



INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE GROWTH OF ONLINE MEDIA BUSINESSES: A STUDY OF DELTA UHURU AND SHOCKNAIJA PLATFORMS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effects of social media on the growth of online media businesses, specifically focusing on Delta Uhuru and ShockNaija platforms. The objectives include assessing the impact of social media strategies on audience engagement, analyzing its role as a cost-effective marketing tool, and evaluating the challenges posed by digital infrastructure and misinformation. Anchored on Media Dependency Theory, the study explores how these platforms depend on social media for visibility, audience engagement, and revenue generation. The research design employs a descriptive survey, with a sample size of 400 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data was collected via structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings indicate that social media significantly enhances audience engagement, with 75% of respondents reporting increased interaction with content. Additionally, platforms using social media strategies saw a 30% revenue growth, highlighting its effectiveness as a marketing tool. However, challenges such as unreliable internet connectivity and the spread of misinformation were identified, which hinder growth. In conclusion, social media serves as a powerful tool for enhancing the reach and financial success of online media businesses, though infrastructural improvements and effective management of misinformation are necessary. The study recommends that Delta Uhuru and ShockNaija strengthen their social media presence and address connectivity issues to fully capitalize on the growth potential offered by social media platforms.

Keywords: social media, Online Media Business, Audience Engagement, Revenue Growth, Media Dependency Theory, Digital Economy.

Introduction

Social media has become a transformative force in the digital economy, reshaping the

growth trajectory of online media businesses by driving audience engagement, marketing effectiveness, and revenue generation. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and



Twitter serve as indispensable tools for businesses to establish brand identity, interact with audiences, and monetize their content (Agrawal & Trivedi, 2021). Delta Uhuru and ShockNaija, two prominent online media platforms in Nigeria, exemplify how social media integration enhances visibility and fosters competitive advantage. The ability to leverage social media's interactive features enables these platforms to disseminate content rapidly, attract diverse demographics, and remain relevant in an increasingly saturated digital space.

The Nigerian digital economy has witnessed substantial growth, largely driven by increased internet penetration and the widespread adoption of social media in business strategies (Thisday Newspaper, 2021). The Nigerian government's emphasis on digital transformation has further incentivized businesses to adopt social media for operational efficiency and market expansion. However, challenges such as algorithmic changes, misinformation, data privacy concerns, and inconsistent digital infrastructure persist as obstacles that online media businesses must navigate (Usman & Yusoff, 2023). This study examines the influence of social media on the growth of Delta Uhuru and ShockNaija, focusing on their strategies for content creation, audience engagement, and monetization.

Social media provides cost-effective avenues for marketing, allowing businesses to engage audiences, enhance brand loyalty, and improve visibility (Agrawal & Trivedi, 2021). Delta Uhuru and ShockNaija utilize these platforms to tailor content to specific

demographics, leveraging targeted advertising and promotional campaigns to sustain audience interest. This strategic marketing approach enables them to remain competitive and expand their reach in Nigeria's digital landscape.

Braune & Dana (2021) emphasize the importance of interactive engagement in fostering audience retention. Personalized content, real-time responses, and interactive campaigns on social media have proven effective in enhancing brand loyalty. Delta Uhuru and ShockNaija apply these strategies to build lasting relationships with their audiences, ensuring sustained viewership and participation in their digital offerings.

Social media plays a significant role in revenue generation, with studies by Nobanee & Dilshad (2020) and Parveen, Ismawati & Ainin (2018) highlighting its impact on business monetization. Through targeted advertising, subscription models, and strategic partnerships, Delta Uhuru and ShockNaija capitalize on their online presence to increase revenue streams. Social media analytics further enable these platforms to refine their content strategies and optimize engagement, ultimately driving profitability.

Despite the benefits of social media, inadequate internet connectivity remains a critical barrier to digital growth in Nigeria (Usman & Yusoff, 2023). For Delta Uhuru and ShockNaija, unreliable digital infrastructure can hinder content dissemination and audience engagement.