

ADVERTISING INFLUENCE IN PROMOTING BRAND HERITAGE FOR TOURISM: A STUDY OF 2016 CALABAR CARNIVAL, NIGERIA

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Abstract

In Nigeria, tourism is one of the untapped resources that can generate significant revenue for the nation. However, a state such as Cross River has organized tourist activities to promote the cultural traditions and heritage of the Nigerian people. Advertising has become a very multifaceted institution. It is a means of disseminating information about a product, service or idea, its attributes or qualities and locations of sales. The study therefore attempted to investigate how advertising has contributed to the choice of Calabar for tourist relaxations as well as assess the extent to which the Calabar carnival has promoted the culture of tourism in Nigeria. The study was anchored on the hierarchy of effects model. The study made use of the survey design and the instruments for data collection were questionnaire and interview. The population for the study was tourists present at the 2016 Calabar carnival which had a sample size of 350 but only 347 copies of the questionnaire were useful for analysis. The findings of the study showed that advertising has indeed contributed to the choice of Calabar for tourist relaxation. The study went further in discovering that 98% of the respondents felt the Calabar carnival had a positive effect on tourism in Nigeria. The finding also revealed that the medium respondents viewed such adverts through was mostly through the television. The researchers therefore recommend that for Nigeria to be a pacesetter in Cultural heritage in Africa, more limelight should be given to tourism because of its potential especially to a developing nation like Nigeria with abundant tourism attractions. Hence, the study concluded on the note that advertising the Calabar carnival is impactful as it provides enlightenment, generates interest and promotes relaxation experiences.

Keywords: Advertising, Calabar carnival, Brand heritage, Tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising has become a very multifaceted institution. It is a means of disseminating information about a product, service or idea, its attributes or qualities and locations of sale. This insinuates that to the consumer, advertising is required to make a knowledgeable choice; it further induces consumers to try new products. According to Oyesomi and Oyedepo (2013), advertising is part of the marketing activities of a company, and part of the range of communications that can support a brand. Advertising stimulates the distribution of products plus build brand loyalty, equity and heritage for such products or services. The place of tourism in community development was aptly captured by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2014). In its 2014, annual tourism day tagged "Tourism and Community Development" According to the UNWTO; the theme is perfectly timed to contribute to the debate on tourism's contribution to the sustainable development goals of advancing new socio-economic opportunities and better livelihoods for communities around the world.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (2014) Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, in his official World Covenant University Centre for Research, Innovation and Development (CUCRID) Tourism Day (WTD) message posted on the website said: "Tourism can only prosper if it engages the local population by contributing to social values such as participation, education and enhanced local governance. At the same time, there can be no real tourism development if such development damages in any way the values and the culture of host communities or if the socio-economic benefits generated by the tourism sector do not trickle down to the community level". Tourism has the capacity to promote opportunities for cultures and communities around the world. Tourism is a people-based economic activity built on social interaction, and as such can only prosper if it engages the local population by contributing to social values such as participation, education and enhanced local governance.

The Calabar Carnival has come a long way. It all started 2004, when the then governor of Cross River State, Mr Donald Duke, had a vision of making his state the hub for tourism and hospitality in Nigeria and in Africa. The Carnival presents a perfect platform from brand visibility for consumer and market awareness. This work therefore sought to find out how advertising has been promoting the tourism sector, in the process creating a brand heritage.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study sought to accomplish the following objectives namely:

1. To assess if advertising has contributed to the choice of Calabar for tourist relaxation.
2. To find out the extent to which Calabar carnival has promoted the culture of tourism in Nigeria.
3. To determine the management strategies used in promoting the Calabar carnival.
4. To ascertain how advertising was used as a tool in managing the Calabar carnival.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Has advertising contributed to the choice of Calabar for tourist relaxation?
2. To what extent has the Calabar carnival promoted the culture of tourism in Nigeria?
3. What are the management strategies used in promoting the Calabar carnival?
4. How was advertising used as a tool for managing the Calabar carnival?

4. TOURISM AND BRAND HERIAGE

Tourism comprises the actions of people travelling to and lodging in abodes outside their typical environment for not more than one successive year for relaxation, business and other reasons not interrelated to the implementation of an activity remunerated from within the place stayed (World Tourism organization). Youell (1998) defines tourism as the temporary, short term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work, and activities during their stay at these destinations. Dinnie (2008) defines branding "clusters of functional and emotional values that promise a unique and welcome experience between a buyer and a seller" The branding process comprises of communicating the name, attributes and identity of a brand in order to build and maintain the reputé of the brand centered on four distinct components – brand identity, brand image, brand purpose and brand equity. Anholt (2007) summarises these four components as Brand heritage. According to Kotler (6), brand identity refers to how the product or service strives to identify itself and "convey its individuality and distinctiveness to all its relevant publics".

Brand image, as defined by Kotler (2003) is the “set of beliefs held about a particular brand”. It is the consumer’s perception of the brand. The other two elements brand purpose and brand equity refers to the goals and value of the brand. According to Anhot(2007), brand heritage is viewed as a reference of the essence of a brand, its identity and history. Brand heritage is used to differentiate brands from others and become unique in order to face better the competition and to deliver to the potential customers a story behind their brand.

5. METHOD

The research design used in this research is the survey. The questionnaire and interview were used as instruments of data collection. The population of the study was the tourists who visited Calabar during the Carnival. As a leading state in Tourism, Cross River provides diversity in demographic and socioeconomic variables such as ethnic composition, sex, age, tastes and lifestyles, income levels and even religious affiliations. Although not all of the factors mentioned above would be considered in the study, they all indubitably exercise influence on behaviour towards promotional messages and towards the brand being promoted. According to the Cross river state tourism board (7) the Calabar carnival attracts over 350,000 people annually. The size of the sample for this study was a total of 350 respondents.347 copies of the questionnaire were useful for analysis. Purposive sampling was used as a technique because the researcher is not addressing the whole population but an element of the population which has the information needed.

6. RESULTS

From the demographic characteristics of the respondents it could be seen that there are more male respondents to their female counterparts. One might infer from the above data amongst other reasons, that more male respondents existed because of the higher male population in Nigeria in general as well as in Cross River State. For the age distribution, respondents between age 21 and 30 (59%) had the highest percentage and the lowest percentage of respondents were those that were 51 and above (12%). It could be deduced from this record that the results gotten from the sample population is a mini-representation of the larger Calabar society, especially those that attend to such events as Carnivals. That is, more young/middle-age people prefer such outdoor events compared to teenagers who might need their parents’ permission and the aged who might prefer a slower paced relaxation activity.

A higher percentage of the respondents have as their highest educational qualification, their Secondary School Certificate (43%). Also, undergraduates and B.Sc. holders had a fairly high occurrence (36%). It could be observed from the data that the more advanced educationally the population became, the lesser their presence at the event (the questionnaires were distributed at the base of the event). Generally, less people have M.Sc/Ph.D as their highest qualification (9%). 7% of the respondents have school leaving certificate and 5% have no education at all. Many of the respondents are well educated. More respondents were single” in terms of marital status while more respondents were students in terms of occupation. This could be a mirror of the design of society in general where single individuals attend such events to socialize and students being the younger group in society enjoy the high pace of such an event.

Most respondents were domestic tourists, that is, they were indigenes or residents of Cross River State (47%). This group was closely followed by National tourists (39%). That is, tourists from other parts of Nigeria. The foreigners were the fewest respondents (14%). It could be implied from this data that the appreciation of tourism by Nigerians is on the increase amongst other deductions. Since the inception of Calabar Carnival in 2004, 33% of the respondents have attended the carnival more than three times, 58% have attended the carnival since inception and only 9% are first timer. The data derived reveals a visible increase in the number of people that attend the Carnival. This shows an upward movement in the participation in the event.

Table 1: Respondents’ source of exposure to Calabar Carnival

Response	How did you come to know about the Carnival? (%)
Adverts	56.7
Friend/family	30.3
Media coverage	9.5
Promos	2.3
Other	1.2
Total	100
	n=347

Table 1 reveals that a large number of respondents were first exposed to the Calabar Carnival through advertisement. Family and friendship network had the second largest response rate and promos had the least. This highlights the importance of advertising.

Table 2: Medium of Exposure to adverts on Calabar Carnival

Response	What medium did you view adverts? (%)
Television	68.0
Radio	15.0
Newspapers/magazines	4.0
Social media	4.0
Other	0.6
No medium	8.4
Total	100
	n=347

Most respondents stated that they were exposed more often to television adverts on the Carnival compared to other media of communication.

Table 3 Respondents view of advertising the Calabar Carnival to promote cultural heritage and tourism

Response	
Necessary	87.0
Not necessary	5.0
Waste of money	3.5
Undecided	4.5
Total	100
	n=347

87% of the respondents are also of the opinion that advertising the calabar carnival is necessary to promote cultural heritage and tourism.

Table 4: Respondents' Opinion of Calabar Carnival

Response	Do you enjoy the activities at the Carnival? (%)	Has the Carnival influenced tourism in Nigeria? (%)
Yes	83.3	98.0
No	16.7	2.0
Total	100	100
	n=347	n=347

More respondents enjoy activities at the Calabar Carnival. This highlights the entertainment purposes of tourism. It can also be asserted from the data presented here shows that the Carnival is fulfilling its purpose for its creation. Most respondents also believe that the Carnival has greatly influenced tourism in Nigeria.

Table 5: Respondents' Perception of tourism value of Calabar Carnival

Response	Experienced Calabar Culture? (%)	Calabar has rich cultural heritage? (%)	Carnival enhanced tourism experience? (%)	Attracted local and foreign visitors? (%)
Strongly Agree	43.5	43.5	41.3	46.4
Agree	43.8	42.4	49.4	45.8
Undecided	7.2	9.5	6.9	5.8
Disagree	2.3	2.6	0.9	1.7
Strongly disagree	3.2	2.0	1.5	0.3
Total	100	100	100	100
	n=347	n=347	n=347	n=347

Most respondents had agreed that they experienced the rich cultural heritage of Calabar, that the Carnival enhanced their tourism experience and also attracted many visitors to the State Capital. The findings presented in these tables corroborate themselves and do not in any way negate each other.

Table 6: Respondents' appraisal on the organization of the Calabar Carnival

Response	Properly organized? (%)	Dominated by western culture? (%)	Promoted Nigerian culture? (%)
Strongly Agree	45.0	38.3	40.9
Agree	40.6	43.2	47.8
Undecided	5.8	8.5	7.8
Disagree	3.7	4.2	1.8
Strongly disagree	4.9	5.8	1.7
Total	100 n=347	100 n=347	100 n=347

Most respondents agree that the carnival was properly organized while very few were either undecided or had a level of disagreement about the organization of the carnival. In their assessment, most respondents stated that the carnival was dominated by western culture, although it also tried to promote the image and identity of Nigeria. This also can be a mirror of the larger society.

7. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question One: Has advertising contributed to the choice of Calabar for tourist relaxation? This question was answered by both questionnaire item and the interview with the Chairman, Cross Rivers State Carnival Commission. Table 1 showed that 56.7% of respondents had been exposed first to the Carnival via advertising platforms. This was the highest percentage in terms of means of first exposure to the Carnival (that is, where people got first informed about the Calabar Carnival). These showed that adverts were seen with a great frequency on the Calabar Carnival.

Table 2 revealed that the medium that respondents viewed such adverts through was mostly the television. This collaborates with the findings of Morgan & Pritchard (2003) that televisions are both sight and sound (audio/visual) media and for advertising tourism it would be an ideal means. It further defends the findings of Daramola (2003) that Nigerians exposure to televisions is very high. Mr. Onah, Chairman, Cross Rivers State Carnival Commission, stated in his interview that advertising has been a major strategy in managing the Carnival. He further stated that a growth in the number of participants has been seen as an increase in advertising has occurred. This finding is in support of Abideen & Saleem (2012) who posited that advertising is one of the most effective tools of promotion because of its ability to motivate consumers to buy products. In evaluating the advertising campaign strategies, Mr. Onah stated that results show that not only does advertising increase the number of participants (tourists), but sponsors have also been very interested in supporting the Carnival. This finding is in support of Osunbiyi (2001) who opined that most of the early newspapers were short-lived because they did not develop aptitude in attracting advertising support, therefore advertising is imperative to the continued existence of any commercial organization.

Research Question Two: To what extent has the Calabar carnival promoted the culture of tourism in Nigeria? Several people (respondents) have been to the Carnival at least once. Besides from that, they have found events and activities at the Carnival enjoyable, they believe that the Carnival is one of the best leisure environments in Nigeria, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the people, and attracting local and foreign visitors to the State. Respondents believe that the Carnival has truly influenced tourism in Nigeria positively. One of the findings showed that respondents had at least participated in the Carnival once before. It also revealed that the Carnival was an enjoyable event for participants and it could be asserted here that if it was enjoyable, the likelihood for a repeat participation was likely to exist. This supports the findings of Wright (1997) who opined that happy and satisfied tourists are more likely to return and more likely to say positive things about the destination and service.

Research Question Three: What are the management strategies used in promoting the Calabar carnival? The interview with the Chairman, Cross River State Carnival Commission, Mr. Gabriel Onah provided the information needed to answer this question. Mr. Onah stated that advertising through radio, television jingles, social media and billboards, other advertising campaigns, use of Satellite and national television stations to advertise has been used to promote the Carnival. Besides from that, the timing of the Carnival, during the Christmas festive period has promoted the Carnival. The Cross River Carnival Commission also exists and the utilization of existing State bodies such as the tourism bureau and Calabar Urban Development Authority has helped in promoting the carnival. As with development campaigns, in which the engagement of members of the community promotes participation in the campaign, so also in this case, the engagement of community members, especially the youth has helped in the promotion of the Carnival. There has been an attestation that these management strategies have continued to work and have helped in the growth of the Carnival till

date.

Research Question Four: How was advertising used as a tool for managing the Calabar carnival?

The interview with Mr. Onah provided the information needed to respond to the fourth research question. He stated that advertising through radio and television jingles, billboards and other advertising campaigns have been used to sensitize the people about the Carnival. Advertising has also been used to remind people about the rich cultural heritage of the people of Cross River State, its peacefulness and hospitality and how ideal a holiday spot it would be. He also stated that the adverts have also spoken to business people, that is, Cross River being an ideal place for not just pleasure but business and that these advertising efforts have "paid off tremendously." Mr. Onah said that things have been stepped up with the establishment of a State owned advertising agency and this has increased the quality and quantity of adverts on the Carnival. Advertising has not only been used to create awareness about the Carnival but as a continual reminder of the Carnival. These advertising campaigns have not only focused on the residents of Cross River State, but the nation and even across the borders of Nigeria.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From data gathered and analysed, it is evident that advertising is indispensable. At the beginning of this research, certain objectives were established to guide the study, from those objectives, research questions were generated. This research questions steered the data gathering, presentation, analysis and interpretation process. Findings revealed that advertising has indeed contributed to the choice of Calabar as a tourist destination, the annual Calabar festival has promoted the culture of tourism in Nigeria, advertising amongst others was used as a strategy in promoting the carnival, and participants at the Carnival had more positive opinions about the Carnival than negative or neutral ones. From the analysis, it was obvious that the findings of the study supported the argument and other related literature that advertising promotes tourism. Hence, this study concludes on the note that advertising the Calabar carnival is very impactful, as it provides enlightenment, generates interest and promotes relaxation experiences. Furthermore, Mr Onah evaluations of advertising campaigns show that adverts have encouraged larger turnouts and this has in turn increased the number of individuals and groups that want to sponsor the Carnival. It was also concluded that the Calabar carnival was properly organized, and although dominated by western culture, the identity and image of Nigerians were also promoted. The study therefore recommends that for Nigeria to be a pacesetter in Cultural heritage in Africa, more limelight should be given to tourism because of its potential especially to a developing nation like Nigeria with abundant tourism attractions. Furthermore, in relation to the advertising media, television should still remain predominant in advertising message channels irrespective of the new media. Findings from the research revealed that majority of the people are mostly exposed to the broadcast media. In the case of Calabar carnival since the adverts promote intangible attributes of the brand, it makes much sense for the Carnival Commission and Tourism Bureau to channel their resources more to television advertising because people can have access to a combination of all creative elements, all at once. For loyalty to a product, service or brand to be maintained, advertising has to be done consistently. This is because it is what they see overtime, that lingers in their minds and that they become accustomed to amidst the barrage of advertisements in existence and yet to come. Tourism opportunities such as carnivals, festivals should be maximized by all stakeholders, the media inclusive. The opportunities should be promoted using the media channels like advertisements, editorials and other channels of mass communication.

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