Marketing Strategies and the Performance of SMEs in Ghana

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Abstract

Marketing strategies constitute one of the key functional strategies that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) adopt to enhance performance. This study examines the effect of marketing strategies on the performance of SMEs in Ghana in terms of their profitability, brand awareness and market share. Data was collected through a survey research methodology. 363 SMEs were sampled from a population of 900 through stratified random sampling. Hypotheses were tested to ascertain the relationship between marketing strategies and performance. The overall results of this study suggest that strategic marketing are drivers of organizational positioning in a dynamic environment, and that it helps to enhance the development of new product/service for existing markets. Results of the study also reveal that the SMEs in Ghana mostly use traditional form of marketing to reach potential customers and also to entrench their brands. Interestingly, only few of them use modern technology in marketing their product and services; the SMEs should thus adopt more modern technological marketing tool such as mobile marketing to improve on their performance. The findings provide valuable insights for decision makers and SMEs owners on the relationship between strategic marketing and performance of SMEs in a globalized developing economy context.

Keywords: Marketing strategies, strategic marketing, performance, SMEs, developing economy

1. Introduction

In the current competitive business environment, marketing can be seen as a matrix of business activities organized to plan, produce, price, promote, distribute goods, service, and ideas for the satisfaction of relevant customers and clients. Achumba &Osuagwu (1994) posit that marketing is important for the success of any organization, whether service- or product-oriented. Chilya et al (2006) confirm that marketing performance is central to success in today's fast moving competitive markets, and measuring marketing's performance is critical to managing it effectively.

The process of communicating the value of a product or service to customers, for the purpose of selling the product or service has become complex in recent times due to globalization. There is also the need to exceed the expectation of customers since satisfied customers : (i)are the organization's least expensive customers; (ii)buy again and again; (iii) talk favourably about the business, which means free advertising; (iv) pay less attention to competition and (iv)tend to buy new products or equipment lines an organization may add later(Kotler,1988).

As a result of this, organizations including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have realized the need to institute strategies that will help them gain an in depth understanding of the market, particularly with regards to their competitors and customers. Organizations achieve this objective effectively by considering the total marketing environment and its impacts on a company or product or service (Acker, 1988).

The role of SMEs in economic development cannot be underestimated. According to Subrahmanya et.al (2010), policy makers, economists, and business experts admit that SMEs are the drivers of economic growth as they have contributed to over 50% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provided over 60% of the total employment in so-called developed, high income countries.

Developing nations have also benefited from SMEs. In Ghana for instance, the sector accounts for about 70% of industrial employment and well over 50 % of the country's GDP (Abor & Biekpe, 2007). In spite of their invaluable contributions to economic growth, SMEs increasingly face fierce competition from larger firms due to emerging technologies, innovation and relaxing trade barriers. The situation makes it difficult for the SMEs to survive or maintain their business position in the local and global market (UNCTAD,2004:5).

Although it can be argued that the performance of SMEs is adversely affected in the global market, most of the enterprises in this sector in Africa and Ghana in particular have, in their own small way, adopted some marketing strategies that have enabled them survive the stiff competition over the years.

As pertained in most developing countries, indigenous Ghanaian SMEs also experience lack of trained manpower, poor infrastructural development, lack of adequate or sufficient capital, and also face intense competition from superior foreign companies (Li et al., 2000).

More importantly, owners of these businesses have understood the role that marketing strategies play in enhancing the performance of contemporary companies (Taiwo, 2010). The SMEs in Ghana have also recognize

this need and now incorporate various market mix elements to improve their market outreach/ coverage, new product ratio, price positioning, competitive orientation,etc to survive and grow (Johne & Davies, 2002).

Although strategic marketing places a vital role in the performance of SMEs (as revealed and discussed in this study), many research efforts in the area of marketing practices in developing economies have emphasized on macro issues and the management structure of an organization as the measure of performance in terms of market share, growth, efficiency and well-being of consumers and clients (Samli & Kaynak 1994).According to Akinyele (2011), the static and macro analysis of marketing practices in developing economies, minimizes the impact of marketing environment on the achievement of performance measures.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the marketing strategies of the SMEs in Ghana and their market performance. Specifically, this study aims at :(i) to identify the types of marketing strategies adopted by SMEs in Ghana, (ii) to ascertain the market performance of the SMEs and (iii) to examine the relationship between the marketing strategy and performance.

Particularly in the era of globalization, the study also examines the challenges that the SMEs encounter and further suggests ways that the SMEs can overcome these challenges and become successful.

The study fits into the quest to find a more efficient and effective way of improving the performance of SMEs with the view of limiting the effect of globalization on SMEs. The findings of the study is also intended to expand the body of knowledge in respect of the application of strategic marketing to the SMEs sector and also serve as a guide to policy makers to implement policies that will help improve the performance of businesses in the sector.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews existing literature on the impact of technology and marketing strategies on the performance of SMEs. A review of the literature did not only helped in placing the study clearly within a larger context , but also assisted in providing a framework for establishing a benchmark for comparing results with other findings (Bruce, 1994; Creedy, 2008; Creswell, 2009).

2.1 SMEs

The National Small Business Act 102 of 1996(South Africa, 1996) amended by Act 29 of 2004 (SouthAfrica, 2004) classifies SMEs into four categories namely micro enterprises, including survivalist enterprises; very small enterprises; small enterprises; and medium enterprises. With the exception of micro enterprises, the differentiating factor between these categories is the number of employees. For micro enterprises however, the criterion usually used is turnover level (South Africa, 1996, 2004).

Although large global corporations have created a significant portion of this century's wealth, most of the world's economic growths over the past 20 years have been created by SMEs (EurActiv, 2009).SMEs often flourish on their adaptability and agility such as their close proximity to their customers, their openness towards new ways of working, and their risk taking approach, but many of them are also susceptible to major external shocks (Berry, 2002; Laforet & Tann, 2006).

The major challenge faced by many SMEs have been how to globalize their operations in order to be able to better source raw materials and components and to take advantage of proximity to global markets in order to compete head to head with much larger companies(EurActiv, 2009).

Although SMEs experience difficulties in absorbing and coping with obstacles, they need to develop an ability to deal with the ever increasing challenges in the global market (Leopoulos, 2006). As a step, these organizations activate marketing strategies and tactics that can help them take decisions on a number of variables to influence mutually-satisfying exchange transactions and relationships (Taiwo,2010).

2.2 Marketing Strategies

Marketing has been described by the American Marketing Association (2013) as the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. Typically, marketers have a range of tools they use and these include megamarketing (Kotler, 1986) and the so-called "4Ps" of marketing (McCarthy,1995) among others.

Mega marketing is a term used to describe the type of marketing activity required when it is necessary to manage elements of the firm's external environment (governments, the media, pressure groups, etc.) as well as the marketing variables; but two more Ps (public relations and power) are sometimes added to the marketing mix so as to ensure that the firm is competitive in the market (Kotler, 1986).

"Marketing" seems easy to describe, but extremely difficult to practice (Kotler & Connor,1997). Marketing have evolved, and it involves an assessment and the inclusion of various stakeholders in the decision making process(Darroch et al. 2004;AMA 2008).It is therefore important for organizations to develop and implement efficient and effective marketing strategies which will incorporate relevant dimensions of the marketing concept. This involves the organic tasks of selecting a target market (customers/clients) in which to operate and developing an efficient and effective marketing ingredient combination (Kotler & Connor, 1997).

The "4Ps" (product, price, promotion, and place) suggest the elements an organization can and must control in

tailoring its product offer to the market (Pomeringet.al,n.d).This framework–first proposed by McCarthy(1960)-has dominated and informed the understanding of marketing principals since 1950s (Grönroos, 2006). It has not only offered a useful guide to major categories or marketing activity (Czinkota & Kotabe, 2001), but it has also provided the organizing framework for "almost all marketing textbooks and courses" (Shapiro, et.al,1985:7).

The dynamics of marketing in recent times has changed dramatically. Marketing has come to be seen to be preoccupied with tactical issues, and poorly linked to strategy (McGovern et al. 2004). Part of the problem, according to Day & Montgomery (1999), must be blamed on the lack of versatility of the 4Ps framework in the face of changing market conditions.

Scholars (Gummesson, 1999;Grönroos, 2004) have also argued that the framework (4Ps indicated above) is increasingly irrelevant to marketing management practice, and that it is conceptually flawed for managers to use it as a basis for their business decisions (Day & Montgomery 1999; Dobscha & Foxman 1998;Hyman,2002).

Yudelson (1999) has thus suggested a new set of 4Ps – *performance, penalty, perception,* and *process.* However, Yudelson (1999)'s framework is preoccupied with meeting the individual customer's needs and therefore ignores the new millennium's social and environmental sustainability imperatives (Pomeringet.al,n.d).

Given the imperatives for future business of sustainability and the growing recognition of the legitimacy of corporate social responsibility (CSR), Pomering et.al,(n.d) propose the addition of *Planet* and *People* to the original 4Ps framework in order to bolster a contemporary framework's efficacy. These two additional elements were drawn from the *Triple Bottom Line* reporting framework of People, Planet and Profit (Elkington 1997).

Owing to this shortcoming, various alternatives to the 4Ps have been proposed. Hyman (2002:927) suggests replacing the 4Ps with an appropriately alliterative mnemonic device of *8Ds* that, while imperfect, is a "starting point for subsequent development".

The first four elements of this set - *design*, *demand*, *didactics*, and *distribution* - are reminiscent of McCarthy's 4Ps, but the fifth - *duty* - explicitly addresses marketing ethics and social responsibility. *Duty* covers ethics in all domains, such as advertising ethics and sales force ethics, but also covers topics such as the political environment and legal environment, consumerism, and green marketing.

Hyman (2002: 928) argues that making ethical concerns explicit to marketing management is warranted, given the growing belief that ethics instruction in business is important (Priddle 1994; Shannon & Berl, 1997). The final three Ds - *direction*, *diary*, and *dialectic* - address marketing strategy, research, and practice.

Brownlie & Saren(1992) argue that consumers' and society's requirements of business are now broader than purely economic criteria, with production and procurement functions now expected to tackle major sustainability challenges. Indeed, supply chains have become more important as consumers scrutinize firms' overall marketplace practices, beyond products, prices, promotions, and place.

2.3 Technology and SMEs

It is widely acknowledged that SMEs play an important role in the vitality of local economies around the globe. The introduction of new technology has changed the way businesses are conducted in the global world. The roles of technology in the process of bridging trade barriers include improving and diversifying methods of communication, widening the advertisement platform and ensuring efficient and timely delivery of goods and services.

Findings of a recent study- on the economic impact of Information Technology (IT) on small businesses today - conducted on more than 4,000 SMEs in five of the world's largest and most diverse economies (the United States, Germany, China, India and Brazil) found that tech-savvy SMEs outperformed SMEs using little technology in innovation, job growth and increased revenues over the last three years (Ayala,2013**;**David et.al, 2013).

According to Ayala (2013), SME leaders using technology have grown their businesses and reduced costs, and increased worker productivity. In details, the study revealed that if 15% of those SMEs that used little technology and 30% of SMEs who used moderate amounts of technology adopted the latest IT tools, they could boost their combined revenues by $770 billion and create more than 6 million new jobs in just those five markets combined(Ayala,2013;David et.al, 2013).

2.4 Strategic Marketing

The early strategic marketing - performance studies can be traced back to the 1960s (Henry, 1999). Strategic marketing is simply making choices to determine what an organization intends to accomplish and how managers direct the organization and its resources towards attaining the goals within a specific time frame (Ulrich & Barnet,1984; Ansoff, 1988; Berry, 1997; Gup & Whitehead, 2000).

In other words, strategic marketing is seen as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future (Anderson 2004; Bryson,2004).

This requires using systematic criteria and rigorous investigation to formulate, implement, and control strategy, and formally document organizational expectations (Higgins & Vincze, 1993; Mintzberg, 1994). Broadly, this systematic process can be used to determine a firm's goals and objectives (for at least three years into the future) and help an organization develop the strategies that will guide the acquisition and use of resources to achieve the

set objectives (Kudler ,1996).

2.5 Performance

Performance, as a concept, is a subject open to wide variability as it is a somewhat imprecise word when it functions as a placeholder in research (Folan,et.al 2007). The lack of agreement on a definition creates confusion and clearly limits the potential for generalisability and comparability of research in this area (Franco-Santos, et.al 2007). The business dictionary however defines performance as the accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed.

According Molly (2013) to accurately assess how well a business is performing, one needs to develop some quantifiable measures by identifying those aspects of the business processes that need improvement and those that are working well. This can then be used to evaluate the company's productivity over a set period of time.

The U.K based firm, Kellerton Consulting (2013) has observed that performance management should be at ensuring that as much information and decision making as possible is geared towards improving performance in line with the organization's goals and strategy. Kellerton's definition of performance management is a wide one and incorporates a number of other disciplines that can help an organization to achieve the desired result. These include:

- Business planning and consolidation software (to align budgets, strategic plans and management accounts to an organization's goals)
- Executive dashboards (to display key performance indicators (KPIs) to the senior management team)
- A balanced scorecard methodology (to help measure an organization's performance holistically and balance financial and non-financial KPIs)
- Strategy management software (to keep track of initiatives, performance objectives and KPIs in one place)
- Performance appraisals and performance related pay (An HR driven activity to align

This study measured the performance of SMEs in terms of profitability, brand awareness and market share.

2.6 Relationship between Marketing Strategies and Performance

To create an effective marketing strategy, it is necessary to include a communication strategy to support the actions to be taken. This strategy should also include a schedule that contains both traditional and non-traditional media (Tapia, 2013).

Traditional media includes television, newspaper, magazine, cinemas and billboards. For the purposes of this study traditional media was categorized into seven main forms as shown in table1.Non-traditionalmedia includes internet, digital media, social media, websites, emails, mobile technologies and video conferencing. For the purposes of this study non-traditional media was categorized into three main forms as shown in table 2.The importance of non-traditional media is fast growing and they can be used create the right brand management that will lead into more sales and brand recognition (Tapia, 2013).

It is important to note that none of the strategies is better than the other. However, finding the right mix of both media can create the best communication/marketing strategy for the company and specifically for the product being offered for sale.

Taiwo (2010) has indicated that strategic marketing practices have a significant impact on performance variables and that they interact with the different components to facilitate performance. This statement confirms the observations of earlier studies (Day & Montgomery, 1999;Johne and Davies, 2002: Folan et. al.,2007; Franco-Santos et. al.,2007).

Davidet.al (2013) concludes that there is a strong correlation between marketing strategies of SMEs and performance in terms of growth in revenue and job opportunities, improved efficiency, and wider connection with customers. Further, it also enables the SMEs to compete fairly with larger players.

In view of the findings from previous researches especially in developed economies which show that marketing strategies are related to performance, the following hypotheses were posited:

H_o: Traditional marketing strategies are related to the performance of SMEs

H_1: Non- traditional marketing strategies are related to the performance of SMEs

The testing of the hypotheses will ascertain whether marketing strategies are related to performance of SMEs in developing nation context as well.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a survey research methodology to examine the impact of the marketing strategies of SMEs in Ghana on their level of performance. The population of the study comprises of SMEs in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The database was obtained from NBSSI Regional Office. After screening the database -using the definition of SMEs based on turnover and the number of staff employed (South Africa, 1996, 2004) - nine hundred (900) SMEs in the Eastern Region constituted the population of the study. These SMEs were selected from different sectors of the economy which include fisheries, agro-processing, manufacturing, information technology, microfinance, tourism, import and export etc.

A simple random sampling method was used to select three hundred and sixty-three (363) respondents from the target population so as to give everyone the chance of being selected. A standardized questionnaire, comprising both open and close ended questions was administered. Three hundred and twenty (320) copies of the questionnaire distributed (representing 88.88% responses) were retrieved for analysis. Thirty-two (32) respondents were purposively selected and interviewed to gain deeper insight to the variables measured in the questionnaire. The statistical tools used in testing and analyzing the data collected include Analysis of Variance, Pearson Moment Correlation Analysis and Factor Analysis. MarketSight(2013) acknowledges the importance of these statistical analysis tools as they "are required for a thorough and scientifically valid analysis of survey results".

The statistical tools identified above were also used to assist in interpreting the true meaning of what the research shows **(**Blurtit.com,[n.d]). This further means that the statistical methods helped in detecting and measuring relationships and effects in situations where results could not be identically replicated because of natural variability in the measurements of interest (Utts,1999).

4. Discussion of Results
4.1The Market Strategies Adopted by the SMEs in Ghana
Traditional Marketing Strategies
Results from the study shows that the SMEs advertise their products and services through traditional marketing media as shown in table 1. 24.7% of the respondents mostly use television and radio to market their products and services. They also use newspaper and magazine (16.2%), banners and billboards (15.6%) and branded paraphernalia (15%) in their marketing strategies.

The SMEs also participate in trade fairs and exhibitions (12.2%) and use door-to- door and word- of-mouth(10%) to obtain feedback from customers. This face-to-face encounter enables the SMEs to gather relevant information on the needs of their customers which they usually depend on to ensure continuous customer satisfaction. Although the least used, the SMEs use discount sales and promotions (6.2%) to sell off old stock and promote the sale of new products. Discount sales and promotions are also largely used to retain existing customers and drive new customers to their shops.

Table 1. Traditional Media

Media	Frequency	Percent
Television and Radio	79	24.7
Newspaper and Magazine	52	16.2
Banners and Billboards	50	15.6
Branded paraphernalia	48	15.0
Trade fairs and Exhibitions	39	12.2
Door - to - door and word - of - mouth	32	10.0
Discount Sales and Promotions	20	6.2
Total	320	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Non-Traditional Marketing Strategies
Results from the study indicate that the SMEs also use non-traditional marketing strategies to reach existing and potential customers. In an attempt to compete fairly on the global market, the SMEs deploy modern technological marketing tools in their businesses. Social media (55.3%) were greatly used to market the products and services of the SMEs. Facebook was the most form of social media used due to its popularity. Comparatively, it is cheaper for the SMEs to set up a Facebook account or page than create or own a corporate website (31.9%). On the average, it costs about US$600 to own a corporate website in Ghana and the SMEs find this relatively expensive than social media. In terms of interactive, the SMEs preferred to use Facebook than direct Email (12.8%).

Table 2. Non-Traditional Media

Media	Frequency	Percent
Websites	102	31.9
Emails	41	12.8
Social Media(Facebook)	177	55.3
Total	320	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

4.2 The Market Performance of the SMEs

The ANOVA table (Table 3) further buttresses the assertion of the respondents. The ANOVA table shows a significant level of 0.657 which is greater than 0.5(<0.5). This means that each of the advertising medium plays a major role in helping the SMEs reach out to their potential customers.

Table 3. ANOVA: The Media Used and Access to Customers

Do the media play a major role to help you reach out to your customers?

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.264	4	.566	.608	.657
Within Groups	293.423	315	.932		
Total	295.688	319			

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The Pearson moment correlation coefficient in Table 4I shows a figure which is greater than 0.5 (> 0.5). This indicates that there is a strong relationship between the method used in advertising and access to potential customers.

Table 4. Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient

		Which of the following do you advertise your products/ service through?	Do media companies play a major role to help you reach out to your customers
Which of the following do you advertise your products/ service through?	Pearson Correlation	1	.025
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.659
	N	320	320
Do media companies play a major role to help you reach out to your customers	Pearson Correlation	.025	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.659	
	N	320	320

Source: Field Survey, 2013

More importantly, the marketing strategies used by the SMEs have a significant impact on the performance of SMEs in terms of profitability (50%), brand awareness (30.6%) and market share (19.4%) as illustrated in Table 5. In the words of a producer of non-alcoholic beverage in the SME industry for instance:

"I advertise my product on radio because many people do listen to radio these days. I used to sell only 50 boxes of my product when I started this business. But after advertising through the local media, the demand for my product has significantly increased. On the average I sell over 5000 boxes per week, not only in Ghana but in Nigeria as well. Sales is indeed good! "

Another respondent who deals in the manufacture of traditional ornaments revealed that:

"A friend advised me to create a website for my business a year ago. I initially didn't want to do it because of the cost. But he kept persuading me and I finally gave up. I sometimes get amaze where people call me from and demand for my products. People call me as far as London to request for a supply. Recently, I received orders from an international company in the United States. I will advise everybody to get a website"

Table 5. The Performance of SMEs

	Frequency	Percent
Profitability	160	50.0
Brand Awareness	98	30.6
Market Share	62	19.4
Total	320	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

4.3 Hypothesis Testing
The Relationship between the Marketing Strategies and Performance
This study relied on two hypotheses:
Null Hypothesis: Traditional Marketing Strategies are related to the performance of SMEs.
$$H_0 = \mu_1$$
Alternative Hypothesis: Non - Traditional Marketing Strategies are related to the performance of SMEs.
$$H_1 \neq \mu_1$$
From table 6, it implies that F statistic is 0.828. In order to test H_0 at the 0.05 level of significance, we use $F_{0.05}$ with $p - 1 = 7 - 1 = 6$ and $n - p = 320 - 7 = 313$ degree of freedom. Using the statistical table of $F_{0.05}$, it implies that $F = 0.828 > F_{0.05} = 2.10$
Therefore, we fail to reject H_0 at 0.05 level of significance. This provides strong evidence that traditional marketing strategies are more related to the performance of SMEs than non - traditional marketing strategies are.

Table 6. ANOVA: Traditional and Non - Traditional Media

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.086	6	.681	.828	.549
Within Groups	257.335	313	.822		
Total	261.422	319			

Source: Field Survey, 2013

5. Conclusion
The overall results suggest that strategic marketing strategies are drivers of organizational positioning in a dynamic environment, and that it helps to enhance the development of new product/service for existing markets. The findings of the study also imply that none of the strategies (traditional and non-traditional) is better than the other; finding the right mix of both media can create the best communication/marketing strategy for the SMEs.
The study revealed that there is a positive relationship between marketing strategies and the performance of SMEs in Ghana. This observation is consistent with existing studies (Johne and Davies, 2002: Folan et. al.,2007; Franco-Santos et. al.,2007;David,et.al, 2013) which maintain that strategic marketing practices have a significant impact on performance.Davidet.al (2013) particularly found a strong correlation between marketing strategies of SMEs and performance in terms of growth in revenue, improved efficiency, wider connection with customers and ability to compete fairly with larger firms.
Traditional marketing strategies are however more related to the performance of SMEs than non - traditional marketing strategies. This shows that the SMEs mostly use traditional form of marketing – mainly television and radio, newspaper and magazine, banners and billboards and branded paraphernalia- to attract the attention of prospective customers.
The SMEs also participate in trade fairs and exhibitions and use door-to- door and word- of- mouth to foster a long term relationship with their customers. The owners of the enterprises capitalize on this collaboration to receive feedback on their operations so as to improve on customer satisfaction. The SMEs also use discount sales and promotions to gain access to new customers and to entrench their brand in existing and new markets. These strategies generally help the SMEs to increase their profitability and brand awareness. These factors enable the SMEs to generate enough revenue to expand their businesses now or in the future.
Non - traditional marketing strategies were found to be less related to the performance of the SMEs. It was observed that only a few of the SMEs deploy technology based marketing strategies in reaching their customers. Social media (Facebook) was however the most used marketing platform than corporate websites and Emails. The SMEs resort to social media because of its interactivity nature. It is also less difficult and relatively cheap to set up a social media page than create and manage a corporate website.

6. Recommendations

Both traditional and non-traditional marketing strategies must be practiced together to achieve the desired results. Door-to-door/word of mouth, discount sales, banners, branded paraphernalia and radio / television advertisement are powerful marketing tools for SMEs in Ghana. They must be emphasized in the marketing strategies of SMEs because they are not only cheaper but they help the SMEs to have a greater access to a niche market which is sometimes ignored by larger firms.

There is the need for the SMEs to adopt a more modern technological marketing tool in their businesses. The SMEs can use social media to create a viral market for their products and services. The SMEs must also create links on social media to drive traffic to their corporate websites. There is the need for the SMEs to create a website for their businesses. A live chatroom can be created on these websites to ensure interactivity with their customers.

Studies have shown that 87% of the world population uses mobile phone (ITU,2011). In Ghana, the mobile penetration rate is 80% (Samuel, 2012).The SMEs can utilize the usage of mobile and adopt mobile marketing where text, photo and video based advertising contents can be sent directly to the users of mobile phones to influence their purchase decisions. A recent study (Ofosu et.al, 2013) has found that mobile advertising has a strong influence on the purchase decision of consumers.

An investment in non-traditional marketing strategies is worthwhile because it eliminates traditional barriers to business relationships, and between geographies, allowing diverse constituents to access information, resources and services in the most efficient and advantageous manner(Sean de, et.al, 2004).

Sean de, et.al, (2004) concludes that the use of non-traditional marketing strategies can break the barrier to international marketing and make it possible for the SMEs to reach a global audience a lower cost.

7. Suggestions for Future Research

A larger sample size, probably comparing SMEs between a developed and developing nation could be used to provide a new insight into the impact of marketing strategies and the performance of SMEs. Future studies could also test the hypothesis-used in this study- on SMEs operating a specific sector so that the necessary recommendations will be provided to address performance challenges in that sector.

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