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Rekindling movie going culture in South–South Nigeria: Evaluating public relations strategies of cinema houses

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Abstract

The central focus of this study is on the influence of public relations strategies on customer loyalty of Genesis Deluxe Cinema in Port-Harcourt and Owerri. The researchers employed both survey and case study in the collection of data because the people's opinions were sought through questionnaire. The population of movie- goers in Port-Harcourt and Owerri is put at 1,894,000. The designs were considered most relevant because they allowed the research to make reference, and generalization of the population by studying the sample obtained from the study. The selection 450 respondents were done through the Taro Yamane sampling technique. This was to give equal opportunity to all the members in the population area to be selected for the study. The main instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire designed by the researcher and with the help of the supervisor. Chi – square (X^2) statistical analysis was employed to test the null hypothesis. The statistical technique is considered most appropriate because hypothesis were subject to testing at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the analysis showed that the Public relations strategies employed by Genesis Deluxe Cinema influenced its customer loyalty and the customers' satisfaction with Genesis Deluxe Cinema services guaranteed customer loyalty.

Keywords: Rekindling movie, South–South Nigeria, public relations strategies, cinema houses

Introduction

Nigerian film industry remains an inheritance of colonialism. Even after the exit of Britain from Nigeria, the film culture continued to thrive, especially, during the oil boom of the 60s and 70s. However movie going culture declined following the down turn in the country's economic fortune. Hence, movie going have reduced among Nigerians due to economic down turn, lack of cinema houses and lack of security. Public Relations strategies could be the means to achieve good image because they employ various tactics to create mutual relationship between the organization and its publics, attract, and maintain a large customer base. Public Relations strategies are blue prints for a well-coordinated and planned corporate activities meant to achieve a long-term corporate goals; they are plans of action that integrate organizational goals and objectives. They also help the organization to maximize the success of PR efforts and help the business grow. Customer loyalty is a costly affair. Hence, firms spend more than five times as much to obtain a new customers than retaining an existing one (Kotler & Keller, 2006) ^[30]. According to a study by the global business-consulting firm, Baines and Company (2000), a 5% increase in customer retention can increase a company's profitability by 75%. Customer loyalty is a tendency to favour one brand over all others, whether due to satisfaction with the product or service, its convenience or performance, or familiarity and comfort with the brand. Customer loyalty encourages consumers to shop more consistently, spend more, and feel positive about the purchasing experience. Higher customer loyalty implies a higher market share and an ability to demand relatively higher prices compared to those of competitors (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001) ^[11]. One of the greatest challenges facing firms today is how to gain an advantage over competitors in satisfying customers' needs and this is being driven primarily by more demanding customers. The inability of a firm to satisfy its customer needs can affect his loyalty. Evans and Lindsay (1996) ^[20] state that companies with satisfied customers have a good opportunity to convert them into loyal customers who purchases from those firms over an extended period. Hence, businesses must be able to show more concern for customers than the competition in order to gain any competitive advantage.

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Customer loyalty can help in the proliferation of cinema houses in Nigeria. This is because customer loyalty is the possibility of a returning customer repurchasing from a company and willing to behave with them as a partner. This is necessary because their loyal customers might have recommended the company to others who might not be in the area of the cinema house as people would also want to be partakers of the products and services. For instance, it seems the ability of Cinema houses to attract a lot of customers through their satisfactory products and services have led to their proliferation in Lagos, Enugu, Owerri and Abuja. This was also the same thing for Genesis cinema with branches in Lagos, Abuja, Port-Harcourt, Owerri and other cities in Nigeria. The need for cinema houses to continue to win and retain customers cannot be over-emphasized as businesses with high customers' loyalty rates have the ability to reach great financial results through public relations. Moreover, loyal customers foster positive word of mouth promotion and defy competitors' strategies (Dick & Basu, 1994) [17]. Thus, the major concern of this study is to identify if Cinema houses employ public relations strategies to retain the loyalty of their customers as there are other growing companies in Port Harcourt and Owerri similar services competing for a larger market share.

Statement of the problem

What are the Public Relations Strategies employed by Cinema Houses in winning and retaining customers? This is against the backdrop that insecurity and economic hardship have made cinema going culture a rare activity in Nigeria more especially in South-South states with its militancy problem. However, there have been growth and expansion of various business outfits in Port Harcourt and Owerri. The introduction of such cinema Houses as the Silver bird and Genesis Cinema may have created competition for a large market share. Thus, it may have become a challenge for Cinema Houses to attract new customers and maintain their existing customer base. Hence, with these challenges, it is pertinent for the study to examine such problems as;

- a) What Public Relations strategies do Cinema Houses use in attracting customers?
- b) What is the influence of Cinema Houses Public Relations strategies on customers' patronage?
- c) What problems can hinder the use of PR strategies in winning and retaining customers for Cinema Houses?

Objectives of the study

The study was aimed at assessing the use of public relations by Cinema houses in Nigeria. The following objectives were derived;

- 1) To identify the range of services Genesis Deluxe Cinema offer to attract their customers.
- 2) To ascertain whether Cinema Houses employ PR strategies to win and retain customers.
- 3) To determine the effectiveness of the PR strategies they employ.
- 4) To ascertain whether the customers are satisfied with the PR strategies employed by the companies to ensure loyalty.
- 5) To identify other factors that influence the loyalty of Cinema customers.

Research questions

To achieve the objectives of the research work, the

following research questions were formulated;

- RQ 1 What range of services do Cinema Houses offer to attract their customers?
- RQ 2 Do Cinema Houses employ PR strategies to win and retain customers?
- RQ 3 How effective are the PR strategies employed by the Cinema Houses to attract customers?
- RQ 4 Are the customers satisfied with the PR strategies employed by the Cinema companies to ensure customer loyalty?
- RQ 5 What other factors can influence the loyalty of the Cinema Houses' customers?

Hypothesis

To enable the researchers achieve the stated objectives, these hypotheses were derived;

H₀₁: The PR strategies employed by Cinema houses do not influence customer loyalty.

H₀₂: Customer's satisfaction with Cinema services does not guarantee customer loyalty.

Literature Review

Theoretical framework

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006) [58], 'A theory is a set of related propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relationships among concepts'. Every research is conducted under certain theoretical prescriptions which help to orderly analyze and interpret data. This research will be anchored on two theories - the Symmetry and Relationship marketing theory. Activities of an organisation. Going by the first axiom, if Genesis Deluxe Cinema fails to communicate its company's activities and policies to its customers, it will lose the goodwill of the customers which will not retain loyalty. Secondly, Genesis Deluxe Cinema must constantly communicate with the customers, in terms of their services to retain their loyalty. On the third axiom, if Cinema Houses do not use the right PR strategies to communicate, it will not be effective on the customers and they should also ensure they get feedback from their customers. Therefore, all communication must be constructed within the context of the customers. The fourth axiom implies that for Cinema houses to maintain close relationship with their customers, they must always listen to them and at the same time talk with them as this will attract and enhance the loyalty of their customers.

The relevance of the theory to the study cannot be over-emphasised. This is because public relations deal with effective communication to build a strong relationship and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics. In essence, effective communication activities of Cinema Houses can attract and enhance the loyalty of their customers. The roots of relationship marketing theory stem from Economics. Alderson (1958, pp. 27, 28) [3] extended the institutional economics view that exchanges are driven by value maximization and market efficiency, he argued that because people are involved, marketing thought must include the sociological factors of "power structure" and "two-way exchange of commitments," as well as the social psychological factors of "communication" and "emotional reactions." Relationship Marketing can be defined as consciously working to establish and develop relations with customers and other interested parties, in a way which creates mutual value and competitiveness. Relationship

marketing has evolved from a primary focus on consumer goods in the 1950s, industrial marketing in the 1960s, non-profit and societal marketing in the 1970s, services marketing in the 1980s and finally, relationship marketing in the 1990s (Christopher, Payne & Ballantyne 1991)^[12].

Grönroos (1994)^[23] state that paradigms shift is evolving in marketing from the focus on the four P's of marketing; product, price, place, and promotion to a new approach based on building and management of relationships. Grossman (1998:27)^[25] refers to Evans and Laskin (1994) who state that relationship marketing will lead to greater profitability, increased consumer loyalty, opportunities for strategic advantage, and reduced costs in recruiting consumers and more effective organisational planning. The challenge for most companies today is to thrive in a relationship economy (Cap Gemini Ernst & Young, 2005). Competition for the most profitable customer relationships is extremely tough and companies need to know who their customers are.

Cinema Houses offer services such as various game zones and film café with over three big screens in Port-Harcourt and owerri that attracts 10,000 viewers. In order to attract customers to patronize their services in a long-term run, relationship marketing is relevant. The main focus of the study is not just about the attraction of the customers but retaining the loyalty of their customers. In view of this, the use of relationship marketing is very imperative for them to retain their customer's loyalty. Genesis Cinema relationship marketing's focus should be to move customers up the ladder of loyalty. Relationship marketing has to focus on customer retention, service, and product benefits, a long-term scale, service emphasis, high customer commitment, customer contact, quality, and finally customer loyalty (Abratt & Russell 1999)^[2]. The customer relationship must be maintained to sustain repurchase, loyalty and retention, which will lead to profitability. Therefore, Genesis Deluxe Cinema needs to embrace relationship marketing as a way to build loyal and profitable long-term relationships with each customer, which leads to improved financial and market performance, and an increased competitive edge.

The Influence of Public Relations Strategies on Customer Loyalty

Public relations is all about communication activities to achieve organizational goals and objectives. According to Jobber (2001)^[29] the objectives of public relations is to manage misconceptions for unfounded opinions not to tarnish the image and operations of an organisation. Wells, Burnet and Moriarity (2005)^[56] also support the view of Jobber (2001)^[29] and stressed that public relations objectives focus on creating credibility, delivering information, building positive images, changing stakeholders' attitudes, opinions, or behaviours about a company. This entails that the objectives of every organization is to achieve a reputable image in the eyes of the public in order to have lasting relationship with them. Public relations strategy in the context of this research work entails organisational management's deliberate and well-planned use of communication activities in the direction that would position the organisation as a credible one and by so doing, attract, retain, and enhance the loyalty of its customers. By defining and researching into the customer's behaviour and needs, the organization can tailor their communication to suit their behaviours. This will in turn

attract, increase, and retain the loyalty of the customers. They are an important part of a PR strategy because they can shape the content and communicate a unified message. Hallahan (2000)^[26] stated the primary function of public relations should be to create effective messages to reach strategically important public. In order for the organization to get customer's loyalty, the message of the products and services of the organization has to be defined. For instance, if the organization launches a new product, it has to succinctly explain the use and benefits of the product. It should also ensure that the messages are accurate. The consistency of the repeat purchase will lead to the loyalty of the customer. Wells *et al.*, (2005)^[56] further opined that public relations practitioners have many tools to establish and enhance a positive image of an organisation and its products among its various publics. Hence, the various tactics employed by public relations practitioners to deliver messages to the publics of an organisation include speeches, sponsorships, events, corporate advertising, press releases, websites, internal publications and notice boards (Belch & Belch, 2001; Lancaster, 2005; Moore & Kalupa, 2007; Palmer, 2000; Wells *et al.*, 2005)^[6, 32, 38, 45, 56]. In this study, the effective tactics used to influence customer loyalty of an organization includes:

Through events, an organisation can achieve objectives such as an increase in awareness level, reputation enhancement, and image building. Palmer (2000)^[45] states that major events are an opportunity for two-way dialogue between the organisation and the media. Event and sponsorship in the words of Duncan (2002)^[18] are designed to create involvement and intensify the marketing communications activities in an organisation. Events such as Easter Fiesta, Valentine's Day, Christmas Bash, Anniversaries etc. can attract a lot of people including the customers and non-customers. Through this means, the customers are entertained thereby making them feel special and attached to the organization. Lancaster (2005)^[32] believe that key individuals can be invited to artistic events and such key individuals can be targeted, contacted, entertained and result in long-term relationships building. Event is an important tactic to communicate positively to the customers, because some customers might have unfavourable opinions about the organization. Moore and Kalupa (2007)^[38] also were of the view that events play an important part in changing attitudes and opinions. The authors further assert that events provide information that often induces a change of mind. Clow and Baack (2007)^[14] further mention that since event is an opportunity for organisation to have a dialogue with their publics, public relations professional should always amplify responsibility for positive outcomes of events and increase the desirable outcome in the eyes of the public.

According to Stone and Merlin (2002)^[54], to develop effective retention strategies an organization has to have an in depth knowledge of customers behaviour and needs. It is important for an organization to measure its success of the PR strategy. The organization can set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or Key Result Areas (KRAs). Regardless of the terminology, they all refer to the major observable features for measuring success. Applying KPIs in public relations strategy is to some extent difficult because "the results of public relations work can be intangible in nature and are not often repeated on regular basis" (Allert and Zawawi: 2004:177)^[4]. The scholars further added that, most times, input and output rather than outcome is measured. Thus, key performance indicators can be measured in these

terms: 1) Number of media organisations that attended an organisation's public relations events and the number that actually reported the event positively or negatively; 2) Determining the number of press releases sent out on an issue, and how much coverage was achieved (Allert and Zawawi: 2004:177)^[4].

Empirical Studies Review

Little research has been done on this present study especially among scholars in Nigeria. Notwithstanding, two key studies related to this present study were reviewed. For instance, Uzoma (2010) in a study entitled: The effectiveness of public relations practice in the oil sector: A case study of African Petroleum plc. Port-Harcourt. The aim of the researcher was to determine the extent of AP'S public Relations messages' accessibility to the publics and also find out whether AP's public relations practices influence the opinion of the publics. Relevant data based on the scope of the study were collected through primary and secondary data with structured questionnaire as the main instrument administered to two hundred and fifty (250) respondents comprising forty African petroleum staff, sixty shareholders, one hundred and twenty customers and thirty members of the press. Among the findings were that the African Petroleum Public Relations Media Messages and quality of their overall services are satisfactory through their mobilization programmes and enlighten campaigns but needs more efforts. AP's Public Relation's Practice influences the publics to favour her products through persuasive and convincing communication. The reviewed study and the current study main focus are on the impact of public relations in an organization. The referenced study focused on how public relations activities and messages can enhance positive public opinion and attitude towards African petroleum Oil Company. .

Also, Hung (2008) in a study, sought to investigate the relationship between customer perceptions of public relations (PR) and customer loyalty; to test for the moderating role of brand image in that relationship. This study extends previous research by examining the moderating role of brand image. Further research is indicated, to identify the key moderators of the driving force of PR in relation to customer relationship marketing. The work explores that consumers' perception of an organisation's PR practice is an antecedent of loyalty. The impact of public relations perception (PRP) on customer loyalty is stronger and more significant when the brand image is favourable. If it is unfavourable, the effect of PRP on customer loyalty is negligible. The researcher gathered Data using a questionnaire designed on the basis of focus-group discussions with 30 consumers of the insurance industry in Taiwan, Hierarchical regression analysis of data from 367 respondents was used to test two hypotheses. The result from the hypotheses states that the relationship between perceived public relations (PRP) and customer loyalty are moderated by brand image and the tendency for PRP to be positively-related to customer loyalty will be significantly more pronounced when brand image is high rather than low.

Background on Genesis Cinema Houses

Genesis Deluxe Cinema (GDC) is one of Nigeria's leading

cinema developers and operators of multiplex cinemas in Nigeria. GDC is part of the Genesis Group, a Nigerian based conglomerate established in 1991 with its key focus on hospitality and entertainment. The Genesis Deluxe brand and company was launched into the Nigerian market 2008 in Lagos. Since, then Genesis Deluxe Cinemas has grown to three cinema with 15 screen and over 2000 seats. By the month of December 2011, the company had served over 5 million customers. Genesis Deluxe Cinemas Lagos was the first cinema in West Africa to show 3D movie (Green Hornet) in February 2011. Through a growing range of innovative and differentially priced offers, varying experiential benefits and the latest technology, Games Zones, Film Café, Genesis Deluxe Cinema is able to provide the leading cinema experience in order to influence customer loyalty.

Research Methodology

The central focus of this study is on the influence of public relations strategies on customer loyal of Genesis Deluxe Cinema in Port-Harcourt and Owerri. The researchers employed both survey and case study in the collection of data because the people's opinions were sought through questionnaire. The population of movie-goers in Port-Harcourt and Owerri is put at 1,894,000 according to a research conducted by T.I.N magazine to conclude the most populated cities in Nigeria as of 2015. In relation to this study. Taro-Yamane statistical sampling method was adopted in order to obtain a true representation of all categories of the publics. The sample size of the population is 400 from the population of the study. The research instrument used for this study was the questionnaire. A questionnaire is a data collection tool which uses various questions to achieve the research objectives (Obasi, 2012)^[43]. It was administered to the publics of Genesis Deluxe Cinema in Owerri and Port Harcourt. The questionnaire was designed in a way that all necessary information regarding the study was obtained to properly test the hypothesis. A total of 400 items was drawn and administered to the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Section A contained items on the demography of the respondents while Section B contained items that answered the research questions formulated for the study.

The questionnaire questions used for this study was thoroughly scrutinized by colleagues to ensure its clarity, relevance and, un-ambiguity. Data was generated using the questionnaire that was self-administered to the respondents. Four hundred copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the customers of the Cinema. Houses in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Data collected were analysed using frequency tables, percentages, simple descriptive data analysis, and chi-square statistical analysis. Chi-square as a non-parametric statistical tool was conveniently used in testing hypothesis. Out of Four hundred (400) copies distributed, 300 were returned as the number of casualties was hundred (100). The hundred (100) casualties include fifty- (50) that were not returned and fifty - (50) that had major answer discrepancies and incomplete answers. All data presented and analysed emanates from the 300 copies that were retrieved. Therefore, the response rate was 75% response rate.

Results

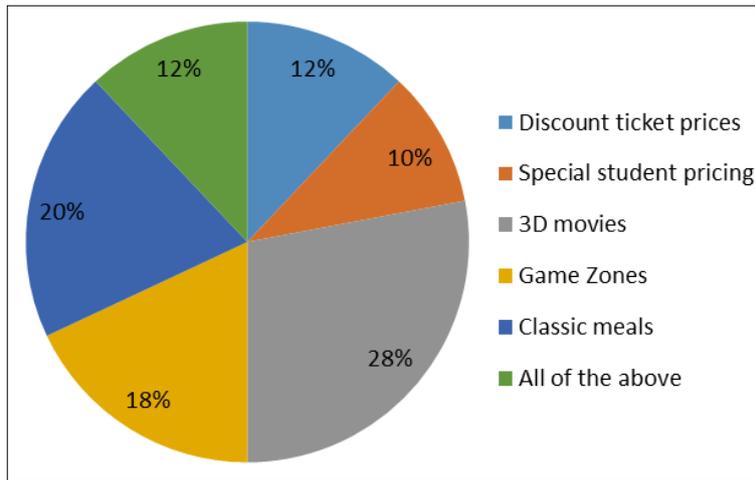


Fig 1: Movie goers' major reasons for watching films in the cinema Houses

In the graph above and table 1 below (see appendix), 36 (12%) respondents say Genesis Deluxe Cinema offers Discount ticket prices, 30 (10%) respondents say Special student pricing, 84 (28%) respondents say 3D movies, 54

(18%) respondents say Game zones, while 60 (20%) respondents say Classic meal and 36 (12%) respondents say all of the above.

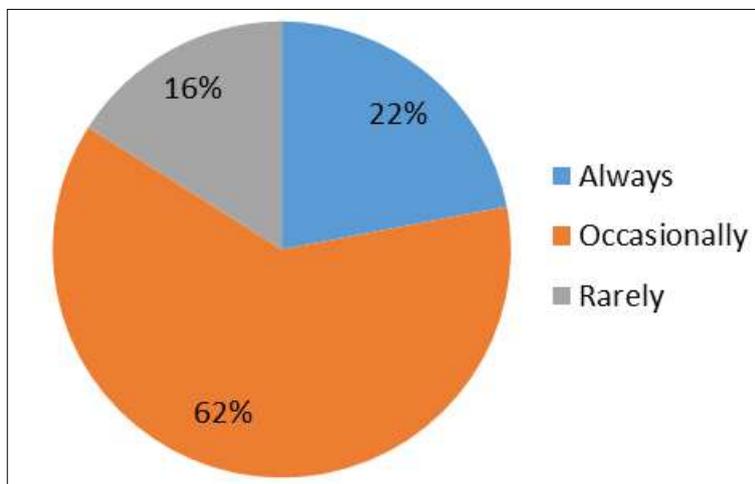


Fig 2: Respondents patronage of Cinema Houses

In the graph above, 66 (22%) respondents always patronize Genesis Deluxe Cinema, 186 (62%) respondents occasionally patronize Genesis Deluxe Cinema, while 48 (16%) respondents rarely patronize Genesis Deluxe Cinema.

In the graph above and table 3 below, (see appendix) 246 (82%) respondents think Genesis Deluxe Cinema employ Public Relations Strategies to retain customers, while 54 (18%) respondents do not think Genesis Deluxe Cinema employ Public Relations Strategies to retain customers.

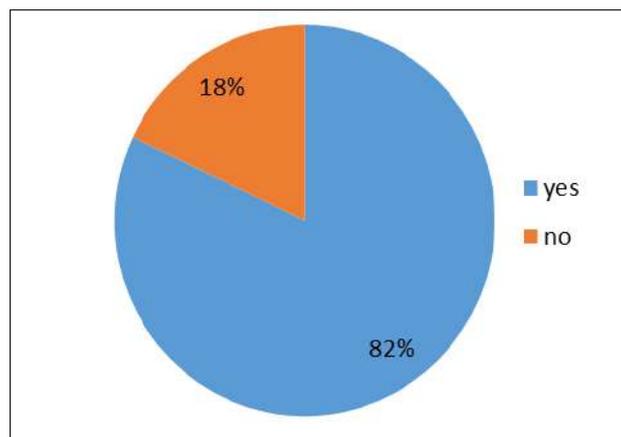


Fig 3: The usage of Public Relations strategies by Cinema Houses

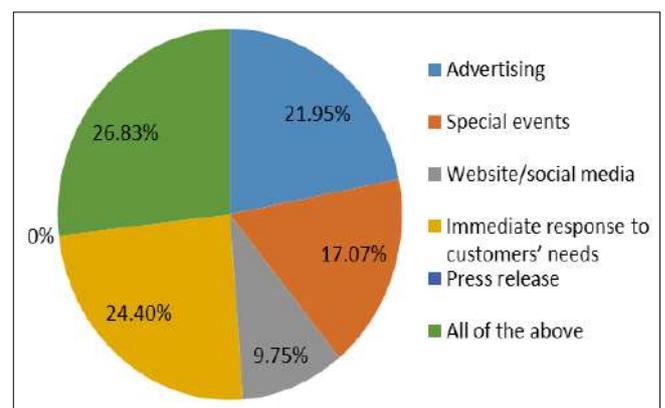
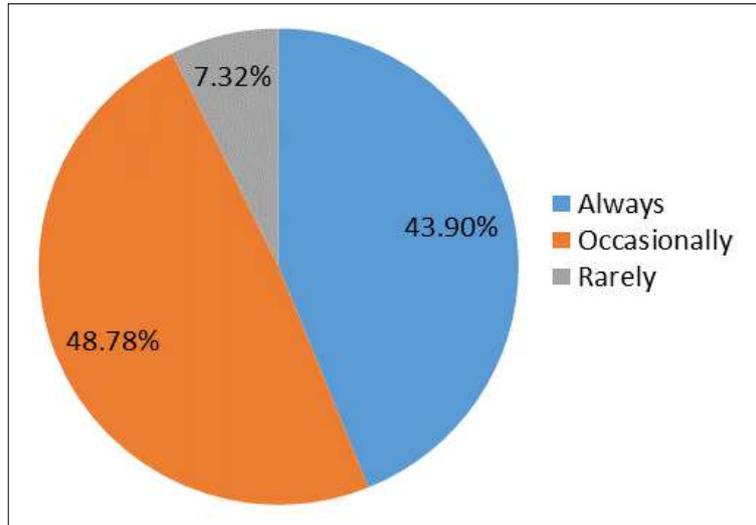


Fig 4: The PR Strategies of Cinema Houses

246 respondents said yes that Genesis Deluxe Cinema employ PR strategies to retain customers from the previous table. Thus, from the table above, 246 respondents responded to question 9. 54 (21.95%) respondents say is advertising, 42 (17.07%) respondents say is special events,

24 (9.75%) respondents say is website/social media, 60 (24.40%) respondents say is immediate response to customers' needs, while no respondent says press release and 66 (26.83%) respondents say is all of the above.



Source: questionnaire item 10

Fig 5: The frequency of the usage of the PR strategies by Cinema Houses

The 246 respondents still went on to answer the question 6 as the question do not have any relevance to the respondents that said no to question 4. Thus from the table above, 108 (43.90%) respondents say Genesis Deluxe Cinema always

employ these strategies, while 120 (48.78%) respondents say occasionally, and 18 (7.32%) say Genesis Deluxe Cinema rarely employ these strategies.

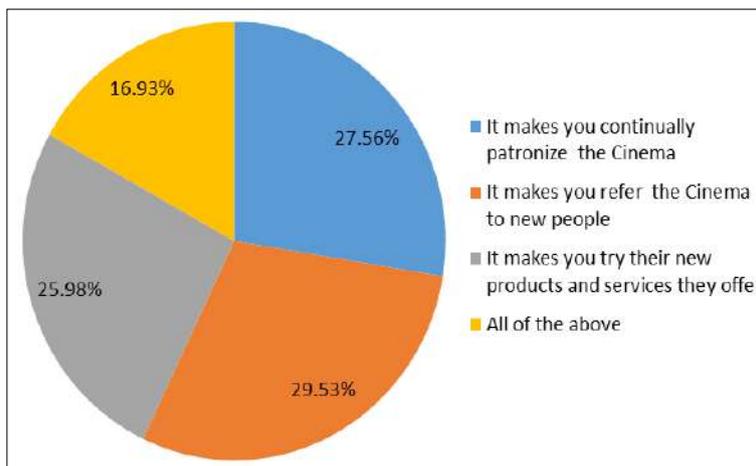


Fig 6: The effect of PR strategies on Movie Goers

In the table above, question 13 was relevant to the 254 respondents who said yes in question 12. Thus, 27.56% respondents believe it makes them continually patronize Genesis Deluxe Cinema, 29.53% respondents believe it

makes them refer Genesis Deluxe Cinema to new people, while 66 (25.98%) respondents believe it makes them try Genesis Deluxe Cinema new products and services and 16.93% says is all of the above.

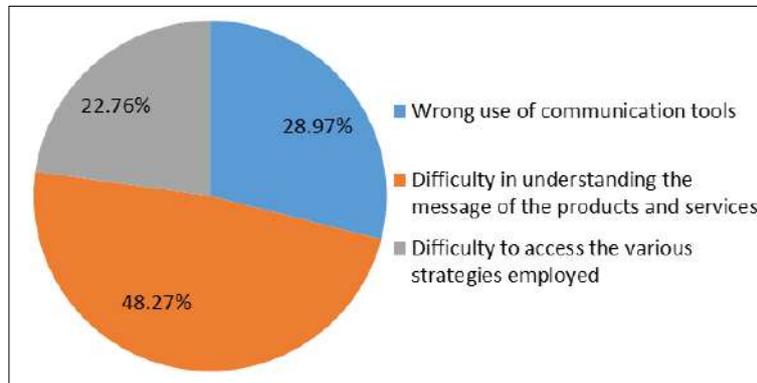


Fig 7: Respondents reason for dissatisfaction with Cinema Houses PR strategies

In the table above, question 16 was relevant to the 145 respondents that said no to question 15. Thus, 42 (28.97%) respondents are dissatisfied because of wrong communication tools, 70 (48.27%) respondents are

dissatisfied because of difficulty in understanding the message of the products and services while 33 (22.76%) respondents are dissatisfied because of the difficulty to access the various strategies employed.

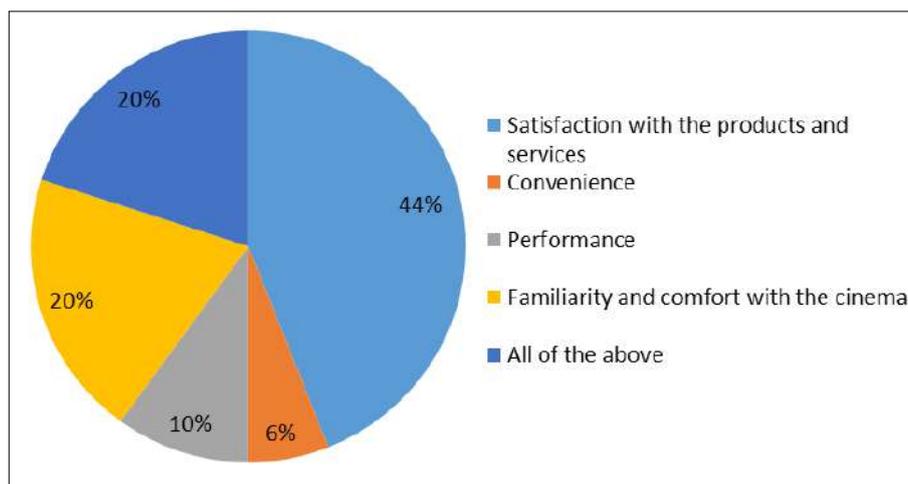


Fig 8: Other factors that make Customer loyal to a Cinema House

In the figure above, 132 (44%) respondents believe satisfaction with the products and services can make them loyal, 18 (6%) respondents believe that convenience can make them loyal, 30 (10%) respondents believe that performance can make them loyal, while 60 (20%) respondents believe that familiarity and comfort with the cinema can make them loyal, and 60 (20%) respondents say is all of the above.

Where;
 K= number of rows
 H= number of columns
 $X^2_{0.05 (k-1) (h-1)}$ degree of freedom
 $(K-1) \times (H-1)$
 $(2-1) \times (2-1)$ degree of freedom
 $X^2_{0.05 (1)}$ degree of freedom
 $\therefore X^2 = 22.8, P = 0.05, df = 1, X^2/u = 3.841$

Testing of the hypotheses

Hypotheses were formulated for this study thus:

Hypothesis 1:

H₀: The public relations strategies employed Cinema Houses do not influence customer loyalty. See Table.

Using tabular format to calculate X², we have this:

Responses	O	E	O - E	(O-E) ²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
Yes	254	217	37	1369	6.31
No	46	83	-37	1369	16.49
TOTAL	300				22.8

Tabulated / critical chi squared value = (k-1) (h-1) degree of freedom @ 0.05 level of significance

Decision Rule

Reject the Null hypothesis (H₀) if the calculated value of the chi-square (X²) is greater than the critical or tabulated value at 0.05 level of significance and (k-1) (h-1) degree of freedom.

Since the calculated Chi-square (22.8) is greater than the table value (3.841), we reject H₀ (null hypothesis) and conclude that the Public relations strategies employed by Genesis Deluxe Cinema influence its customer loyalty. .

Hypothesis 2:

H₀: Customer’s satisfaction with Cinema Houses’ services does not guarantee customer loyalty.

Do you think satisfaction with Genesis Deluxe Cinema services can retain you?

Using tabular format to calculate X², we have this:

Responses	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
Yes	180	217	-37	1369	6.31
No	120	83	37	1369	16.49
TOTAL	300				22.8

Tabulated / critical chi squared value = (k-1) (h-1) degree of freedom @ 0.05 level of significance

Where;

K= number of rows

H= number of columns

X²0.05 (k-1) (h-1) degree of freedom

(K-1) × (H-1)

(2-1) × (2-1) degree of freedom

X² 0.05 (1) degree of freedom

∴ X² = 22.8, P = 0.05, df = 1, X²/u = 3.841

Decision Rule

Reject the Null hypothesis (H₀) if the calculated value of the chi-square (X²) is greater than the critical or tabulated value at 0.05 level of significance and (k-1) (h-1) degree of freedom.

Since the calculated Chi-square (22.8) is greater than the table value (3.841), we reject H₀ (null hypothesis) and conclude that customer’s satisfaction with Genesis Deluxe Cinema services is a guarantee to customer loyalty. The rejection is that it received statistical support.

Discussion of findings

The use of Public relations strategies by Genesis Deluxe Cinema to win customers’ loyalty

According to Hudson (2004), PR strategy is the overriding plan that allows public relations practitioner to help ensure that organizational goals and objectives are achieved. This is in correlation to the findings on table 8 that Genesis Deluxe Cinema employs public relations strategies to achieve the objective of retaining customers.

Its first step of strategies was to offer range of services that attracted customers and this is in support of Inamullah (2012) [28] who says once a firm understands the mind of their customer they can make a long lasting profitable relationship with them and can make them loyal. It is also in line with Oliver’s (1999) [44] perspective which proposes that loyal customers go through four stages. First is a cognitive sense (belief) with his example of “sales promotion or high quality products of a firm for first time purchase consideration attracts a customer. To be loyal, the customer must consistently confirm that his or her expectations about the goods or services are met”. The responses in table 5 indicated that customers of Genesis Deluxe Cinema are mostly attracted to the service of 3D movies.

According to Stone and Merlin (2002) [54], to develop effective retention strategies an organization has to have an in depth knowledge of customers behaviour and needs. This is in agreement with the findings that the most used strategy by Genesis Deluxe Cinema to retain customers was found to be immediate response to customers’ needs indicated in table 9, which has created a platform for the customers to occasionally patronize them. In the interview also conducted with the public relations officer of Genesis Deluxe Cinema, one of his responses from the questions asked was that there

is a maintained relationship between Genesis Deluxe Cinema and its customer due to the exceptional service of putting their customers first. This is also in submission to Jobber (2001) [29] who says that the objective of public relations is to manage misconceptions for unfounded opinions not to tarnish the image and operations of an organization. The result from hypothesis one, we concluded that the public relations strategies employed by Genesis Deluxe Cinema influence its customer loyalty. The various findings achieved the objective no. 2 of the study which was to ascertain whether Genesis Deluxe Cinema employ PR strategies to win and retain customers.

The effectiveness of Genesis Deluxe Cinema PR strategies in encouraging customers’ patronage.

According to Inamullah (2012) [28], Customer loyalty is the willingness of a consumer to purchase the same product and keep the same profitable relationship with a particular company. The findings supported the empirical review as customers agreed that the public relations strategies employed by Genesis Deluxe Cinema can make them loyal. The responses from table 11 and 12 indicated that the PR strategies used by Genesis Deluxe Cinema has an effect on their customers as it is employed occasionally. In addition, the effect of these strategies makes them to mostly refer Genesis Deluxe Cinema to new people. This is in submission to (Dick & Basu, 1994) [17] empirical study that loyal customers foster positive word of mouth promotion and defy competitors’ strategies. It was also found out that there were other effects of the PR strategies on the customers in addition to the word of mouth publicity.

Evans and Lindsay (1996) [20] stated that companies with satisfied customers have a good opportunity to convert them into loyal customers who purchases from those firms over an extended time period. This is in consonance with the findings that customers who are satisfied with Genesis Deluxe Cinema services can be loyal as seen in the responses of table 14 and 18. The tested hypothesis 2 rejected that customer’s satisfaction with Genesis Deluxe Cinema services does not guarantee customer loyalty. Therefore, it concluded that customer’s satisfaction with Genesis Deluxe Cinema services guarantees customer loyalty and this is in relation to the findings of the study. It also achieved the objective no. 3 of the study which was to determine the effectiveness of the PR strategies employed.

Problems of the use of Genesis public relations strategies in winning customers’ loyalty

Hallahan (2000) [26] stated that the primary function of public relations should be to create effective messages to reach strategically important public. This is in contradiction to the findings that difficulty in understanding the message content of Genesis Deluxe Cinema services led to the dissatisfaction of some of their customers as seen in table 16. It also contradicts the response of the PRO of the company in an interview that they have no major challenges with their customers whereas the customers are dissatisfied with their message or information of their services.

The message content of the organization should be defined, accurate, explaining the benefits and the use of the service to the customers. This will lead to the satisfaction of the customers then to their loyalty. The findings also revealed that the respondents think there are other strategies that Genesis Deluxe Cinema can employ to make them loyal in addition to the traditional public relations strategies such as

advertising, press release, special events and social media. The prominent suggested PR strategies and suggestions from the customers were marketing, sales promotion and stronger relationship with the customers to make them loyal. According to Rossiter & Bellman (2005) ^[51], promotion is more useful than advertising since it transforms cost into creating direct benefits for customers, such as gift card, discount, or bonus. Rust, Lemon & Zeithaml (2001) ^[52] says the objective of marketing strategy is to deliver value to customers as well as build a long-term and mutually profitability relationship with customers. Cap Gemini *et al.*

(2005) said the challenge for most companies today is to thrive in a relationship economy while Grossman (1998) ^[25] states that relationship marketing will lead to greater profitability, increased customer loyalty, reduced costs in recruiting consumers and more effective organizational planning. The reviews are in agreement with the suggestions of what other strategies can make the customers of Genesis Deluxe Cinema loyal. The findings was also able to achieve the objective no. 5 of the study which was to identify what other factors can influence Genesis Deluxe Cinema customer loyalty.

Table 1: Movie goers’ Major reasons for watching films in the

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Discount ticket prices	36	12%
Special student pricing	30	10%
3D movies	84	28%
Game Zones	54	18%
Classic meals	60	20%
All of the above	36	12%
Total	300	100

Source: questionnaire item 5

Table 2: Respondents patronage of Cinema Houses

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Always	66	22%
Occasionally	186	62%
Rarely	48	16%
Total	300	100

Source: questionnaire item 7

Table 3: The usage of Public Relations strategies by Cinema Houses

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	246	82%
No	54	18%
Total	300	100

Source: questionnaire item 8

Table 4: The PR Strategies of Cinema Houses

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Advertising	54	21.95%
Special events	42	17.07%
Website/social media	24	9.75%
Immediate response to customers’ needs	60	24.40%
Press release	0	0%
All of the above	66	26.83%
Total	246	100

Source: questionnaire item 9

Table 5: The frequency of the usage of the PR strategies by Cinema Houses

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Always	108	43.90%
Occasionally	120	48.78%
Rarely	18	7.32%
Total	246	100

Table 6: The effect of PR strategies on Movie Goers

Response	Frequency	Percentage
It makes you continually patronize the Cinema	70	27.56%
It makes you refer the Cinema to new people	75	29.53%
It makes you try their new products and services they offer	66	25.98%
All of the above	43	16.93%
Total	254	100

Source: questionnaire item 13

Table 7: Respondents reason for dissatisfaction with Cinema Houses PR strategies

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong use of communication tools	42	28.97%
Difficulty in understanding the message of the products and services	70	48.27%
Difficulty to access the various strategies employed	33	22.76%
Total	145	100

Source: questionnaire item 16

Table 8: Other factors that make Customer loyal to a Cinema House

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfaction with the products and services	132	44%
Convenience	18	6%
Performance	30	10%
Familiarity and comfort with the cinema	60	20%
All of the above	60	20%
Total	300	100

Source: Questionnaire item 18

Conclusion

The study ascertained the influence of public relations strategies on customer loyalty in Genesis Deluxe Cinema from the point of view of the customers. The research method involved in this study is survey method, which includes use of questionnaire and interview.

The researcher discovered Genesis Deluxe Cinema offers various services such as Game Zones, Special student pricing and Discount ticket prices, but the customers are more attracted to the 3D movies. They employ different strategies such as advertising, special events, immediate response to customers’ needs, website, and social media to retain their customers. The most effective strategy on majority of their customers is immediate response to customers’ needs. The effect of the strategy makes the customer to mostly refer Genesis Deluxe Cinema to new people. Notwithstanding, majority of the unsatisfied customers say is due to the difficulty of understanding the message of the services and that is why the strategies employed do not have effect on them.

The result of the analysis indicated

- i. The Public relations strategies employed by Genesis Deluxe Cinema influence its customer loyalty;
- ii. Customers’ satisfaction with Genesis Deluxe Cinema services guarantees customer loyalty.

Public relations strategies are vital for every organization in order to foster long-term beneficial relationships between the organization and key public. This study implies that PR strategies of an organization have the ability to influence positive customer loyalty. The efficiency of the PR messages is a key consideration that creates a strong relationship which key publics through the media. The efficiency of PR strategies at its highest levels, creates a significant impact on customer’s purchase decisions of products or services.

The following conclusions have been drawn from the findings of the study

- i. The majority of Genesis Deluxe Cinema customers are attracted and satisfied by the services they offer;
- ii. Genesis deluxe cinema employ public relations strategies and it have effect on majority of their customers. The effect it has on them is to mostly refer Genesis Deluxe Cinema to new people;

- iii. Most of the customers believe that satisfaction with their services is the other factor that can make them loyal apart from the common public relations strategies.

Recommendations

- i. The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:
- ii. The management of Genesis Deluxe Cinema should ensure they continue to maintain relationship with their customers through two-way communication flow;
- iii. The management should also ensure that the message content of their services is concise and clear to aid better understanding for their customers;
- iv. Genesis Deluxe Cinema should employ more strategies in addition to the traditional public relations strategies as suggested by customers such as marketing, sales promotion, discount, sponsorship, bill board and television advertisements in order to attract more customers and retain their customer base;
- v. The management should provide a wider parking space for cars as the current one is too small for their enormous customers;
- vi. Genesis Deluxe Cinema should give little freebies to regular and loyal customers;
- vii. The management should also try to reduce the prices of their products and services as this is one of the prominent suggestions from the customers.

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