SMEs are unaware of the potential of online buying to enhance their business operations which they may consider not applicable to their products and services.

### **E-Advertising**

The study sought to establish whether their organizations practice e-advertisement. Majority of the organizations 89.09% indicated that they practice e-advertisement while only 10.91% who don't practice e-advertisement. The results infer that e-advertisement is common among the youth led enterprises which agrees to the study by Agnihotri *et al.* (2012) that many businesses in progressive markets are adopting electronic advertising.

The study sought to find out the forms of advertising that are being used by the youth led enterprises. The study findings are summarized in the Table 5. The study sought to find out what form of advertising youth led enterprises undertake. Majority 89.09% of the respondents indicated that they undertake online advertising (e-advertising). The respondents also indicated they conduct advertising through e-mail 22.72%, billboards 15.75%, newspapers 12.12%, radio 10.60%, magazines 9.69%, mail/ post 4.54% and television 2.12%. The study results infer that the most popular method of advertisement among the youth led enterprises was online advertising (e-advertising). This conforms to the study by Agnihotri, et al.(2012) that e-advertising has the ability to affect all parts of the sales process no matter the

organization's products or services hence many businesses in progressive markets are adopting electronic advertising as the newest form of marketing communication recognizing it as viable, low cost public relations and marketing tactic.

**Table 5: Forms of Advertising Used by Youth Led Enterprises**

	Frequency	Percent
Radio	35	10.60
Newspapers	40	12.12
Television	7	2.12
Magazines	32	9.69
Mail/ Post	15	4.54
E-mail	75	22.72
Online advertising (e-advertising)	294	89.09
Billboards	52	15.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study sought to establish whether advertising products and services using online platforms increased sales. All 100% the respondents agreed that advertising their products and services using online platforms has increased sales. The respondents indicated that the main reason why online advertisement increased sales was that it is cost effective; hence a cheaper alternative as most of people are nowadays online on various platforms such as Face Book and Google. The finding conforms to the study by Mun & Yazdanifard (2013) that online advertising is an efficient promotional tool leads to a reduction in the cost of advertising and increase in sales revenue.

#### **Response on e-advertising Practices**

The study also established the response on e-advertising practices. The study findings are illustrated in the Table 6.

**Table 6: Response on e-advertising Practices**

Response on e-Advertising Practices	SD Freq (%)	D Freq (%)	N Freq (%)	A Freq (%)	SA Freq (%)	X <sup>2</sup>	P>CHSQ
Promotional campaigns are carried out through websites and wireless media	-	8 2.4%	15 4.5%	199 60.3%	72 21.8%	319.252	<0.0001
We display our offers through e-advertising	-	5 1.5%	11 3.3%	156 47.3%	122 37%	241.592	<0.0001
We contact our clients through e-advertising	8 2.4%	30 9.1%	57 17.3%	142 43%	57 17.3%	175.830	<0.0001
E-advertising enables customer relationship management	8 2.4%	36 10.9%	68 20.6%	134 40.6%	48 14.5%	152.327	<0.0001

Key: SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Freq = Frequency, %= Percentage

The respondents were asked to state their level of agreement on various statements on e-advertising practices that are done in an organization. A majority of 60.3%, ( $\chi^2 = 319.252$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) of the respondents agreed that promotional campaigns are carried out through websites and wireless media while 37% ( $\chi^2 = 241.592$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) strongly agreed that they display their offers through e-advertising. On the other hand, a majority of 43% ( $\chi^2 = 175.830$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) agreed that they contact their clients through e-advertising. The study results indicates youth led enterprises carry out various e-advertising practices such as display their offers, promotional campaigns, contacting clients and customer relationship management just like the study done by Mun and Yazdanifard (2013) who found out that online advertising increases efficiency of matching consumers and retailers, delivering promotional messages to the consumers through online providers and direct sales forces. Viewers are moving to online advertising because of comfort, flexibility and the interactive nature compared to offline dimensions of access.

### **Social Media Communication**

The study sought to find out whether youth led enterprises practice social media communication. The study found that 92.42% of the youth led enterprises practice social media communication. While 7.75% of youth led enterprises do not practice social media communication. The results indicate that overwhelm majority of youth led enterprises practice social media communication. This conforms to the study by Kaur & Singh (2017) that social media communication has become more common with the increased popularity of Face Book & You Tube.

### **Response on Social Media Communication Practices**

The study sought to find how the organizations practice social media communication. The study findings are illustrated in the Table 7.

**Table 7: Response on Social Media Communication Practices**

<b>Social Communication Practices</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>SD Freq (%)</b>	<b>D Freq (%)</b>	<b>N Freq (%)</b>	<b>A Freq (%)</b>	<b>SA Freq (%)</b>	<b>X<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>P&gt;CHSQ</b>
The organization enables audience participation on social media		13 3.9%	9 2.7%	1 .3%	241 73%	66 20%	619.818	<0.0001
Social media enables the firm to establish social contacts and support for the organization		15 4.5%	4 1.2%	3 .9%	115 34.8%	193 58.5%	438.545	<0.0001
Viral campaigns are carried out by the firm through social media		19 5.8%	42 12.7%	56 17%	152 46.1%	61 18.5%	156.152	<0.0001
Interactive feedback is facilitated by social media	customer	18 5.5%	40 12.1%	52 15.8%	149 45.2%	71 21.5%	152.879	<0.0001

Key: SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Freq = Frequency, %= Percentage

73%, ( $\chi^2 = 619.818$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) of the respondents agreed that organization enables audience participation on social media meaning that organizations take the lead duty to engage its potential clients and not the other way round. This goes a long way since 58.5%, ( $\chi^2 = 438.545$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) of the respondents strongly agreed that Social media enables firms to establish social contacts and support for the organization. Further to that the results revealed that viral campaigns are carried out by the firm through social media, a statement supported by 45.2% of the respondents ( $\chi^2 = 156.152$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ) where interactive customer feedback is facilitated by the same social media (45.2%,  $\chi^2 = 619.818$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ). The results indicate that most of youth led enterprises use social media communication to facilitate social contacts, support, and audience participation and for interactive customer feedback. The findings conform to the study by Stelzner (2011) who found out that social media communication creates a link between customers and the company, enables instant feedback, quick transfer of information and develops broad areas of influence.

### **Sales Performance**

The study sought the impact of the use of e-marketing strategies on sales performance as compared to the previous period. The findings established that majority 81.81% of youth led enterprises, the sales revenue had increased as result of e-marketing strategies. Some 14.84% of the youth led enterprises their sales revenue had no change while a few youth led enterprises 3.33% their sales revenue had decreased as result of use of e-marketing strategies. The study results indicate that e-marketing strategies have a positive impact on sales performance of youth led enterprises which agrees with the study by Adede (2017) which indicated that e-marketing practices have a significant effect on organizational performance.

Finally the study sought to establish whether the respondents believed that electronic marketing practices has improved sales revenue of the youth led enterprises. Majority 87.27% of the respondents agreed indicated that electronic marketing practices had improved sales revenue, 11.21 indicated they don't know while only 1.51 who indicated that electronic marketing practices do not improves sales revenue. The researcher probed further why electronic marketing practices has improved sales revenue, majority of the respondents indicated that electronic marketing practices are cost friendly, easier, able to reach to masses and more effective thus improving sales revenue. This conforms to the empirical findings by Gectil & Dastan (2013) that e-marketing positively affects the business performance via the mediation of marketing-based outputs and costs.

### **Correlation Analysis**

The Pearson's coefficient was used to verify the existence or non-existence of linear correlation between and among the quantitative variables as indicated above. Correlation coefficient ("r") ranges from -1.0 to +1.0. The higher the r is towards the positive side the higher the correlation is positively and versa.

The correlation results show a lack of significant correlation between online buying and sales performance ( $r = 0.00$ ,  $\alpha = 0.994$ ), followed by a weak negative correlation between e-advertising and sales performance ( $r = -0.082$ ,  $\alpha = 0.160$ ), this however turned insignificant. Lastly there was a positive correlation between social media communication and sales performance ( $r = 0.179$ ,  $\alpha = 0.001$ ) which also turned out to be significant.

**Table 8: Pearson Correlation Results**

		X1	X2	X3	Y
X1	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.			
	N	330			
X2	Pearson Correlation	.031	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.595	.		
	N	294	294		
X3	Pearson Correlation	.099	.075	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.072	.200	.	
	N	330	294	330	
Y	Pearson Correlation	.000	-.082	.179(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.994	.160	.001	.
	N	330	294	330	330

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

(Where X<sub>1</sub> is Online buying, X<sub>2</sub> is E- Advertising, X<sub>3</sub> is Social Media Communication and Y is sales performance)

### Regression Results

Mainly the study was on dependent and independent variables which include online buying, e-advertising and social media communication, a multiple regression analysis was used. A multivariate regression model was applied to determine the relative importance of each of the three variables with respect to the sales performance of youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya. The regression model was as follows:

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + e$$

Y was the sales performance,

B<sub>0</sub> is the constant

X<sub>1</sub> is Online buying

X<sub>2</sub> is E-advertising

X<sub>3</sub> is Social media communication

B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub>, and B<sub>3</sub> are coefficients

e is the error term

**Table 9: Regression coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.803	.452		3.992	.000		
X1	.016	.017	.053	.908	.365	.961	1.041
X2	.019	.015	.073	1.265	.207	.996	1.004
X3	.033	.014	.138	2.379	.018	.960	1.042

a Dependent Variable: Y

The established multiple linear regression equation becomes:

$$Y = 1.803 + 0.016X_1 + 0.019X_2 + 0.033X_3$$

Where;

Constant = 1.803, shows that online buying, e-advertising and social media communication, were all rated as zero changes in sales performance would be at 1.803 level.

$B_1 = 0.016$ , show that one unit change in online buying results in 0.016 units increase in sales performance.

$B_2 = 0.019$ , show that one unit change in e-advertising results in 0.019 units increase in sales performance.

$B_3 = 0.033$ , show that one unit change in social media communication results in 0.033 units increase in sales performance.

### Strength of the Model

The analysis in table below shows the coefficient of determination which shows the percentage variation in the dependent variable being explained by the changes in the independent variables.

**Table 10: Model Summary**

Model	Root MSE	Dependent mean	R Square	Adjusted R Square	CoeffVar
1	0.59536	6.38116	.0977	0.0866	9.33

a Predictors: (Constant),  $X_3$ ,  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$

$R^2$  is called the coefficient of determination, it shows how change in the independent variable results to changes in the dependent variable. It is also the coefficient of determination that tells us how perceived sales performance is explained by online buying, e-advertising and social media communication. From the Table 4.17, above, the value of adjusted  $R^2$  is 0.0866; implying that only 8.66% changes in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables which are online buying, e-advertising and social media communication, at a confidence level of 95%. This means that there are other major factors that can be attributed to sales performance but were not part of this research.

### ANOVA

All the predictors' variables ( $X_1$ -  $X_3$ ) were entered into the estimated procedure of SPSS and the result model was found to be significant ( $F_{5, 122} = 2.784$ , p value = 0.041)

**Table 11: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.895	3	1.298	2.784	.041
Residual	135.234	290	.466		
Total	139.129	293			

a. Predictors: (Constant),  $X_3$ ,  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$

b. Dependent Variable: Y

The overall model is significant since from the ANOVA table above, the researcher found an overall p value of 0.041 which is less than 0.05.

### Hypotheses Testing

The independent variables were determined of their significance by using the ANOVA test. The value of t statistics was checked for its significance. This was done by setting the

following general hypothesis. All the independent variables were tested at 95% confidence level.

$H_0 = B_i = 0$  that the independent variable is statistically zero. If the value of p was less than 0.05 then the null hypothesis was rejected and thus the variable was statistically significant.

**Table 12: Hypotheses Testing**

Model	t	Sig.	Null hypothesis
X1	.908	.365	Accept
X2	1.265	.207	Accept
X3	2.379	.018	Reject

From Table 12 above, it is clear that variable X<sub>1</sub> (Online buying) and X<sub>2</sub> (E-advertising) have no significant influence on Y (Sales Performance) while X<sub>3</sub> (Social media communication) has significant influence on Y (Sales Performance).

For H<sub>1</sub>: p value =0.365 which is greater than 0.05, therefore the researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis meaning that X<sub>1</sub> (Online buying) has no significant influence on Y (Sales Performance). This specific finding conforms to the research findings by Wanjau et al. (2012) who found out that most SMEs are slow to evaluate the significance of online transactions and buying processes hence most SMEs have failed to reach the levels of adoption required to realize the benefits of e-commerce.

For H<sub>2</sub>: p value =0.207 which is also is greater than 0.05, meaning the researcher shall fail to reject the null hypothesis therefore X<sub>2</sub> (E-advertising) has no significant influence on Y (Sales Performance). This specific finding also conforms to the research findings by Hailiang (2010) who found out that the relationship between broadcasting activities on MySpace and sales ranks are nonlinear due to over marketing.

For H<sub>3</sub>: p value =0.018 which in this case is less than 0.05 thus the null hypothesis was rejected therefore X<sub>3</sub> (Social media communication) has a significant influence on Y (Sales Performance). This specific finding agrees to the research findings by Gectil & Dastan (2013) who found out that social media marketing focused information and communication technologies have a significant effect on the business performance via the mediation of marketing based outputs and costs.

## VII.CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study concludes that there is high level of use of e-marketing practices among youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya as it's a cheaper alternative compared to traditional marketing methods. The study concludes that youth led enterprises combine traditional and electronic marketing practices as they mainly use the social media platform, Face Book and E-mail marketing.

The study concludes that online buying has an impact on sales performance as it mainly enhances payments for goods or services. The study also concludes that the most preferred payments methods for online transactions among the youth led enterprises are Cash on Delivery and M-pesa. The study concludes that online buying has no significant influence on sales performance of youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya.

The study concludes that that e-advertising is most popular method of advertisement among the youth led enterprises. The study concludes that e-advertising enhances sales performance as most of the youth led enterprises display their offers through e-advertising, conduct promotional campaigns through websites and wireless media; they also contact their clients through e-advertising and e-advertising enables customer relationship management. The study concludes that e-advertising has no significant influence on sales performance of youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya.

The study concludes that majority of the youth led enterprises practice social media communication as it facilitates social contacts, support, and audience participation and to interactive customer feedback. The study concludes that social media communication has significant influence on sales performance of youth led enterprises in Nakuru County, Kenya.

### **VIII.RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study recommends in order for youth led enterprises to fully adapt to e-marketing practices there is need for them to fully utilize other platforms such as search engine optimization, websites and you tube. The study recommends that youth led enterprises should explore more forms of online buying as it enhances sales performance such as e-procurement systems. The study recommends that youth led enterprises should continue using e-advertisement as it enhance sales performance through displaying their offers through e-advertising, conduct promotional campaigns, contacting clients and relationship management. The study recommends that youth led enterprises should continue using social media communication as it has a significant effect on sales performance. Social media communication facilitates social contacts, support, and audience participation and to interactive customer feedback. The study recommends that in order to improve the attitude towards e-marketing issues related to trust and credibility should be addressed. The study recommends that there is need for introduction of rating and review programs in order to improve trust and credibility of e-marketing.

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