

## **Innovation and Marketing for Sustainable Development in Nigeria Organisations**

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### **Abstract**

Relevant knowledge such as innovation and marketing is a laudable tool for sustainable economic development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The concept of innovation, elements of innovation, importance of innovation, drivers and triggers of innovation, innovation process, steps of innovation process was discussed. Further, marketing and innovation was critically look into, concept of sustainable development and factors that enhance marketing and innovation for sustainable development were examined. It was concluded that innovation and marketing for sustainable development could be achieved through sustainable innovation marketing. It was recommended among others that organization should be productive conscious and focus on the marketing concept in creating value for the customers, society, environment, and public/private collaboration be encouraged to establish research institutions for sustainable innovation marketing.

**Keywords: innovation, marketing, sustainability, development, strategies, creativity, knowledge**

### **Introduction**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century world is a world of creativity and witty inventions inspired by increased knowledge (information). Other drivers of the information age are science in technology and communication which has also increased the needs of the society. These needs when carefully articulated and analyzed, form the basis for production (creativity) of goods and services for human consumption and satisfaction which is the marketing concept. According to Orogun (2016), new product development starts with a process. The stages are: the idea generation stage, idea screening stage, concept development stage, business strategy analysis and development stage, product development stage, test marketing stage, communication stage and introduction to the market stage/feedback stage. He further reiterated that, it is not enough for a product to be

produced alone, the produce life cycle (introduction, growth, maturity, decline) should be properly managed through application of different strategies to help meet the challenges of competition and the manufacturer maximizing profit at each stage to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization.

Kotler (2006) opined that the key areas to watch in the product life cycle management are: research and development, financing, marketing, manufacturing and information so as to add more value to the consumers and be competitive in the market or else the product may fail and be out of business. Onah (2004), described the lack of proper management of the product life cycle lead to product abandonment, a situation where the product is completely dead or abandoned. A state of decline or abandonment in the product life cycle can

be rejuvenated, a process where value is added to the generic product and a new improved product is birthed. This process is known as innovation marketing, marketing innovation the hallmark of this paper.

### **The Concept of Innovation**

The term innovation according to Chandrakhatha (2018), is derived from the latin word innovatus, which is the noun form of innovare “to renew or change” streaming from in -‘into’+ norus – ‘new’. Although the term is broadly used, innovation generally refers to the creation of better or more effective products, processes, technologies, or ideas that affect markets, governments and society.

Innovation is the successful exploitation and commercialization of new ideas. It is far more than the common perception that innovation is only about new ideas or research and development. Innovation covers:

- All processes, technology, organizational and marketing, in the development and commercialization of novel products and services providing value to customers.
- Occur at four (4) main tiers of level:
  - i. Technologies/products/services
  - ii. Process
  - iii. Organizational
  - iv. Business

Include, but it not restricted to the ideas and research stages of the innovation cycles or to novel technology alone though these are core elements of **innovation**

- Include “low tech” and is not restricted to “high tech” technologies. Martin (2007).

Flowing from the above, innovation is not limited, it is wide and varied and cut across every facet of the society and economy.

Innovation has been and continues to be an important topic of study for a number of different disciplines including marketing, and has been misconstrued with related terms such as invention, renovation, imitation, creativity and design. Innovation differs in that it signifies a substantial change compare to entirely new incremental change. Innovation means the introduction of new things, ideas or ways of doing something. Hornby (2006).

Ajokporise (2018), define innovation as the process of bringing the best ideas and transforming it into reality with value. It is a process that combines ideas and knowledge into new value. Oteh and Akuma (2010), sees innovation as a deliberate, specific change which is thought to be more efficacious in accomplishing the goals of a system.

Yabrifa (2014) opined that innovation is the process of making changes to something established by introducing something new that adds value to customers. This signifies that innovation is a change that is deliberate, purposeful and can be on a small or large scale upon something already created and can add value to customers. The customers that experience the added value will continue to use the product, process, or service and this lead to growth for an organization. Just like the product life cycle so also innovation has particular life cycles and innovation management. For organization to sustain their mission, they must continuously innovate and replace existing products, price and services with more efficient, effective and competitive ones.

This is in alignment with Oluwadare (2015), who sees innovation as the process of making changes, large and small, radical and incremental to products, process and service that results in the introduction of something new for the organization that add value to customers and contribute to the knowledge store of the organization.

This later definition although general, is specific and illustrate a number of core concepts of innovation as applied in any marketing organization. Applying innovation which is the hallmark of this paper for sustainable development is therefore the application of practical tools and techniques that make changes large and small, radical and incremental to products, processes and services that results in the introduction of something new for an organization that add value to customers and contributes to the knowledge store of an organization.

Flowing from the above definitions, the author, therefore define innovation as the application of new ideas to the products, processes services, or other aspects of the activities of an organization that lead to increased value to the organization, customers, other organizations or the society at large.

### **Elements of Innovation**

An innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process a new marketing method, or a new organization or external relations. It therefore implies a product or service from its current state through creative thinking, knowledge and motivation. It is adding something new to an existing product, service or process to what is desirable to users, what is possible with technology and what is viable in the market place.

Okpara (2006), identified the following as elements or principles of innovation:

1. Challenge – what the organization is trying to change or accomplish. The “pull”.
2. Customer focus – creating value for your customer. The “push”
3. Creativity – generally and sharing the idea. The “brain”
4. Communication – the flow of information and ideas of “life blood”
5. Collaboration – people coming together to work together on the idea. The “heart”
6. Completion – implementing the new idea. The “muscle”
7. Contemplation – learning and sharing lessons lead to higher competency. The “ladder”
8. Culture – the playing field of innovation which are: leadership, people, basic values, and innovation values.
9. Context – innovation is shaped by interactions with the world
10. Creation for sustainability

### **Importance of Innovation**

Innovation is the source of success in the market economy. The organization that is creative and innovative in today’s changing and competitive environment cannot survive in the market place as they will not remain relevant to the customer which is the purpose of every business.

Growth and development cannot be sustained without additional innovations in form of a product, process or a service. Introducing new products, process or service is usually seen as part of innovation, which is itself seen as the engine driving continued growth and development. Martins (2017), highlighted the following as importance of innovation.

1. Solving problems – most ideas are actually derived from attempts to solve existing problem. As such, when you encourage innovation, you are opening doors for solutions to problems both with and outside your company.
2. Adapting to change – this is especially evident in the technological world where there are rapid changes defining the business. Change is inevitable and innovation is the method to not only keep your business afloat, but also ensure that it remains relevant and profitable.
3. Maximizing on globalization – with market all over the world becoming more interlinked greater opportunities are emerging in these new markets and with that, new needs and challenges. It is only through innovation that an organization can tap and take advantage in the new opportunities.
4. Facing up the competition – the corporate world is always very competitive, and with many companies coming up, the top position in the industry is no longer a reserve of a few. To retain or establish your company's cutting edge, you can compete strategically by having a dynamic business that is able to make strategic and innovative moves and thus cut above the rest.
5. Evolving workplace dynamics – the demographics in the work place are constantly changing. With the new generation that has entered the market place, new trends are also coming up. Innovation is therefore critical to ensure the smooth running of the company.
6. Customer's changing tastes and preferences – the current customer has a great variety of products and services available to him/her and is well informed of his/her choices than before. The company must therefore keep itself abreast with these evolving tastes and preferences and forge new ways of satisfying the customers. This can be achieved through innovation.
7. Creativity – innovative companies attract innovative employees. Since the company maintains an innovative culture, the employees understand that they are responsible for innovation and implementation of new products.
8. Experience – innovative companies have the advantage of experience in innovating a product, process or a service. Since they understand the process so well, they do not have to always go through trial and errors.
9. Leadership – as a matter of fact, innovative companies are industry leaders. They are always ahead of others in the market, they are pace setters while others follow.
10. Name recognition – companies with an innovative culture are known in their industry. Therefore they do not have a huge budget on marketing and branding. As a matter of fact, customers look forward to new products, processes or services from them.

In ascertaining the importance of innovation John (2017), depict that the objectives of innovation should be considered also. He highlighted the

objectives of innovation to include: saving time, efficiency, convenience, quality, satisfying customers needs, customer experience, risk reduction, increase performance and knowledge, competitive advantage, improved quality of life, increase productivity and sustainability.

### **Drivers and Triggers of Innovation**

Sullivan (2008), posits that, there are various factors which encourage an organization to innovate. These factors are sources of innovation and they are as follows:

1. Emerging technologies – new knowledge or technology
2. Competitor's actions
3. New ideas from customers, partners and employees
4. Changes in the needs and preferences of customers
5. Emerging changes in the macro environment
6. Drastic shift in new political rules and policies
7. Market evolving through market segmentation and growth
8. Industry and market changes
9. Unthinkable event or unexpected occurrence
10. Perception and reality etc

These drivers and triggers of innovation present new opportunities to old and new businesses. Besides, companies that are willing to adapt to the new ways of doing thing succeed, increase their market share and experience growth and development.

### **Innovation Process**

Innovation process is holistic. It is a structure, strategy that ensures that the innovation team idealizes an innovation and runs with it until it is successfully implemented. It is expedient to state that, the way one understand the innovation process greatly influences the way it is

established and this affect the outcomes. Innovation involves some key players and set rules which affect or influence the conditions and space of the innovation.

Sullivan (2008), reiterate that different understanding on “innovation” has several consequences on the innovation process. For example;

- When the innovation process viewed as a process for only the specialists to participate, there will be little involvement from all the employees.
- When small companies view innovation for only big companies because innovation process is complicated which they lack the capacity to handle, they will miss out of the market and technical opportunities which they would have enjoyed.
- When innovation is targeted, it miss out opportunities for new market. This makes the organization to fail.
- When looking at innovation as a linear process (relies on either technology or market trend as source of innovation) and ignoring the customers, suppliers, public and employees as source of innovation, the innovation is not a reflection of the needs of the customers, at such the innovation will not last.
- When companies look at innovation as breakthrough and fail to think about incremental innovation, they soon fade away.
- When the innovation process is looked at as an independent process separated from the other process in the organization, people

will not work to support each other, at such the innovation will not be achieved.

Innovation is a process. It is interrelated set of activities designed to transform inputs into a specified output for the customer. It implies a strong emphasis on how work is done within an organization (organization culture) rather than what an organization does. Innovation is incremental, radical, and can be disruptive (destroying existing markets and creating new ones) as a result of new sciences and technology applied to a new market that offers the potentials to exceed the existing limits of technology. However, without cooperation and unity of purpose in the organization, an innovation will not meet its goals and objectives.

#### **Steps of Innovation Process**

Just like every new product development follows steps/stages, so also there are steps of innovation process. Orogun (2016). These steps are:

- A. Idea generation – this is the first step in innovation process. It is where one decides on the concept that he/she want to develop and come up with reasons why he/she want to improve on the idea. It is important to involve more knowledgeable people to get better understanding of the market and look at the idea from more perspectives and provide more viable idea. Customers, employees, the public, partners/suppliers, and competitors are where one can draw ideas for innovation.
- B. Advocacy and screening – not every idea that is generated is worth implementing. For this reason one must screen the ideas presented to know the benefit and risks of each idea to determine its viability. Idea for the present or the future should be adequately communicate to instill an innovation culture in an organization.
- C. Experimentation – at this stage, the idea is tested in a targeted market for acceptability or rejection of the innovation. Experimentation is a continuous process as it generated new ideas.
- D. Commercialization – this is the stage where the product is ready for the market.
- E. Diffusion and implementation – these are two different stages. Diffusion is where the organization accepts the innovation and implementation is setting up everything that is needed to develop and utilize or produce the innovation idea.

For a successful innovation process in an organization to be achieved and reaping the benefits that accrue is no easy task. Sullivan (2008), profile strategies on how to make the innovation process work:

- Create an innovation management space by putting in place, systems and structure that will support innovation and also evaluate the innovation process.
- Sharing the idea – to foster innovation culture, the goals and objectives of the innovation must be communicated to all stakeholders in the organization.
- Removing the red tape – this is the process of removing policies and laws that hinder innovation and progress to enhance efficiency. Open – door –

policies should be adopted between management and employees.

- Creative thinking – innovation always starts with thinking against the norm, that is challenging the existing values and systems.
- Teamwork – ensuring leadership and the rest of the workforce work together in order to move the organization forward. Potentials of the employees are known so as to know their strengths and weaknesses to bring about efficiency and maximize production.
- Leadership by example – the leaders must set an example for the rest of the team to follow by being creative and innovative to motivate the team.
- Hold people responsible and accountable by giving staff freedom and power to implement their ideas.
- Conducive working environment – employees whose welfare is well catered for are more likely to be creative, innovative, and more motivated to work. Therefore, their workplace should be comfortable and be motivated.
- Rewarding performance – employee's effort at innovation and creativity should not go unnoticed and unrewarded. Those who prove themselves to be an asset to the organization should be given more

responsibility and rewarded accordingly.

- Encourage collaboration – due to the diversity often found in the workplace diversity often found in the workplace the organization can take advantage of this by teaming up people with certain skills set and personalities and even skills set and personalities and even have teaming competency in bring new ideas. (Haring ideas men)

### **Marketing and Innovation**

Marketing according to Ayo in Tanner (2016), is the selling of ideas, products and services of all kinds to identified and qualified markets. Orogun (2016), in the American Marketing Association (AMA), (2015) defines marketing in a more broader perspective as the activity, communicating, delivering and exchanging offering that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large. This therefore means that marketing is the process through which producers and customers are brought into contact formally or informally for the exchange of goods and services involving the performance of marketing activities. In a nutshell, marketing is the process where the producers communicate to the consumers and prospective customers about their products and services.

On the other hand, innovation is the process of coming up with new ideas that will be able to bring positive impact to the business such as new products or services in the market place. Innovation is developing new ideas differently and getting them into practice within marketing practice. Clakrawti (2014). Innovation is the act of introducing something new or doing something in a

different way. A combination of both terms yields marketing innovation/innovation marketing which is the implementation of a new marketing method which has not been used in production of goods and services due to advancement in business world propelling by advancement in technology.

Marketing is creativity as well as innovation. Creativity in the entities of marketing and the seven 'Ps' (7P's) of marketing. Innovation is adding value to creativity – product innovation, process innovation and service innovation. Thus creativity is simply one element of the innovation process through which new ideas lead to new products, procedures, or services and this leads to company success. There is creativity before innovation. Growth and development cannot be sustained without additional innovations. Marketing innovation help organizations to add new products and services to their product line and effectively manage the product life cycle as well as the transformation/modification the potential products or service might undergo in the future, that is the new improved product for competitiveness. This improvement/modification (innovation) may be in the development of the generic product, market development, or diversification.

A feature of organizations that want to survive in the market and continue in production and growth, engage in marketing and innovation, they also sustain their creative and innovative environment that is why marketing and innovation are inseparable. A sustained creative and innovative culture increase marketing performance thereby improving return on investment, net profit, sales and increase in market share. This breed

development to the organization, creators, innovators and the society at large.

### **Concept of Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development according to the Bruntland commission is development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Ewubare (2018). This definition contains two key marketing concepts which are:

- i. The concept of needs – knowledge economy for creativity (information), which in turn is the basis of production (creativity), that is the marketing concept, knowing the needs and wants of the consumers before production. These needs are not in conflict as they differ in present and future generations.
- ii. The concept of marketing environment – and at this point, it is the technological environment for production, creativity and innovation.

An economy can be sustained for a long time through production and innovation of goods and services. This may lead to growth without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. Nevertheless, ability to meet the needs is determined by human capital development which in turn bring about:-

- Capital development
- Economic development
- Human development
- Social development
- Environmental development and protection for sustainability

Sustainable development means all round development of an individual. It is

improving the quality of life of the people through judicious use of available natural resources in the production of goods and services.

The United Nations development programme (2015) in its framework for sustainable development outlined some sustainable development goals also known as transforming our world by 2030. The goals include:

1. Poverty reduction – end poverty in all forms
2. Food security – end hunger and achieve food security
3. Healthcare delivery – ensure healthy lives and promote well being for all
4. Education for all – ensure inclusive and equitable education for all
5. Women – achieve gender equality and empowerment for all women.
6. Water – ensure available of water for all
7. Energy – ensure access to affordable and reliable modern energy for all
8. Economy – promote and sustain economic growth, full and productive employment
9. Infrastructure – promote basic infrastructure for all
10. Inequality – reduce inequality within and among countries
11. Habitation
12. Consumption
13. Climate
14. Eco-system
15. Marine system
16. Institutions
17. Sustainability- strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Nwokike (2018).

To achieve and sustain the aforementioned goals, there must be production (creativity/marketing) and innovation of goods and services in a conducive environment without compromising the present and future needs of the consumers (society).

### **Factors that Enhance Marketing and Innovation for Sustainable Development**

Kumar (2012) highlighted factors that enhance marketing and innovation for sustainable development. Some of these factors are:

1. Effective and efficient production. Adopting the marketing concept in this regard is inevitable. Knowing the needs and wants of the consumers before production through sustainable marketing by understanding consumer behaviour and consumption patterns.
2. Effective and efficient monitoring and management of the product life cycle
3. Application of the 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies in production and distribution of goods and services
4. Employing new technologies /marketing strategies that is innovation marketing
5. Creating a conducive environment for creativity and innovation, employing, imbibing and embracing the culture of creativity and innovation, training, research and development and motivation of 'ideasmen' in the organization for sustainable development.
6. Satisfying the consumers through value creation. Value is not created by or within the organization alone, but it is influenced by the external environment, created through

relationship with stakeholders, and dependent or various resources.

7. Employing sustainable innovation concept. A process where sustainability consideration (environment, social, financial) are integrated into company systems from idea generation through to research and development and commercialization. This applies to products, services and technologies, as well as new business and organization models.
8. Employing sustainability marketing concept. This is development of marketing that integrates aspect of economy and the new concept of relationship marketing and social economic and environment perspectives.

### Conclusion

Innovation and marketing for sustainable development could be achieved through sustainable innovative marketing, that is planning, organizing, implementing and controlling resources and the marketing programme to meet the needs and wants of consumers through focusing on increasing customer value, social value and ecological value. Organization can acquire knowledge necessary to drive innovation through internal discovery processed or through external search. The specific characteristics and vision of an organization define their unique approach to markets, products, technology and what they want to be known for. This is also innovation.

### Recommendations

Based on the expository facts, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Organizations should be productive focusing on the marketing concept in creating value to

satisfy the customers, society and the environment

- ii. Government should provide funds to develop the science and technology sector to spur more individuals into research and development for sustainable innovation marketing
- iii. There should be public/private collaboration to establish and develop research institutions and centres for sustainable innovation marketing.
- iv. Innovative marketing strategies should be employed to reflect the 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies, markets, consumers and environment for improve innovative marketing performances
- v. Government should create conducive environment for creativity and innovation and organizations imbibe creative and innovative culture; training and motivation for sustainable innovation marketing.

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