

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTAGRAM IN PROMOTING SMALL SCALE
BUSINESSES BY INSTAGRAM VENDORS.**

BY

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS
COMMUNICATION, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ART (B.A) DEGREE IN MASS
COMMUNICATION**

SEPTEMBER, 2023.

DECLARATION

This project work is based on a study researched and undertaken by me, in the department of mass communication, faculty of ARTs, university of Benin, under the supervision of Dr. Daniel Ekhareafo. All findings and analysis in the study are product of my personal research and the views of my personal research and where the views of others have been used, explained and expressed have been duly acknowledged.

MATTHEW TOLUWALOPE BEATRICE
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was carried out by Matthew Toluwalope Beatrice in the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of ARTs, University of Benin in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the award of Bachelor of ART degree in mass communication.

Dr. Daniel Ekhareafo
Project Supervisor

Date

Dr Daniel Ekhareafoo
Head of Department

Date

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to the Lord Almighty for his unending and undeserving Grace and love over my life. Also, I dedicate it to my parents (Mr. and Mrs. Matthew) , my supportive siblings and wonderful friends.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My gratitude goes to God for his unending and undeserving love over my life. He kept me alive, protecting and providing from the start of this academic journey till now.

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My gratitude goes to my parents, Mr and Mrs Matthew, especially to my beautiful mother for her support and love. Also, to my beautiful and amazing siblings, Joy, Samuel and Florence. Thank you for being my siblings, for your emotional support and love. I love you.

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the role of Instagram as an advertising platform for promoting small-scale businesses. With its vast user base and visual-centric format, Instagram has become an increasingly popular medium for businesses to reach potential customers. This study presents the findings from a comprehensive field survey conducted in 2023, investigating the effectiveness of Instagram in business promotion, user perceptions, and the convenience of its advertising platform for buying and selling. The survey collected responses from 250 participants covering demographics, Instagram usage patterns, and attitudes towards the platform's role in business promotion. The results indicate a balanced gender distribution among respondents, with the majority falling between 15 and 30 years old. A significant portion of participants reported being single and having diverse educational qualifications. Regarding Instagram usage, the survey highlighted that approximately half of the respondents were frequently on the platform, with a significant percentage using it as a primary shopping destination. The findings further indicated that a notable proportion of respondents viewed Instagram as an effective platform for promoting small-scale businesses, emphasizing its impact in generating awareness and reaching potential customers. However, concerns about the authenticity of goods and services emerged, with almost half of the respondents expressing reservations about the platform's consistency in delivering what was advertised. Additionally, a considerable number of participants acknowledged that the effectiveness of Instagram in business promotion may be affected by factors like hacked social media accounts, raising questions about security and trustworthiness. Despite the mixed perceptions, the study revealed that Instagram's advertising platform is perceived as convenient for buying and selling, primarily attributed to its user-friendly interface, direct shopping features, and seamless integration with various payment options. In conclusion, Instagram has shown significant potential as an effective advertising platform for small-scale businesses, benefiting from its visual appeal and influencer marketing strategies. However, addressing concerns regarding authenticity and security will be critical in sustaining its effectiveness in the long term. The research provides valuable insights for businesses seeking to leverage Instagram's potential and lays the groundwork for future investigations into the evolving landscape of social media-driven business promotion.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Instagram's meteoric rise unfolds like a Silicon Valley fairy tale, with the business picking up steam in just a few short months. Software engineers just needed eight weeks to create the photo and video-sharing app, which was then released in October 2010 on Apple's mobile operating system.

Kevin Systrom introduced Instagram, a social networking platform for sharing images and videos, in 2010. Because Systrom enjoys drinking high-quality whiskey and bourbon, he was inspired to create Bourbon, the earliest version of Instagram. The social media platform might amass up to 25,000 users per day. The app's main objective was to showcase photos, particularly ones taken on mobile devices.

Instagram is a social media platform for uploading photos and videos, making it simple for company owners to sell their products and connect with their intended market. In order to reach specified goals and objectives, advertising is fundamentally required to define targets, methods, plans, and operations. Every producer or marketer of a product wants people to buy it from them. The main motive is to fulfill a customer's particular wish. Vendors on Instagram utilize the social media platform

to advertise their goods and/or services. Instagram is a social media platform that is popular all over the world and has been utilized as a marketing tool by numerous multinational corporations. It is a crucial marketing tool that enables effective corporate communication. Marketers may communicate with their customers on Instagram by posting photographs and videos, leaving comments as a method to share information, and earning likes as a way to get customer feedback. Nowadays, the majority of the purchasing process is done online on social media networks, starting with presumptions and knowledge searches and ending with the sharing of actual experiences. Customers utilize social networks to research new products and services and read reviews from other customers online before making a purchase choice because they are spending more and more time online. Due to this, social media is frequently described as a multimedia kind of word of mouth (Kabani, 2010). The primary method for focusing on customers in this generation is undoubtedly social media marketing. The Internet has given businesses more chances to interact with their clients, but it has also made everything more challenging. If the marketers don't have the right expertise and technique for social media marketing, it won't work. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram are just a few examples of the various sorts of social networking sites (Hellberg, 2015).

1.2 Statements of Problem

There are some issues on Instagram that over the years have really dealt with consumer's trust, especially because of these occurrences people now rather go for pay as you deliver or buy physically. These issues impeded as earlier said can be in form of low patronage due to the ineffectiveness of the marketing tools related to Instagram. Therefore, an Instagram vendor may post what he/she sells but might not get to the intended number of customers

Another of these issues can also be in the form of constant traffic on the internet may not really mar the awareness of the product or services, because of other content trooping the news feeds of respective targeted audience. The reason is that other users are trying to get information or pass them across on the internet, this may likely reduce how many times a product would be seen on the other user's news feeds. This may render the advertising strategies less effective, whereas it could lead to most cost-effective on advertising of a particular product or services from a prospective vendor.

More so, hacking of user's accounts can be a hindrance to the effectiveness of Instagram promoting small-scale businesses. This has really been a threat to most vendors. Basically on Instagram, because some persons engage in fraudulent

activities with various unidentifiable business-related accounts; online customers. These accounts could be impersonating, that is, it may instigate fear and increase trust issues. This can also be frustrating to online vendors, especially on Instagram, who would have to go through the hassle of having their accounts verified for authenticity or opening a new one to start afresh at the detriment of a possibly large number of followership.

Another common problem will be application malfunctioning. However, in recent times, this has been the case with some other popular social apps like WhatsApp and Facebook. This has often caused havoc to online advertisement, especially on Instagram, which may render the app inaccessible at a particular time and moment.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The major aim of the study is to understand the level of how effective Instagram has been in the promotion of small-scale businesses.

1. To know how Instagram can be used as an advertising platform in the promotion of small-scale businesses.
2. To ascertain ways how to market goods and services on Instagram.

3. To examine the effectiveness of Instagram in the promotion of small-scale businesses.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. How Instagram has been used as an effective platform for advertising?
2. How convenient is it to use Instagram's advertising platform for buying and selling?
3. What is the effectiveness of Instagram in the promotion of small-scale businesses?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is a quantitative design to find in-depth information on the effectiveness of Instagram in promoting small-scale businesses by Instagram vendors. This study will be practically focusing on the students at the University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria. This study will collect data using questionnaires administered by the researcher to randomly select respondents from all faculties and departments of the institution in order to know their views about how effective Instagram has been in promoting small-scale businesses.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study have been significant to Instagram vendors on how to make use of the social marketing tools to enhance advertisement for their goods and services.

The findings of this study have been of the essence to address the importance of advertising in recreating awareness and encouraging patronage from the purchasing public.

The findings of this study have been of greater value to the public. They would gain knowledge of the advantages of Instagram and its enhancement to promoting small-scale businesses, and also helping them to make good choices in buying products and/or paying for services on various social applications, especially on Instagram.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

There is no form of human endeavour without some or a few forms of limitations.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Advertisement: The Latin word "adventure"—which meaning to direct attention toward a particular thing—is where the word "advertising" originates.¹ An

notification made in public is known as advertising. Today, however, advertising have purposes beyond simply making announcements; they also influence potential customers, serve as a reminder to current customers, and generate demand, brand preference, and brand loyalty, in addition to counteracting the effects of competitor commercials.

Small Scale: This has to do with anything done in a limited scope or size. I.E. not large in size, number, degree or amount. According to the Oxford learners advanced Dictionary (1980;118), small scale means; An organization whose activities are not Large in size or extent, limited in what it does.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapters presents the review of related literature on each topic taken into account in this chapter.

2.1 Concept of Advertising

The Latin word "advertere," which means to draw attention to a certain subject, is where the word "advertising" originates. A notification made in public is known as advertising. Today, however, advertising has purposes beyond simply making announcements; it also influences potential customers, serves as a reminder to current customers, and generate demand, brand preference, and brand loyalty, in addition to counteracting the effects of competitor commercials.

Advertising is not directed at one specific person, but rather at a group of people. These groups of people comprise the target audience, who are also potential customers—not the general public. Instantaneous feedback is unavailable in advertising, unlike personal selling. Thus, it is a paid type of impersonal communication with a target audience through mass media, including as television, newspapers, magazines, radio, the internet, etc.

1. American Marketing Association: Advertising is a paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of goods, services or ideas by an identified sponsor.
2. Philip Kotler: Advertising is a non-personal form of communication conducted through paid media under clear sponsorship.
3. John J. Myers: Advertising is dissemination of information concerning an idea, service or product to compel action in accordance with the interest of the advertiser.
4. John Kennedy: Advertising is the substitute of human salesman.
5. David Ogilvy: Advertising means developing favorable brand image to enlarge market share and to increase the profits of the organization in the long run.

Advertising fulfills the final requirement; occasionally, when a product's manufacturers engage in persistent advertising, consumers purchase more frequently. Retailers can predict consumer demand for their goods with the use of advertising. A producer might conduct a robust campaign and then secure a sizable portion of the market where there are various brands of the same product on the market. The other goods will likewise vie for consumers' attention. This would enable the merchant to stock up in accordance with the most well-liked brands that are most in demand. Loss will be less likely as a result. Additionally, advertising enables the business to

maintain a rapid and high turnover. By spreading awareness of the products, advertising generates demand and is a crucial distribution factor. Advertising forces the business to stock the products, to put it bluntly.

Advertising often serves as a book for a consumer's logical brand choice because it provides them with a number of significant product traits or features that will encourage favorable views. Through the advertisement's appeal, ability to capture viewers' attention, and ability to raise awareness, people are provided with information (Arens 2004) .

Whether the advertisement conveys the intended meaning is one of the advertiser's main concerns. The perception of the receiver is that of a highly engaged participant in the communication process, one who is highly able and motivated to attend to, absorb, and understand/evaluate communications. It is a huge success for the marketer if the target audience comprehends the message and uses it as the advertiser intended, especially if it encourages the customer to buy something (Clow and Back 2002).

Features of Advertising includes the following:

1. Paid form: There is never a free way to advertise. The organization releasing the advertisement must pay the media. The amount paid varies according to the

media's popularity, type, and circulation. Because the marketers have paid for the space or time to share information with the target audience, or in other words, potential customers, advertisements can be seen in newspapers, radio, and television.

2. Non-personal: Advertising is referred regarded be non-personal salesmanship because there is no face-to-face interaction with the consumers. Here, instead of using direct interpersonal communication, the message is sent to the target audience via mass media like newspapers, magazines, radio, television, or the internet.
3. Promotion of ideas: Advertising is not only the promotion of goods and services, but also of ideas.
4. Identified sponsor: An identified sponsor runs advertising. The producer or the trader could be the sponsor. In the advertisement, the sponsor's name is mentioned. This shows that the source of the ideas and opinions the commercial provides is cited.
5. Influence buyer's behavior: The attitudes and behaviors of consumers are influenced by advertisements to favor the promoted goods or services.
6. Element of marketing mix: The marketing mix's four main components are product, promotion, pricing, and venue. An essential component of

"promotion" is advertising. Other components of the marketing mix cannot accomplish their goals without effective promotion.

7. Promotion mix: One of the four components of the promotion mix is advertising, along with personal selling, sales promotion, and publicity. It is the most economical kind of advertising since it generates demand, boosts sales, and efficiently reaches the intended demographic.

2.2 Internet Adverts

Any marketing message that appears online is considered to be using internet advertising. This implies that it might show up in a web browser, search engine, social media platform, mobile device, and even email.

For a variety of reasons, savvy advertisers are increasingly using this venue to connect with consumers:

- It's relatively inexpensive
- It reaches a wide audience
- It can be tracked to measure success (or failure)
- It can be personalized for a target audience

Indeed, the reach of online advertising is expanding as new channels for marketers open up (consider text-message-delivered advertisements or geo-targeted marketing messages sent to people in a specific location). While some of the advertisements are less frequent or are only recently becoming more popular, there are still several that we see repeatedly every day. 2.2.2 Instagram and Advertising

When Instagram debuted sponsored post advertising in November 2013, Michael Kors became the first recognized user and gained 34,000 new followers in just 18 hours. Based on user and demographic targeting, these sponsored posts are displayed in users' news feeds. Making it appear to be natural content is the key to preventing the consumer from irritably scrolling through it. Creating attractive institutions post.

The following are the vendors strategies for creating attractive post on Instagram.

Content Type

A marketing strategy known as content type focuses on creating and distributing dependable, suitable, and valuable material in order to draw in and keep a target audience and encourage profitable consumer behaviour.

Entertainment

The term "entertainment" describes how captivating brand material is on social media. Instagram has a variety of amusing videos, teasers, slogans, and puns. Entertainment is often thought of in terms of relaxation, emotional release, enjoyment, and satisfaction with a task or habit. Instagram posts that are intended to provide entertainment may have special qualities that allow users to appreciate and enjoy others' photographs that they have shared. Games, advice, celebrations of national holidays, quips, and interactive videos all fall under the category of entertainment material for Instagram postings.

Information

Information is the content that describes how a brand represents particular items, brands, and associated marketing activity. According to research by Park et al. (2009), Facebook users intend to look up crucial information about pertinent products and services to satisfy their knowledge and information needs. Informational posts on Instagram would include all of the posts with information about the company and its goods.

Remuneration

The expectation of receiving something in return, such as money or a reward, is another key factor that encourages people to connect with brands on social media. Remuneration is the type of post content that offers giveaways, promotions, coupons, special offers, and other offers to attract customers' attention.

Social Content

Social content is the text in a post's caption that has been coded to track the presence of social media tags and hashtags, which are marked by the use of the '#' symbol before clickable words, phrases, or acronyms used to denote common topical posts, and user tagging, which is indicated by the use of the '@' symbol before a clickable username.

Tag

In social media, tags are crucial because they can point users to certain information that has been shared among a community. Tags form an ever-growing circle connecting social media users, media, and material, increasing exposure. The @ sign on Instagram tags acts as a "call to action," making it simpler for other social media users to engage with a topic or piece of material. This is crucial for images.

Posting Time

According to Kumar et al. (2006), scheduling, which includes posting time, was already recognized as a crucial element of marketing techniques that can ultimately lead to higher sales. Online advertising often involves obtaining a time and/or space slot(s) on an online platform where marketing materials will be displayed. Because it affects how people interact with the post, the time of social media posting is crucial.

Weekday

Any day that is not a weekend is referred to as a weekday. In most nations, Monday through Friday are regarded as weekdays while Saturday and Sunday are not. Social media posts made during the week are those made between Monday and Friday.

Peak Hour

A time of day when a lot of people have gathered is known as peak hour. According to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013), social media's busiest times are between the hours of 4 PM and 4 AM.

2.3 Social Media and Business Promotion

Social media has emerged as one of the elements without which businesses have a considerably lower chance of becoming profitable enterprises. There are many instances of business concepts that started out in social media and grew through social networks or blogging.

The expansion of social media in business creates enormous potential as well as responsibilities. Marketing experts have a growing quantity of information at their disposal to aid them in their efforts because of the vast amount of data that users share on social media. However, the opportunity to create measurable, long-term relationships with clients is the true benefit. The obligation for these clients starts to form at the same moment. Expectations have altered along with changes in customer behaviour. Customers may voice comments or engage in dialogues about a business whether it is online or not.

The Social Media Examiner's End-of-Year Report 2019 demonstrates how significantly the value of social media marketing has grown: 86% of marketing experts claimed that social media is essential to their company, and 89% said that the main advantage of social media marketing has been to increase their company's exposure and visibility. The following are the main advantages mentioned:

- Increased exposure and visibility.

- Increased traffic.
- Creating an environment of loyal "fans";
- Increased business partnerships.
- Increase sales and decrease marketing costs;

Although social media advertising is a relatively new marketing strategy, it is developing more quickly than we can think. Consider Facebook or Facebook Ads campaigns as an illustration. Facebook has been using advertisements since 2005, but in the first quarter of 2017, Facebook ads added 9.16 billion euros in new revenue. This demonstrates that social media advertising has a promising future.

Advertising on social networks is characterized by:

- Reduced ad costs: Social media commercials are less expensive than traditional advertising channels like radio, TV, and print.
- Reaching the target: You do not have the luxury of targeting the target demographic with traditional advertising the way you can with social media ads. You can precisely reach your target demographic, enhance conversions, and eventually increase your return on investment by implementing this form of marketing. Real-time performance analysis: The effectiveness of the advertising campaign cannot be evaluated for any form of offline advertising. Ad social

networks enable the business to continuously monitor how well (or poorly) its advertisement is received. The company can make "on-the-go" changes to its advertisement and see the effects right away. • Raising brand recognition. When it comes to increasing brand recognition, social media shows to be a potent instrument. Some companies disregard it as a means of creating a brand, but by doing so, they give rivals a freer hand. But many credible chief marketing officers concur that social media does have an effect on brand recognition.

Increasing brand awareness via social media involves several steps:

- Finding the audience: A company should ascertain whether its target audience is present on a particular social media platform before beginning to concentrate on it. It can do this by looking for discussions that are pertinent to its product or sector. A B2B company, for instance, might discover their audience on LinkedIn rather than Facebook.
- Using visuals: Once a company is aware of who its target market is, it should use eye-catching images in conjunction with its content to grab people's attention. A firm can increase its brand awareness on social media by using images and videos.
- Creating conversations: social media is all about building conversations. If a company uses these social platforms for one-way communication, it will only

grab so much attention. Instead, it should talk and listen, get involved, and showcase its personality by conversing, tagging and mentioning others.

- **Measuring the efforts:** To measure its social media activity, a company should use the tracking tools offered by the platforms (such as Facebook Page Insights) in conjunction with other external tools like URL shorteners, Google Analytics, etc. Unfortunately, it should make use of the insights to comprehend what is effective in order to maximize its efforts and strengthen its brand through social media.
- **Building authority:** A company should attempt to establish its authority by providing genuine value if it wants a higher engagement rate and more brand recognition. The company's content should contain both original and borrowed material because originality boosts credibility.
- **Increase Inbound Traffic -** One of the most efficient ways to drive relevant visitors to a website is through inbound marketing. Because it is so relevant, this is the kind of traffic that actually converts.

An organization can open up a completely new channel to attract highly targeted inbound traffic and get more inbound links by exerting greater effort in social media promotion. For instance, having a frequently updated blog makes it simple for a company to engage with its audience through new material. However,

the company's reach is multiplied tenfold by having them post this content (at the appropriate moment) on Twitter or Facebook. The company is now abruptly interacting with a larger audience that might enjoy and spread its content, follow its brand, and eventually purchase its products. Similar to this, a smaller percentage of consumers are already actively looking for keywords associated with a specific company's product or service than are people who are not. Social media enables a business to reach this broader, underserved target segment. A business can vary its marketing initiatives in a number of ways by utilizing social media. It connects with a diverse consumer base, which is essential for the company to stand out in its sector and not only appeal to one kind of audience. For instance, serious professionals might discover the business' website via LinkedIn, but millennials or younger audiences would discover it on Instagram. Every piece of social media material that the company produces opens a new door for potential clients.

- Improve Search Engine Optimization

A company has a better chance of being found online when it is interested in search engine optimization. The rating of your website is unaffected by social sharing, according to Matt Cutts, the former chief of Google's spam department. (<https://seodigitalgroup.com/what-are-social-signals/>) However, it is a reality that social media properties frequently appear at the top of search engine result pages for

brand names, giving social media profiles the ability to be in the top 10 listings. A firm can connect with its prospects and consumers through social media platforms. Because they highlight the company's human side, they serve as a portal to the website. They assist the searcher in joining the conversation as well as informing them about the company.

2.4 Empirical Review

The research that has been done on or in relation to the study is covered by the empirical review. These consist of:

Online social media activity is the primary metric used by Muder (2015) to assess the efficacy of social media. Although Instagram has been recognized as the social media platform with the best consumer interaction among others like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and TikTok, local fashion firms have not always used Instagram as a marketing tool effectively. The study used the Hype Auditor rating engagement calculator to measure the Instagram profiles of 150 local fashion firms, and it was discovered that more than 50% of them had below-average to bad online engagement levels. The researcher chose two local fashion brand accounts with high and low levels of online engagement as one of the samples.

According to a study by Rodriguez et al. (2012), an efficient social media strategy will result in sales processes, the creation of opportunities, and the management of client relationships. As a result, businesses will find it very difficult to benefit from those advantages if they are unable to use social media in an efficient manner. As a result, this study intends to evaluate the Instagram effectiveness characteristics for regional fashion businesses with high engagement in order to use them as benchmarks for content strategies that will increase online engagement and the efficacy of Instagram as a marketing tool.

2.5 Theoretical Review

Darmola (2003, p. 36) defines a theory as a methodical and deductive approach to thinking about reality in order to characterize and comprehend that reality. Some academics consider a theory to be the creation of meaning from nothing. According to Asemah et al. (2011, p. 131), theory is an effort to synthesize and integrate information. Empirical evidence for the greatest elucidation and unity. The use of theories is crucial when conducting research. McQuail, referenced in Asemah et al. (2011), defined a theory as a group of ideas with varying status and origin that have the potential to explain or interpret a phenomenon.

2.5.1 Media Dependency Theory

According to the Media Dependency Theory, a person will value the media more and experience greater affects from it as a result of this increased dependence on it for self-fulfillments. Three media needs, according to Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976), control how essential media is to a person at any particular time:

The need to understand one's social world (surveillance)

The need to act meaningfully and effectively in that world (social utility)

The need to escape from that world when tensions are high (fantasy-escape)

In fact, the Media Dependency Theory states two specific conditions under which people's media needs, and consequently people's dependency on media and the potential for media effects, are heightened.

When the number of media and centrality of media functions in a society are high, e.g., as a tool for information dissemination, entertainment escape etc.

When a society is undergoing social change and conflict. When there is a war or large-scale public protests like the January 2012 Nigeria Labor Congress protest, a national emergency like the Dana plane crash of June 2012 or terrorist attacks.

However, Baran and Davis identify four primary criticisms of dependency theory:

Variability in micro-level and macro-level measurement makes between-study comparability problematic.

The theory is often difficult to empirically verify.

The meaning and power of dependency are sometimes unclear.

The Dependency Theory lacks the power to explain long-term effects.

The Dependency Theory was originally proposed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur (1976).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Designs

This research uses the survey design. The term “survey” means the process of looking at something in its entirety. A survey is an empirical study that uses questionnaires or interviews to discover descriptive characteristics of a phenomenon. Surveys are used across communication studies. Survey research takes a sample in order to understand and make descriptive assertions about a large population.

3.2 Population of the Study

A population according to Asika(2002:p.39) is made up of all conceivable elements, subjects or observations relating to a particular phenomenon of interest to the researcher. The population may be observed or physically counted.

Therefore, the population of the study comprise of the users of Instagram at large since the researcher can’t reach all of them. The size will be limited to the users of Instagram in the University of Benin, mostly the students.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size for this research was limited to the users of Instagram at the University of Benin. The researcher made use of her WhatsApp and Instagram user accounts to reach 250 persons during the course of this research.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique employed for this study was the purposive sampling technique which allows the researcher to select cases that are informative, applicable and appropriate based on their background knowledge while ignoring those who do not fit into the study .

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The study relied on primary and secondary data. The questionnaire was the major instrument used in the gathering of data for the study. The questionnaire was divided into (2) sections. Section A sought information relating to the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B sought for information on the subject of study.

3.6 Validity of the Study

In the course of this study, the validity and authenticity of the study was realized through the face validity techniques. This involves examining the measurements device or instrument for data collection at face value. To

determine subjectively the validity, the instrument for data collection (questionnaire) have to be analyzed and approved by the researcher who is a professional in the field of mass communication.

3.7. Reliability of the Study

Reliability is an important part of quantitative research. A questionnaire, a tool in this study used to determine the effectiveness of Instagram in the promotion of small scale businesses by Instagram vendors. , was highly reliable as it helped answer the study questions. A questionnaire was put into a pilot study to test the instrument's reliability. During the course of the pilot study, 20 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The copies of the questionnaire were distributed using google form by the researchers person WhatsApp and Instagram account.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected and collated for this study using simple table with means scores.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents and analyses the data collated through the questionnaire distributed online. The data collected were examined using the simple percentage method. A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and properly filled making the sample size a total of 11” after questionnaire administration which accounts for 100% return. 250 respondents, therefore, represent 100% of the sample size being studied. The details of the questionnaire are analyzed below using frequencies, percentages and tables for the presentation of data.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: GENDER

Male	100	40%
Female	150	60%
Total	250	100%

Source: field survey 2023.

Table 1 presents the gender distribution of the respondents surveyed in 2023. The data is categorized into two groups: "Male" and "Female."

According to the data, 40% (100 individuals) of the respondents identify as "Male." This indicates that a significant portion of the surveyed population consists of male individuals.

The "Female" category comprises 60% (150 individuals) of the total respondents. This represents a larger proportion of individuals who identify as female.

Table 2: Age Bracket

15-20 years	100	40%
20-25 years	75	30%
25-30 years	50	20%
30 and above	25	10%
Total	250	100%

Source: filed survey 2023.

Table 2 provides information about the age distribution of the respondents surveyed in 2023. The data is categorized into different age brackets.

According to the data, the majority of respondents, 40% (100 individuals), fall into the age bracket of "15-20 years." This suggests that a significant portion of the surveyed population consists of young individuals between the ages of 15 and 20 years.

The next largest age group is "20-25 years," which accounts for 30% (75 individuals) of the total respondents. This indicates a substantial number of participants who are in the age range of 20 to 25 years.

The age bracket "25-30 years" comprises 20% (50 individuals) of the surveyed population, representing a smaller but still significant proportion of individuals between the ages of 25 and 30 years.

Lastly, the "30 and above" age group includes 10% (25 individuals) of the respondents. This category encompasses individuals who are 30 years old or older.

Table 3: Marital Status.

Single	239	95.6%
Married	10	4%
Separated/Divorced	0	0%
Widowed	1	0.4%
Total	250	100%

Source: field survey 2023.

Table 3 showed that the majority of respondents, 95.6% (239 individuals), identified as single. A small percentage of the sample, approximately 4% (10 individuals), reported being married. Interestingly, there were no respondents who identified as separated or divorced, accounting for 0% in this category. Additionally,

only one respondent (approximately 0.4%) reported being widowed. The data appears to be complete, as the percentages of each category sum up to 100%

Table 4: Educational Qualification

First degree	72	28.8%
Masters	6	2.4%
Phd	3	1.2%
Others	169	67.6%
Total	250	100%

Source: Field survey 2023.

The data presented in Table 4 represents the Educational Qualifications of 250 individuals surveyed in 2023. The results indicate that the majority of respondents, constituting 67.6% (169 individuals), fall into the category of "Others," implying that they possess educational qualifications other than the specified categories. Among the specific educational qualifications, 28.8% (72 individuals) reported having a First degree, making it the most common educational level in the sample. A smaller proportion of respondents, 2.4% (6 individuals), indicated that they hold a Masters's degree, while an even smaller percentage of 1.2% (3 individuals) reported having a PhD degree, the highest academic qualification among the given options.

It is crucial to note that the "Others" category, with the highest percentage, encompasses various educational qualifications not detailed in the table, such as diplomas, vocational certifications, and secondary school certificates, among others. Consequently, the specific distribution of educational qualifications within this category remains unknown.

Table 5: How often are you on Instagram?

Often	65	22%
Sometimes	65	26%
Always	120	48%
Never	10	4%
Total	250	100%

Source: field survey 2023.

The data presented in Table 5 provides insights into the frequency of Instagram usage among 250 individuals surveyed in 2023. The results reveal that Instagram is a widely utilized platform, with the majority of respondents, constituting 48% (120 individuals), reporting that they use it "Always." This indicates a significant number of individuals who are frequent users and likely engage with the platform on a regular basis. Additionally, 26% (65 individuals) of the surveyed population stated

that they use Instagram "Sometimes," suggesting that they are active users, but not as consistently as those in the "Always" category.

Furthermore, there is another group of 22% (65 individuals) who reported using Instagram "Often." This category represents individuals who use the platform frequently but not to the extent of the "Always" category. On the other hand, there are 10 respondents (4% of the sample) who claimed to "Never" use Instagram, indicating a small proportion of individuals who do not engage with the platform at all.

Table 6: How often do you shop on Instagram?

Always	155	62%
Often	20	8%
Sometimes	55	22%
Never	20	8%
Total	250	100%

Source: field survey 2023.

Table 6 provides insights into the shopping behaviour of 250 individuals surveyed in 2023 in relation to Instagram. The data reveals how frequently respondents shop on the platform.

The results indicate that a substantial majority, comprising 62% (155 individuals) of the surveyed population, reported shopping on Instagram "Always."

This suggests a significant number of individuals who are regular and frequent shoppers on the platform, relying on it for their purchases.

Additionally, 22% (55 individuals) of the respondents stated that they shop on Instagram "Sometimes." This category represents individuals who make purchases on the platform occasionally but not as frequently as the "Always" group.

On the other hand, there are two categories with 8% each. The first category consists of 20 individuals who reported shopping on Instagram "Often." This indicates that they engage in shopping activities on the platform with some regularity but not as consistently as the "Always" group. The second category also includes 20 individuals who claimed to "Never" shop on Instagram, implying that they do not use the platform for shopping purposes at all.

Table 7: shopping online is stress-free and convenient.

Strongly agree	30	12%
Disagree	50	20%
Agree	97	38.8%
Strongly disagree	73	29.2%
Total	250	100%

Source: field survey 2023.

Table 7 presents the results of a field survey conducted in 2023, which examines respondents' perceptions regarding the stress-free and convenient nature of online shopping.

According to the data, 38.8% (97 individuals) of the surveyed population "Agree" that shopping online is stress-free and convenient. This indicates a significant proportion of individuals find online shopping to be a favourable and hassle-free experience.

On the other hand, 29.2% (73 individuals) "Strongly disagree" with the statement, expressing a negative sentiment towards the stress-free and convenient aspect of online shopping. These respondents likely have reservations or challenges with the online shopping process.

Additionally, 20% (50 individuals) of the participants responded with "Disagree," indicating that they hold a more moderate view and are not fully convinced of the stress-free and convenient nature of online shopping.

Furthermore, 12% (30 individuals) "Strongly agree" that online shopping is stress-free and convenient, representing a smaller but still notable proportion of respondents who highly value the ease and convenience of shopping online.

Table 8: Has Instagram been effective in promoting small-scale businesses?

High	98	39.2%
Very high	102	40.8%
Low	42	16.8%
Very low	8	3.2%
Total	250	100%

Source: field survey 2023

Table 8 presents the results of a field survey conducted in 2023, which examines respondents' opinions regarding the effectiveness of Instagram in promoting small-scale businesses.

According to the data, a significant proportion of respondents, 40.8% (102 individuals), believe that Instagram's effectiveness in promoting small-scale businesses is "Very high." This indicates that a substantial number of participants perceive Instagram to be a highly effective platform for helping small businesses reach their target audiences and promote their products or services.

Additionally, 39.2% (98 individuals) of the surveyed population responded with "High," expressing a positive view of Instagram's impact on small-scale businesses' promotion. These respondents also consider Instagram to be effective in supporting the growth and visibility of such businesses.

On the other hand, 16.8% (42 individuals) of the participants rated Instagram's effectiveness as "Low." This group holds a more critical view and believes that the platform's impact on promoting small-scale businesses is limited.

Furthermore, a smaller proportion of 3.2% (8 individuals) responded with "Very low," indicating the most negative perception of Instagram's effectiveness in promoting small-scale businesses. These respondents feel that the platform has little to no positive impact on small businesses' promotion.

Table 9: Authenticity of goods and services or what is popularly known as what I ordered vs what I got has caused the effectiveness of Instagram in promoting small-scale businesses to diminish overtime.

Agree	120	48%
Disagree	39	15.6%
Strongly agree	72	28.8%
Strongly disagree	19	7.6%
Total	250	100%

Source: field survey 2023.

Table 9 presents the results of a field survey conducted in 2023, which explores respondents' opinions regarding the impact of the authenticity of goods and services on the effectiveness of Instagram in promoting small-scale businesses over time. The statement suggests that discrepancies between what customers expect (what they

ordered) and what they receive (what they got) may have led to a decrease in the platform's effectiveness for small businesses.

According to the data, 48% (120 individuals) of the respondents "Agree" with the statement. This means that almost half of the participants believe that the issue of authenticity and discrepancies between advertised products or services and the actually received ones has had a negative impact on Instagram's effectiveness in promoting small-scale businesses.

Additionally, 28.8% (72 individuals) "Strongly agree" with the statement, representing a significant portion of the surveyed population who strongly support the idea that this problem has adversely affected the effectiveness of Instagram as a promotional platform for small businesses.

On the other hand, 15.6% (39 individuals) "Disagree" with the statement, indicating that a smaller proportion of participants do not think that this issue has significantly impacted Instagram's effectiveness for small-scale businesses.

Furthermore, 7.6% (19 individuals) "Strongly disagree" with the statement, representing the smallest proportion of respondents who strongly believe that the issue of authenticity has not led to a decline in the platform's effectiveness for promoting small businesses.

The data shows that most respondents, a combination of those who "Agree" and "Strongly agree," are concerned about the impact of authenticity issues on Instagram's effectiveness for small-scale businesses. Conversely, a smaller proportion of respondents, a combination of those who "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree," do not believe that this issue has significantly affected the platform's effectiveness.

Table 10: Do you think hacked social media accounts can make the promotion of small-scale businesses by Instagram vendors ineffective?

Agree	102	40.8%
Disagree	41	16.4%
Strongly disagree	30	12%
Strongly agree	77	30.8%
Total	250	100%

Source: field survey 2023.

Table 10 presents the results of a field survey conducted in 2023, focusing on respondents' opinions regarding the impact of hacked social media accounts on the effectiveness of promotion by Instagram vendors for small-scale businesses.

According to the data, 40.8% (102 individuals) of the respondents "Agree" with the statement, indicating that they believe hacked social media accounts can have a negative impact on the promotion efforts of Instagram vendors for small-scale businesses. These individuals are concerned about the potential risks and consequences of security breaches affecting promotional activities.

Additionally, 30.8% (77 individuals) "Strongly agree" with the statement, representing a significant portion of the surveyed population who strongly support the idea that hacked social media accounts can indeed make the promotion of small-scale businesses by Instagram vendors ineffective. This group is particularly convinced of the negative consequences of account hacking on promotional efforts.

On the other hand, 16.4% (41 individuals) "Disagree" with the statement, indicating that they do not see a significant link between hacked social media accounts and the effectiveness of promotion for small-scale businesses by Instagram vendors. These respondents may believe that other factors play a more crucial role in promotional success.

Furthermore, 12% (30 individuals) "Strongly disagree" with the statement, representing the smallest proportion of respondents who strongly believe that hacked social media accounts do not impact the effectiveness of promotion by Instagram

vendors for small-scale businesses. This group is particularly confident in their disagreement with the proposed relationship between account hacking and promotional effectiveness.

4.2 Discussions of Findings

The field survey conducted in 2023 explored various aspects related to Instagram usage, small-scale businesses, and user perceptions. Table 1 reveals that the gender distribution of respondents was balanced, with 60% being female and 40% male. Table 2 presents the age distribution, showing that the majority of respondents were between 15 and 30 years old, with 40% falling in the 15-20 age bracket. Table 3 indicates that a significant proportion (95.6%) of respondents were single, while only a small percentage were married, widowed, or separated/divorced.

In Table 4, it is evident that the educational qualifications of respondents were diverse, with the majority (67.6%) having "Other" qualifications, followed by 28.8% with a first degree. Only a small proportion had higher qualifications such as Masters or Ph.D. Table 5 and Table 6 delve into Instagram usage patterns. While 48% of respondents claimed they are always on Instagram, 62% stated that they always shop on the platform. This indicates a strong engagement with the platform for both social and commercial purposes.

Table 7 shows that 38.8% of respondents agree that shopping online, particularly on Instagram, is stress-free and convenient. However, 29.2% strongly disagree with this statement, implying that some users may have reservations about the convenience of online shopping.

Table 8 and Table 9 focus on the effectiveness of Instagram in promoting small-scale businesses. The results are mixed, with 39.2% agreeing and 40.8% strongly agreeing that Instagram has been effective. However, 16.8% disagree, and 3.2% strongly disagree, indicating a level of scepticism. Additionally, 48% of respondents believe that the authenticity of goods and services has diminished over time, potentially impacting the platform's effectiveness.

Table 10 addresses concerns about hacked social media accounts affecting the promotion of small-scale businesses. Interestingly, 40.8% agree, and 30.8% strongly agree that this can be a factor, while 16.4% disagree and 12% strongly disagree. This indicates that a significant portion of respondents believes that hacked accounts can indeed impact promotional efforts.

1. How has Instagram been used as an effective platform for advertising?

Instagram has been used as an effective platform for advertising due to its massive user base and highly engaging visual format. According to the survey results

from Table 8, a significant percentage of respondents (39.2%) believe that Instagram has been effective in promoting small-scale businesses, while an even higher percentage (40.8%) think it has very high effectiveness. This shows that businesses are finding success in using Instagram as a marketing tool to reach their target audience.

Instagram's emphasis on visual content allows businesses to showcase their products or services creatively and attractively. The platform's photo and video-sharing features, coupled with the ability to tag products and provide direct links to online stores, make it easy for businesses to connect with potential customers and drive traffic to their websites. Additionally, Instagram's use of influencers and sponsored content has proven to be an effective way for businesses to reach a wider audience and build brand awareness.

2. How convenient is it to use Instagram's advertising platform for buying and selling?

The convenience of using Instagram's advertising platform for buying and selling is apparent in the survey results from Table 6. A majority of respondents (62%) stated that they always shop on Instagram, while an additional 22% said they sometimes shop on the platform. This demonstrates that users find the buying process on Instagram to be convenient and appealing.

Instagram's shopping features, such as shoppable posts and tags, enable businesses to showcase products with direct links to their online stores, making it seamless for users to make purchases without leaving the app. The platform's user-friendly interface and integration with various payment options further enhance the convenience of shopping on Instagram. For sellers, the ability to easily set up a business profile and manage product catalogs makes it straightforward to reach potential customers and conduct transactions.

3. What is the effectiveness of Instagram in the promotion of small-scale businesses?

The effectiveness of Instagram in the promotion of small-scale businesses is a mixed perception, as seen in the survey results from Table 8. While a considerable proportion of respondents (39.2%) believe that Instagram has been effective for business promotion, a similar percentage (40.8%) thinks it has a very high effectiveness. However, a notable minority (16.8%) holds a different opinion, stating that the platform's effectiveness is low.

Moreover, Table 9 reveals that 48% of respondents agree that the authenticity of goods and services on Instagram has diminished over time, which may impact the platform's overall effectiveness. Additionally, Table 10 shows that 71.6% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that factors like hacked social media

accounts can make the promotion of small-scale businesses by Instagram vendors ineffective, further raising concerns about the platform's reliability.

In summary, while Instagram has proven to be an effective platform for advertising, particularly through its visual appeal and influencer marketing, there are concerns about the authenticity of goods and the potential impact of security breaches. To maintain and improve the effectiveness of Instagram in promoting small-scale businesses, addressing these concerns, ensuring a secure environment, and providing transparent and reliable purchasing experiences will be essential.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This chapter summarizes what the project is about, the method used in data collection and the findings of the data. The study is aimed at examining the effectiveness of Instagram in the promotion of small-scale businesses. The research was carried out by using the survey research method. The survey research method for data gathering for the study was the questionnaire as the research instrument to gather data from the respondents which provided the findings of the study.

From the responses gathered from the respondents through the questionnaire, the following were the results,

1. Most persons actually prefer to shop through Instagram
2. Shopping on Instagram I stress free and convenient.
3. Authenticity of goods or what is known as what I order vs what I get can cause ineffectiveness to the promotion of small scale businesses.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the research reveals a varied perception of Instagram's effectiveness in promoting small-scale businesses. While many users engage with

the platform for shopping and acknowledge its impact, concerns about authenticity and security raise questions about the platform's sustainability as a marketing tool. As Instagram continues to evolve, addressing these concerns and maintaining user trust will be critical for sustaining its role as a successful platform for business promotion.

5.3 Recommendations

Arising from the findings, the study recommends the following.

1. Owners of social media platforms should use strict regulatory bodies to ensure vendors account don't get hacked easily.
2. Instagram should impose strict rules for business owners account so they won't be issues of authenticity of goods.
3. Instagram should allow verification of business accounts both small and big that have made customers satisfied with their goods and services and recommend them to potential customers.

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APPENDIX I

Department of Mass Communication
University of Benin
Benin City, Nigeria.

Dear respondents,

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF ITEMS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a final year student of the above named department/institution. I am conducting a research on THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTAGRAM IN THE PROMOTION OF SMALL SCALE BUSINESSES BY INSTAGRAM VENDORS. The research is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Arts degree in mass communication.

I will be very grateful if you assist me with useful information in completing the questionnaire below, I assure you that your responses will be treated with confidentiality and the information given will be used strictly for the purpose of this academic work.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

MATTHEW TOLUWALOPE BEATRICE
Researcher

APPENDIX II
QUESTIONNAIRE

Instruction: Please kindly tick (√) the appropriate option below

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

What is your gender? (a) Male (b) Female

What is your age bracket? (a) 15-20 (b) 20-25 (c) 25-30 (d) 30 and above

What is your marital status? (a) Single (b) Married (c) Divorced/ Separated (d)
Widowed

What is your educational qualification? (a) First degree (b) Master's (c) PhD (d)
others

SECTION B: PSYCHOGRAPHICS

1. How often are you on Instagram ? (a) often (b) sometimes (c) Always (d)
Never
2. How often do you shop on Instagram? (a) Always (b) often (c) sometimes
(d)never
3. Shopping online is stress free and convenient. (a) strongly agree (b) agree(c)
strongly disagree (d) disagree

4. Has Instagram been effective in promoting small scale businesses? (a)high (b) very high (c) low (d) very low
5. Authenticity of goods and services or what is popularly known as what I ordered VS what I got have caused the effectiveness of Instagram in promoting small scale businesses to diminish overtime? (a) Agree (b) disagree (c) strongly agree (d) strongly disagree
6. Do you think hacked social media account can make the promotion of small scale businesses by Instagram vendors ineffective? (a) agree (b) disagree (c) strongly agree (d) strongly disagree

