



Effects of Social Media Network Sites on Service Delivery in Hotels in Nakuru Town

Faith J. Yator

School Of Business, Kabarak University

ABSTRACT

The importance of social media in enhancing positive relationships between customers and business cannot be gainsaid. This is because they offer new and innovative ways to communicate and network via the internet. There are various platforms provided by the social media networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Skype, Mysite, WhatsApp and Twitter in the strategic marketing of products and services for the hotel industry. As such, social media networking has become an effective form of marketing which has raised the brand awareness, brand loyalty, customer services and has led to increase in sales. As such it has opened tremendous opportunities for companies to market their products and services using social media. The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of social networking in service delivery in the hotel industry in Kenya. It sought to establish how hotels are utilizing social media in marketing so as to boost awareness amongst its customers. The theoretical background was based on theories of social media. In order to explore, identify and suggest workable policies and strategies in the management of the use of social networking, stratified proportionate sampling procedure has been used to pick the hotels, the study used questionnaires to collect data. Collected data was analyzed using statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 22 and presented in tables, figures and charts form. A sample size of 190 employees was used with the end result expected to give the effects of social networking in the hotel industry and how this strategic change can be managed to increase productivity in the industry. The research findings of the study is useful to hotel industry in using social media as a part of its marketing strategy.

The study showed that a huge percentage of 94.1% used social media. This was attributed to the high usage of internet enable smartphones. There was also a noted higher usage of the social media among the younger age groups compared to their old counterparts. Facebook and twitter usage topped the list of the highly used social media networks in the hotel industry that mirrored their usage in the social lives. There is different prevalence of the usage of diverse social media networks for different purposes such as marketing, sales, customer service and giving of information. In the context of marketing, 82.2% of the respondents utilized social media for marketing purposes of which the face book and Google plus topped the usage. The social media was used for marketing to give out new product introduction, product features elaboration and networking with potential customers. In the context of branding, the social media platforms were used by hotels to elaborate certain aspects of their service and standards. The face book and twitter formed the highest used platforms for branding. The hotels used the social media platforms to a higher degree to elaborate on their location, available facilities, technical expertise of workers, and hotel menu amongst other factors.

Keywords: Social media network sites, Service delivery, and Hotel industry.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study



The use of social media network sites in organizations is wide and cannot be avoided. Social media network sites have come with the current generation and affected the way of operating in various organizations to reach and engage customers, communicate and market their products. Social networking refers to activities, practices, and behaviours among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media. Conversational media are Web-based applications that make it possible to create and easily transmit content in the form of words, pictures, videos, and audios (Safko & Brake, 2009). These are changes on how people discover, read, connect, and share information. It can offer business advantages for both private companies and government agencies. Organizations can use social media networks to reach out to mass audiences efficiently at very low cost, promote brand awareness in many different markets and network with potential customers. It transforms monologues into dialogues and transforms people from content readers into content publishers (Cheryl & Heather, 2008).

Currently, entrepreneurs leverage their business development services on the use of internet tools which include social media networks. These services include, among others, information gathering, and networking, consulting in areas like marketing, management, accounting, legal aspects, counseling as well as education and training. Other organizations such as institutions and political parties are trying to keep up with this changing environment and are struggling to use Social Media to their benefit only, thus riding on the wave of Social Media but without any strategy (Robin, Jos & Theo, 2011). But Yankee (2008) argues that using social networking, as e-business format is not so much about soliciting business as it is about establishing yourself as a real, live person with whom others may wish to do business.

Social networking is therefore a change that has emerged in the 21st century and organizations may not have any other way but adopt this change to improve and compete in the current environment in the business world.

It is common knowledge that social media networking is available to anyone with an internet connection and should therefore be a platform that can be recommended to organizations such as the hotel industry. This is because social networking will enable them to increase their brand awareness and facilitate direct feedback from their customers. In essence, a business that understands the advantage of social media is well aware that social media is fundamental in developing new business in the current competitive and online driven marketplace.

While marketing is an important aspect for any business, social media marketing can be useful in reaching out to the people who access these social media platform regularly. This is also because communication is essential for any corporation and business. Therefore either they change the way information is conveyed or be prepared to lose some of the audience. It is imperative for marketing managers in the hotel industry to continuously find a solution to appeal, keep new and current consumers (Schneider, 2009). Social media network is the ideal platform for communication that applies perfectly with marketing in the virtual world. Social media networks are groups of individuals who prefer to communicate with one another through a preferred site based on the profile created for themselves (Laudon & Traver, 2007).

Social media marketing has advantages for marketing. For example it has the ability to reach a wide audience, provides two-way communication, it is accessible and has a viral effect. Social media marketing promises to improve promotional efforts significantly. One of the major advantages of social media marketing is the ability to reach a wide audience breaking down



geographic boundaries. Historically communication with others was limited by geographical boundaries and the current technological of the era. Today's social media technologies enable nearly everyone to reach a global audience for interpersonal interaction and exchanging information (Gillin, 2009). Web 2.0 encompasses tools and platforms that enable people from different part of the world to be connected and to exchange information with each other.

The importance of Social Media is still growing and could well become an essential mode of communication towards interacting with the customer and hotels can take advantage of this trend and rip the benefits in terms of online placement and revenue. Many organizations today use social media as a vehicle to reach out to millions of prospective and usual customers. Businesses in the service industry, such as the hotel industry, that engage in constant communication with guests are drastically changing their marketing strategies by choosing this new age interactive media over traditional practices of marketing and public relations. This is considered so because the social media has been lauded as having an increasingly important role in many aspects of the hospitality industry, including guest satisfaction and process improvement.

One of the more intriguing aspects of social media is their potential to move markets by driving consumers' purchasing patterns and influencing lodging performance. The hospitality industry tends to be very customer-centric and also one that prides itself by reaching out to its guests and providing a personalized experience. Social media encourages customer engagement, and it being on Web 2.0, promotes two-way traffic. It allows for a faster response and a low cost investment than is typically achieved with traditional marketing.

Statement of the Problem

There has been a general outcry about the decline in the number of customers in various hotels in Kenya (Kinyua, 2012). This decline has greatly affected the hotel industry leading to a reduction in profits as well as income generated especially because of stiff competition from their counterparts. It is for reason that many hotels have come up with new strategies to reach out to many potential customers. One strategy that has been lauded for its ability to boost sales is the use of Social media network sites. Social media networking can play a significant role in social learning, which can subsequently influence customer choice of hotels. To have a lasting impact, strategies need to be compatible with the structures and functions of social networks in the hotel industry. This study is designed to examine the effects of social media networks in reaching out to customers in four star, three star and two star hotels in Nakurutown.

Objectives of the Study

Overall Objective

To investigate the effects of social media network sites on the hotel industry in NakuruTown, Kenya

Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the extent to which hotels in Nakuru Town are using social media networks as a strategic tool for marketing their services.
- ii. To determine the effects of social media networks sites on brand awareness of services in the hotel
- iii. To establish the effects of the adoption and integration of social media network sites in educating and informing customers
- iv. To determine the effects of social media networks sites in increasing sales
- v. To determine the effects of social media network sites in improve customer service

Significance of the study



This assessment is meant to help the Managers, employees and customers of various hotels to understand the role and use of social networking in its diversity. The study will not only add to the existing knowledge with regard to the application and effects of the use of social networking in the business operations in organizations, but it will provide insight on some insights on how social media helps in strategic marketing and managing organizational change can benefit the industry, and at the same time concentrate on their primary efforts of ensuring good use of social media by all stakeholders.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brief history of origin of social networking

Early social media networking on the World Wide Web began in the form of generalized online communities such as Theglobe.com in 1994, Geocities in 1995 and Tripod.com in 1995. Many of these early communities focused on bringing people together to interact with each other through chat rooms, and encouraged users to share personal information and ideas via personal WebPages by providing easy-to-use publishing tools and free or inexpensive webspace. Some communities - such as Classmates.com - took a different approach by simply having people link to each other via email addresses. In the late 1990s, user profiles became a central feature of social networking, allowing users to compile lists of "friends" and search for other users with similar interests.

Here are several social networking. New social networking methods were developed by the end of the 1990s and many sites began to develop more advanced features for users to find and manage friends. This newer generation of social networking began to flourish with the emergence of Friendster in 2002, and soon became part of the Internet mainstream.

MySpace was started in 2003 and was a driving force in popularizing social networking and still maintains a large user base. Facebook was designed as a social networking site for Harvard students. After spreading from Harvard through the university ranks and down into high school, Facebook was opened to the public in 2006. Facebook profiles also include two types of messaging services: a private system; which is similar to webmail service, and public system called 'the wall', where friends leave comments to the owner of the profile that can be viewed by other users. Users can create profiles with photos, lists of personal interests, contact information, and other personal information. Users can communicate with friends and other users through private or public messages and a chat feature. They can also create and join interest groups and "like pages" (called "fan pages" until April 19, 2010), some of which are maintained by organizations as a means of advertising. Facebook has been prompted to add a "third gender", "other", or "intersex" tab in the gender option which contains only male and female. Facebook refused and said that individuals can "opt out of showing their sex on their profile. Twitter started out as a microblogging website in 2008 and has quickly grown into a social messaging platform and one of the top social networking in the world. Twitter is phenomenon that transcends social networking to provide an outlet for news, trends, buzz, and chat among many other uses (Cornelius, 2008).

Life therefore is becoming more solitary without social media and ignoring them is almost unthinkable. Since its inception, this social network service has quickly become both a basic tool



for and a mirror of social interaction, personal identity, and network building among users. Social network sites have deeply penetrated users' everyday life and, as pervasive technology, tend to become invisible once they are widely adopted (Human Capital, 2010).

In Kenya, social media has become a familiar phenomenon used by many individuals and organizations alike. Ouma (2010) in the East African's on-line edition says that "Social media ,which has gained popularity with the launch of sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and MySpace has become an integral part of many Kenyans' lives through which they express their opinions on matters affecting their lives, organizations and brands" (Ouma, 2010). Some organizations in Kenya especially institutions like telecommunication and media televisions have now heavily invested in information technology and online communities to capture customers who are heavy users of the internet.

Facebook specifically, for example, is widely used by celebrities, organizations and even individuals who utilize it for different uses and gratifications. The Kenyan media, for instance, radio and TV have recently complimented the traditional call- in sessions with Facebook and twitter. Additionally interactions like the common opinion polls on Kenyan TV usually in the evening news are shifting to the use of Facebook, twitter and even reading comments posted on the station's Facebook page. Some famous politicians have also shown interest in using Facebook, Skype and Twitter to reach their followers or even seek new support from people whom they become friends with on Facebook, twitter and other social networks. Moreover, Lecturers in various universities use Skype to lecture students within or outside the university premises and Alumni of many universities converge on the social networking and catch up on issues touching their lives.

The greatest challenge, however, is that it is not easy to authenticate the identity of the persons or organizations on social network since the registration process is easy, free and open meaning anyone can call themselves anything including impersonation and still get friends.

What is clear is that more and more organizations are now embracing the use of online communities as a communication channel alongside other forms of communication. However there are many other organizations that are willing to utilize the online communities as a channel but are not convinced of its effectiveness and reliability.

Social media usage has benefitted from rapidly growing internet access, especially as increasing numbers of people use mobile phones for this purpose. Kenya already has a mobile penetration rate of around 50%, and the prices for smart phones keep falling, as do the data tariffs offered by mobile telecommunication companies: Safaricom currently offers virtually unlimited mobile internet access for KES10 a day, Yu's Peperusha service allows people to access the internet via SMS, i.e. users do not even need a Smartphone anymore to use Twitter, and Orange offer 50MB for KES 50 a week (Onsando, 2012).

Social networking is quickly becoming a key source of information for urban Kenyans. Consequently, in addition to straightforward online advertising, corporates also need to be aware of how they can use the digital chatter spaces to provide information about their goods and services, to build their brand, and also to counteract mentions on online media that are



detrimental to their image. Social media is changing the way people relate to brands, and more and more people are expecting to interact with brands (Kaigwa, 2010). Social media strategist frames the change that: “Think of it as a room with loads of people in it talking about a brand. The conversation is happening and will happen whether or not the owner is in the room. One might as well take part.”

General Benefits of Social Media Networks

Social networking has many benefits which include knowledge sharing, improved feedback/service, improved marketing and sales. From the organizations’ viewpoint, use of social network channel can enhance relationship to customers if social network is used to gather information from customers, analyze customer information, and respond to customers faster. Prior research on social network has mainly focused on individual perspectives such as the impact of social influence, social presence, behaviour and benefits. Social networking provides an opportunity to enhance relationship between customer and business. Therefore, it’s important to know how to manage social network site in details so that organization can use as the framework to manage social networks more effectively. The better social network site management can make customers feel impression and intention to use the networks. Only effective social network site management can enhance knowledge sharing among employees (Abedniya&Mahmouei, 2010).

According to Pate (2011) the usefulness of social networks is usually determined by their dimension. He further acquires that a network that is not open up to outsiders tends to not be incredibly valuable to its consumers, as they will be limited to what and who they by now know. On the other hand, a network that is open to outside members provides their members the opportunity to meet new people with quite perhaps new suggestions, and new and cultures. Thus, this affords organizations and businesses the possibility to marketplace their goods and solutions to a wider populace. Organizations have regarded the aggressive edge that can be gained, when using these networking internet sites to market their goods. These internet sites have been known to guide in investigation about rivals and competitors, offering data on the current and prospective employees of an organization.

Effects of Social networking on the Hotel Industry

Social networking relies on Internet and Web-based tools and services to enable anyone the ability to publish information on the Web (Computer Economics, 2010). The hotel industry has yet to identify the effectiveness of marketing through the use of social media. This is in spite of an abundance of advantages such as low cost investment, direct customer communication, brand communication and also it acts like a verbal evidence theory that people tend to believe when compared to commercial advertising (Hailey, 2010).

It appears that the hotel industry is very slow to gain momentum towards technology and is reputed to be reluctant to adopt technological advances. This implies that the industry has not leveraged on the power of social networking and integrates it with their marketing initiatives. With consumers becoming more immune to conventional advertising and communication channels, the hotel industry should turn to social media (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter) as a means of reaching out to their audience. Social Media has become very much part of everybody’s everyday life. In effect, social media is an alternative platform for them to enhance



their knowledge and widen their network of connection. But for the non-technological sophisticated users, they can learn from those whom are experienced in the IT aspect (Abreu, 2010).

It seems the hotel industry fears social media because they think that it could be detrimental to employee productivity or even fears that social media has the potential to damage the company's reputation. But social media engagement is essential to a business branding and communication yet it can also work against a business if used inappropriately. A social media policy can be developed to educate and provide better understanding for employees to keep within certain parameters and implications of their participation. Nevertheless, there is a need to explore and discover if social media can become the new "tool" for effective branding and marketing purposes.

There are a number of people who consider Social media as just a tool. It is a tool for connection and a medium for broadcasting. These social media tools are recommended to be used in the way they are designed. For example, Twitter and Facebook are used as marketing machines while YouTube functions more as a public relations tool since it is video sharing website. Similarly, LinkedIn is a professional networking tool; it is a site for business minded professionals to keep track of their contacts. According to Mowat (2010) the adoption of social media such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn has opened up a variety of avenues and opportunities to listen to the hotel guest. Owning a website is a form of marketing strategy; there has been a significant increase in marketing over the Internet these days.

The parameters of social networking websites possess several unique implications for the hotel industry including guests, staff, and management. These sites provide a platform for a rating system that can be used to generate, monitor, and evaluate reputation and image of the business. Online consumer-generated content is perceived as highly credible and in fact, more so than information attributed to the hotel entity (Starkov&Mechoso, 2008).

The participation of hotels in online social networking has been shown to be a cost-effective means for interaction and engagement with potential clients. Participation in these websites provides businesses with direct access to active users without the need to adding any additional hardware, or software. A social networking site that is easily accessible, straightforward, and appealing enables participants to become engaged in unique ways. It comes as no surprise that many hotels, restaurants and travel business have entered the social network space. Hotel businesses are proactively interacting with their customers by coming up with innovative customized solutions and much responsive and prompt customer service (Kasavana, Nusair, &Teodosic, 2010). Online consumer reviews play a big part in the choice of hotel and travel consumers make today.

With a rise in the number of social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, consumers are given an opportunity to look up reviews by other real consumers; the way information is perceived today has changed considerably. Making a unique social network that allows guests to create a profile and share opinions, feelings, stories and even photos can be a source of competitive advantage or disadvantage. If a guest decides to participate in an online network, shares a testimonial or recounts an experience or downloads content, others in the network are



likely to be affected by the opinion of the postings. More so than the content contained at a company specific or industry related website (Green, 2009). Another networking and communication tool that has become popular is blogging. The Travel and Hotels today are faced with consequences that blogs have not only positive impacts but also negative ones, if not managed properly (Thevenot, 2007). This is also because any individual can upload content in the form of images, audio or video for others to respond and comment, which forms the basis of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 has given popularity to user generated content where information is gathered from different online sources all of which collaborate to form the final source (Cox, Burgess, Sellitto, & Bultjens, 2009). An effective means to benefit from this trend is to carefully follow the comments that are posted relating to your business. Research has proven that hotels that engage their customers via social media get their customers to spend more, have higher repeat clientele, and get more referrals from their guests. However good, bad, or ugly, it is vital that no comment goes unnoticed because for every benefit a hotel rakes in with positive feedback, suggestions and tracking consumers it can be on the receiving end of unfair criticism and negative publicity if it leaves important issues unaddressed (Kasavana, 2008).

Effects of social media networks on brand awareness

Social marketing provides visibility and awareness for the brand; this is the awareness that is essential to convert potential customers to loyal customers eventually. The secret is to create a thematic content that can lead to an effective marketing campaign. This move will generate brand awareness and the brand will be top of mind with the consumers if they decide to buy the product or services. For example, on 25th February 2010, Sony reported that Sony Vaio's Twitter account had achieved over £1 million in sales. Therefore Sony sees Twitter as a viable sales platform (Wares, 2010). Another success story through the use of Twitter is by the third-largest maker of PC, Dell, which reported that its promotions on Twitter have helped generate more than \$6.5 million in orders for PCs, accessories and software (Guglielmo, 2009).

Social media keeps the customers stimulated and involved. When a company gets their customers involved and engaged, it leads to lasting working relationships with organizations. The level of customer support increases with the use of social media since it is personal and interactive. In the event of an unfortunate situation, social media may serve as a catalyst to turn this situation into an opportunity for a company to extend their services and go the extra mile to reverse the negative feeling.

Reputation management is a construe component of online activity for organizations with plenty of internet users, especially their customers. Whereas some organizations utilising the internet are cautious to project themselves in a way that suits specific audiences, other internet users embrace a more open approach. For instance, a report by Deloitte, titled 'Hospitality 2015' states that social media and new technology trends are playing the key role over the next five years towards the growth in the hospitality industry. With millions of consumers having internet access around the globe, these numbers are expected to increase by 50% in year 2015 (Deloitte, 2010). Nevertheless, the growth of social media can be positive for consumers but it can be bad news or an opportunity for hotel operators. Jeremy Wagstaff, a commentator on technology has shared that the most effective way to get satisfactory service these days is to tweet about how bad it is. Since hospitality is a leisure industry, social media may act as a disaster item for one's brand (Wagstaff, 2010).



Conceptual frame work

Independent variables

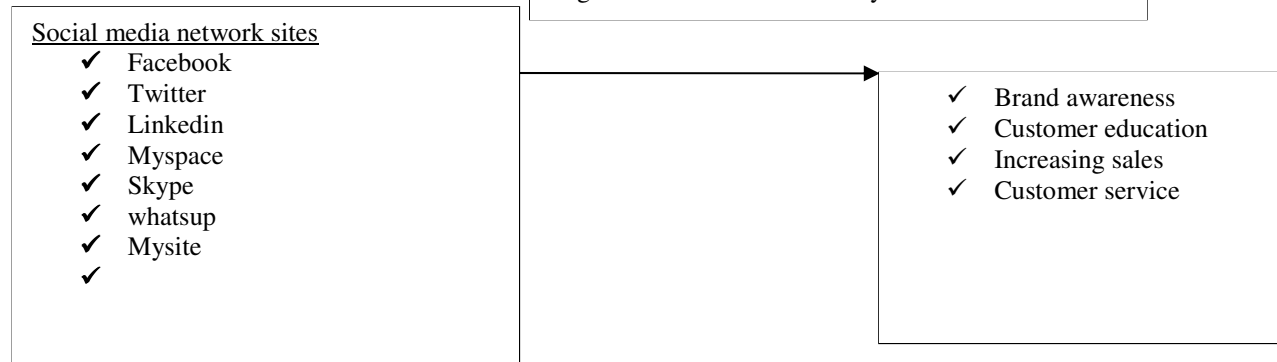


Figure 2: Conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Kothari, 2004). This research employed a descriptive research design. This method was appropriate for the study since the study involved collecting data regarding values, behaviour, experiences and attitudes of the population under study as well as answering questions on their status, it’s a survey of people who have had practical experience with the problem to be studied.

Population and Sampling Procedure

Population of the Study

According to Kothari (2004), a statistical population is the complete set of all items in the researcher’s field of inquiry. The target population is defined as all individuals, objects or things that the researcher can reasonably generalize his or her findings to (Mugenda, 2008).The target population comprised the twenty one hotels in NakuruTown, Kenya. The study considered only the permanent employees as they provided informative details regarding their work. There were 977 employees permanently employed in these hotels as shown in Appendix I.

Sample and sampling procedure

The sample size will consist of employees permanently employed in the two, three and four star-rated hotels. In order to pick the hotels for the study, stratified proportionate sampling procedure has been used. There are 13 two star hotels, 6 three star hotels and 2 four star hotels in NakuruTown. According to Gay (1976), a sample of between ten to thirty percent of the total population is adequate in large population while twenty percent above of the total population is commendable in small population. 30 % of the hotels in each group will be used. As such, 1 hotel was picked from the four star category; 2 from the three star and 4 hotels selected from the 2 star category. A total of nine hotels were picked. This represented a 30% of the total number of the hotels in each category namely 2 star, 3 star and 4 star hotels. Each hotel from the nine was picked at random using the balloting method. In these hotels, the total number of employees is 363. From this total population, the Slovin’s formula was used to determine the sample size. A sample of 190 employees was needed to accurately represent the population in question.

The formula used is:



$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where: n = sample size

N = population size

E = margin of error * desired

Hence:

$$n = 363 / 1 + (0.05)^2$$

$$n = 363 / 1.9075 = 190$$

$$n = 190$$

Table 3.1 shows the various representations from each hotel.

Table 3.1 Sample of Hotels

Name of hotel	Classification	Number of employees	sample
Capital hill	2 star	28	15
Waterbuck	2 star	64	33
Kunste	2 star	33	17
Jumuia	2 star	51	27
Chester	3 star	40	21
Bontana	3 star	63	33
Merica	4 star	84	44
Total		363	190

The proportionate sampling technique will be used to select one hundred and ninety participants who will serve as respondents chosen from the employees of each category across the hotels that constitute the sample.

Data Collection

This study adopted the use of both structured and unstructured questionnaires to gather in-depth information from the respondents. The justification of using the questionnaire was to allow the respondents adequate time to think about their responses, being focused and guided by the questions. The questionnaire was therefore developed from the literature review and organized on the basis of background information of the respondents and the research objectives. This ensured relevance of the research problem. The questions had been tailored to determine the use of social media network sites in 2 stars, 3 star and 4 star rated hotels in NakuruTown.

Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

In consultation with the supervisors, the researcher developed a questionnaire based on the research objectives. A pre- test was conducted before the main research work commence. The pre-test was conducted on 10 respondents who were not part of the final sample. This allowed any modification in the questionnaire before the samewere distributed to the respondents. It also ensured the reliability and the validity of the instrument. In this study, for instance, the researcher hoped to find out the effects of the use of social media network sites in the hotel industry in NakuruTown.

Data collection procedure

Data for this study was collected using a questionnaire. Prior to visiting the hotels under investigation, the researcher planned for the most appropriate timings of the respondents in order to fill the questionnaire. This ensured that, their work schedules were not affected. After administering the questionnaire, the respondentswere given at least two days to respond. The



researcher then visited the hotels under the study on several occasions for a follow-up on the research questionnaires and collecting them.

Data Analysis

For data to be properly interpreted and understood it must be processed or analyzed. Data analysis is the process that begins after data collection and goes all the way up to the point of interpreting the results. The data received was in both qualitative and quantitative forms since this research employed triangulation (use of both qualitative and quantitative methods). Questionnaires were coded and fed into the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) for analysis. The data was later presented in tables, figures and charts form.

Results

Response Rate

The target sample size of the study was 190 respondents. The researcher was able to collect back 152 questionnaires out of the 190 questionnaires issued. This represented a 80% response rate. There were several reasons for the unreturned questionnaires including staff that had proceeded for leave, staff not at their work places at the time of questionnaire collections, respondents who had misplaced the questionnaire and respondents who were not willing to participate in the study. The collected questionnaires were further analyzed to remove inconsistencies in the responses and eliminate partially filled questionnaires. Out of the 152 questionnaires that were collected, a further 34 questionnaires were eliminated due to various reasons; 22 questionnaires due to inconsistent responses and 12 questionnaires due to incomplete questionnaires. One hundred and eighteen questionnaires were thus analyzed representing a 62.1% of the sample size. The analyzed questionnaires are deemed representative of the population under study.

Respondents' Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents included the respondent's age group, level of education, job role, and length of service in the hotel industry. The background information will also capture the level of social media usage among the respondents' hotel and the different social platforms used by the different hotels.

Respondent's Age Group

The respondent's age group was measured in five categories that are 18-25 years, 26-30 years, 31-35 years, 36-40 years and 41-45 years age groups. The age group is critical in the determination of the usage of the social media as a younger age group are likely to be more digital savvy and hence influence the usage of the social media in their workplace. The results indicate that a majority of the workers 61% of the respondents were in the 26-30 years age group.

Table 9 Respondents' distribution by age

Age Group	Frequency	Per cent (%)
18-25 Years	20	16.9
26-30 Years	72	61.0
31-35 Years	13	11.0
36-40 Years	7	5.9
41-45 Years	6	5.1
Total	118	100.0



Respondent's Level of Education

The level of education is a major determinant on the aptitude to use the social media especially when considered in conjunction with the age factor. Respondents with post-secondary education level would be relatively exposed to social media working and hence easily adapt to its usage in work environment. The respondent's level of education was categorized into four categories that is KCPE level, `KCSE level, Diploma Level, Graduate Level, and post graduate level. A majority of the respondents at 45.8% had a degree level of education, 28.8% diploma level education and 20.3% KCSE level education and only 5.1% had postgraduate level of education.

Table 10 Education Distribution of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
KCSE Level	24	20.3
Diploma Level	34	28.8
Graduate	54	45.8
Post Graduate	6	5.1
Total	118	100.0

Respondent's Job Role

The job role is a critical role in the respondent's usage of the social media. Job roles that are skewed towards information technology, customer service, complaint handling, customer onboarding, marketing and public relations are more likely to be involved in the social media as part of their job functionalities compared to other job roles. There were 12 categories in relation to job roles that are Front Office and Operations, Food and Beverage, Finance and Administration, Human Resource and Food Production. Others are management, health and safety, housekeeping and laundry, maintenance and repair, security, procurement and information technology.

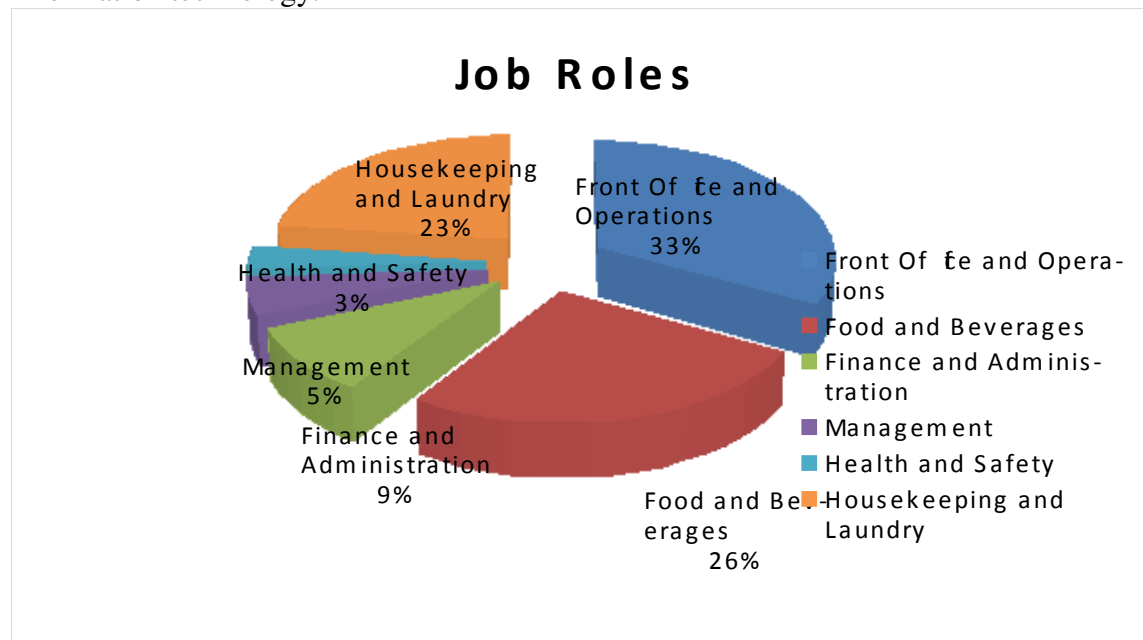


Figure 0.1 Respondent’s Job Role

Respondent’s Length of Service in Hotel Industry

The length of time worked in the hotel industry was divided into four categories that is 0-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years and over 15 years. 72.9% of the respondents indicated that they had worked in the hotel industry for less than five years while 16.1% indicated that they had worked 6-10 years. Only a small fraction of the employees who had worked for 11-15 years and none of the employees indicated that they had worked for over 15 years.

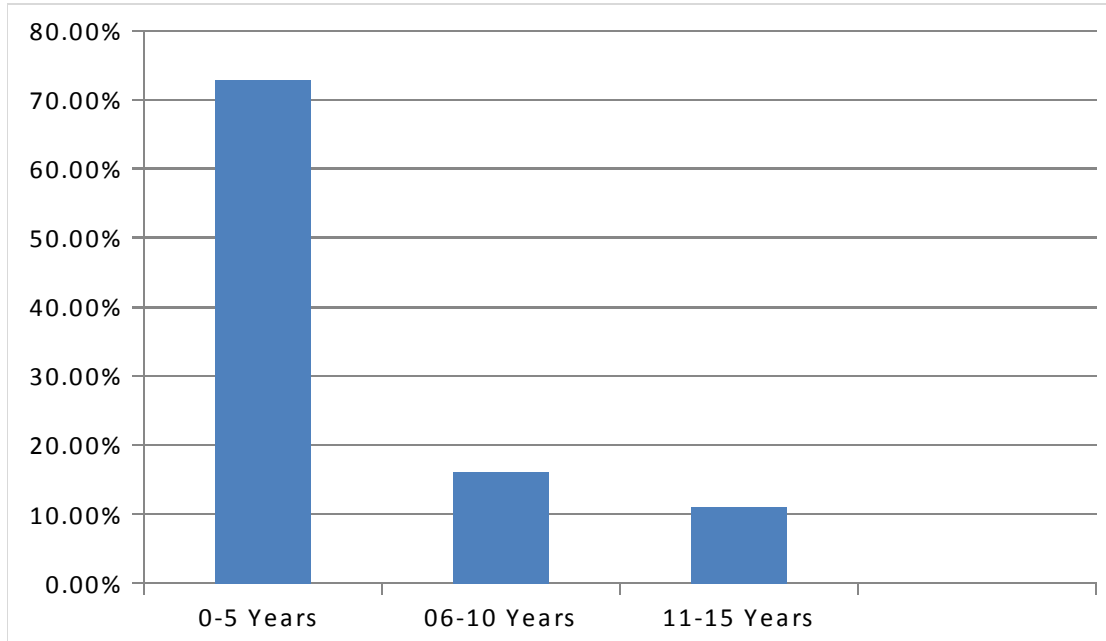


Figure 0.2 Respondent’s Length of Service in Hotel Industry

Usage of Social Media in Hotel Industry

The usage of social media is important for any business due to the number of target market as well as existing customer using the social media platforms. In this context, the study revealed that a high frequency of 94.1% of the respondents used social media. The high percentage can also be explained by the fact that the social media has come of age where a large percentage of the population is well versed with the usage of social media in their private lives. The high number of cheap smart phones with internet connection capabilities is also contributing to the familiarization with internet usage in general and to some extent the social media. It is thus easy for social media users in social lives to use the same for their professional needs.

Table 11 Social Media Usage in hotel industry

Does the hotel use any social media?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	111	94.1
No	7	5.9



Does the hotel use any social media?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	111	94.1
No	7	5.9
Total	118	100.0

An analysis between age and the usage of the social media indicated that age factored in strongly in the usage of social media. All the respondents below 30 years of age utilized social media platforms while the higher age groups such as 31-35 years, 36-40 years, and 41-45 years has some respondents who didn't utilize social media platforms. The respondents constituted 7.69%, 28.57% and 67% of the 31-35 years, 36-40 years, and 41-45 years age groups. Therefore, a huge percentage of the older age groups is not utilizing social media platforms. This can partially be attributed to lack of interaction and exposure on the usage of the social media platform as the some of the platforms have only exploded in usage in the recent past.

Table 12 The influence of age on social media usage

The influence of age on social media usage	Does the hotel use any social media?	Total	
		Yes	No
What is your age group?	18-25 Years	20	0
	26-30 Years	72	0
	31-35 Years	12	1
	36-40 Years	5	2
	41-45 Years	2	4
Total		111	7

Prevalence of Social Media Platforms in the Hotel

Different social media platforms have different target groups, different dynamics in terms of usage and different ease of use among different social demographic factors. For example, the face book is relatively easy to use and is versatile to accommodate text (long and short) and images. Face book is also relatively well known among different age groups and hence its popularity. This is reflected in the prevalence for the usage of the social media platforms where up to 66.9% of the respondents indicated that they used the social media. This compares with 38.1%, 16.1%, 5.1%, 44.9%, 26.3%, 31.4%, 9.3% and 11% who used twitter, instalgram, my site, Google Plus, you tube, Skype, my space and LinkedIn respectively. Google Plus was the second most popular social media-networking platform used by the respondents. This can be attributed to the relative familiarity on the usage of the Google plus due to familiarity with the use of the sister product that is Gmail. Twitter is also relatively popular due to its uptake among the youth for micro blogging purposes. There is low usage of social media platforms that have low popularity among the general population or are more inclined towards niche target market.





Table 13 Prevalence of the Social Media Platforms in the hotel industry

Does your hotel use the following social media platforms?		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	Yes	79	66.9
	No	39	33.1
	Total	118	100.0
Twitter	Yes	45	38.1
	No	73	61.9
	Total	118	100.0
Instalgram	Yes	19	16.1
	No	99	83.9
	Total	118	100.0
My Site	Yes	6	5.1
	No	112	94.9
	Total	118	100.0
Google Plus	Yes	53	44.9
	No	65	55.1
	Total	118	100.0
You Tube	Yes	31	26.3
	No	87	73.7
	Total	118	100.0
Skype	Yes	37	31.4
	No	81	68.6
	Total	118	100.0
MySpace	Yes	11	9.3
	No	107	90.7
	Total	118	100.0
LinkedIn	Yes	13	11.0
	No	105	89.0
	Total	118	100.0

The Use of Social Networking Media as a Marketing Tool

The social networking media platforms can be used for the marketing purposes through provision of a platform to connect with customers in cyberspace. There is also an element of the ability to reach a wide target market at a relatively low cost compared to traditional marketing tool. A high percentage of the respondents utilized the social media for marketing purposes that is 82.2%.

Table 14 Use of Social Media for Marketing Purposes



Does Your hotel use Social Media for Marketing Purposes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	97	82.2
No	21	17.8
Total	118	100.0

The Usage of the Specific Social Media Platforms for Marketing Purposes

One of the major usages of the social media in organizations in service industry such as hotels is marketing purposes. However, different social media platforms are utilized to different levels by the hotels. The usage of the particular social media platform is influenced by its usage among general population in social lives and the extent to which the platform is customized for marketing aspects. For example, the face book offers a wide variety of combination of text and images that is ideal for marketing purposes. The hotels can be able to highlight their products, ambience of their facilities, different amenities available in their hotels. In addition to these, customers and prospective customers can make comments, and ask for clarifications.

To measure the usage of the different social platforms for marketing purposes, the respondents were asked the extent in which the specific social media platform was utilized. The face book and twitter had the highest usage for marketing purposes that is also reflective of their general popularity in day-to-day lives. Up to 28% of the respondents indicated that the face book and Google plus were frequently used for marketing purposes. This was followed closely by 22% of the respondents who indicated that they utilized twitter for marketing purposes. Some of the social media platforms such as my site, my space and LinkedIn did not have any of the respondents indicating that they frequently used the social media for marketing purposes.



Table 15 The Usage of Different Social Media Platforms for Marketing Purposes

To what extent are the following Social Media Platforms used for marketing		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	Frequently Used	33	28.0
	Rarely Used	25	21.2
	Not Used at all	42	35.6
	Don't Know	18	15.3
	Total	118	100.0
Twitter	Frequently Used	26	22.0
	Rarely Used	15	12.7
	Not Used at all	55	46.6
	Don't Know	22	18.6
	Total	118	100.0
Instalgram	Frequently Used	3	2.5
	Rarely Used	10	8.5
	Not Used at all	68	57.6
	Don't Know	37	31.4
	Total	118	100.0
My Site			
Google plus	Frequently Used	34	28.8
	Rarely Used	9	7.6
	Not Used at all	36	30.5
	Don't Know	39	33.1
	Total	118	100.0
YouTube	Frequently Used	13	11.0
	Rarely Used	13	11.0
	Not Used at all	45	38.1
	Don't Know	47	39.8
	Total	118	100.0



Table 16 The Usage of Different Social Media Platforms for Marketing Purposes

To what extent are the following Social Media Platforms used for marketing			
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Skype	Frequently Used	10	8.5
	Rarely Used	11	9.3
	Not Used at all	44	37.3
	Don't Know	53	44.9
	Total	118	100.0
MySpace	Rarely Used	13	11.0
	Not Used at all	58	49.2
	Don't Know	47	39.8
	Total	118	100.0
LinkedIn	Rarely Used	7	5.9
	Not Used at all	48	40.7
	Don't Know	63	53.4
	Total	118	100.0

Social Media Networking Forms used in the hotel industry

Different social media networking forms such as podcasts, blogs, micro blogs, face book posts, twitter feeds, you tube videos and skype. These different forms have their ease of usage, the potential audience reach and the kind of information they can conduct which influences their usage. The podcasts are ideal for the hotel management, founders, and key staff such as chefs to do videos while providing background commentary. This is a critical form of marketing in the context of the potential customer of existing customer getting a view of the hotel or hotel services from an authoritative figure in the hotel ideally who is well known in the public arena. In this context, 13.6% and 22.0% of the respondents indicated that they “frequently used “and “rarely used” the podcasts respectively in marketing. Therefore, a cumulative figure of 35.6% used podcasts for marketing purposes. Twitter feeds were well used for marketing purposes with up to 21.2% of the respondents indicating that they frequently used it. Other social media platforms used frequently included face book posts (18.6%), and you tube videos (8.5%). Blogs, micro blogs, and skype were lowly used mainly due to the fact that they would require a higher creativity input to bring up the marketing aspects of a hotel.



Table 17 The use of different social media networking forms for marketing purposes

Which of the following social media networking forms is used in your hotel for marketing purposes?		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Podcasts	Frequently Used	16	13.6
	Rarely Used	26	22.0
	Not Used at all	55	46.6
	Don't Know	21	17.8
	Total	118	100.0
Blogs	Rarely Used	8	6.8
	Not Used at all	95	80.5
	Don't Know	15	12.7
	Total	118	100.0
Micro Blogs	Frequently Used	3	2.5
	Rarely Used	13	11.0
	Not Used at all	68	57.6
	Don't Know	34	28.8
	Total	118	100.0
Face book posts	Frequently Used	22	18.6
	Rarely Used	13	11.0
	Not Used at all	55	46.6
	Don't Know	28	23.7
	Total	118	100.0
Twitter feeds	Frequently Used	25	21.2
	Rarely Used	8	6.8
	Not Used at all	45	38.1
	Don't Know	40	33.9
	Total	118	100.0
You Tube Videos	Frequently Used	10	8.5
	Rarely Used	8	6.8
	Not Used at all	55	46.6
	Don't Know	45	38.1
	Total	118	100.0
Skype	Frequently Used	4	3.4
	Rarely Used	15	12.7
	Not Used at all	60	50.8
	Don't Know	39	33.1



Which of the following social media networking forms is used in your hotel for marketing purposes?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Podcasts	Frequently Used	16
	Rarely Used	26
	Not Used at all	55
	Don't Know	21
Total	118	100.0

The Objectives of Social Media Marketing

Engagement in social media for the marketing purposes has certain objectives in which the hotels aim to achieve within the marketing sub themes. These sub themes include introduction of new products/services, networking with potential customers, publicising products and elaboration on product features. Networking with potential customers was the major reason on why the hotels engaged in social media marketing as indicated by 83.9% of the respondents. Social media platforms by nature provide an avenue of diverse and large groups of people networking in the cyber space at their own convenience. The ability to engage each other in a virtual world is key where there is need for clarification on services offered and where there is need for validation on the product features by older users of the product or service. In this context, 77.1% of the respondents indicated that they used the social media platforms for the elaboration of the product features. This is closely linked to the use of the social media for publicising of existing products (61%) and introduction of new products/services (43.2%).

Table 18 Objectives of Social Media Marketing

What are the objectives of social media marketing?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Networking with potential customers	Yes	99
	No	19
	Total	118
Introduction of new products/services	Yes	51
	No	67
	Total	118
Elaboration on product features	Yes	91
	No	27
	Total	118
Publicising products	Yes	72
	No	46
	Total	118

The Use of Social Networking Media as a Brand Awareness Tool

There is high usage of the social media platforms for the purposes of brand awareness as indicated by 66.1% of the respondents.



Table 19 Use of social media for brand awareness

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Does your hotel use social networking sites for branding purposes? Yes	78	66.1
No	40	33.9
Total	118	100.0

The Usage of Different Social Media Platforms for Branding Purposes

Branding involves making the hotel know for certain aspects such as standards, quality service, and excellent customer experience amongst others with a view of standing out from the crowd. This may be through creating memorable experiences, unique experiences and evoking of positive emotional connection with users. In this context, the hotel may use photography, songs, audios, and text to create positive mental imagery of their institution, service and staff. Among the social media platforms highly used for this aspect include face book (44.1%) and twitter (22.9%). However, there is low usage of the social media platforms for branding purposes through instagram (3.4%), my site (4.2%), Google plus (6.8%), and my space (3.4%).

Table 20 Social Media platforms used for branding

To what extent are the following social media platform used for branding?		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	Frequently Used	52	44.1
	Rarely Used	6	5.1
	Not Used at all	45	38.1
	Don't Know	15	12.7
	Total	118	100.0
Twitter	Frequently Used	27	22.9
	Rarely Used	14	11.9
	Not Used at all	50	42.4
	Don't Know	27	22.9
	Total	118	100.0



Table 21 Social Media platforms used for branding (Continuation)

YouTube	Frequently Used	9	7.6
	Rarely Used	13	11.0
	Not Used at all	72	61.0
	Don't Know	24	20.3
	Total	118	100.0
LinkedIn	Rarely Used	7	5.9
	Not Used at all	79	66.9
	Don't Know	32	27.1
	Total	118	100.0
Skype	Frequently Used	12	10.2
	Rarely Used	19	16.1
	Not Used at all	61	51.7
	Don't Know	26	22.0
	Total	118	100.0
MySpace	Frequently Used	4	3.4
	Rarely Used	6	5.1
	Not Used at all	56	47.5
	Don't Know	52	44.1
	Total	118	100.0
My site	Rarely Used	5	4.2
	Not Used at all	86	72.9
	Don't Know	27	22.9
	Total	118	100.0
Google Plus	Frequently Used	8	6.8
	Rarely Used	18	15.3
	Not Used at all	65	55.1
	Don't Know	27	22.9
	Total	118	100.0
Instalgram	Frequently Used	4	3.4
	Rarely Used	12	10.2
	Not Used at all	80	67.8
	Don't Know	22	18.6
	Total	118	100.0

The forms in which the Social Media Platforms are used for branding

There are several ways in which the social media platforms are used for branding including discussion of the hotel culture, discussion of the hotel heritage, discussion of the product features, face book posts, twitter feeds and you tube videos. These forms have different ways in



enhancement of the brand image and suited to particular social media platforms. Discussion of the product features was the most commonly used means of creating brand awareness according to 66.9% of the respondent. The other used aspects for brand awareness include hotel heritage (43.2%), face book posts (46.6%), you tube videos (38.1%) and twitter feeds (25.4%).

Table 22 Aspects used to create brand awareness

Does your hotel engage in discussing the following aspects to create brand awareness?		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hotel Culture	Yes	23	19.5
	No	95	80.5
	Total	118	100.0
Hotel Heritage	Yes	51	43.2
	No	67	56.8
	Total	118	100.0
Product Features	Yes	79	66.9
	No	39	33.1
	Total	118	100.0
Facebook Posts	Yes	55	46.6
	No	63	53.4
	Total	118	100.0
Tweeter Feeds	Yes	30	25.4
	No	88	74.6
	Total	118	100.0
You Tube Videos	Yes	45	38.1
	No	73	61.9
	Total	118	100.0

The Brand Awareness Measurement Metrics

To determine on the effectiveness of the specific social media platforms in relations to creating brand awareness there is need for measurement metrics. These measurement metrics includes number of followers, mentions per period (times the brand is talked online for a given period), and inbound links that is the number of sites linking to the hotel site. The other metrics are the share of voice (number of times mentioned in comparison to the competition) and share of conversation that is number of times mentioned in conversations relevant to the industry. There is well usage of each of the metrics as evidenced by the responses that ranged from a low of 39.0% to 61.9%. The metrics used in order of popularity include share of voice (61.9%), share of conversation (55.9%), number of followers (55.1%), mentions per time (49.2%), and inbound links (39.0%).



Table 23 The extent use of brand awareness metric measures

To what extent does your hotel use the following brand awareness metric Measures		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Number of followers	Frequently Used	65	55.1
	Rarely Used	21	17.8
	Not Used at all	12	10.2
	Don't Know	20	16.9
	Total	118	100.0
The mentions per time period (times brand talked online for a given period)	Frequently Used	58	49.2
	Rarely Used	47	39.8
	Not Used at all	7	5.9
	Don't Know	6	5.1
	Total	118	100.0
Inbound Links (Number of Sites Linking to the Hotel Site)	Frequently Used	46	39.0
	Rarely Used	46	39.0
	Not Used at all	20	16.9
	Don't Know	6	5.1
	Total	118	100.0
Share of Voice (Number of Times mentioned in comparison to competition)	Frequently Used	73	61.9
	Rarely Used	27	22.9
	Not Used at all	6	5.1
	Don't Know	12	10.2
	Total	118	100.0
Share of Conversation i.e. number of times mentioned in conversations relevant to the hotel industry	Frequently Used	66	55.9
	Rarely Used	34	28.8
	Not Used at all	12	10.2
	Don't Know	6	5.1
	Total	118	100.0

The Use of Social Networking Media as an Information/Education Tool

There are various types of information that can be cascaded through the social media such as hotel location, hotel menu, amenities near the hotel, and hotel facilities information. The technical expertise of key staff and the hotel vision and mission are also discussed. All the respondents indicated that they discussed the hotel location. The other aspects cascaded through online measures included the hotel menu (66.1%), amenities approximately the hotel (72.9%), hotel facilities (82.2%), and technical expertise of key staff (50.0%).

Table 24 Information Cascaded through social media

Which information is cascaded through social media		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hotel Location	Yes	118	100.0



Which information is cascaded through social media		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hotel Menu	Yes	78	66.1
	No	40	33.9
	Total	118	100.0
Amenities in the vicinity of the hotel	Yes	86	72.9
	No	32	27.1
	Total	118	100.0
Hotel facilities information	Yes	97	82.2
	No	21	17.8
	Total	118	100.0
Technical Expertise of Key Staff	Yes	59	50.0
	No	59	50.0
	Total	118	100.0
Hotel Vision and Mission	Yes	85	72.0
	No	33	28.0
	Total	118	100.0

The Use of Social Networking Media for Sales Purposes

The usage of social media networking platforms for the purposes of sales is relatively limited at 39.8%. The low usage of social media for sales can be attributed to the fact that sales process needs a one on one persuasion in order for the potential customers to commit themselves.

Table 25 The Use of Social Networking Media for Sales Purposes

Does your hotel use social media for the purposes of sales?		Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Yes	47	39.8
	No	71	60.2
	Total	118	100.0

Prevalence of Social Media Platforms usage for Sales

The key attribute for the social media platform to be ideal for the usage of sales is the ability to have a one- on-one conversation as opposed to one-to-many conversation. This is because there is need for the personal touch for the potential customer to be convinced on the need buy the product. This convincing can only take place in a one-on-one conversation. In this context, social media platforms that had provision for one-on-one conversations such as face book through inbox and Google plus had high usage for sales purposes. In this context, face book had 35.6% popular usage for sales services while Google plus had 19.5% usage for sales oriented services.

Table 26 Platforms used for sales purposes



To what extent are the following platforms used for sales purposes		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	Frequently Used	42	35.6
	Rarely Used	16	13.6
	Not Used at all	54	45.8
	Don't Know	6	5.1
	Total	118	100.0
Twitter	Frequently Used	10	8.5
	Rarely Used	6	5.1
	Not Used at all	69	58.5
	Don't Know	33	28.0
	Total	118	100.0
You Tube	Frequently Used	15	12.7
	Rarely Used	4	3.4
	Not Used at all	65	55.1
	Don't Know	34	28.8
	Total	118	100.0
Skype	Frequently Used	11	9.3
	Rarely Used	11	9.3
	Not Used at all	86	72.9
	Don't Know	10	8.5
	Total	118	100.0
MySpace	Frequently Used	4	3.4
	Not Used at all	75	63.6
	Don't Know	39	33.1
	Total	118	100.0



Table 27 Platforms used for sales purposes (Continuation)

To what extent are the following platforms used for sales purposes		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Instalgram	Frequently Used	6	5.1
	Rarely Used	4	3.4
	Not Used at all	79	66.9
	Don't Know	29	24.6
	Total	118	100.0
Skype	Frequently Used	1	.8
	Rarely Used	5	4.2
	Not Used at all	77	65.3
	Don't Know	35	29.7
	Total	118	100.0
Google Plus	Frequently Used	23	19.5
	Rarely Used	8	6.8
	Not Used at all	75	63.6
	Don't Know	12	10.2
	Total	118	100.0

Efficiency of Different Social Media Platforms for Sales Purposes

The sales related work is comprised of different components` including sales prospecting, closing of sales, clarification of the service/product features, referrals and networking and market intelligence gathering. The social media were ideal for the sales prospecting (71.2%), market intelligence gathering (66.9%) and, referrals and networking (62.7%).



Table 28 The efficiency of social media platforms

How do you rank the efficiency of social media platforms in the following aspects		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sales Prospecting	Very Effective	33	28.0
	Effective	51	43.2
	Ineffective	13	11.0
	Don't Know	21	17.8
	Total	118	100.0
Closing Sales	Effective	26	22.0
	Ineffective	92	78.0
	Total	118	100.0
Clarification of Service/Product Features	Very Effective	59	50.0
	Effective	52	44.1
	Ineffective	7	5.9
	Total	118	100.0
Referrals and Networking	Very Effective	74	62.7
	Effective	44	37.3
	Total	118	100.0
Market Intelligence Gathering	Very Effective	79	66.9
	Effective	39	33.1
	Total	118	100.0

The Use of Social Networking Media for Customer Service

The social media platform is also used for customer service aspects especially complaints resolution. A majority of the firms have embraced social media as a means of complaints management in order to counter the effects of customer's complaints getting into a wider group. In this context, up to 38.1% of the respondents indicated that they utilized the social media for the customer service purposes.

Table 29 The usage of social media for customer service purposes

Does your hotel use social media for the purposes of customer service?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	45	38.1
No	73	61.9
Total	118	100.0

The social media platforms are used for different aspects in relations to the customer service purposes e.g. complaints capturing, complaints resolution, compliments capturing, sharing of best practices and customer experience. A majority of the respondents (44.9%) indicated that they utilized the social media for complaints capturing. This is in tandem with the recent usage



of the social media such as twitter to launch complaints and the notion that these complaints are attended to much faster than those handed through the traditional means.

Table 30 Efficiency of different Social Media networking platforms

How do you rank social media networking efficiency in the following aspects		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Complaints Capturing	Very Effective	53	44.9
	Effective	25	21.2
	Ineffective	27	22.9
	Don't Know	13	11.0
	Total	118	100.0
Complaints Resolution	Very Effective	52	44.1
	Effective	45	38.1
	Ineffective	14	11.9
	Don't Know	7	5.9
	Total	118	100.0
Compliments Capturing	Very Effective	45	38.1
	Effective	46	39.0
	Ineffective	20	16.9
	Don't Know	7	5.9
	Total	118	100.0
Sharing of Best Practices on Services/Products on Service	Very Effective	53	44.9
	Effective	25	21.2
	Ineffective	27	22.9
	Don't Know	13	11.0
	Total	118	100.0
Customer Experience /Initiatives	Very Effective	52	44.1
	Effective	45	38.1
	Ineffective	14	11.9
	Don't Know	7	5.9
	Total	118	100.0
Customer On boarding	Very Effective	45	38.1
	Effective	46	39.0
	Ineffective	20	16.9
	Don't Know	7	5.9
	Total	118	100.0



Conclusion

There is generally high usage of the social media at personal level for the respondent that has not translated fully into the professional context. The face book and twitter social media are the highest used social media platforms, which closely mirrors the day to day social usage of the platforms. There is evidence of the basic usage of the social media platforms in diverse basic ways but lack of digital strategy as would have been noticed by more pronounced usage of particular platforms for given aspects.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations as a result of the study

- i. There is overreliance on the face book, twitter and Google plus while the hotels should enhance the usage of diverse social media platforms in order to capture niche markets.
- ii. There is need to have clear strategies on the specific usage of particular social media platforms in order to maximize the gains that can be derived from them.

Suggestions for further research

Future scholars on the subject matter can explore the impact among guests in terms of sales, branding, information awareness as a result of social media usage by the hotels.

REFERENCES

- Abreu, E. (2010). Role of media in social media examined at conference; njsocialmedia.com presents June 18 program in somerse. Retrieved from <http://www.thealternativepress.com/article.asp?news=13352&Role-of-Media-in-Social-media-Examined-at-Conference;-NJSocialMedia.com-Presents-June-18-Program-in-Somerset> on 15th March 2014.
- Cheryl L. Coyle and Heather Vaughn (2008). *Social networking: Communication*, Bell labs Technical; Wiley Interscience.
- Collymore B. (2012). CEO, Safaricom Kenya: use of social networks in the mobile operators in Kenya, Safaricomnews letter.
- Computer Economics. (2010). Social media adoption is low despite interest. Retrieved from <http://www.computereconomics.com/article.cfm?id=1519>.
- Cornelius, D. (2008), "Are social networking sites knowledge management?", available at: <http://kmspace.blogspot.com/2008/04/are-social-networking-sites-knowledge.html> (accessed 15 March 2014).
- Gordon, J. (2010). The coming change in social media business applications: Separating the biz from the buzz. London: Social Media Today.
- Green, C.E. (2009), "Sensible marketing in tough times", Hospitality Upgrade Magazine, March 1
- Guglielmo, C. (2009). Dell rings up \$6.5 million in sales using Twitter (update2). Retrieved from http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=akXzD_6YNHCK. On 15 March 2014.
- Hailey, L. (2010). The importance of social media marketing today. Retrieved from <http://ezinearticles.com/?The-Importance-of-Social-Media-Marketing-Today&id=3873989>, on 15th March 2014.
- Human Capital Institute (2010). Being sociable can be good for business: But don't get left behind by the technology-savvy, *Strategic Direction*, Vol. 26 (9) 5 – 7.



- Jones.M, (2008).Leveraging social networking sites to generate business.*Strictly Business Journal*, vol 3(6)16-22.
- Kaplan, A.M. &Haenlein, M. (2010).Users of the world, unites! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Journal of Business Horizons*, 53, 59–68.
- Kasavana, M. L., Nusair, K., &Teodosic, K. (2010).Online social networking: Redefining the human web.*Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 1(1), 68-82.
- Kasavana, M.L. (2008). The unintended consequences of social media and the hospitality industry. Hospitality Upgrade Fall 2008. Retrieved from http://www.hospitalityupgrade.com/_files/File_Articles/HUFall08_Kasavana_SocialMediaandHospitality.pdf on 15th March 2013.
- Kinyua, R. (2012).Role of technology in building sustainable competitive advantage: A case study of hotels in Nakuru.Matsers project, Kabarak University
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: methods & techniques*.India: New Age International Publishers.
- Kaigwa, M. (2010).Kenya Corporate on social Media; *business, business, East Africa, ICT, KENYA*; Business daily.
- Maxwell Chi, (2011).Security Policy and Social Media Use; SANS Institute.*Revolution or Evolution?*Alcatel-Lucent.
- Mckay, L. (2008),CRM's a Social Animal: *On the Scene Web 2.0 Journal of Customer relationship management*, 14 (July).
- Mowat, B. (2010). Social media: Is it a friend, or foe? Canadian Travel Press , 42 (26), 8-22. Retrieved from Hospitality & Tourism Complete database on 15th March 2014.
- Mugenda, O., & Mugenda, G. A. (2003). *Research method: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Nairobi: Acts Press.
- Onsando M. (2012). *Kenya Corporate on Social Media*, Business Daily News.
- Ouma M. (2010). *Trend of Social media in Kenyan Organizations*.East Africa newsletter.
- Robin E., Jos, V., Hillegersberg and Theo H. (2001). Social media and political participation; are facebook, Twitter and YouTube Democratizing our political system? Page 26.
- Safko, L., & Brake, D.K. (2009).*The social media bible: tactics, tools and strategies for business success*.New Jersey: John Wiley & sons Inc.
- Starkov, M. &Mechoso, M. (2008), Best Practices on Monitoring Hotel Review Sites, Hospitality eBusiness Strategies, New York, NY.
- Thevenot, G. (2007). Blogging as a social media.*Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 7(3-4).
- Wagstaff, J. (2010, June 29). *Personal technology: Why hotels should avoid social media*. Retrieved from <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/06/28/personal-technology-why-hotels-should-avoid-social-media.html> on 15th March 2014.
- Yankee, S. (2008). Social Networking in the 21st Century. *Strictly Business Journal*, 23 pp 8.