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Globalisation: Insights on the Opportunities and Threats to Advertising and Public Relations Practice in the 21st Century

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Abstract

The world is experiencing a technological revolution where advances in information and communication technologies have rendered the world borderless, thereby creating a new fillip to economic and social linkages among nations of the globe. This revolution has brought ample opportunities to the practice of advertising and public relations such as facilitating mergers; acquisitions and strategic alliances among firms operating in the global market; enhancing cyber-marketing; increasing competition, sales and economies of scale; removal of barriers for the free transfer of goods, services, finance, technology and skills, among others. On the other hand, the global business is dominated by multinational corporations of the West which are seen as crusaders of exploitation. The loop-sidedness of the flow of goods and technology usually from the West to firms or nations of the South – thereby creating a dumping ground scenario – as well as the technological backward agencies/firms/nations of the South among others have been identified as the threats or evils of globalisation on the practice of advertising and public relations in the 21st century. Strict regulation of how goods, knowledge, and technology should flow in the global market for the mutual benefit of all participants as well as full adoption and utilization of ICTs by advertising and public relations practitioners among others are seen as the way forward to a free for all global business operation.

Keywords: Globalisation, ICTs, Monopoly, Advertising, and Public Relations.

Introduction

Nearly half a century ago, the late Canadian professor of communications Marshal McLuhan foretold that, in the near future, electronic circuitry will bind the world up in a web of instant awareness, shrinking the tentacles of space and time as well as reducing the world to a global village in which everyone is involved with everyone else – the haves with the have-nots, races of different colours with one another, adults with teenagers, and science, art, industry, politics and religion together (Block, Houseley, Nicholls, & Southwell, 2001). Today of course, there is no denial of this prophecy. The world is rapidly shrinking with the advent of faster communication, transportation and financial flows thereby creating a 'next door' effect where distance is completely being exterminated and far-reaching possibilities are brought to our reach (Lanre, 2007).

In this context, it can be contended with a high degree of accuracy that, there is hardly a person who is not affected by the implications of the shrinking world consciously or unconsciously (Lanre, 2007). Products manufactured in one country - Gucci purses, Mont Blanc Pens, McDonalds's hamburgers, Japanese sushi, Kentucky Fried Chickens (KFC), German BMW's, to mention but a few, are finding enthusiastic acceptance in other countries. In this shrinking world, it is common place to see a German businessman wearing an Armani suit to meet an English friend at a Japanese restaurant who later returns home to drink Russian Vodka and watch an American soap on TV (Kotler, 2002). But globalisation is not a 21st century phenomenon. At various points over history, globalisation has taken place and civilisations have exchanged their values and artifacts (Srimamesh, 2009).

Globalisation has, therefore, created a network of international relations and interdependence

across the globe at a magnitude that raises a number of concerns to players in the advertising and public relations business. Communication Technologies have not only accentuated demand for goods and services globally but have also made delivery of those goods and services easier and cheaper. All of these activities have created a dire need for communication, particularly global advertising and public relations (Srimamesh, 2009). Advertising and public relations in this context, envisaged globalisation primarily in terms of the opportunities accrued to it with the opening of local business to international trade and investments.

Furthermore, proponents of globalisation are of the conviction that it has blossomed business opportunities, efficiency gains from trade, more rapid growth of knowledge and innovations and transfer of same to developing countries (Todaro & Smith, 2011). For Seitel (2007), opportunities for public relations in the global arena are increasing in the face of phenomena growth in information and communication technology and the pace-setting trend of corporate mergers and acquisitions. And for advertising, the global market is assumed to be a fertile market place for the exchange of goods, services, ideas, technology and skills (Aruvian Research, 2007).

However, critics of this world economic policy have resented against it and argued that it is a new form of colonialism aimed at exploiting third world nations of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. According to them as noted in Rao (2010), multinational corporations of the western world are the real beneficiaries of the globalisation programme thereby using Third World nations as means to achieving their exploitative tendencies. The West regard Third World nations as market places where they can sell surplus goods, even as dumping grounds for second-handed goods including toxic waste. Their distribution channels have also metamorphosed into Transnational and Multinational Corporations such as Leventis, UTC, SCOA and others. They have also singled the period of slave trade, having been dictating the prices of Third World economic commodities and their products and now they direct their economy through institutions such as the IMF, World Bank and others (Ciboh, 2005). Conscious of the above contentious propositions about globalisation, this paper therefore seeks to examine the opportunities and threats of the ever shrinking and borderless world to advertising and public relations practice in the 21st century.

Conceptual Clarification

Globalisation

Globalisation is the rapid integration of trade relations, productive and investment decisions across the globe by economic agents who employ and move investment capital and technology around to take advantage of environments where their competitive edge can manifest in high returns (Odozi, 1998, cited in Ogundokun, 2000). The phenomenon has benefited much from the multilateral trading and investment arrangements, advancement in technology and communication, and the opening up of trade and investment through the liberalisation of current and capital account transactions. Indeed, globalisation means unrestricted flow of merchandise, services, investments, ideas, but not people between nations. Through globalisation, the world economy has been reduced to a "borderless world," something almost akin to a village market with all its simple and fast business relationships. This feat is driven by technological factors, such as computers and the Internet which reduce the distance between people and between goods in terms of space and time. Thus, globalisation is multidimensional, spanning economic, political, cultural and social activities.

On his part, Ake (1978) sees globalisation as a growing structural differentiation and functional integration in the world economy. It is a growing interdependence across the globe; it is about the nation states coming together under pressure from the surge of transnational phenomena; it is about the emergence of global mass culture driven by mass advertising and technological advances in mass communication. The above notwithstanding,

globalisation refers to a number of elements which have been identified by Ohiorhenuan (1998) as cited in Sen (2003) as the broadening and deepening of linkages of national economies into a worldwide market for goods, services and especially capital due to developments in media technology and communications. Supporting this contention is Qureshi (1996) as cited in Omofor, Ezi and Tarurhor (2007) who further elaborated that:

> Globalisation is altering the world economic landscape in fundamental ways. It is driven by a widespread push towards the liberalisation of trade and capital markets, increasing internationalisation of corporate production and distribution strategies, and technology change that is rapidly dismantling barriers to the international tradability of goods and services and the mobility of capital.

Technological advancements, especially in the field of information and communication, have had the effect of linking and bringing the world closer in time and space, making possible new ways of doing business and intensely changing social interactions. The share of trade in goods and services as a proportion of national income and consumption has expanded, and now includes trade in such services as banking, telecommunications, education and culture (Ogbeifun, 2007). Competition has dictated a reform of production networks, and a signal of mergers and acquisitions have encouraged the reorganisation of corporations on a global scale, giving them unparalleled size and power. New mass media, including satellite television and the Internet, have accentuated globalisation.

Despite the widely acclaimed opportunities globalization is expected to offer to participants in the world market, the western world has been indicted and accused of hypocrisy and underhand dealings for deceiving third world nations to remove their trade barriers while keeping theirs thereby depriving third world nations the much needed benefits of the globalisation programme. On his part, Mazrui (2001) has added his observation to this problem when he warned that Africa should be seen as battle ground for globalisation and that its effects on the continent might be as devastating as slavery and colonialism. He challenged Africans to rise to the whims and caprices of globalization, which has its winners and losers. According to him, Africa has already lost out in the first stage due to the technological backwardness of her children, whereby some American universities, for example, have more computers than an African country of 30 million people.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The dawn of the 20th century was heralded with the emergence of a new media which has been described as the second industrial revolution of the century (Rao, 2010). The emergence of information and communication technology has raised hopes for fundamental transformation and even renewal in all ramifications of our lives, both national and international. These advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the view of techno-utopians have signaled an end to an era in human history and the coming into being of a postindustrial society.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be viewed as the use of diverse set of technological tools and resources to create, disseminate, store and manage data and information (UNESCAP, 2001). ICTs can be classified into traditional and modern, with traditional ICT tools being television, radio and telephone, while the modern ICT tools consist of computers, the Internet and wireless communication like mobile phones along with powerful software for processing and integrating text, sound and video into electronic media (Okwu & Obinne, 2012). Similarly, the Asian Development Bank (2003) cited in Okwu and Obinne defined ICTs as electronic means by which processing, transmission and display of information is

facilitated. The term ICT is commonly used to embrace a multitude of media, including telephone, television, radio, audio compact disc or cassette recorder/player, video tape or compact disc (VCD/DVD), telex, voice information systems and fax as well as those requiring the use of personal computer fitted with a modem.

Bandwidth and broadband services are the current mantra of the communications industry. Digital technology has delivered the possibility of the uniform data stream decoded by the user's device appropriate to the product's interface. The revolution in computing systems and local networks of the past 20 years is yet to be matched by the telecommunication systems. Whilst fibre optics and satellite systems offer narrow cast and broadcast bandwidth, the fully integrated infrastructure is yet to emerge (Block, Houseley, Nicholls & Southwell, 2001). The amount of traffic carried over the Internet is said to be doubling every 100 days. In the near future, the data stream volume will exceed that of voice on a system that, for the domestic subscriber, was designed to carry low bandwidth continuous analogue signals. In the 21st century, communication technologies enable information to be shared instantaneously and simultaneously with millions of people almost anywhere around the world.

With the development of ICTs, the inter-connection between communication and the global community in the realms of politics and economics has exploded into a variety of opportunities and challenges. Integrating global economic and communication system as Sen (2003) notes is shrinking space and time and making the global village a global shopping mall. He further reiterates that, apart from general improvements in global communication through radio and satellite television, innovative telephony through satellite and cell phones, and access to the internet, in many instances from cybercafés, is enhancing what is generally referred to as e-commerce or e-trade.

It would not be out of reason for one to stress categorically that, one cannot meaningfully discuss globalisation without making recourse to ICTs. ICTs are, therefore, a generic concept that encapsulates a number of communication hardware used for the dissemination or transmission of messages about goods, services, ideas, organisations, cultures, new brand of products and social values instantaneously from one corner of the globe to another. This is why they (ICTs) are considered as "engines of globalisation" (Onwe, 2006). Globalisation can therefore be taken as a by-product of advances in Information and Communication Technology. The success of globalisation is therefore highly dependent on the interplay of ICTs which serve as catalysts through which global marketing becomes a success.

Advertising

Advertising in the words of Patti and Frazer (1988) is any planned communication activity in which messages in mass media are used to persuade audiences to adopt goods, services or idea. Kotler (2000) on his part defined advertising as any paid form of non- personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor. Advertising is a paid, mediated, form of communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action, now or in future (Hoffmann, 2007). Advertising is the placement of announcements and persuasive messages in time or space purchased in any of the mass media by business firms, nonprofit organisations, government agencies, and individuals who seek to inform and/or persuade members of a particular target market or audience about their products, services, organisations or ideas (Keghku & Edema, 2012).

Through advertising, new firms have an easier time entering the market than would be true if advertising were restricted or prohibited. Advertising helps the new firm, or the firm with a new product, take on the giants in the industry and carve a niche in the market. Advertising is, thus, pro-competitive (Sambe, 2005). Every organisation needs advertising to promote and elevate the status of its products-goods and/or services. The essentials for employing advertising efforts are to

create mass awareness in the marketplace to arouse consumers' interests, secure patronage, increase sales volume and value, intimidate competition, and reposition the product among others (Keghku & Edema, 2012). Advertising drives the size and diversify a country's economy by telling consumers the benefits they can expect by using a particular product, where to get it, how to use it, and at times even how much to get it. It is, therefore, an inescapable element of the media.

Public Relations

Public relations is an all-life embracing activity carefully conducted among and/or between individuals, organizations, communities and their environment. Public relations is a mix factor of both management and communication functions used for identifying, anticipating and proffering solutions to human, organisational and governmental problems (Keghku & Edema, 2012). For Srimamesh (2009), public relations is the strategic communication that different types of organisations use for establishing and maintaining symbiotic relationships with relevant publics many of whom are increasingly becoming culturally diverse.

Today, the realities of globalization, commercial and non-commercial organizations - including the government – are seeking all possible means to achieving some hallmarks. The puzzle has however been how to attain and sustain desirable level of peace, resulting from equity, transparency, honesty, good governance, mutual respect, unique partnering and networking, united front and one voice (Keghku & Edema, 2012). As a problem-solving tool for individuals and organisations, public relations plays a crucial role in managing information communications as well as maintaining goodwill and public interest all of which every organisation needs to continue existing.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored in Paul Krugman's North–South Trade Model (1979). This model focuses specifically on trade relations between rich and poor countries. The typical North–South Trade Model argues that initial higher endowments of capital in the industrialised North generate external economies in manufacturing output and higher profit rates. This, in combination with the rise in monopoly power of the North, stimulates higher Northern growth rates through further capital accumulation. As a result, the rapidly growing North develops a cumulative competitive advantage over the slower – growing South (Todaro & Smith, 2011).

The assumption of this model is built on the pitiable scenario of the center- periphery- the rich giants and the poor wretches of the earth. The model paints a picture of the ills, monopolistic and lopsided exchange mechanisms of the global market perpetrated by Transnational Corporations basically owned by world giants. These Transnational Corporations (TNCs) or Multi-national Corporations (MNCs) and their giant owners are far more sophisticated both in technology, capital and their mode of production. Southern countries are therefore incapacitated to engage in equal exchange of goods and services, and have hence lost that competitive advantage to have a fair trade share (Todaro & Smith, 2011).

In this context, infant advertising agencies and public relations firms of the poor nations lack the pedigree to compete with the world giants to pitch accounts in the global media business. These global giants have spread their wings to almost every corner of the globe; squeezing the small players in this global market place and banishing them from the airwaves, television screens and cinemas (West Africa Magazine, as cited in Sen, 2003).

The Borderless World and the Opportunities for Advertising and Public Relations

The contraction of the world into an immense village market courtesy of advances in Information and Communication Technologies have ushered in a myriad of opportunities for advertising and public relations activities in the 21st century. Apart from enhancing closer integration of businesses and

associates due to enormous reduction in costs of transportation and communication, as well as the breaking down of particular barriers to efficient flow of goods, services, capital, knowledge, and technology beyond national frontiers; it has also been characterised by the creation of new subsidiaries of Transnational Corporations to work beyond their parent nations (Taylor, 2002).

Corroborating the above contention, Douglas and Craig (n.d) observe that the advertising industry is characterised by a large number of small and medium sized advertising agencies that operate primarily in one country and a small number of very large advertising agencies with operation in many countries. These agencies developed extensive networks of offices throughout the world in order to coordinate the advertising process in all the countries where their clients do business. This may be what prompted Marx (1948) cited in Onwe (2006) when he opined that the imperative of the capitalist nuances has pushed the bourgeois to nestle everywhere, settle everywhere and establish connections everywhere. The "Lords of the order" as Marx described them, generated and utilised technologies which expedited the annihilation of space and which paved the way for penetration in every direction. These global networks are deemed necessary because, in the words of Douglas and Craig (n.d), advertising agencies that do not have a global network are at a serious risk when competing for new accounts or attempting to retain existing ones that are expanding globally.

With the exception of Dentsu, a Japanese advertising agency, most other agency networks generate their revenues outside their home countries. The largest agency group, Omnicom, places over $37 billion of advertising for its clients around the world and derives half of its revenue from outside the US. Omnicom has 891 offices in over 85 countries and employs 35,600 workers worldwide (Douglas & Craig, n.d). Public relations has induced a number of US counseling agencies to extend their operations abroad. This is done by establishing a branch office abroad or an affiliation with a local firm in one or more nations (Seitel, 2007). This means that globalisation has brought about an astronomical increase in employment in advertising and public relations firms across the globe. Nevertheless, Gershon (1998) and Abdi, Lundahl and Patel (n.d) have elaborated more on how globalisation brings about these global networks in the advertising industry. They identified this in two key areas, namely through mergers and acquisitions and strategic alliances.

Mergers and Acquisitions

A merger is a definitive strategy for growth since agencies merge to benefit from synergy advantages that accrue from the pooling together of resources, resulting in greater efficiency in the utilisation of people, financial and material resources (Esuh, 2006). Most advertising agencies have merged or acquired controlling interest in the share capital of others. Patti and Frazer (1988) confirm this with the example of the acquisition of Richardson-Vicks by Procter and Gambleon 1st October, 1985 to improve its productive capacity. The merger announcement between the LTC Financial Partners and LTC Global Marketing on 2nd July, 2014 can also be seen as a glaring instance. According to Richard Pitbladdo, CEO of LTC Global,

> The merger will bring financial and operational efficiencies … Our combined resources will allow greater opportunities for our agents as well as reduced unit costs for shareholders… Consolidation is a great way to thrive in today's challenging LTC insurance environment, and to capitalise on demographic opportunities…

Stressing the imperatives of mergers and acquisition arrangements in the advertising industry is Ekundayo (1999) also cited in Esuh (2006) who notes that:

> merger is one of the survival strategy ally agencies used during economic depression to enter into affiliation with foreign agencies and this has paid off in terms of

business, training of staff, exposing them to international training facilities, thereby up-skilling them for greater efficiency. Since the economic downturn when most business owners deliberately reduced their advertising budgets to prune down costs, pundits in the marketing communication industry have been suggesting mergers and acquisitions as the last resort. This as Akingbolu (2016) reasoned is deemed necessary because of the global economic reality which has weakened the advertising industry and compels many multinationals and local companies to slash their budgets. To this end, top practitioners, such as a former president of the Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria (AAAN), Mr. Kola Ayanwale and the president of the Public Relations Consultants Association of Nigeria (PRCAN) Mr. John Ehiguese, have urged agency owners to consider mergers and acquisitions to be able to strengthen their operations.

Mergers and acquisitions often lead to an increased value generation for the company and it is expected that the shareholder value of a firm after merger or acquisitions would be greater than the sum of the shareholder value of the parent companies. If an agency, which has a strong market presence, buys out the weak ones, then more competitive and cost efficiency can be generated. Here, the target agency benefits as it gets out the difficult situation and after being acquired by the large firm, the joint company accumulates larger market share. It is due to these benefits that small and less powerful firms often agree in advanced economy to be acquired by the large firms (Akingbolu, 2016).

However, mergers and acquisitions fail primarily due to poor planning. They are not strategic and the dominant company rarely pays attention to the cultures and people of the acquired company. The holding companies basically buy the agency to increase revenues. They are careless about the rest. In such a situation, mergers and acquisitions will not work. The turmoil caused by merging usually results in unhappy people at all levels. Unhappy people make for unhappy clients. Unhappy clients put their accounts in review. While there are some back office savings, mostly those are offset by account defections (Akingbolu, 2016).

Strategic Alliance

In the new global environment, with greater competition from more and more agencies, alliances are not just a planning option but a strategic necessity. This as Gershon (1998) notes is a business relationship in which advertising agencies work to achieve a collective advantage. This allows them to acquire the relevant competencies to compete in the global market. Abdi, Lundahl and Patel (n.d) have opined that the formation of strategic alliances becomes necessary especially when there is threat of new entrants into the advertising agency business. However, Kotler (2000) notes that advertising agencies go into alliance to fill the gap in current market and technology, reduce risk and entry costs into new markets, achieve economies of scale, overcome legal barriers and extend the scope of existing operations. Alliance between local advertising agencies with multinational ones therefore has huge benefits for the ally agencies.

In the area of improvement in technological advancement, global media of advertising have reaped a lot of dividends from globalisation. With advances in cable and satellite communication, telephone, computers, Internet and all what not; advertising has now become as natural as air. ICTs have made web advertising to bring markets to the door steps of consumers. Websites such as amazon.com, jumia.com, konga.com, netflix.com among others have made it possible for electronic marketing or cyber-buying to be made by consumers in various parts of the world. This cyber-marketing as Archibong and Ayinde (1998) as cited in Esuh (2006) note provides information on customer services, the online feedback from consumers which enable marketers to assess consumers' perceptions about their products and

services.

Advertising is increasingly becoming more sophisticated with the advent of the new media and it is uncommon for mainstream advertisers to have their new advertisements on a website like YouTube, for example, the Australian big beer advertisement produced for Carlton Draft beer. There are now online games designed to promote products and services, in what has been called *"advergaming"* (Galloway, 2005). Notwithstanding, the Aruvian Research (2007) has, however, identified major areas through which globalization has influenced advertising. These are:

- Globalisation has standardised advertising (exploiting the "global village" media effect and economies of scale).
- Globalisation has paved the way for the interplay of mergers and acquisitions in the advertising industry.
- It has heightened the process of replicating and dissemination of universal fashions, fads, trends in lifestyle and even modes of communication.
- Globalisation has embraced the overwhelming spread of consumerism and new product development (as a response to the creation and replicating lifestyle) and,
- Globalisation has made way for a plethora of products on the market and a need to distinguish themselves from the competition (via the application of novel marketing tools).

Drawing home, Nigerian indigenous advertisers and products have gone past the domestic markets. Besides, there is a club of multinational corporations in Nigeria today indicating the dismantling of trade barriers among nations of the globe. Most of advertising practitioners in Nigeria have attained international status. One of Nigeria's erudite advertising practitioners Mr. May Nzeribe of Sunrise D'arcy Lagos won an international award by the International Advertising Association (IAA) in 2000 announcing its arrival in the global scene (Esuh, 2006).

The Borderless World and the Threats to Advertising and Public Relations Practice

Operating in a global society inherent with sophisticated technology and cut-throat competition has always been the survival of the fittest. Technologically, the shrinking world has drastically handicapped local advertising and public relations firms. The local advertising and public relations practitioners are deeply threatened by poor technological know-how and living up to the global expectations of their global clients. The local firms lack the resources to compete in the global market. Sen (2003) argues that, in economic and trade terms, third world industries can hardly compete globally due to infrastructural, technological and managerial inadequacy. Hendrix and Hayes (2010) are of the optimism that public relations would only attain success if the practitioners are adequately trained technologically to be conversant with their applications in solving public relations problems.

Again, while merger and acquisitions partially succeeds in the developed economies, it is still a dream in developing nations. The 2014 failure of $35 billion plan to merge Publicis and Omnicom turned out to be an indication that the fallout of mergers is a global threat to marketing communication growth. However, a clash of CEO egos and lack of trust, more than any tax snarls or regulatory issues, were said to have spoilt the Publicis and Omnicom engagement (Akingbolu, 2016). He further states that Nigeria's advertising and public relations practitioners like to discuss merger and acquisitions in public fora but it has always been in theory with little or no practical stand. Except for early agencies like Rosabel, Center spread, Insight Communication, TBWA, DDB and a few others, most agencies exist only in name with little or no business to survive on either globally or locally.

The paternalistic approach to the flow of goods, services, technology and information in the global market which is usually top-down, has eluded southern countries the opportunity to enjoy equal trade exchange in the world market. This has

grossly contributed to countries of the south becoming dumping ground of goods, technology and undesired information about world products. Schram (1964) cited in Ciboh (2005) is of the confirmation that less than one third of the countries of the world are major producers and custodians of the technology and technical knowledge on which modern society depends. The concentration of technology, wealth and power in relatively few countries ensures that they will produce the lion's share of useful technical information, and makes it easier for their people, the industries and enterprises of communication, or produce the equipment which an efficient flow of information requires.

Striving in the global market where there is high competition of who "pitches" an account has become a puzzle. This is because most firms and/or agencies lack the creative competence to handle accounts of Transnational or Multinational companies, thereby lose them to big firms/agencies that have the creative and technological competence to handle and manage global accounts. Douglas and Craig (n.d) aver that advertising agencies that do not have global network are at a serious disadvantage when competing for new advertising account or attempting to retain existing ones that are expanding globally.

Global media billing or cost of placing global information about goods, corporations, nations, etc. is astronomically exorbitant. Global media owners charge much money to carry a global advertising campaign thereby creating untold financial hardship to advertisers and advertising agencies that are not financially buoyant. Again, the threats of international laws, political and economic ideologies, culture variation, and language among others are also considered. The challenge of operating in a country alien to the operator requires profound knowledge of the terrain in which such business or firm operates. Failure to do this may result to entangling litigations and violation of cultural norms and values of such nation in which the firm/agency operates. Commenting on this, Kruckerberg in Kamalipour (2002) stress that, in such a situation, professionals will be critically needed to examine, maintain and modify as necessary indigenous organisational and societal values and beliefs systems in an age and communication milieu in which values and ideologies will be prudently managed.

The Borderless World and the Future of Advertising and Public Relations in Nigeria

The future of advertising and public relations practice in Nigeria will be promising only for those firms/agencies that have positioned themselves strategically to capitalize on the upswing in technology (Aruvian Research, 2007). To this as the Research further reiterated, many firms will look up to technology as the critical point of departure for huge returns. The Research expressed optimism that, in the near future, agencies would and must recognise that traditional advertisers/ agency/customer relationships will be challenged with innovative models of engagement coming to the fore. As traditional advertising continue to wane by 2020, the media owners of all categories including online search of all networks, gaming environments and interactive digital television, will be integrating brands directly into contents and editorial. Consumers will take charge of content and directional flow of interactions. Agencies will not just be competing with others; affiliates may become competitors, consumers channels, advertisers may become suppliers and agencies may become media owners.

Still looking into the future, traditional advertising will shrink at the expense of consumers. As a result, agencies will take on multiple roles such as agency as media, programme creators, network creators and so on. If agencies take these opportunities there will be tremendous implications in terms of their relationship with clients, their remuneration packages and their very existence (Aruvian Research, 2007).

Again, the future of public dependent relations in Nigeria is highly on how international public relations practitioners embraced advances in

technology. Since ICTs, especially the Internet, mean new ways of delivering public relations messages, they will enable consultants to manage quickly and directly situations that used to take at least a day to accomplish. Those who entered the public relations field in the 1960s and early 1970s probably used a manual typewriter and sent their copy to newspapers that used hot lead in its production process. There is need for a paradigm shift from the relics of the mammoth age to wireless. However, there is no limit of opinions on how technology will impact the practice of public relations. Public relations practitioners will attain success if they are adequately trained technologically to be conversant with their applications in solving public relations problems (Hendrix & Hayes, 2010).

Esuh (2006) believes that the Nigerian advertising scene is proliferated with multinational brands courtesy of advances in ICTs. He opines that the techniques of the new interactive media of information dissemination about organisations, brands, countries and services at the global level seem to elude the industries in Nigeria. He further points out that those who enjoy the full benefits of globalisation are those firms who through their intercourse with ICTs voluntarily seek to use them to their advantage. With the influx of ICTs into Nigeria, it is imperative that persuasive media practitioners, governments and commercial agents, advertising and public relations industries need to reconsider their media, ethical, training and creative, as well as multinational accounts and audience approach to embrace the global trends (Esuh, 2006).

Conclusion

We are indeed in an era of human existence whereby national borders cease to be an impediment to the transition of goods, capital, skills and technology: an era where the globe is consistently compressing by day; an era where distance has been dismantled thereby converging the world citizens and economies into a mini shopping mall courtesy of unprecedented upswing in transport and communication. This economic amalgamation has brought about fundamental opportunities to businesses across the globe with an unprecedented impact on advertising and public relations. This can be witnessed through effective service delivery to clients, increased sales, increased economies of scale, the growth of mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances, more competition and the creation of a global market place to foster exchange among nations.

Unfortunately, this technological amalgamation of the world's markets has also been dominated by multinational corporations of Northern supremacists who brandish their sophistication in technology and skills which participants from third world nations lack. This paper is, therefore, of the firm submission that for advertising and public relations firms from third world nations such as Nigeria to excel in the global market, they must embrace technology as their critical point of departure. This will enable them to compete in the world village as well as render effective and efficient services to their global and local clients.

Recommendations

From this discourse the paper advances the following recommendations:

1. Technologically advanced nations with their multinational companies should not use information and communication technologies to exploit or foster their parochial interests but for the good of every participant in the world market. This will encourage technological backward nations and their industries enter the world market with the intent of achieving positive returns.
2. Regulators of globalization such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the government and other concerned organizations should make laws that would govern how goods, services, technology and finance flow in the world trade. Instead of being top-down, it should be vertical in approach to change the backward nations from being dumping ground of goods and technology- but economic viable markets.
3. Advertising and public relations firms and practitioners should embrace ICTs in their day-

to-day operations to enable them to deliver quality service to their local and global clients.

4. For advertising and public relations firms to succeed in handling global campaigns, pitching global accounts for multinational companies and maintaining existing ones, they should establish subsidiary offices to be able to serve their clients wherever they operate. This will also increase their competitive advantage in the global business environment.
5. Mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances in the marketing communication industry should be encouraged by firms to foster mutual benefits, trust and transparency. This will yield a long standing synergy especially when the cultures and values of the holding companies are respected.

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