

DATABASE MARKETING AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY OF FAST-FOOD FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT, NIGERIA

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Abstract: Database Marketing is about the usage of customer database to improve marketing productivity of an organization, through proper customer acquisition, retention and development processes. The study examines the relationship between database marketing and customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. A total of 104 copies of questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Ninety eight (98) representing (94.2%) copies were accurately filled and useful, while the remaining six (6) representing (5.8%) copies were not properly filled and therefore not valid for the analysis. Spearman Rank order correlation coefficient was used to analyse and test the hypotheses. The study revealed that there is a positive and strong significant relationship between database marketing and customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study concludes that database marketing significantly increases the level of customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt. The study further recommends that there is need for improvement in privacy policy of the fast-food firms and that third party involvement should be clearly communicated to consumers so that the overall perception of corporate policy can be significantly enhanced.

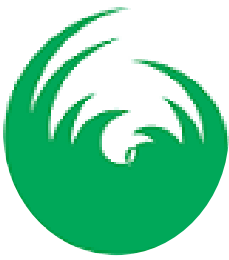
Keywords: Database Marketing, Customer Database, Customer Privacy, Customer Loyalty.

INTRODUCTION

Firms in their various sectors are competing fiercely to have a higher competitive advantage over their competitors. As the marketplace gets tough, organization such as the fast-food firms strive to stay relevant in today's business environment. Furthermore, customer's preferences changes continually and it's the sole responsibility of a firm to meet and satisfy these customers' unstable needs, desires and preference from time to time. Inoni & Nwokah (2006), posited that in the Mid 1990s, that fast food sector in Nigeria has experienced an incredible growth and development and this is as a result of the massive urban expansion, increase in population and the amelioration in socio-economic of the citizens and changes in their various lifestyles. The consumption of fast food has really become a common practice by citizens living in the urban areas and because it is a quick service venture, customers tend to patronize them. Successful and

marketable operations by firms calls for firms to strategically implement the use of gathering vital information about the customers (existing and potential) by preferring solutions about their needs, desires and preferences in order to attain their marketing goals.

According to Dumitrescu and Fuciu (2010), the marketing of services by a given firm aims towards providing an excellent service, thereby ensuring that there is a stable strategy and an effective execution. The essence of developing an efficient personal relationship with customers in a firm has being imposed and used in an one to-one marketing concept, where customer database are up to date, an effective dialog with each customer's needs and preferences, differentiating customers according to their individual needs and expectations and also offering a customized service. (Dumitrescu, 2009). Data base marketing is a function of relationship marketing where customers are being handled on a one-to-one basis and the data acquisition



of these customers are treated with utmost confidentiality and privacy. Database marketing is about the usage of customer database to improve marketing productivity through a proper customer acquisition, retention and development processes. The main focus of every organization is to attain a considerable level of loyalty from their customers and it has become a major concern in the fast food industry. In other words, Nyarko et al (2016), noted that customer loyalty has become a vital prerequisite for firms and that it is of great importance that these firms find out the drivers of customer loyalty to improve their marketing productivity. Brody & Cunningham (1968), noted that customer loyalty is considered to be the frequent purchase by a satisfied customers. However, customer loyalty to every firm plays an important role in achieving competitive advantage in the marketplace. No firm can survive in the marketplace without customers being loyal to them. Kahn et al. (1986), posited that a consistent repeat purchase from a customer is known as customer loyalty, while Ehrenberg, (1988), stated, a customer is loyal when there is multiple aspects of repurchase behaviour from the customer.

Furthermore, previous scholars in Nigeria have carried out studies on fast-food firms from different perspectives (Konwea, 2012; Akinbola, Ogunnaike & Ojo, 2013; Onwujarin & Nnennanya, 2015). In other words, a considerable research has been done on the area of customer loyalty by previous researchers (Zhang et al. 2014; Chou et al; 2014; Cheng, 2012; Yong-Jae et al, 2013; Yang et al. 2014). Moreover, the fast-food firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria are still facing an intense competition to out-perform one another due to the speedy changes in customers' expectations, preferences, desires and needs, however ability to meet these customer expectations, appear to have generated a gap in literature. Thus the application of database marketing to curb the aforementioned gap in the fast-food sector appears to be absolutely inevitable. Despite the massive studies on customer loyalty, there is scarcely any study conducted on data base marketing to

fill the gap in literature, this study further attempts to empirically examine how the combination of data base marketing attributes such as handling customers data and customer privacy can be used to enhance customer loyalty in the fast-food industry, specifically in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

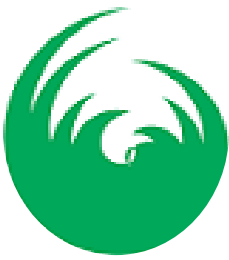
2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Database Marketing

Database marketing is an essential attribute of customer relationship management (CRM) which enables firms to identify individual customers' needs and preferences. Customer relationship management enables organizations to selectively pick more viable and profitable customers and also to identify those that are no longer needed by the firm (Pinto et al., 2009). Kelly (2000), stated that database marketing is a strategy that helps organization to understand customer behaviour and their responsiveness which allow firms to understand in-depth customer lifecycle, loyalty, customer profitability and accrued customers segmentation.

Dibb and Meadows (2004), posited that database marketing is all about technological enabler, where all customer-related data are stored and accessed in ways that generates strategic and tactical marketing decisions. According to Mc-Donald's (2007), database marketing is seen as a collection of customer data and information that is generated from outside and inside an organization which are stored, accessed and also analysed to help marketing managers to make decisions that will help them improve their marketing success.

Furthermore, database marketing is all about the use of customer database to ensure that these customers are properly satisfied according to their individual needs and expectations. Database marketing has direct connection with customer relationship management and direct marketing; this is due to the fact that in direct marketing, firms interact with customers on a one –to –one basis (Blattberg and Deighton, 1991). Database marketing is also about managing customers by using their data and information to serve them satisfactorily. Application of database marketing gives a firm a better



competitive advantage in the marketplace. The benefits of Database Marketing (DBM) are enormous in that it brings about facilitation of long term customer relationships, customer loyalty, improved target market segmentation and the ability to categorize customer attributes to their buying behaviour (Desai, et al., 2001; Desai et al., 1998; Lewington et al., 1996). According to Straszewicz (2006), database marketing is aimed at developing a better identification and recognition of customers' needs and also adjusting the offer to align with their individual requirements, needs and preferences. Caley (2010), posited that database marketing is a vital attribute of Customer Relationship Management (CRM), where stored customer data are not only used for direct marketing activities but is also used to manage their customer relationship, on an individual basis and also to offer a customized products and services to both (actual and potential) customers. Grabowska (2013), noted that the acquisition of customer database creates the accurate identification of the customers which the products, services, loyalty programs and promotional message will be delivered and offered to. While, Pilarczyk and Mruk (2006), stated that the actual benefit of database marketing is that it brings together a uniform way of handling customers individually in different segments. They noted that, it further brings about better understanding and accurate knowledge of customers' needs and expectations for productive marketing objectives.

Dimensions of Database Marketing

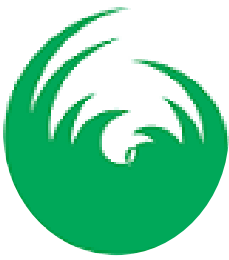
Customer Database

Customer database are information and data about customers gotten from inside and outside of an organization that are electronically stored by firms for the purpose of offering customers and base on their needs, preferences and desires. Customer database such as data on psychographic, demographic, geographic and their purchasing habits are generated within and outside organization. Domazet and Zubovic (2010), noted that customer database contains the data and information (such as age, income, sex, religion, nationality, marital

status etc.) of customers which are handled electronically and stored and can easily be accessible when needed by the firm. The further noted that customer database can be created on individual or aggregate level. Managing customer's data is a crucial part of relationship management and it serves for better management and understanding of a firm's customer (actual and potential). Development customer database could be used as a strategy for making and taking strategic and tactical marketing decisions. According to Kelly (2000), customer database is essential in making strategic decisions in that it helps firms to understand customer behaviour, level of loyalty and their individual responsiveness which allows marketing managers to understand customers and segment them accurately. A customer database contains information and data on existing and potential customers that organizations uses to strategically make marketing decisions for the success of the organization.

Customer Privacy

Every customer of an organization desires reasonable amount of privacy in their business transaction with any given firm. Sambada and Bhayani (2018), posited that in general terms, that privacy is the right of an individual to be let alone, and privacy is concerned with secrecy, aloneness and freedom over personal matters or information. They further noted that, privacy means a lot to consumer and it is seen as having an absolute freedom and autonomy over individual's personal information, right to know how their data profile and information about them are collected and how it is being managed and controlled. Information and personal data of customers collected by the firms enables the firm in an appropriate segmenting of their customers and also better positioning of their products and services to suit customer needs and expectations. Customer privacy is also about customer knowledge and the extent to which consumers are informed about how firm's handle their information practices and privacy control policies (Foxman and Kilcogze, 1993; Nowak and Phelps, 1995). Customer privacy is the ability for an organization to collect personal



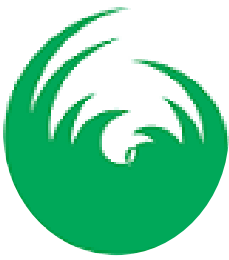
information about customers and ensures that those information collected are controlled and managed accurately without exposing the data given by the customer. Sambada and Bhayani (2018), stated that when customers perceive that an organization is more careful in handling their privacy concern, they tend to share their personal information for personalized and customize online services. When customers feel that they have an enormous control over the personal information while, transacting business with a firm, they are more likely to click on personalized information that protects their privacy online (Tucker, 2014).

Customer privacy is seen as customer's ability to ensure that there is control, and anonymity in the collection and usage of their personal information. Organizations collect, use and analyse customer's personal information and data and they further ensures that these information are controlled and managed properly, so as to provide customers with better products, services and accurate offers. Customers are also scared that internet hackers can gain access into their personal information online, this tend to make them become more sceptical about their privacy concern. George (2002), also noted that customers also suspect that firms extract data from them without their knowing. Customers often times are scared that the data collected on them may sometimes include errors and these could provide incorrect profile of the customer without the knowledge of the firm or the customer. An organization's collection, storage and usage of customers personal information increases the chances of mishandling that information, thereby creating a feeling of vulnerability amongst customers (Kelly et al., 2016). The favourable attribute takes place when firms have access to customer's personal data and this accessibility often times creates vulnerability. Furthermore, customers limit the way they share and get out sensitive information to enable them reduce vulnerability. Through the use of disclosure management processes (Acquisti, John and Loewenstein, 2012). It is of importance that firms protect and control the privacy and confidentiality of

customer personal information and assets against unauthorized and unwanted access and also they should be accountable in a case of omissions or errors of imputing incorrect data on the customer's profile.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is one of the major concerns that firms seeks to achieve. The major aim of customer relationship management is the development and creation of deep rooted loyal customers. Customer loyalty is a process where a customer repeatedly purchases from a particular organization over a given period of time. Jacoby and Kyner (1973), noted that customer loyalty is a consistent purchase behaviour by a customer which results from a psychological decision making. Loyalty is seen as an emotional or affective commitment of a customer towards a particular firm's products or services (Cater and Zabkar, 2009). George et al., (2015), stated that customer loyalty has no generally acceptable definition; rather previous scholars in extant literature agrees that loyalty of customer represents a combination of favourable attitudes and behaviours that are beneficial to an organization against its competitors (Day, 1969; Dick and Basu, 1994; Melnyk et al., 2009). Customer loyalty is crucial for fast-food firms that strives to survived and succeed in the competitive marketplace. Customer loyalty plays a vital role in ensuring that firms gain a competitive advantage in their business environment, because, it is far less expensive for firms to retain actual customers than acquiring new ones (Roy, 2011). Furthermore, customer loyalty for any firm brings about increase in the market share, profitability and in strengthening the firm (Terblanche and Bashoff, 2010). A satisfied customer will always in most cases remain loyal to an organization. Previous scholars noted that customer satisfaction is a major determinant of customer loyalty (Anderson and Sullivan 1993; Andreassen and Lindestad 1998a; Parasuraman et al., 1988; Cronin, 2000; Modougall and Leveque, 2000; Heskett and Sasser, 2010).



Database Marketing and Customer Loyalty

The improvement of any business organization is majorly dependent on its loyal customers. Firms with an amazing customer loyalty experiences faster and tremendous growth than businesses with limited customer loyalty. The development and creation of customer database brings about a significant impact in a firm's achievement of its marketing goals. Database marketing which is the process of collecting, complying and accumulating information and data about customers (potential and existing) helps organization to identify and segment customers in order to offer them products and services according to the customer's specifications .Grabowka (2013), posited that database marketing is the accumulation of information concerning customers both (actual and potential) which firms use in different applications such as profiling, segmentation, retaining customers and attracting new ones, enables firm's to maintain and retain customer loyalty. The collection and accumulation of customer's information such as their (personal life, lifestyle, geographical location, socio-demographic data, likes and dislikes, etc.), by these firms helps in offering customers with products and services that satisfies their exact needs and preferences , and this calls for the firm's customers to become loyal to them. Kelly, (2000), noted that database marketing is crucial in understanding customer behaviour and their responses to firm's offerings, which helps marketing manager to attract customer loyalty. When a customer is notified or congratulated by a firm about his/her birthday, wedding anniversary or any other special event in his/her life, the customer feels

happy and excited that the firm has his/her information in their database, it brings about a happy and satisfied customer, which in -turn results to loyalty.

When information about customers such as (personal life, age, language, population, religion, race educational background, nationality, gender, income and family size) are properly collated by an organization, it calls for easy offering customers what he/she needs on an individual and personalized ways, it will evidently enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty on the side of the customer. (O'Malley et al., 1997; Turban et al.,2008). Turban et al., (2008), asserted that accumulating data from customers is usually done in an interactive manner which creates personal content and interaction with customers. McIntyre et al., (2009), observed that the major benefit of database marketing is that, it is done directly with customers without the use of channel intermediaries and these helps the firm to collect detailed data about what customers, what to purchase, what they have purchased how they want it delivered and packaged. Database marketing is an essential strategy that helps firms to accumulate and acquire information about customers and also helps marketing managers in developing strategies and knowledge in competing favourably with competitors so as to enhance customer loyalty (Nwokah and Maclayton, 2006). Based on the above premise, the author proposes thus:

Ho : Database marketing does not significantly relate with customer loyalty of fast-food firms in Port Harcourt.

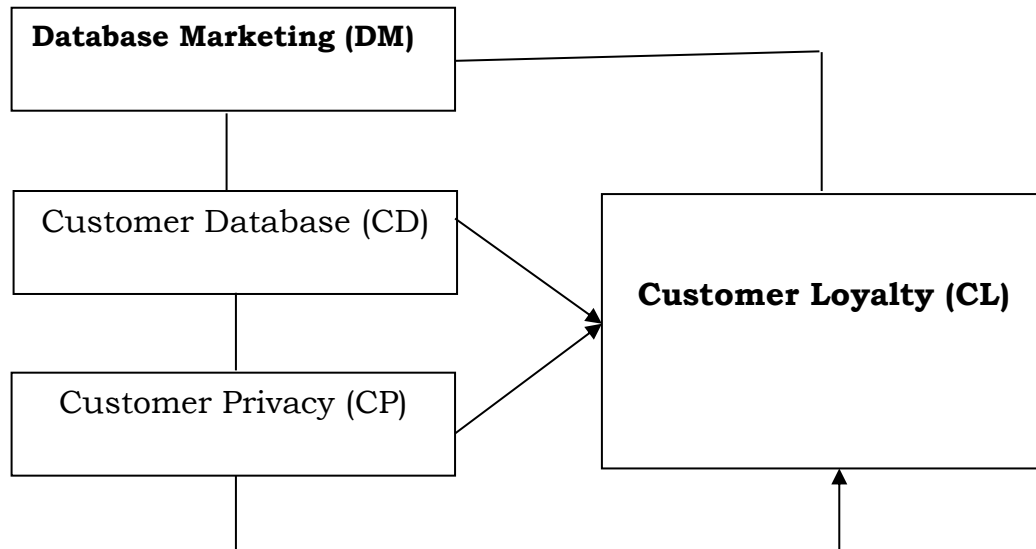
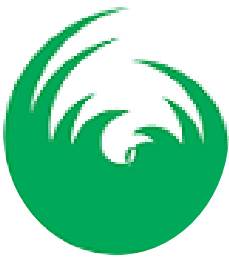


Fig.1.1: A operational framework showing the relationship between database marketing and customer loyalty.

Customer Database and Customer Loyalty

Database which is containing data about customer are being stored handled and treated in such a way that it can easily be accessible by the firm to better serve their customers. Secondly, these data can be handled and treated in an individual or aggregate level (Domazet and Zabovic, 2010). Direct marketing has a direct link with maintenance of a customer database, this is due to the fact that when firms accesses customer's database on an individual level. They are at the same time deeding directly with the customers in offering them their exact needs or preferences (Bauer and Miglautsch, 1992). Effective application of customer database brings about better understanding of customers (potential and existing) which becomes an accurate marketing campaign weapon in the competitive marketplace.

Firms that seeks to maximize profit should maintain a customer database that can easily enable them to identify customers' needs and wants and provide them with products and services that exceeds their expectations. Zadeh et al., (2013), asserted that firms need to apply customer relationship management

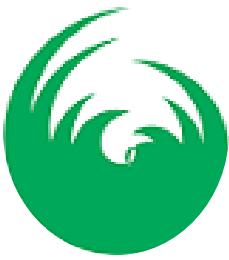
strategy which is an aspect of database marketing in order to coordinate a customer- centric system which results in achieving customer loyalty. Acquiring customer data and information which directly related to customer. Relationship Management (RM) helps firms to manage the data of customers and relate with them in a wide customer cycle (Kincaid, 2003). When firms adopt techniques and strategies such as developing and managing customer database, in a customer-focused environment, it brings about long-lasting relationships between the organization and the customers, therefore enhancing customer loyalty (Foss and Stone, 2002). Based on the preposition above:

The author hypothesize that:

Ho₁: Customer Database does not significantly relate with customer loyalty of fast-food firms in Nigeria.

Customer Privacy and Customer Loyalty

Customer privacy is ability for firms to acquire information about customers and keep it confidentially and private. Every customer both (actual and potential) requires a maximum level of privacy about the information given to a firm. Customers are always excited and loyal when organizations appreciate them,



recognized them by names, congratulate them on their birthday and anniversaries. Jones, (1991), noted customer privacy is a significant issue in the field of marketing. Customers are very much concerned about their privacy and they try as much as possible to ensure that their information is kept private and some of them opted to stay off the internet to ensure that their communications and information remains confidential (Harris, 1998). It is of great importance that firms endeavour to translate customers' needs and wants into an efficient communication strategy and ensure that they understand how customers value the information given to them. Furthermore, organizations need to understand customer concern about privacy and information they gathered about customers and use their knowledge and experience to develop a confident customer base online to reach and secure online transactions successfully and thereby enhance customer loyalty (Samsudin et al., 2011). From the above discourse, the author hypothesized.:

H0₂: Customer privacy does not significantly relate with customer loyalty of fast-food firms in Nigeria.

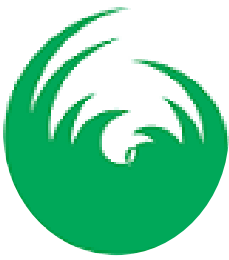
3.0. Methodology

4.0 Data Analysis and Results

Table 1: Properties of the Measurement Instruments.

Constructs/indicators	Factors loading(λ)	λ^2	AVE	α	CR
Customer Database			0.87	0.89	0.96
CD1	0.975	0.951			
	0.935	0.874			
	0.899	0.808			
CD2	0.919	0.845			
CD3					
CD4					
Customer Privacy			0.89	0.88	0.97
CP1	0.954	0.910			
CP2	0.922	0.850			
	0.966	0.933			
CP3	0.931	0.867			

This study investigated the relationship between database marketing and customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt. Therefore, the cross-sectional research design will be adopted by the researcher. Cross-sectional surveys permit researchers to collect data at a point in time from test units. The population of this study are top management of registered fast food firms in Port Harcourt. According to the Association of Fast Food and Confectionery of Nigeria (AFCON) Rivers State Branch, enlisted by the Rivers State Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Yellow Pages, 2014/2015) there are total of Fifty Two (52) registered and functional fast food restaurants in Port Harcourt. For convenience precision, the researcher distributed two (2) copies of questionnaire each to these selected fast food firms. We therefore have 104 copies of questionnaire and convenience sampling techniques was adopted for this study. Well-constructed questionnaires were used to administer the questionnaires to the respondents. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze and test the formulated hypotheses.



CP4				
Customer Loyalty			0.92	0.91
CL1	0.972	0.945		
CL2	0.961	0.924		
CL3	0.984	0.968		
CL4	0.919	0.845		

Consequently, calculated AVE, Cronbach Alpha and composite reliability for the above constructs and their statement items demonstrated a high level of validity and internal consistency. The AVE outputs were greater than 0.50 threshold while Composite reliability and Cronbach Alpha outputs for the various instruments were above 0.70 threshold. Therefore, the statement items were valid and consistently reliable for further analysis.

One hundred and four (104) copies of questionnaire were distributed among the top management of fast food firms in Port Harcourt. 98(94.2%) copies were accurately filled while the remaining 6(5.8%) contained certain inconsistencies, and thus not valid for analysis. Therefore, the analysis was based on 98 copies accurately filled.

Table 1: Correlation showing the relationship between customer database and customer loyalty

			Customer Database	Customer Loyalty
Spearman's rho	Customer Database	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.833**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	98	98
	Customer Loyalty	Correlation Coefficient	.833**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	98	98

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From table 2; Spearman Rank Correlation is used to analyze the association between customer database and customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt. The results illustrates that customer database at ($P < 0.05$) and $\rho = 0.833$ and a P-value = 0.000 significantly relates with customer loyalty. This result ascertains that customer database has a significant and positive relationship with customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt.

We therefore reject H_{01} , because, p-value (0.000) is less than the level of significant at 95% (0.05) as established in the decision rule.

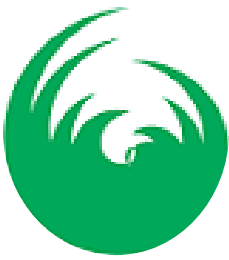


Table 2: Correlation showing the relationship between customer privacy and customer loyalty

		Customer Privacy	Customer Loyalty
Customer Privacy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.805**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	98	98
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	.805**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	98	98

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From table 2; Spearman Rank Correlation is used to analyze the association between customer privacy and customer loyalty. The results illustrates that customer privacy has a significant relationship with customer loyalty at a rho = 0.805 and a P-value = 0.000. This result determines that customer privacy has a significant and positive relationship with customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt.

We therefore reject Ho₂, because, p-value (0.000) is less than the level of significant at 95% (0.05) as established in the decision rule.

4.1 Discussion of Findings

1. Hypothesis one (Ho₁) aimed at examining the significant association between customer database and customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt. The hypothesis was tested using Spearman rank Correlation Coefficient. The analysis revealed a positive and strong significant relationship (Rho= 0.833). This means that, customer database had a positive and strong relationship with customer loyalty. Zadeh et al., (2013), asserted that firms need to apply customer relationship management strategy which is an aspect of database marketing in order to coordinate a customer- centric system which results in achieving

customer loyalty. And their findings were consistent with our results.

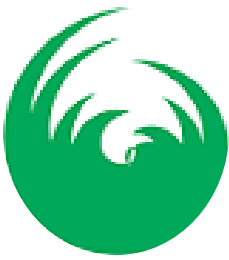
2. Hypothesis two (Ho₂) aimed at examining the significant relationship between customer privacy and customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt. The analysis revealed a positive and strong significant relationship between the variables which resulted to (Rho= 0.805). Our findings was in agreement with the work of Samsudin et al. (2011) that organizations need to understand customer concern about privacy and information they gathered about customers and use their knowledge and experience to develop a confident customer base online to reach and secure online transaction successfully and thereby enhance customer loyalty.

Conclusions

The findings on database marketing contribute significantly towards achieving customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt. In the light of this, the study therefore concludes that, database marketing significantly increase the level of customer loyalty of fast food firms in Port Harcourt.

Recommendations

- The fast food firms in Port Harcourt should provide adequate materials and human

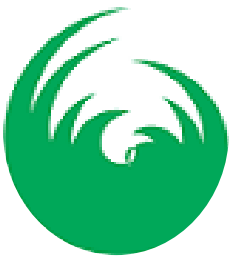


resources in order to cope with the difficult Nigerian terrain, vastness and increase loyalty.

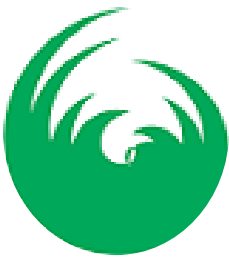
- Based on our results, one way to achieve a reduction in consumer privacy concern is via improving an organization's privacy policy. Thus, fast food firms should have and pass across their organizational policy.
- Improvements in privacy policy and third party endorsements should be clearly communicated to consumers so that the overall perception of corporate policy can be significantly enhanced.
- Customer database should be develop and follow-up promptly by fast food firms in Port Harcourt.

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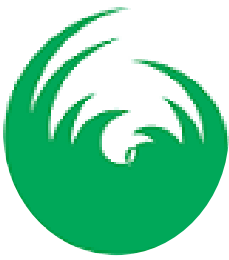
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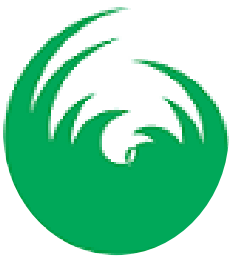
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Questionnaire

S/No	Statement items	SA	A	N	D	SD
	Database Marketing					
DM1.	Database marketing enables your firm to identify individual customer needs.					
DM 2.	Database marketing enhances your ability to selectively pick more viable and profitable customers					
DM 3.	It helps your firm to understand customer behaviour.					
DM 4.	Database marketing helps your firm to manage customer data accurately.					
	Customer Database					
CD 1.	Customer’s personal data enables your firm to understand the psychographic, demographic and geographical data of your customers.					
CD 2.	Customer database helps your firm to understand the purchasing habits of your customers					
CD 3.	Managing customer database enables your firm to create a lasting relationship management with customers					
CD 4.	Customer Database improves your understanding about loyal customers to your firm.					
	Customer Privacy					
CP 1.	Customers trust your firm because they handle their data, privately					
CP 2.	Privacy means a lot to customers and they expect firms to respect their personal data.					
CP 3.	Your firm control and manage customer’s information accurately to avoid hackers and scammers violating their privacy.					
CP 4.	Your firm personalizes and customizes customer’s online services to help them maintain loyalty with your firm.					
	Customer Loyalty					
CL 1.	Customer repeatedly purchase from your firm due to the improvement of your database marketing					
CL 2.	Customers are loyal to your firm since the introduction of database marketing.					
CL 3.	Controlling and managing customer personal data enhances positive					



	word-of-mouth about your firm.					
CL 4.	Segmenting customers and attending to them base on their private information your firm has about them, improves repeat purchase.					