

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

INVESTIGATING ELECTRONIC MARKETING AND HOTEL PERFORMANCE IN GHANA: THE CUSTOMERS' PERSPECTIVE

BY

SELOM KOKUI AKABA

(10441707)



**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
AWARD OF MPhil MARKETING DEGREE**

JUNE, 2015

DECLARATION

I do hereby that this work is the result of my own research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other University. All references used in the work have been fully acknowledged.

I bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings.

.....
SELOM KOKUI AKABA
(10441707)

.....
DATE



CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this thesis was supervised in accordance with procedures laid down by the University.

.....

PROFESSOR ROBERT E. HINSON
(SUPERVISOR)

.....

DATE

.....

DR. DANIEL QUAYE
(CO-SUPERVISOR)

.....

DATE



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parent, Mr. & Mrs. K. Akaba. Thank you for your endless love, prayers and support.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My deepest thanks and appreciation goes to my principal supervisor, Professor Robert Hinson and his teaching assistant, Wunzalgu Ibn Kailan for their constructive criticism, constant direction and guidance. My second appreciation goes to Dr. Daniel Quaye for your guidance and direction which shaped this work, I say thank you very much.

I also want to thank my family and those who have supported me in diverse ways. Especially, my siblings; Elikem and Edem, thank you all for your support and encouragement all this while. To all my classmates who have made this journey worthwhile, I say God richly bless you all. To my dear friend Gerald, thank you for your support and prayers.

Finally, to all those who directly or indirectly helped me finish this program successfully, God richly bless you all for your support, encouragement and prayers.

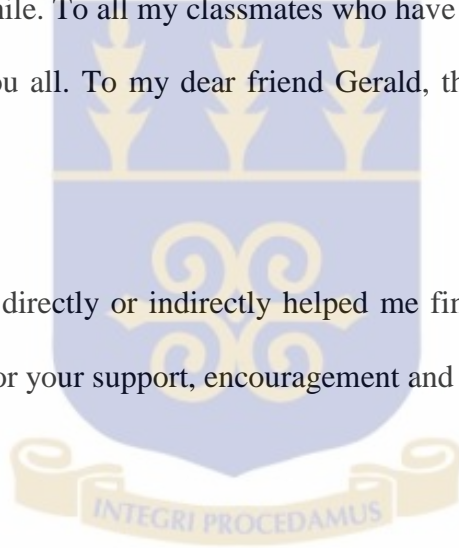


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION.....	i
CERTIFICATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	x
ABSTRACT.....	xi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Background.....	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.2 Research Objectives.....	5
1.3 Research Questions.....	5
1.4 Hypothesis.....	6
1.5 Methodology.....	6
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	7
1.7 Scope of the Study.....	7
1.8 Limitations of the study.....	8
1.9 Chapter Disposition.....	8

CHAPTER TWO.....	10
LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	10
2.0 Introduction.....	10
2.1 Definition of Electronic Marketing.....	10
2.2 The Advantages and Constraints of Electronic Marketing	13
2.3 The Electronic Marketing Concept	14
2.4 Electronic Marketing in Hotels	18
2.4.1 Websites	21
2.4.2 Social Media.....	22
2.4.3 Electronic Mail	25
2.5 Drivers of Electronic Marketing	26
2.6 Electronic Marketing Mix.....	28
2.7 Traditional Marketing versus Electronic Marketing	30
2.8 Electronic Marketing and Performance	32
2.9 Conceptual Framework.....	33
2.9.1 Importance of Electronic Marketing.....	34
2.9.2 Performance	35
2.9.3 Management Commitment	36
2.9.4 Employee Training	36
CHAPTER THREE	38
CONTEXT OF THE STUDY	38
3.0 Introduction.....	38

3.1 Ghana's Hotel Industry	40
3.2 The role of Hotel Industry to National Development	43
3.3 E-Marketing and the Hotel Sector Performance	46
3.4 Profile of Ghana	49
3.4.1 Economic Performance	51
3.4.2 Contribution of the Tourism Sector	51
3.5 Overview of Tourism in Ghana	52
CHAPTER FOUR.....	55
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	55
4.0 Introduction	55
4.1 Research purpose	55
4.2 Exploratory Research.....	55
4.3 Descriptive Research.....	56
4.4 Explanatory Research	56
4.5 Research Approach	57
4.6 Research Strategy and Design.....	60
4.6.1 Sample Design and Sample Size Selection Technique	62
4.6.2 Population	62
4.6.3 Data Sources and Collection Method.....	64
4.6.4 Data Collection	65
4.6.5 Statistical Analysis Technique	66
4.6.6 Factor analysis.....	67

4.6.7 Regression analysis	68
CHAPTER FIVE	70
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	70
5.0 Introduction.....	70
5.1 Electronic Marketing in Ghanaian Hotels – An Overview	70
5.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents	71
5.3 Data Analysis	74
5.3.2 Normality and Reliability of Variables	76
5.4 Discussion of Findings.....	79
CHAPTER SIX.....	83
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS	83
6.0 Introduction.....	83
6.1 Summary of the Study.....	83
6.2 Conclusions.....	85
6.3 Recommendations	88
6.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions.....	88
REFERENCES	90
Appendix: Questionnaire	121

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Number of Star-Rated hotels in Ghana.....	40
Table 5.1: Demographic of Profile	72
Table 5.2: Online Platform Usage	74
Table 5.3:One Sample Statistics	75
Table 5.4: Normality and Reliability of Variables	76
Table 5.5: ANOVA.....	77
Table 5.6: Regression Analysis Results.....	78

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

E-Marketing	Electronic Marketing
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHA	Ghana Hotels Association
GTA	Ghana Tourist Authority
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ISSER	Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
ODI	Overseas Development Institution
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WTO	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to investigate E-marketing and hotel performance with emphasis on three E-marketing tools namely; website, e-mail and social media. Previous studies that have looked at electronic marketing and hotel focused on adoption of the internet and electronic use in hotels. Others focused on the financial performance of electronic marketing: that is, return on investment, profit and loss and sales margin, to the neglect of other relevant issues such as the effect E- marketing tools such as website, e-mail and social media have on the non-financial performance of hotels. This study therefore seeks to address this gap in research from the Ghanaian contest. To address this gap the study employed a quantitative approach specifically a survey and an adapted framework to carry out the research. Data was collected from 200 customers of Ghanaian hotels. Data was analyzed using factor analysis and multiple regressions. The findings from the study indicated that Website and Social media were the most significant of the three tools analyzed. In addition, E-mails were found to be insignificant, that is, it was rarely used among Ghanaian hotel operators in communicating with customers. The study recommends that, hotels should update and interact with customers on their online sites regularly since customers are becoming more technology savvy. Future studies should consider budget hotels, guest houses and hostel because this study was based on star rated hotels in Ghana.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

The Internet has had a transformational impact on all functions of most firms by supporting all parts of an organization's value chain, including promotion, procurement, production and recruitment. The marketing function, arguably, has seen the greatest change since more, more firms are adopting electronic and internet assisted methods in their marketing strategy (Sandeep, 2006). The growth of the World-wide web has progressed daily since its expansion from the Arpanet system to what is known today as the internet, and was made freely available by 1990 for individual and commercial use by the public (El Gohary, 2012). The percentage of the global population either hooked on to the internet or an electronic device, for instance a smart phone or a tablet has seen a dramatic growth over the last decade with almost 3 billion people making up about 40.4% of total global population using the internet from about 14.1% in 2004 (International Telecommunications Union, 2014). Africa stood out with an over 40% growth rate of mobile broadband penetration by the end of 2014 while Ghana in the same publication recorded 12.30% of its over 25 million population were communicating with the internet by the close of 2013. According to Hinson & Sorensen (2006), with the continuous spread of the internet and its related applications in Ghana, it would seem obvious that the adoption of ICT by enterprises and firms is also growing and making an impact in the way businesses are conducted.

It is widely recognized that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as the internet are rapidly expanding and have affected the way businesses are performed and the way organizations compete (Barnes & Hinton, 2007; Grandson & Pearson, 2004). The

use of the internet and other electronic devices in the marketing process is growing at a dramatic pace and significantly impacting on customers as well as the business behaviour. As technological capabilities expand, businesses are turning more and more to computer-assisted methods to increase efficiency and provide a competitive edge. Firms are continually reminded that innovation within the firm and for its customers is the key to success and survival in a competitive environment. The widespread use of the internet facilitates greater opportunities to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of firms. Hinson (2006) postulated that small businesses in Ghanaian hotels need to better strategize to take advantage of the Internet since it can help them to compete with much bigger and well-established hotels.

Levenburg & Magal (2004) also buttressed the point when they stated that “the Internet has become an important business tool”. However there are a number of barriers that prevent hotels from realizing full benefits of adopting and integrating the internet and other modern technologies into the marketing of their services, these include the hotels ability to fully use the available technology, the commitment of management to the use of technology, available funds and the general knowledge of employees to technology (Johnston & Jones, 2004).

Electronic marketing refers to the use of the Internet/Web and related information technologies to conduct marketing activities (Sandeep, 2006; Hamidi & Safabakhsh, 2011). For tourism organizations, the internet and other electronic devices allows them to engage customers regarding their interest and preferences, to capture information about tourists and to use the information to provide personalized services (Doolin, Burgess, & Cooper, 2002) as well as increase effectiveness and efficiency in communicating with customers (Hardaker

& Graham, 2001). Tourism is now in the forefront of information communication technologies (ICT) adoption and usage especially in the area of e-marketing (E- Business Watch, 2006). The Hospitality sector, specifically hotels are turning more to new technologies and facilities available to them, for instance, websites, social media, electronic mails among others, in reaching their customers, in offering customized services, and competing effectively its competitors.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The need to satisfy the ever changing needs of today' s customer, the desire of every business to succeed and be a leader in terms of the share of the market, coupled with the advancement in technology in the competitive business sectors of the Ghanaian economy has led to the adoption and use of the world wide web. The electronic phenomenon has become popular in different sectors over time: government (Tettey, 2002), Banking(Abor,2005; Crabbe,Standing,Standing &Krajuluoto, 2009), Commerce (Boateng et al, 2008;Saffu, Walker & Hinson, 2008), Business (Hinson & Sorensen, 2006),E- Accounting (Amidu, Effah & Abor, 2011), agribusiness (Aleke, Ojiako, & Wainwright, 2011; Boadi, Boateng, Hinson & Opoku, 2007) , education (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012; Hinson, 2006; Martey, 2004),export (Hinson & Sorensen, 2006; Hinson & Abor, 2005).

Research relating to the adoption and use of ICT in the marketing function of businessesfocusing on Africa especially Ghana (Adam, 1996; Chivhanga, 2000; Hinson, 2006), compared to other continent have been almost nonexistent: Europe (Brodie, Winklhofer, Coviello & Johnston, 2007; Braun, 2002; Sheth & Sharma, 2005; Singh & Hill,

2003; Sigala, 2001). Asia (Yang, Ahmed, Ghingold, Sock, Su Mei & Lee, 2003; Dominici, 2009) and Australia (Adam, Mulye, Deans & Palihawadana, 2002).

With the emergence of E-marketing tools in the global market, businesses in tourism and hospitality industry can no longer rely solely on traditional marketing tools to do business (Eid & El-Gohary, 2013). In spite of the relevance of the E-marketing tools in today's businesses, most hotels are not exploiting the benefits it has to offer (Balogu & Peckan, 2006). Coupled with the sophistication of customers in their purchase decision and competition in the hotel industry, it is not enough to use only the traditional marketing tools in reaching customers (Brodie et al., 2007). Several studies reveal that, most hotels are adopting E-marketing tools to conduct business (O'Connor, 2004; 2011). Consequently, their performance has improved compared to hotels using the traditional marketing tools (Grandson & Pearson, 2004). However, the story is a little different in the Ghanaian hotel sector which is yet to fully adopt E-marketing tools (Hinson & Boateng, 2007). According to Cheng, 2013, the advent of electronic marketing has changed the way customers seek information for their consumption decisions. Internet platforms have become appropriate means of communication due to time constraints, cost of advertising and the ever changing needs of today's sophisticated consumer (Teixeira, 2014), drawing attention away from the traditional means of advertising. In view of these challenges, Eid & El Gohary, 2013 maintains that, electronic platform offers the most flexible interactive exchanges between hotels and their customers as the most cost-effective marketing communication tool today. In spite of the growing use of the internet and web 2.0 tools among consumers, it appears that hotels are not utilizing social media as a marketing communication tool in Ghana (Sigala, 2003). O'Connor, 2011 revealed that many hotels have online presence but their

overall use is basic. Most of the hotels suffer from low levels of; visibility, inactivity and interaction (O'Connor, 2011). Hence, narrowing these issues on an emerging Sub-Saharan country like Ghana has become more crucial, because, the use of technology is increasing and IT could be a more promising tool for improving hotel performance (Hinson & Amidu, 2006).

1.2 Research Objectives

Given the statement of the problem outlined above, the overall objective of this research is to identify the role that the internet and related online platforms play in improving the overall business operation and performance of hotels in Ghana.

1. To explore the effects of E-marketing on customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian hotel sector.
2. To ascertain the influence of management and employee commitment to electronic marketing performance.
3. To ascertain which online platform has the most influence on hotel performance.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the effect of E-marketing on customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian hotel sector?
2. What is influence of management and employee commitment to E-marketing?
3. Which of the E-marketing tools influences hotel performance the most?

1.4 Hypothesis

To properly address the research objective, the following research questions were formulated:

- H1. There is a positive relationship between electronic marketing and performance in the Ghanaian hotel sector.
- H2. Management and employee commitment positively affect electronic marketing performance.

1.5 Methodology

This research embraces the quantitative approach due to the variables under study and the attempt to explain the relationship between them. According to Hair, Bush & Ortinon (2006) quantitative research is appropriate for studies that involve numbers and structured methods for data collection. The population for the study consists of customers of hotels in Ghana. Population is the entire group under study as specified by the objectives of the research, which possesses the information sought by the researcher and about which inferences are to be made (Malhotra, 2012; Burns & Bush, 2006).

The sample for the study will be two hundred (200) respondents, and they will be sampled using the convenience sampling approach. The justification for this sample technique is that, convenience sampling allows for selection of respondents due to convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Primary and secondary data will be gathered for this study. According to Aaker, Kumar and Day (1995), primary data refers to “original data” whilst secondary data refers to data that is collected by persons or agencies for purposes other than solving the problem at hand. Secondary data will be obtained from company website,

annual reports and material from libraries that deal with the research topic and its underlying variables. Primary data will be gathered through the use of a questionnaire. With regards to data analysis, the current study seeks to use factor analysis to reduce and classify the variables to be considered and hence proceed to investigate the relationship and come out with concrete findings between the variables using multiple regression analysis method.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The importance of these topics comes from the resulted changes in both, consumer behavior and hotel management. New technologies benefit hotel consumers due to minimized transactional costs, higher product quality, share market information, lower uncertainty and aids in distribution channel efficiency. This study also seeks to harmonize the diversity of opinions within the Ghanaian hotel industry. This study will also contribute to extant literature on E- marketing, giving insights from a developing economy context. The findings of this study will be useful to the tourism sector. Lastly, it can be used as a source of reference for further study pertaining to the subject in academia.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The overarching aim of the research was to examine the performance of internet and electronic device in marketing the function available in Ghanaian hotels. The project sought to investigate the benefit and key issues associated with the use of internet and electronic media as a means of reaching and interacting with target audience. Performance can be either financial (return on investment, profit and loss, sales target) or non-financial (customer satisfaction, service quality). In respect to this study non-financial performance indicators were considered.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The study is limited to only star-rated hotels (1-5 stars) in the Accra metropolis even though there is a varying range of hospitality and lodging service in Ghana, which could have been studied for results that are more conclusive. However, this was not possible due to time and financial constraints. Another limitation with respect to the findings is that a good number of respondents were found to be between the ages of 21-30, this may limit the generalization of the findings since that age bracket do not patronize hotel services due to their economic position.

1.9 Chapter Disposition

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter introduces background of the study, problem statement, research gap, research objectives and questions, hypothesis, significance of the study. Further, scope and disposition of the thesis are also presented.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This chapter dealt with the review of existing literature to throw more light on the concepts of electronic marketing and its integration as a communication tool in the hotel industry. The review also involves the factors that influence the successful use and relevance of electronic marketing as well as some underlining constraints.

Chapter 3: Context of the Study

This chapter will provide contextual background information of the study. The chapter provides information on the History of Ghana in relation to hotels, Ministry of Tourism, Ghana Hotels Association, and the overview of the Ghana Tourism sector, and impact of tourism on the Ghanaian economy is also covered.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

The fourth chapter provides information about the methods used in this thesis to provide a solution for the research questions posed earlier in this study. The methodology illustrates how necessary data is collected and the usage of the gathered data to answer the research questions.

Chapter 5: Analyses of Data and Discussion

This chapter will provide information on data analysis and discussion of the findings of the study.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter will deal with the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations that will be drawn from the findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter features a review of related literature on the adoption and use of electronic marketing in developing countries, in order to facilitate the advancement of knowledge on the phenomenon, unearth new research areas and justify the need for this study (Webster & Watson, 2002). In order to better understand and position this research in the right perspective, the study will take a look at literature on electronic marketing and the various theoretical and empirical literature that underpin the topic in order to develop a framework that gives a thorough explanation of the various concepts in the literature reviewed. This will give insight on how far scholarly work has gone on this topic as well as address any gaps in knowledge.

2.1 Definition of Electronic Marketing

Electronic Marketing (E-marketing) is viewed as a modern business practice associated with buying and selling goods, services, information and ideas via the Internet and other electronic means. A review of relevant literature reveals that the definitions of e-marketing vary according to each author's point of view and background. Chaffey (2007) defined e-marketing as "Achieving marketing objectives through use of electronic communications technology". According to McDonald and Wilson (1999) e-marketing can also be defined as "Any use of technology to achieve marketing objectives. On the other hand, Reedy and Schullo (2000) defined it as "The process aimed at facilitating and conducting of business

communication and transactions over networks”. Dominici (2009) define it as “Achieving marketing objectives through applying digital technologies”. This work will however focus on the definition by Strauss and Frost (1999) which defined e-marketing as “The use of electronic data and applications for planning and executing the conception, distribution and pricing of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives”.

The internet and various technologies have existed for several years and have been a catalyst for many markets since its inception. Information technologies have been sought by many sectors of the economy as a productive or operational means of assisting in their daily businesses(source).Many markets have witnessed a dramatic increase in the value of information technology (IT) to business organizations (Hamidi & Safabakhsh, 2011). Sophisticated, new information technologies have caused many markets for goods and services to become truly global in nature. The globalization of markets and industries and the changing role of IT within business organizations have made the strategic use of IT a key element in determining the success of a company and their bank accounts from any geographic location they want.

The Internet and other modern electronic technologies with current and emerging multimedia features provides ample opportunities which are particularly useful for dealing with intangible nature of the service, and transforming marketing mix variables to capitalize on the informational and transactional potential of the internet, and to gain a competitive advantage. (Baloglu & Peckan, 2006). According to the internet week survey, more than two thirds of the world’s travel and hospitality companies consider the internet a significant

weapon to gain competitive advantage within their industry (Doolin, Burgess & Cooper, 2002).

Speculation initially suggested that these developments would lead to a dramatic transformation of marketing, and this would lead to superior business performance. This optimism subsequently led to the dotcom boom and bust of the 1990s. Since then, the potential impact of IT has been reevaluated, leading to the realization that in addition to potentially transforming marketing, IT plays an important role in supporting and enhancing business and marketing practices. The study of the diffusion of internet and e-technology usage in business is the subject matter of both academia and practitioner interest in many parts of the world. This can be attributed largely to the amounts of revenue that nations are making due to the level of transactions between countries and its resulting impact on the economies of these countries and the world at large (Adam et al., 2002). In recent past, the internet had exploded onto the world stage and had become an integral part of the marketing mix (Strauss & Frost, 1999). Global marketing campaigns have been facilitated with ease especially for organizations that would previously be constrained by either time or distance (Deighton, 1997). Developments in information communication technology have ceaselessly had profound marketing implications with the internet recently being established as a global channel through which both existing and would-be customers can be targeted and through which organizations can both promote and present commercial offerings (Melewar & Smith, 2003). A presence on the web means being automatically international, this assertion plainly means that the internet has become established as a global marketing and communications channel, and can deliver various aspects of the marketing strategies of firms ranging from

branding, customer acquisition, relationship building, providing customer service, information search among others (Samiee,1998).

The grounding of the technology has offered new advanced business transactions and models for the world economy. The rapid growth and diffusion of the internet and the advancement of information communication technologies have had an enormous effect on the operations of most organizations. The internet now serves as a mainstream channel of communication for most organizations and institutions (Duckett & Nehmzow, 1998). According to Novak, Hoffman & Yung (2000) the Internet can be described as “the most important innovation since the development of the printing press” with the potential to "radically transform not just the way individuals go about conducting their business with each other, but also the very essence of what it means to be a human being in society. Electronic marketing can be defined as “the use of electronic data and applications for planning and executing the conception, distribution and pricing of ideas, goods and services to create exchange that satisfy both the individual and the organization” (Strauss & Frost, 1999). Personally I will define electronic marketing as a strategic process of achieving a firms marketing objective through the use of electronic communication technology.

2.2 The Advantages and Constraints of Electronic Marketing

The ability to allow customers express their needs and wants directly to the firm in response to the firm’s marketing communications is one very important characteristic of electronic marketing (Nieves & Segarra-Cipres, 2015). Interaction and interactivity is carried out within real-time making transaction time shorter and much more effective (Pantano & Di Pietro, 2013). Hotels are able to cover a broader market of their target audience in terms of

marketing their products and services, hence reducing cost of advertising since the web allows them to cover a large area with the same budget (Ievenburg & Magal, 2004). Customer and stakeholders of hotel tend to feel a sense of group membership or belonging when they join virtual communities of hotels on the web (Boyle, 2001). Hotels have the ability to access databases or data warehouses containing individual customer profiles and past purchase histories and to use these data in real-time to customize a marketing offer (Ainscough, 1996). Electronic marketing allows customers to obtain information available on the Internet and regulate the information they view and the rate and sequence of their exposure to that information (Liao & Cheung, 2002). The web also offers the opportunity for customers to inquire about competing products and prices so as to make the best decision (Evans & King, 1999). The ability to represent a product, or at least some of its benefits, as digital bits of information is one importance which cannot be overlooked when it comes to doing business electronically.

2.3 The Electronic Marketing Concept

The recent revolution in computer science, the Internet, information technology (IT), media and communications has changed the nature of business and marketing practices. A growing numbers of companies and enterprises use the Internet and other electronic tools to communicate with suppliers, business customers and end-users of their products and services. New forms of marketing have presented an opportunity for all kinds of enterprises to grow in a dramatic and dynamic way (Eid & El Gohary, 2013).

Electronic marketing can be viewed as a new business practice associated with the buying and selling of goods, services and information via the internet and other electronic means. A

review of existing literature on the area revealed varying definitions of electronic marketing depending on the author's view point and background. According to Strauss & Frost (2001), electronic marketing is defined as "The use of electronic data and applications for planning and executing the conception, distribution and the pricing of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives". On the other hand, Electronic Marketing includes the use of any electronic data or electronic applications for conducting marketing activities. As a result, Electronic Marketing includes Internet marketing, e-mail marketing, intranet marketing, extranet marketing, mobile marketing, telemarketing, electronic data interchange for marketing activities, customer relationship management among others.(Chaffey, Ellis-Chadwick, Mayer, & Johnston, 2006; Eid & Trueman, 2004; El-Gohary, Trueman, & Fukukawa, 2008; Evans & King, 1999).

The terms online marketing, internet marketing, email-marketing are often interchanged with electronic marketing and have been considered synonymous as well. E-marketing has a broader scope than Internet marketing since it refers not only to the World Wide Web and its related applications, but also includes the management of customer relationships and other marketing functions through other technologies but not directly over the internet (El-Gohary, 2012). In contrast, e-commerce and e-business have a wider and broader scope than e-marketing.

E-commerce is doing business electronically across the entire organization or firm, covering all forms of business transactions and information exchange that is executed using information and communication technology. Electronic business is a wider concept that embraces the use of information technology in all aspects of the firm's business. It includes

not only transactions, but also customer service and collaborating with business partners (Rowley, 2001). It is therefore safe to say that e-business encompasses all stakeholders of the business interaction.

Marketing has been defined by the American Marketing Association (2013) as the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society. According to Kotler & Armstrong (2010) in their book *Principles of Marketing*, they also defined marketing as satisfying needs and wants through an exchange process. An organization should be able to identify the needs, wants of the customer, and try to deliver benefits that will enhance or add to the customer's lifestyle, while at the same time ensuring that the satisfaction of these needs results in a healthy turnover for the organization. The fundamental argument that has been continually made is that the major aim of marketing is "to get and keep customers" (Levitt, 1986).

Increasingly, literature and practice has shifted towards innovation in marketing as the key driver of growth, business success or failure (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006; Bilton & Cummings, 2010). Changes in markets and the competitive strategies of large organizations have increased the pressure on businesses to focus on innovation, capabilities and innovation management (Hsu, 2011). Accelerating technological and scientific developments and ever-shortening product lifecycles have generated a particular innovation imperative as well as opportunities for SMEs (Dlodlo & Dhurup, 2013).

The rapid adoption of the internet as a commercial medium has resulted in more innovative ways of marketing to consumers in computer-mediated environments (Ainscouth, 1996). The marketing potential of the internet and other related electronic devices has been realized by many organizations over the past few years, as a medium to increase the number of consumers it targets at a time and to be able to reach a wider target audience. The internet has facilitated the ability of firms to reach target audiences more efficiently, displacing undifferentiated mass marketing techniques for more customized approaches (Melewar & Smith, 2003).

Some academics have also predicted that the number of consumers which the internet is able to reach at a time will increase due to the growing rate of the internet usage worldwide (Novak, Hoffman & Yung, 2000; Mack, 2000). Projections from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) statistics for 2014 showed an increase in individual internet usage worldwide to about 2,923,000 people from 2,710,000 people in 2013. The use of the Internet and other related information and communication technologies (ICTs) to foster the marketing activities of major business ventures is increasingly becoming a part of major business activities. Increasing competition leads organizations to search for more effective business strategies. Many of these have turned to information and communication technologies (ICT) as a way to cope with turbulent environments. Indeed, over the last decade, ICT investments in tourism and hospitality have greatly increased (Sigala, 2005; Siguaw, Enz & Namasivayam, 2000; Cline & Warner, 1999).

2.4 Electronic Marketing in Hotels

The increasing popularity of the internet and other related technologies has transformed the basis of marketing in the hospitality sector (Ip, Leung and Law, 2010). A group of experts in the hospitality industry stated that training marketers to use ICTs and having ICT reports for marketing are the most urgent and important for the future of marketing in the hotel industry (Dev and Olsen, 2000). According to Stewart and Barr, 2005, Hotels and lodging facilities are encouraged to strongly make use of web-based marketing, in order to improve their performance. In 2005, Stewart and Barr stated that the internet and word of mouth are the two most important and powerful promotional tools used by hotels and other hospitality firms. Some hotels are still reluctant to take advantage of the many benefits that comes with the use of ICTs in their operation but rather rely largely on human resources to deliver personalized services to their customers (Connolly, 2000).

Increasing competition in the hotel sector has lead hotel owners and managers to search for more effective business strategies. Many of these hotels have turned to ICTs as a way to cope with the unstable wave in the sector (Sigala, 2003). Competition within the hotel sector is affected by change in customer perception, globalization and technological advancement among others (Aksu and Tarcan, 2002). Information Communication Technologies offer hotels an opportunity to be cost effective, reach out to new customers through the web and enhance business efficiency with their partners (Bui, Le and Jones, 2006). According to Sweeney, 2000 hotels mainly go into electronic marketing to enhance their general operations like taking reservations, promoting hotel products and services, providing customer service support, establishing brand awareness, advertising an event and generating traffic.

Hotels and other tourism firms are increasingly pushing promotional material directly to their target audience via the web through e-mails, customized web portals and social media for potential and existing customer to pull as much information as they wish (Bui, Le and Jones, 2006). Online platforms of hotels should be able to attract customers, generate their interest and get them to participate, secure their loyalty, and customize interaction with customers. Technology is gradually becoming a critical source of sustainable competitive advantage in the hospitality industry, particularly in the areas of description, promotion, distribution, amalgamation, organization, and delivery of hospitality products. These of IT, more than ever before, is a major prerequisite in forming strategic alliances, developing innovative distribution methods, and communicating with consumers and partners while satisfying consumer demand (Chaffey, 2000).

Customers and partners alike tend to place greater importance on organizations which utilize IT to a greater extent than their competitors (Buhalis & Main, 1998). Much more attention should be paid to IT subjects because of constantly changing conditions, especially in the current situation where hotels are forced to confront and deal more effectively with the speed and competition, and be increasing customer expectations (Aksu & Tarcan, 2002). Hospitality literature supports the essential role of IT in refining customer service, (MacDonald & Smith, 2004) improving operations (Ham, Kim & Jeong, 2005), increasing revenues and minimizing costs (Huo, 1998). A number of researchers have identified a positive and significant relationship between the use of IT and the development of a competitive advantage (Cho & Olson, 1998).

Wang and Qualls (2007) recommended that IT be extensively adopted within the lodging industry and note the visible evidence of the acceptability and widespread use of IT in many

aspects of the service industry in general and in the lodging industry in particular. Given the benefits that IT provides to the lodging industry, the extensive use of technology would appear to be an inevitable conclusion (Siguaw et al., 2000).

Competition within the hotel industry is affected by increased globalization, technological advancements, horizontal and vertical integration, and changes in customer expectations (Aksu & Tarcan, 2002). Hotels and their business partners see the Internet as an opportunity to cost-effectively reach out to new customers via cyberspace and enhance business efficiency among business partners. Some of the most common reasons for a hotel to go online may include taking reservations, promoting hotel operations, selling products and services, creating and establishing an identity or brand awareness, providing customer service and product support, generating repeat traffic, and advertising an event, product, or service (Lin & Huang, 2006). To maintain a competitive advantage, Internet marketing strategies should be in compliance with the hotel's overall marketing strategies (Wan, 2002).

Strategies might focus on targeting specific markets, include promotions to generate e-revenues or capture online market share, or may improve the level of e-service by providing up-to-date information and personalized service. Geographic, demographic, and behavioral characteristics of target markets should be reflected in the content and tone of the Web site. As an increasingly common e-marketing technique, hotels "push" promotional materials directly to their targeted customers via e-mail or customizable Web portals, and use dynamic data manipulation and display techniques to provide a Web-based portal for potential customers to "pull" as much information as they wish.

Hotels need to be aware of and effectively use all the available tools to increase the popularity and success of their online sites (Hsu & Tsou, 2011; Heinen, 1996). According to

Yuan and Fesenmaier (2000), online platforms of hotels should attract customers, generate their interest and participation, retain their loyalty, learn about their preferences, and customize interaction and value delivery. A study by Wang and Fesenmaier (2006) on internet users' expectations recommends that online platforms of hotels should be first informative, interactive and attractive. One of the most significant impacts of ICT in hotel business is its ability to enable the value chain, both as an integrator within the organization (between employees) and as a value network across business collaborates (business-to-business). Various system facilities used by hotels all over the world have focused on customers over past years, mainly employed to cater for registration, bookings, management of rooms and record of income. E-marketing facilitates rich interaction with customers with access to firms' resources and information while simultaneously providing the hotel information about its customers.

2.4.1 Websites

The use of websites by hotels has become very prominent in most hotels over a short period and according to Smith and Chaffey (2008), a website has key variables, which it must follow to come up with a good design in order to attract potential viewers. They came up with four attributes which included high quality content, ease of use, quick to download and updated frequently. They also said that content was very critical in website design and management to allow for easy use and navigation. A well designed site that is effectively marketed, easy to find, up-to-date, clear and accurate are the most important factors of a website (Perdue, 2001). However, attention is also given to ease and speed of use. The general appearance of the website may be of more importance to many hotels to be able to attract new customers, it should also consider the ease of use and the availability of the

needed information, that is, information necessary for the customers should be available on the website. Once a website has been designed, developed and implemented it is then important to promote the website. Promotion is necessary in order to generate traffic to the site by advertising banners, using social media links among others (Fletcher et al., 2004).

2.4.2 Social Media

The growing importance of the use of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram among others in the business world, requires scientific studies to put forward relationships as to how this type of technology tool can bring about better business results. In recent years, there has been a change in the type of content published on the internet, notably in its socialization aspect, both in its inter-personnel relationships and through the so-called online social networks, as well as its creative facet, with individual users now being the major content providers on the net (Assis-Dorr, Palacios-Marques & Merigo, 2012).

Many times, however, businesses create a corporate profile on social networks simply to keep in step with current trends, rather than it being any part of their corporate business strategy, consequently achieving only unsatisfactory results. This article shows that those companies with a greater degree of involvement in social networking develop organizational learning practices, which improve their results. Social networks are created in an environment that greatly favours user participation, allowing them to add content, and which encourages collaboration and cooperation. These aspects are requisites for achieving an atmosphere of effective learning, given that organizational education is achieved through mental models, knowledge and shared perspectives and which is

founded upon accumulated knowledge and past experiences which are included as part of the report (Lindblom & Tikkanen, 2010).

The involvement of businesses in technological social networks corresponds to a current trend rather than to any type of strategic rethinking procedure, which is why in the majority of cases, this type of endeavor does not result in improvements to business operations (Lin et al. , 2010; Chao, 2011). Market orientation should be supported by tools, which encourage interaction with the user, in the sense of social networking, as these are implemented in a friendly atmosphere and encourage knowledge transfer procedures. To be effective, knowledge transfer emanating from consumers should bring about an improvement to either the organizational procedures or a change to the product attributes so that the business is able to fully adapt itself to consumer requirements. If this were not the case, social networks on their own would only serve to generate interaction with clients but would not result in improvements to the management of the business.

Knowledge about the user continues to grow as long as the social networks manage to maintain relations with their existing members, as well as attracting other members that share similar interests (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). This allows businesses to create routines, which allow their members to develop shared values and knowledge based on their experiences (Becker, 2010).

Organizations must be made aware of the opinions of consumers concerning the different products that are manufactured by the company, given that this external learning mechanism allows the company to modify the attributes of the product so that they

are adapted to the requisites of consumers. Companies are becoming more and more interested in the opinions expressed by their users through social networks, given that in most cases potential clients give more credence to the opinion of an anonymous user, than to all the information that they can be provided about a specific product.

Social Networking has over a couple of years become very popular among many individuals as a means of communicating and meeting peer over the internet. It has recently been adopted by business as a means of reaching their customers and interacting with potential customers as well (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). According to Brown et al., (2007) social networking offers the opportunity to connect with audiences drifting away from traditional media such as print media, television and radio. Social media networking is one sector of the economy that seems to be booming in the midst of the economic challenges. A social network has been defined as ‘a site that facilitates peer-to-peer communication within a group or between individuals through providing facilities to develop user-generated content and to exchange messages and comments between different users (Akar & Topcu, 2011). The future of social media in the business scene is rapidly increasing and it is expected that innovation will improve to meet this trend (Owyang, 2009; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). According to Neti (2011), companies are using customer information on social media to implement direct messages that matches the customer’s personal style and preference. Social networking tools work for direct marketing when they combine engaging content with a focus on something of interest to groups that can be identified by demographics such as age and personal or business interests’.

2.4.3 Electronic Mail

Electronic mail is an important medium of marketing communication especially for companies seeking to build and maintain closer relationships with customers (Reid, Smith & McCloskey, 2008; Ellis-Chadwick & Doherty, 2012). Widespread adoption of e-mail as a means of distributing promotional messages to potential and existing customers has the advantages of low distribution costs (Davis et al., 2007). The Internet provides companies with many different methods to which they can collect customer information, which they can use to target specific audiences. Through personal email chats with existing and potential customers, companies can gather customer information in exchange for free information or services by using sign-up boxes on their company website. Those companies for direct marketing can subsequently use this information. The online medium for this direct marketing is e-mail (O'Connor et al., 2004). Compared with offline direct marketing, online direct marketing allows customization, personalization and individual targeting in a much more flexible, easier, quicker and cheaper way (Kitchen & Burgman, 2004). According to Baggott (2011), “proper targeting, tracking tools and a carefully built opt in list; e-mail can be highly personalized to the need of the individual customer”. Having the permission of your audience to e-mail them news, promotions and other online messages is also important. E-mailing a newsletter or bulletin to customers that have already given you their permission will be a lot more effective (Tatnall & Lepa, 2003). A strong e-mail strategy should focus on encouraging e-mail subscribers in the following ways: e-mail sign up box on websites; Promote sign-up by offering discounts on purchases, ask customers to opt in, not opt out, and back up with email verification; Immediately send a welcome message that puts recipients on the path to purchase and use subsequent event-based e-mails as merchandising opportunities (Burke, 2008).

2.5 Drivers of Electronic Marketing

Undoubtedly, technology commercialization is an important driver of a firms' marketing success (Kiang, Raghu & Shang, 2000). The opportunities presented by Electronic Marketing for SBEs are considered as the Internet and other electronic media are now playing a vital role in the conducting of marketing activities by Small Business Enterprises due to its unique characteristics both as a market and as a medium. A website or a web page can have the potential to directly reach a large number of markets in a fast and economical way. With relatively low investments, almost any person who can read and write can have access to the WWW. EM provides SBEs with the opportunity of developing successful economic businesses in ways that have never been available to them before. It puts these entrepreneurs in touch with previously unavailable global resources and opportunities so that they can communicate and conduct business with new and existing customers in an integrated and easy way.

A competitive environment like that of the hospitality sector requires development, implementation and improvement of information technology so as to be at par with the continuous environmental changes that the sector is experiencing (Byrd & Turner, 2001). The satisfaction of customers is very crucial and plays a major part in the success of hotel businesses hence hotels have to implement new technologies that help to better understand the consumption needs of the customer and can also contribute to fulfillment of those requirements in the supply of the needed services (Deshpande & Farley, 2002). According to Day & Bens (2005), leading companies are implementing electronic marketing to extend their competitive edge.

ICT, particularly the World Wide Web, is believed to be the most cost-efficient tool to help brick and mortar companies gain bigger markets and the ability to compete with other rival well-structured organizations in attracting customers to services (Intan Salwani, Marthandan, Norzaidi & Chong, 2009). The characteristics of the internet such as speed, user-friendliness, low cost and wide accessibility have allowed electronic marketing to be increasingly diffused globally, bringing countries together into a global networked economy (Gibbs & Kraemer, 2004; Parasuraman & Zinkhan, 2002). It is for these reasons that e-marketing has been widely regarded as a new frontier for hotel business environment, and that hotels all over the world are attempting to shift to e-marketing to achieve their marketing objectives (Harridge-March, 2004) in terms of pursuing efficiency and quality (Keen, Mougayar & Torregrossa, 1998).

The interactive nature of the internet and other related technologies has opened up the market space of many industries. The market space is now open and shared by many players in various industries such as the hospitality and lodging sectors (Lazer & Shaw, 2000). The opportunities offered by technological advancements are immense and allow marketers to engage with customers on a global scale, in real-time (Peattie & Peters, 1997). The urge to promote a two way interaction that favors increased understanding of customers and market offers is a clear driver of electronic marketing in many industries. The value of interaction cannot be over looked when it comes to brands like Heineken and Hilton that have created online communities and enhanced customer identification with the brands (Arnott & Bridgewater, 2002, McWilliam, 2012).

2.6 Electronic Marketing Mix

The Internet has many influences on the price strategy. However, the Internet will lead to increasing standardization of prices across borders, or at least to narrowing the price differentials as customers become more aware of prices in different countries (Poon & Jevons, 1997). In the Business-to-Business arena, it is expected that the bargaining power of customers is likely to be increased since they will become aware of alternative products and services. Besides, the ease of use of the Internet channel makes it easier for customers to swap between suppliers. It should be noted that there are still barriers to swapping since once a customer invests time in understanding how to use a web site to select and purchase products, he or she may not want to learn how to use another service. It is for this reason that a company that offers a web-based service before its competitors has a competitive advantage (El-Gohary, 2012).

Promotion refers to all the various ways an organization undertakes to communicate its products' merits and to persuade target customers to buy from them (Kotler et al., 2006). The effect of using the Internet on the promoting strategy of companies has emerged in many studies (Avlonitis & Karayanni, 2000; Wilson & Abel, 2002). Undoubtedly, the use of the Internet allows sales departments to have an interactive communication with the customers. Poon and Jevons (1997) stated that hard-selling and advertiser-push promotion strategies do not work well on the Internet. Global advertising costs, as a barrier to entry, will be significantly reduced as the Internet makes it possible to reach a global audience more cheaply (Hamill, 1997).

However, there are many online promotion techniques. Paying to place links on pages with audiences that mirror or include a company's target customers is less expensive than traditional media. Postings on Internet discussion groups on topics relevant for specific products or markets are another way for marketers to attract visitors to their sites. On the other hand, there are many offline promotion techniques such as traditional forms of advertising, e.g. word of mouth (Wilson & Abel, 2002). Irvine and Anderson (2008), stated that advertising on Web pages other than the firm's own is possible and increasingly common, but might not be well received. Customers merely wish to be presented with the hard facts about the subject matter of the pages they read. Physical distribution is the place aspect of the marketing mix. Marketing channel can be defined as interdependent organizations involved in the process of making a product or service available for use or consumption (Kotler et al., 2006). The Internet, by connecting end-users and producers directly, will reduce the importance of traditional intermediaries in international marketing. To survive such intermediaries will need to begin offering a different range of services. Their value-added will no longer be principally in the physical distribution of goods but rather in the collection, collation, interpretation and dissemination of a vast amount of information (Poon & Jevons, 1997). Few buffer inventories will be needed in the worldwide distribution system and less working capital.

However, if intermediaries can perform a different mix of services, made necessary by the Internet, they will continue to play critical roles and extract value. The distribution system of the company must have some capabilities, for example, 24-hour order taking and customer service response capability, regulatory and customer-handling expertise to ship internationally. White (1997) stated that companies should consider providing information

on how the products are shipped and precautions taken to ensure their quality on arrival. Quality guarantees and special consideration for international returns or refunds may also be necessary. Undoubtedly, the Internet has reduced many distribution issues. According to Wilson and Abel (2002) “the Internet is borderless and the opportunity to sell over the net in a standardized way eliminates many natural barriers to entry”. Any business connected to the Internet can retrieve other business’ products by ordering them from their websites. Companies no longer have to devise long and expensive distribution channels to bring their products to the customer.

2.7 Traditional Marketing versus Electronic Marketing

Electronic marketing allows for a global marketing facility where businesses are able to reach consumers regardless of their geographical location. It is also considered by most businesses to be less expensive compared to traditional marketing methods which uses offline tactics such as print advertisement, television and radio advertisement among others to the online tactics which employs various online channels like websites, banner advertisement, e-mails, social media among others (Hinson & Sorensen, 2006; Kiang, Raghu & Shang, 2000). Electronic marketing allows firms to reach a wider range of customers on a small fraction of traditional advertising budget. Specific benefits have been put forward for business use of the internet by a number of authors. According to Hanson and Kalyanam (2000), the benefit of electronic adoption in any commercial entity, specifically to the hotel business can be grouped into two productivity based and revenue – growth based benefits. These benefits can also be referred to as soft and hard benefit of electronic marketing usage where hard benefits refer to the financial or the monetary results while the soft will refer to the productivity based benefit such as occupancy rate, customer

satisfaction among others (Kiang & Chi, 2001). Electronic marketing allows for a global marketing facility where businesses are able to reach and interact with their customers regardless of their location provided there is an availability of electronic connection, hence a wide spread of information as well as feedback to help improve services rendered out to customers (Ju & Gwinner, 2003). The implementation of information technology into the operations of businesses has over the years been financially beneficial to most firms in the long run. It is considered less expensive compared to the traditional means of marketing and advertising. Online marketing channels such as websites, banner advertising, social media among others comes at a cheaper cost, whereas offline tactics such as print media, trade shows and word of mouth are much more costly (Wang, Lee & Wang, 1998). This means of marketing allows hotels to reach a wider range of its target market sometimes across borders on a small fraction of the traditional marketing budget. Electronic marketing may come off as more beneficial when compared to traditional marketing practices, it has its own limitations which includes the loss of personal touch in shopping, that is the inability of customers to have a physical feel or try out products before they make a purchase, hence customers ran a risk of not being satisfied with the final product they receive (Hoffman, Novak & Peralta, 1999). The issue of cyber security and fraud is also very evident in electronic marketing where firms are faced with securing business transactions made over the internet and other electronic media (Ashcroft & Hoey, 2001). The slow and inconsistent nature of internet connectivity also deters marketing processes from gaining grounds in our part of the world since it is viewed as time consuming and unreliable (Liao & Cheung, 2002). Data security is of the utmost importance when dealing with sensitive information. Despite the huge potential electronic marketing offers hotels, it brings with it potential obstacles which cannot be overlooked (Miyazaki & Fernandez, 2000). The nature of the web

allows for a fast flow of information across borders making it easy to organize a protest against a particular firm for a poor service standard especially in the era of social media (Paul, 1996).

2.8 Electronic Marketing and Performance

In the Ghanaian hotel sector, electronic means of marketing has become a strategic imperative tool for attracting and increasing guests' patronage (Sigala, 2005). The hotel industry is facing an increasingly competitive market which signifies the greater need for the hotels to differentiate themselves, by integrating a significant amount of guest information to be able to improve on the level of satisfaction, loyalty and consequently leading to an increase in the hotels' profitability (Hinson & Boateng, 2007). Several empirical studies have shown that electronic or internet marketing brings benefits in terms of improved performance (Greger & Peterson, 2000). This positive relationship between e-marketing and performance is due to the use of the latter as a business strategy not only to acquire new customers but also to retain existing customers for competitive advantage. The use of technology can enhance organizational performance through improving customer satisfaction and loyalty, reducing customer acquisition costs and increasing profitability by customers (Bottini, Cassen & Piccoli, 2004).

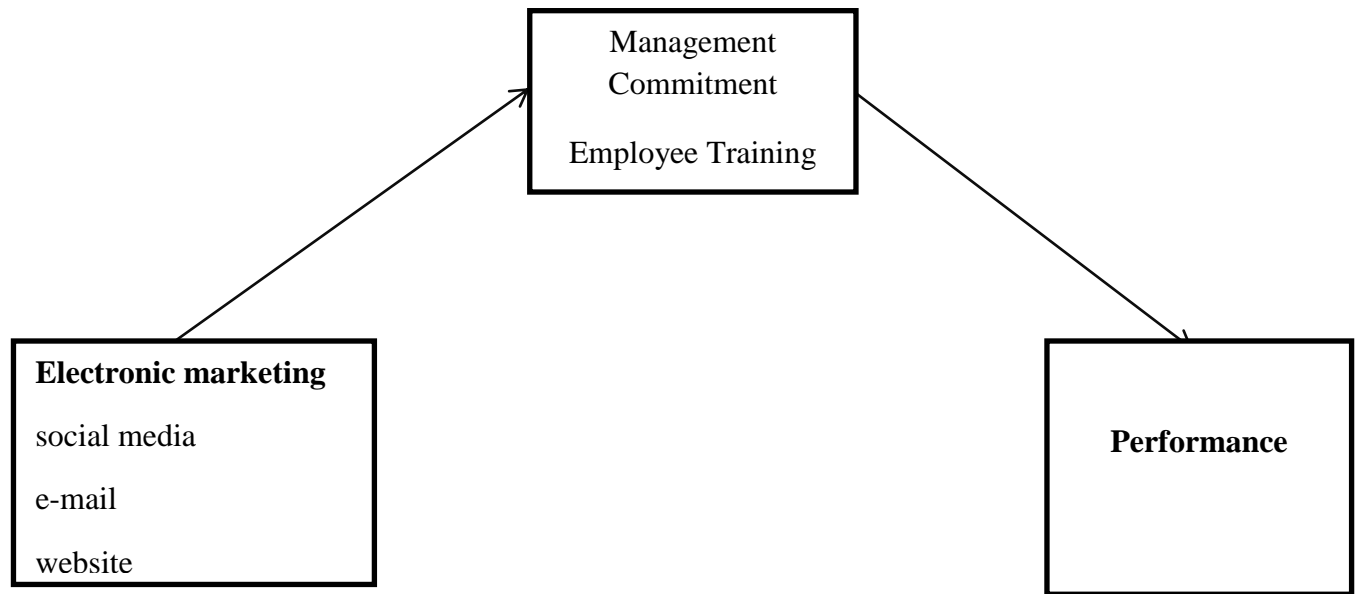
Competition in the hotel sector is based on offering "value" in the service product and it is necessary to assess the various dimensions of hotel performance indicators for measuring.

The performance of hotels have in a long time been largely linked to the hotels annual financial outcomes (Chathoth, 2007; Berthon, Pitt, Katsikeas & Berthon, 1999). However, in recent past there has been a revolution to the use of non-financial measures as well (Neely &

Bourne, 2000). The approaches that relied solely on traditional performance measurement indicators which focused on financial data, return on investment, sales and profit are now being combined into a more integrated system that combines both the financial and non-financial indicators (Bergin-Seers & Jago, 2007). It has become necessary that stakeholders of hotels need to employ indicators that allows them to measure improvement efforts that cannot be quantified in monetary terms, particularly if they relate to customer satisfaction and service quality (Ghalayini & Noble, 1996).

2.9 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework to assess the e-marketing effectiveness in this study was built upon the work of Burgess and Cooper, (2000) and complemented by other similar literature covering effective e-marketing (Sigala, 2001; Eid & Elbeltagi, 2006). Based on the review of literature, managers' knowledge of how much strategic value the innovation can bring to the hotel will play a major part in the level of commitment that the managers will put into the electronic marketing programme of the hotel. In this model, the performance of the hotel will be based on the level of impact that technology has on the satisfaction and loyalty of customers (Mohamad & Ismail, 2009).



Source: Adapted from Burgess and Cooper (2000)

2.9.1 Importance of Electronic Marketing

According to Burgess and Cooper (2000), interaction has moved from a transaction based effort to a conversation. Interaction is facilitated by technology. Communication helps businesses to grow and create relationships, strengthen the effectiveness of organizations and allow people to learn about one another. Technologies such as mobile phones, internet, websites, and social media among others are greatly affecting the way companies interact with potential and existing customers. Many consumers and business professionals seek information and connect with other people and businesses from their computers and phones. With access to many sources of information and an interest in interactive media, consumers may collect more product information on their own.

Sigala (2001) suggests that because the Internet is interactive, it can assist with all phases of the “trade cycle” – pre-sale, execution, settlement and after-sale. Those implementing

electronic commerce do not appear to have changed their thinking from wishing to gain competitive advantage to achieving operational benefits from more efficient operations (Graham et al., 1996).

2.9.2 Performance

The expected output of the innovation process is an enhanced competitiveness and/or improvement of performance. However, other factors other than innovation may also impact performance. Innovation decisions may not necessarily have a direct and positive impact on performance. Such innovations may be implemented because they are also convenient. Organization level research measures performance with a variety of measures for profit, sales growth, return on investment, and so on. In the service sectors the firm's performance measurement is more difficult due to its special characteristics. Nevertheless, in the hotel industry, the average occupancy rate is an acceptable measure of performance. Alvarez et al. literature review reveals that the occupancy rate is an index of the hotel's level of activity that is widely used among hotels and regarded as a performance indicator in the hotel industry. Moreover, the average occupancy rate is easier to know than other better profit measures due to the reluctance of the owners' and the managers' to report the incomes and expenditures.

Consequently, one might expect in the hotel industry, that the positive impact of innovation on performance is the main result, although it may be indirect, complex or lagged as some previous studies have found.

2.9.3 Management Commitment

In order to ascertain the innovation impact on performance other determining factors should also be considered such as the employees' readiness and management's commitment to technology. That is, certain conditions of structure, process and people might enhance the firms' performance.

In the hotel industry, these factors may be approached through the establishment size training, additional services they offer to the accommodation service, intermediated commercialization with tour operators, competitive strategy, chained operation in the market and owners' management. It is inevitable that some hotel practitioners fail to appreciate the benefits of ICT

applications, since the hospitality industry is customer-oriented and service-oriented. Some managers do not have adequate knowledge of ICTs and thus do not rely on their applications to business practices. In order to remain competitive in the current business environment, hospitality managers have to understand the potential advantages of ICT applications, and devote their time and effort to taking advantage of new technologies. To achieve this goal, hospitality

managers should maintain a good relationship with their existing customers by using appropriate ICTs, integrating ICTs into the company's strategies, and enhancing their employees' knowledge on ICT proficiency and ICT trends (Law et al., 2009).

2.9.4 Employee Training

Hotel employees are uniquely positioned to assess increases or decreases in hotel performance due to their involvement with the implementation of IT applications to

achieve their goals. This study examines employee contribution to the effect of IT applications on their performance in lodging operations. Since the roles and types of IT applications differ from division to division, there is a need for management to determine how well specific IT applications contribute to the performance in these diverse components of the industry.

Apart from the pros and cons of using ICTs in hospitality, a few studies have investigated the intentions of employees to use ICTs. For instance, Lam et al. (2007) carried out a study to find out hotel employees' intentions towards the adoption of ICTs. Their study concluded that attitude, self-efficacy, and subjective norm are positively related to behavioral intention, and recommended ways to enhance employees' intention to use new information technologies.

Another study performed by Ham et al. (2005) analyzed the computerized restaurant operations by the technology acceptance model (TAM), and their findings suggested point-of-sale (POS) system developers should pay attention to restaurant users' expectations regarding system functionality, performance, layout, and maintenance, because there is a direct relationship among perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and the POS system adoption process. Although the lodging service industry has incorporated ICTs into its training techniques and tools, research findings have shown that there is a need to improve the quality of current training programs and overall effectiveness as they are still in traditional formats (Harris and Bonn, 2000).

CHAPTER THREE

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide contextual background information of the study. The chapter provides information on the profile of Ghana and the economic history of Ghana with respect to the tourism sector (hotel sector). It would also cover overview of the Ghana Tourism sector with focus on the hotel sector while considering the influence of E-marketing in the sector as a whole. This would help the reader situate the study in a particular context that would aid understanding of the study area.

Tourism development in Ghana is comprehensively aimed at a broad and desirable range of domestic, sub-regional African and international tourists. The Government is pursuing quality tourism development that is internationally competitive and compatible with Ghana's social values and environmental setting. It aims to attract tourists, who show respect for the country's history and environment. Emphasis has been placed on tourism to help in the conservation of the country's historical and environmental heritage. Apart from the economic benefits, Ghana's tourism presents a unique cultural, historical and environmental heritage to the international community educate Ghanaians about their own heritage. The Government intends to use tourism as an alternative development strategy to help address broad national issues (GTA).

No doubt that the tourism sector of Ghana has become robust over the last 2 decades with very promising prospects. In a ranking by World Tourism Organization (World Tourism Organisation, 2009) Ghana's position improved from 17th in 1985 to the 18th position in 1998.

This made Ghana to be among the top 20 leading tourism revenue-earners in Africa (World Tourism Organisation, 1999). It is currently the fastest growing sector in the Ghanaian economy with the prospects for outperforming mining and cocoa as the country's largest foreign exchange earner (Asiedu, 1997; Teye, 2000; Teye, Sirakaya & Sonmez, 2002; Hinson & Boateng, 2007; Fatima, 2015). Currently, tourism in Ghana is the fourth foreign exchange earner after cocoa, gold and remittances (Mensah, 2009; Fatima, 2015).

The Head of United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Dr Taleb Rifai speaking as a guest at Ghana's 58th Independence celebrations in Berlin, Germany organized by Ghana's Embassy in Germany, called on potential tourists around the world to visit Ghana once in their life time. "There is nothing like the experience of being with the wonderful, beautiful, warm, and hospitable people of Ghana" He noted (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2015). Dr Rifai and his team from UNWTO had earlier visited Ghana's stand at the just ended International Tourism Exhibition to hold discussions with Ghana's Minister of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts, Mrs. Elizabeth Ofosu-Adjare on UNWTO's decision to choose Ghana to host the UNWTO's conference on Re-branding the Image of Africa on the 17th-19th August, 2015. This goes without saying that the Ghanaian tourism industry is gaining grounds in the world and the conference would further enhance their position.

The Ghanaian welcome is warm and hospitable, and this is evident in all our hotels. All over Ghana you will find a wide variety of accommodation that ranges from international luxury hotels and resorts to medium and budget hotels to suit all tastes. While the major hotels are in the main cities and towns, there are several other average hotels, hostels and guest houses across the country. Ghana was adjudged the 11th friendliest country in the world, making it

one of the most preferred tourism destinations around the globe. Ghana was the only African country that was ranked high in a survey undertaken by Forbes, a reputable international magazine. The survey which was done in consultation with a cross-section of world travellers in 2010, found that Ghana is one of the “most welcome nations.” Thailand came first (<http://www.ghanaweb.com>).

Meanwhile, Ghana has improved in the latest rankings of the world’s preferred tourism destinations, moving two places up. According to the latest travel and tourism index of the World Economic Forum, the country moved from 110 in 2009 to 108 in 2010 among the 139 countries surveyed. The movement is an endorsement of efforts by government to improve the sector, currently the fourth highest earner of foreign exchange. The ranking was based on three main indicators, the regulatory framework covering the travel and tourism industry, business environment and infrastructure, human, cultural and natural resources. In Africa, Ghana was ranked 10th after countries like South Africa, Mauritius, Kenya, Rwanda and Cape Verde. Ghana performed a little better in the various sub-categories. Out of 139 countries, Ghana’s regulatory framework was ranked 108th, the business environment and infrastructure was ranked 105th, whilst its’ human, cultural and natural resources was ranked 104th. Switzerland remains the most favoured tourism destination in the world (<http://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh>).

3.1 Ghana’s Hotel Industry

The Hotel Industry in Ghana includes hotels, lodges, resorts, inns, motels, guest houses and hostels. Grading of these accommodation units is done by the Ghana Tourist Board according to a classification system of hotels based on a rating system of budget and 1 to 5

star hotels, resorts, luxury Guesthouses and ordinary guesthouses. The highest star rating is 5-star and the lowest is 1-star. A hotel has ten (10) or more rooms whereas a Guest House has between four and nine rooms. A hotel is star rated (meets international standards) depending on the facilities and services offered. A budget or unrated hotel does not meet international standards. Rating of hotels has nothing to do with the size of the hotel (in terms of number of rooms). Thus we can have a star rated hotel or Guest House which may be big or small depending on the number of rooms.

The hotel industry has a widely recognized association known as Ghana Hotels Association (GHA), which has over 1000 members in the country. Membership of the Ghana Hotels Association is made up of hotels, motels and guesthouses that have been certified and licensed by the Ghana Tourist Board to offer accommodation, catering and other tourism services in Ghana. Their membership categories are: Budget (acceptance level below One Star) and One Star to Five Star International standards. According to the GHA, hotels that qualify within their membership categories in total are 817 across the country. According to the Ministry of Tourism (2013) the total number of licensed hotels (1 to 5 star hotels, budget hotel, guest houses) in Ghana was 1751. These are hotels scattered across the country with Greater Accra having a total of 660, Ashanti region-397, Western region-183, Eastern region-129, Central region-126, Brong Ahafo-87, Volta region-87, Northern region-85, Upper East region-54 and Upper West region- 30.

In the context of this study, we are considering only hotels in Greater Accra which includes; two (2) 5-star hotels, five (5) 4-star hotels, seven (7) 3-star hotels, sixty four (64) 2-star hotels while the 1-star hotels are eighty two (82) in number. The region also has forty-seven (47) guest houses and 322 budget licensed hotels according to the 2012 list of licensed

hotels in Ghana by Ministry of Tourism. Thus, Greater Accra region had a total of 660 licensed hotels according to the Ministry of Tourism 2012 list of licensed hotels in Ghana.

Table3.1 Number of star-rated hotels in Ghana

Star Rating	Sample(n=160)
1Star	82
2Star	64
3Star	7
4Star	5
5Star	2
Total	160

According to the GTA report (2009) the number of hotels in Ghana increased from 1,345 with 18,752 rooms in 2005 to 1,775 with 26,047 rooms in 2009. The Ministry of Tourism's 2013 report stated the establishment of accommodation facilities in the country stood at 1800 in 2011 however it was expected to hit 2000 by the end of 2013. A study by Narteh et al. (2013) concerning the luxury hotel industry of Ghana revealed that largest concentration of hotels was found in Accra, particularly in the 5-star, 4-star and 3-star categories. He further argues that due to the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in the last quarter of 2010, Foreign Direct Investments have been attracted into the country. International arrivals into the country reached an all-time high figure of 802,779 at the end of 2009, and the sector contributed 6.7% to GDP (GTA, 2009). The highest arrivals came from the United States,

Ghanaians living abroad, United Kingdom, and Nigeria (GTA, 2009). All the four-star and five-star hotels are located in Accra, the capital city. There were also 26,047 rooms with 31,702 beds by the end of 2009. In terms of room occupancy, five-star and four-star hotels have received the highest customers, averaging between 80% and 95% between 2006 and 2009 (GTA, 2009). In 2012, Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) reported that Ghana has 11 ungraded hotels, 6 two-star hotels, 13 three-star hotels, 11 four-star hotels and 1 five-star hotel.

3.2 The role of Hotel Industry to National Development

The maiden African Hospitality Show 2013 which took place at the Accra International Conference Centre from September 12th-14th 2013, gave Ghana some prominence in the African hospitality. The event was organised by Litina Travel, in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism, Ghana Tourism Authority, Ghana Hotels Association, and Association of Ghana Industries, among others. According to The Minister for Tourism, Culture, and Creative Arts, Mrs. Elizabeth Oforu-Agyare, the continued development of the hospitality industry was boosting the overall economic growth of the country. According to her, players in the hospitality industry employ various segments of the Ghanaian economy, as well as contribute greatly to the socio-economic development of the West African country. She added: “More people are employed in the hospitality industry, making a significant contribution to our economy. There are huge opportunities and social benefits still to be gained by continuing to make progress” (www.thechronicle.com).

For hotels, it seems easy enough to measure the direct economic impacts: number of jobs created at the hotel, local purchase of goods and services, various taxes paid. However, to

get a complete picture one must dig a bit deeper to assess the indirect impacts: visitor spending outside the hotel, multiplier impacts of hotel and employee spending (Cain, 2012). In 2011 the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group commissioned Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in the UK to conduct a value chain analysis to assess the economic impact of the 148-room Kigali Serena Hotel in Rwanda where it made an investment in 2008. The research found the following:

- The hotel generated \$85 million of economic activity in the first few years, \$64 million of which related to the local Rwanda economy, primarily by way of payments to government, staff payments, purchase of local goods and services and discretionary tourism spending (restaurants, tours, shopping, transportation services).
- Directly, the hotel employs 350 permanent staff. Including jobs created indirectly through suppliers, the number increases to over 1,100.

While there is a common misconception that tourism is lightly taxed, between concession fees, VAT, employee income tax, social security, corporate tax and district tax, close to \$16 million was paid to government over a five-year period.

- Thanks to a strong commitment by the hotel owner and operator, Serena, to develop local staff, there is only a handful of expatriate staff at the hotel, mostly from Kenya, and 89% of the wages and salaries are paid to local Rwandese.

These results were consistent with those of IFC's own earlier research on two other hotel investments. IFC's experience shows that hotel investments hold vast potential for job creation and economic stimulus (International Finance Corporation, 2012).

The most obvious impact of the development of the hotel industry is the creation of jobs and contribution to GDP in terms of taxes. Ultimately, the stay of foreign visitors was a vector for disseminating a positive image of the region welcoming potential travelers. Both public and private investments in various tourism subsectors have expanded as well. The growth in tourism can also be seen in the expansion of activities in the hotel sector where the number of hotels approved and licensed in Ghana increased from only 1622 in 2009 to 2000 in 2013 (Ministry of Tourism, 2013).

According to GTA (2008), tourism earnings to the GDP of the country have been increased steadily for three consecutive years, from 4.9% of GDP in 2005, to 5.8% in 2006 and to 6.3% in 2007. According to IDC (2012) tourism is a rapidly growing industry in Ghana. The sector has reported steady growth, with its turnover having risen from an estimated USD 836 million in 2005 to USD 1.88 billion by 2010. Both public and private investments in various tourism subsectors have expanded as well. The growth in tourism can also be seen in the expansion of activities in the hotel sector where the number of hotels approved and licensed by the Ghana Tourist Authority increased from only 273 in 1989 to 730 in 1998 (GTA, 1999). The number of rooms more than doubled from 4,851 in 1989 to 10,879 in 1998. In 2013 according to WTTC (2013) total tourism contribution to the GDP was 7.2% and was forecast to rise by 9.7% in 2014. Again, tourism total employment for 2013 was 124,500 jobs representing 2.3% of total employment and was expected to rise by 7.4% in 2014.

It is nevertheless necessary to underline straight away that this first effect was accompanied by many others. On one hand, the building of hotels and the infrastructures necessary to their functioning generated the considerable investments that are proper to stimulating technical, industrial and financial developments. On the other hand, the influx of tourists is

creating an enormous purchasing power that profited the economy. These tourists also seek several needs including: internet connection, restaurants, books, entertainments, excursions, medical care, souvenirs and luxury.

3.3 E-Marketing and the Hotel Sector Performance

E-marketing is growing at a dramatic pace and is significantly impacting customer and business market behaviours (Sheth & Sharma, 2005). E-Marketing or electronic marketing refers to the application of marketing principles and techniques via electronic media and more specifically the Internet. The terms E-Marketing, Internet marketing and online marketing, are frequently interchanged, and can often be considered synonymous. E-Marketing is the process of marketing a brand using the Internet. It includes both direct response marketing and indirect marketing elements and uses a range of technologies to help connect businesses to their customers.

Different international organizations including; Amazon, iTunes, Expedia, E-TRADE and CDNow transformed their business (selling of books, travel, investments and music) into online. They saw that the system required a lowest price rather than the Brick-and-Mortar (offline) retailers/ companies. Today, the internet is mainstream in industrialized nations. High adoption rates are occurring in the 20 nations sporting 90% of all internet users and most of these populations cannot do without the Web, social media or e-mail. As well, most organizations know that they must include information technology in their marketing strategies to meet the needs of their markets efficiently and competitively.

The Internet has been viewed by many travel and hotel organizations as an innovative and competitive marketing tool in offering travel-related information and online transaction

opportunities (Doolin, Burgess and Cooper, 2002). In a study by Wu, Mahajan, and Balasubramanian (2003), a comprehensive investigation used a sample of U.S firms from four technology-based industries (telecommunications, computer hardware, semi-conductors, and manufacturing equipment). They found a positive relationship between the intensity of e-Business adoption and firm performance. A separate study by Brodie et al. (2007) confirmed that the adoption of E-Marketing is positively associated with performance, which supports Day and Bens (2005) contention, that firms adopting E-Marketing are likely to have competitive advantage.

Global mobile-broadband uptake continues to grow at double-digit rates with subscriptions reaching 2.3 billion and interestingly 55% of them are in the developing countries. According to the International Telecommunication Union (2014), the global mobile-broadband penetration will reach 32% by the end 2014. Africa leads in mobile-broadband growth with penetration rate close 20% in 2014 up from 2% in 2010. According to ITU (2014) by the end of 2014, the number of Internet users' globally would have reached almost 3 billion, which is about 40% of the world's population. Two-thirds of the world's Internet users are from the developing world. In developing countries, the number of Internet users will have doubled in 5 years, from 974 million in 2009 to 1.9 billion in 2014.

In Africa, almost 20% of the population will be online by the end of 2014, up from 10% in 2010. Close to one out of three people in the developing countries are online. In the Americas, close to two out of three people will be using the Internet by the end of 2014, the second highest penetration rate after Europe (ITU World Telecommunication, 2014).

E-Marketing made the strength of the Companies transactions very efficient rather than traditional marketing process as follows:

- Power Shifts from Sellers to Buyers: Buyers can acquire information from any of the webpages so they are not reluctant to a particular seller.
- Market Fragmentation: To create products and communication to small target groups through cell phone, e-mail, facebook, cable television etc.
- Death of Distance: Internet makes no longer geographic location and bypass traditional intermediaries.
- Time Compression: Online stores are open 24/7.
- E- Marketing provides a research resource for buyers, sellers and learners.
- It elevates and extends strong existing brands.
- It is cost-effective for customer self-service and on-going business.
- It allows unprecedented one-to-one communications and dynamic personalization during an online session.
- It opens the market to new groups of customers.

This study contextualizes E- Marketing to include; websites, social media and email. E-marketing strategies entail utilizing existing and emerging communication and data networks to impart personalized and uninterrupted communication between the firm and its customers (stakeholders), and to provide value above traditional networks (Watson et al.,2002).By such a definition, e-Marketing encompasses all the activities a business conducts via the worldwide web with the aim of attracting new business, retaining current business and developing its brand identity. The role of e-Marketing in the hotel sector cannot be underestimated considering the consumer sophistication and competition across the globe. A study in China by Morosan and Jeong (2008) revealed that overall; users had more favourable attitudes and higher intentions to revisit third-party Web sites than hotel-

owned Web sites. They also explain that, customers use websites for online reservations and for search of other comparative information on the hotels. For the purpose of this study, we would consider the usage of websites, social media and email by hotels to market their brand as well as its influence on hotel performance, service quality and the challenges thereof.

3.4 Profile of Ghana

Ghana lies in West Africa, flanked by Cote D'Ivoire on the West, Togo on the East, Burkina Faso on the North and the Atlantic Ocean on its' South. Ghana occupies an area of 238,537 square kilometres and has a population of 25,241,998 (Ghana Statistical Service,2013) Ghana has a low topography with a tropical and savannah regions split into ten regions: Ashanti Region, Brong-Ahafo Region, Central Region, Eastern Region, Greater Accra Region, Northern Region, Upper East Region, Upper West Region, Volta Region and Western Region. The regions are furthermore divided into 170 districts, with the capital Accra in the Accra metropolitan district in Greater Accra Region. According to the 2000consensus estimate Ghana's population consists of over 100 different ethnic groups, divided as follows: Akan 45.3%, Mole-Dagbon 15.2%, Ewe 11.7%, Ga-Dangme 7.3%, Guan 4%, Gurma 3.6%, Grusi 2.6%, Mande-Busanga 1%, other tribes 1.4%, other 7.8% (CIA Factbooks). The ten regions can be seen below:



Fig 3.1 Map of Ghana

Ghana is home to more than 100 different ethnic groups. The official language is English; however, most Ghanaians also speak at least one local language. The ethnic groups in Ghana are the Akan (the Fante, Akyem, Ashanti, Kwahu, Akuapem, Nzema, Bono, Akwamu, Ahanta and others) 49.3 %; Mole-Dagbani 15.2%; Ewe 11.7 %; Ga-Dangme (Ga and

Dangme) 7.3%; Guan 4%; Gurma 3.6%; Gurunsi 2.6%; Mande Busanga 1%; other tribes 1.4%; other (Hausa, Zabarema, Fulani) 1.8% (2000 census). The religious distribution is as follows: Christian 68.8% (Pentecostal/Charismatic 24.1%, Protestant 18.6%, Catholic 15.1%, other 11%), Muslim 15.9%, traditional 8.5%, and other 0.7%, none 6.1% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

3.4.1 Economic Performance

According to International Fund for Agricultural Development (2010) Ghana has a track record as one of the strong performers in the area of economic growth in the Sub-Saharan Africa and Africa as a whole. In the mid-1980s, Ghana embarked on economic reforms which have resulted in a shift from economic recovery to growth. In 1990s, the real GDP grew at an average of 4.8% and accelerated to 6% from 2003 to 2008 (IFAD, 2010). In both periods GDP grew at a faster rate than population leading to a GDP growth of 3.7% between 2003 and 2008 compared to 2.2% in the 1990s (IFAD, 2010). The recovery was led by a pickup in construction activity and port harbour activity, an improvement in the industrial consumption of electricity, an increase in demand for imports and a rise in tourist arrivals. ISSER (2012) reported that Ghana recorded a high GDP growth of 14.4% in 2011. However, in 2013 GDP growth actually declined to 4.4% from 7.9% in 2012.

3.4.2 Contribution of the Tourism Sector

Tourism dominates the economies of many countries and regions. For example, 6.2% of Switzerland's GDP, and over 11% of the European Union's GDP are generated from tourism (Chang et al., 2010). In 2006 tourism generated revenue which exceeded \$700 billion internationally (WTO, 2006). Recreational and leisure tourism goes beyond revenue

creation: it provides substantial employment opportunities, influences regional infrastructure, supports local industry, contributes to traffic congestion, influences freight movements, and encourages urban development (Chang et al., 2010; WTTC, 2013). The tourism industry has with no doubt had a dramatic impact on the world's economy and development. According to UNWTO (2010) and Chang et al. (2010), tourism industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the global economy, accounting for more than one third of the global service trade. During the past 25 years, international tourist arrivals have increased about one percentage point faster than global GDP in real terms. According to UNWTO (2010) after an increase in 2008 (US\$942 billion), international tourism receipts in 2009 decreased by 5.7 per cent in real terms to US\$852 billion. However, in 2010, international tourism recovered strongly with an increase in international tourist arrivals of 7% to a record 940 million, while international tourism receipts growing slowly at 5% to reach US\$ 919 billion. UNWTO (2012) reports that international tourist arrivals reached a record 982 million, an increase of 4.6% on 2010, while receipts grew by 3.8% to US\$ 1.030 billion (€ 740 billion). Despite a global economy in 'low gear', demand for international tourism exceeded expectations, with an additional 52 million international tourists travelling internationally in 2013. Christie et al. (2014) observe that international tourists arrivals to Sub-Saharan Africa is growing, from a small number of 6.4 million visitors in 1990, the region attracted 30.7 million visitors in 2010.

3.5 Overview of Tourism in Ghana

Over the past two decades, Ghana has spent considerable amount of resources in promoting tourism on the international front to gain foreign exchange earnings (Asiedu, 1997). Ghana

offers new and unique attractions, which includes rich African cultural heritage, rain forest tourism, and conference tourism, Euro-African historical and monumental sites of the inhuman trans-Atlantic slave trade (Asiedu, 1997; Teye, 2000; Sirakaya, Teye & Sonmez, 2002). No serious efforts were made to harness these resources before 1985. Tourism industry in Ghana received outstanding turning points in the year 1985 as a potential viable industry in the national economy (Sirakaya, Teye & Sonmez, 2002). According to Asiedu (1997), tourism in Ghana was accorded a priority status under the national investment code of 1985. The government established a Ministry of Tourism in 1993 to underscore its commitment to tourism development, and with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), had prepared a 15-Year Tourism Development Plan for the period 1996 to 2010 (Sirakaya, Teye & Sonmez, 2002). Ghana moved up from 17th in 1985 to the 8th position in 1998 among the top 20 leading tourism revenue-earners in Africa (WTO, 1999). It is currently the fastest growing sector in the Ghanaian economy with the prospects for outperforming mining and cocoa as the country's largest foreign exchange earner (Asiedu, 1997; Teye, 2000; Sirakaya, Teye & Sonmez, 2002; Creaco & Querini, 2003; Hinson & Boateng, 2007; Fatima, 2015). Currently, tourism in Ghana is the fourth foreign exchange earner after cocoa, gold and remittances (Mensah, 2009; Fatima, 2015). Ghana moved up from seventeenth in 1985 to the eighth position in 1998 among the top 20 leading tourism revenue-earners in Africa (WTO, 1999).

International tourist arrivals in Ghana increased steadily from nearly 114,000 in 1988 to about 348,000 in 1998, an average annual growth rate of about 20%. The ministry of tourism (2013) posts that international tourist arrivals increased from 428,533 in 2005 to

930,000 in 2010, largely attributable to the expanding number of air connections between Accra's Kotoka International Airport and destinations worldwide, which rose from 12 in 2005 to 24 in 2011. Business tourist arrivals increased from 92,840 in 2005 to 184,639 in 2009, whereas conference tourist arrivals rose from 36,687 to 72,250 over this period. Tourism receipts grew at an average annual rate of 41.3%, from \$55.3 million in 1988 to \$285 million in 1998.

Generally, it appears the hotel sector is the largest contributor to the tourism sector besides the tourist attraction sites. Considering that all tourists and visitors in the country would have to seek accommodation or the services of a hotel. The emergence, acceptance and adoption of e-Marketing in the world and business cannot be overlooked by the hotel sector. Indeed others who have exploited it are benefitting and most likely to gain competitive advantage (Day and Bens, 2005). To sum it up this study conceptualizes E-Marketing to include: websites, social media and email since they appear more useful in online hotel transactions and its interaction with stakeholders (Kim & Kim, 2004; Morosan & Jeong, 2008).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter explains the research methods that were utilized and touch on the description of the method used to carry out the study and discuss the rationale behind the methods chosen to be able to attain the objectives set in the first chapter. The methodology consists of the research design, population, sample, sampling technique, data collection instrument, administration of the instrument, validity and reliability of the research instrument, method of data analysis and the problems that were encountered on the field in the course of this study.

4.1 Research purpose

The research purpose provided the basic blue print for carrying out the research. That is the step-by-step procedure that the research will take. Research is carried out for three main purposes, that is, exploration, description, and explanation (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders et al. 2009; Robson, 2002). These categories differ in several aspects especially the way research questions or hypotheses are formulated, and the way data are collected and analyzed.

4.2 Exploratory Research

This type of research is typically used when a researcher examines a new interest or phenomenon. When the subject of study itself is relatively new, the researcher tries to

explore the phenomenon. The major emphasis of exploratory research is on the discovery of new ideas and insights, which can be used as a foundation for further research (Saunders et al. 2009). The research questions or assumptions might be difficult to understand because the phenomenon of interest is considerably new and unfamiliar to the researcher. More information is needed to clarify the concept and scope of the study and to make the researcher understand the problem better since the area is quite new and may be difficult to understand. The exploratory research could be conducted through a number of techniques including literature review, interviews, focus group and case study.

4.3 Descriptive Research

Descriptive research is conducted to describe situations or an aspect of an existing phenomenon or event (Smith, 2007). The researcher observes and then describes what was observed (Babbie, 2004). A descriptive study is one in which information is collected without changing the environment (i.e., nothing is manipulated). Sometimes these are referred to as “correlational” or “observational” studies.

4.4 Explanatory Research

The focus of this research purpose was to connect ideas to understand the cause and effect, that simply means, researches want to explain the relationship between two variables. This type of research looks at how things interact. There should be enough understanding to predict what the outcome will be with some accuracy (Saunders et al. 2009). It is concerned with determining cause and-effect relationships. Explanatory research aims to develop precise theory that can be used to definitively explain the phenomena, which leads to the generalization from the research.

This research however focused on descriptive research purpose due to the use of quantifiable information that used statistical inference after data had been analyzed. This method is by far the most commonly used method of research to ascertain the effect of a variable on another hence the researcher's decision to choose this method.

4.5 Research Approach

Literature made it clear that no single approach of research is better than the other. (Benbasat, Goldstein & Mead, 1987). Scholars of research methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Potter, 2013) discuss two general research approaches: quantitative and qualitative research (Engstrom & Salehi-Sangari, 2007), although some researchers have adopted a combination of both approaches, the best methodology for any study is dependent on the research problem that is under consideration and the stated objectives for the study. Hence, making writers like Benbasat (1984) and Pervan (1994) state that the best methodology suitable for any study should be dependent on the research problem under consideration, the richness and complexity of the real world and the stated objective of the researcher. For instance, Cavaye (1996) said that the choice of the kind of methodology a researcher adopts is usually based on the goal of the researcher and not the paradigm. Despite the existence of many research method classifications, the most dominant group of classification are the quantitative and the qualitative (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Myers, 1997). Detailed descriptions of the two most dominant research methods are stated below.

The approach used in conducting this research was the deductive approach (Saunders et al, 2011, Amaratunga et al, 2002; McGiven, 2006). Where a theory or hypothesis was first developed and later a research strategy was designed to test the hypothesis.

In this research therefore, the data collected was analyzed based on existing literature on the topic hence adopting the deductive approach. Some scholars refer the deductive approach to mean quantitative and the inductive as qualitative. The quantitative research (deductive) is seen as an extreme of empiricism in which theories are not only justified by the extent to which they can be verified, but also by an application of facts acquired (Amaratunga et al., 2002). According to Hair et al (2003), a quantitative research method is “an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables”. It involves numbered data that can be analyzed using statistical procedures for measurement. Authors like Straub et al. (2004) have stated that essential tools used for quantitative researchers involve statistical tools and software packages due to the presence of numbers in such research.

In this approach, the researcher tests a theory by specifying hypothesis and collecting data to back the hypothesis. Data collected are analyzed using statistical procedures and hypothesis testing. The qualitative method is said to be the most convenient since it measures people's way of living such as the way they feel, think or behave in a particular way. But this research method tries to quantitatively explain and apply statistical analysis which is often formalized, well-structured and data is usually obtained from larger sample (Tull & Hawkins, 2002). This justification is buttressed by Saunders et al (2009) when they intimated that for a quantitative study to be successful, the most important ingredient needed for the researcher is his/her ability to develop hypotheses and test them with proper statistical techniques, and interpret the statistical information into descriptive information. In as much as the quantitative method so adopted seems workable, Yin, (2013) cautions of the demerits associated with this method. This is because, this research approach is

characterized by generalization and the analysis does not apply to local or peculiar situations. It is also criticized as being too abstract in nature. On the other hand, the qualitative (inductive) research emphasizes getting close to the subject(s) of study and assumes the role of participants to describe a phenomenon in a social reality from the perspective of the subject rather than the observer. A qualitative research can be defined as “an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2013). According to Myer (1997), qualitative research method is an approach or technique designed with the aim of enabling writers gain understanding of the socio-cultural surrounding of people. Thus, this method was developed by the social sciences to enable the study of social and cultural phenomenon. According to Myer (1997), Observation (fieldwork), interviews, documentation and the researcher’s impressions and reactions are the main data sources used in qualitative research. The qualitative approach process involves data collected usually in the researcher’s own setting, data analysis and the researcher making interpretations from the data. Deductive study can be explained as the process of deducing meanings from pre-specified concepts, constructs and hypothesis that make up a theory (Neuman & Neuman, 2006). The reason is to confirm the theory by outlining relationships using testable hypotheses and working towards more empirically concrete evidence. The inductive approach however starts from the collection of data to the developing of theory from the data collected (Saunders, Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2011). Since the objective of our study was clearly defined, intended to sample relatively large cases and use it to test hypotheses on the influence of performance expectancy on the adoption of internet and other electronic media in Ghanaian hotels, quantitative and deductive approach was best suited for the study.

4.6 Research Strategy and Design

The research strategy refers to the research procedure used to answer research questions and fulfill the purposes of the research. The research questions and objectives, the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time and other resources available, and the researcher's philosophical foundations (Saunders et al., 2009) guide the choice of research strategy. Several research procedures can be labeled as research strategies including case study, survey and experiment.

The survey research strategy is the most popular and common strategy for social and business research (Saunders et al., 2009). A survey is a means of obtaining information about the characteristics, actions, or opinions of a large group of people, referred to as a population (Malhotra et al., 2007). It is generally associated with the deductive research approach. In addition, a survey strategy allows researchers to collect a large amount of data from a substantial population at a very low cost. The data are typically quantitative and gathered by questionnaires. The data can be easily compared and analyzed using various statistical techniques. Survey is usually the preferred research strategy for researchers who are interested in collecting original data to describe a population that is too large to observe directly. Careful probability sampling provides a group of respondents whose characteristics may be taken to reflect those of the larger population, and carefully constructed standardized questionnaires provide data in the same form from all respondents (Babbie 2015). Questionnaires are not the only data collection technique in the survey research strategy. Structured observation and interviews can also be employed in survey research, but the questionnaire remains the most commonly used tool in survey.

A research design refers to the procedural framework within which a research is conducted (Malhotra et al , 2007). This framework involves bringing together claims being made about what constitutes knowledge, a strategy of inquiry and specific methods (Creswell, 2013). In order to draw meaningful conclusion from any piece of research, the procedural framework of data collection must be appropriate and relevant. Additionally, Iacobucci & Churchill (2009) and Hair et al., (2012) argue that not only does a research design facilitate the collection and analysis of data, but also it helps to specify the details of the procedures necessary for obtaining the information needed to structure or solve marketing research problems. Ideally, it is a plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically (Kumar, 2005).

In the context of the above discussion, this research was undertaken with a quantitative approach and adopts the survey method in collecting data, using self-administered questionnaire. The intention was to create more knowledge about specific factors, hence the adoption of a deductive approach. This research adopted the survey strategy because the study was cross-sectional in nature and previous cross-sectional studies have mainly employed the survey strategy (Easterby- Smith et. al., 2002; Robson, 2002; Holt, 2006; Bughin et al., 2010). The choice for this research design therefore became necessary not only due to the exploratory nature of the study but also because it has been found to be suitable for analyzing a phenomenon, situation, problem, attitude or issues by considering a cross-section of the population at one point in time (Robson, 2002; Hsu, Chang & Lin, 2003; Litvin et al., 2008).

4.6.1 Sample Design and Sample Size Selection Technique

The sample design is a guide to obtaining the right sample from a given population. It includes the method the researcher takes to choose which units to include in its research since not all units can be considered (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For many research questions and purposes, it becomes impossible to either collect or analyze all the data available in a population due to restrictions in time, money, and often, access. Saunders et al. (2011) emphasize that a census investigation does not necessarily provide more useful results than a well-planned sample survey. If the study sample is representative, generalizations about the underlying population can still be drawn (Zikmund 1994).

4.6.2 Population

For the purposes of generalization, the research population for this study comprised all hotel customers in the Accra Metropolis within the period of this research. This is in contrast with Salant & Dillman, (1994), who observed that a precondition to sample selection is to define the target population as intently as possible and that sample selection depends merely on the population size, its uniformity, the sample media, its rate of use, and the degree of accuracy required. Since it may not always be possible to know the true population, researchers have suggested that a theoretical sample may be used (Attewell & Rule, 1991). Theoretical samples purposely select respondents that exhibit the desired features of prime focus to the researcher. Theoretically, therefore the research population for the study comprised of customers of hotels within Accra.

A sample size is the total number of elements to be measured by the researcher. It is complex to determine the sample size and it involves many deliberations both qualitatively

and quantitatively (Malhotra, 2012). The sample size of 200 respondents was appropriate because it conforms to the recommendation of (Burns, 1997) that the researcher should consider a large sample size for the following reasons. First it maximizes the possibility that the mean, percentages and other statistics reflects the true assessments of the population, that is, the results is able to reflect the true situation on the ground. Again large sample sizes give the effects of randomness the chance to work (Malhotra et al., 2007). Finally, the chances of errors are reduced as the sample size increases. Thus to achieve accuracy, it is important to use a large sample size in a survey study and this issue is captured in this current research. It is possible to collect and analyze data from every representative or case in the entire population in some research especially if the research focuses on a small group. However most research such as the current study need to employ sampling procedures because the group of interest is typically large containing too many cases or members which makes it impossible to collect data from all of them.

There are two broad categories of sampling techniques: probability and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, each element in the sample frame has an equally known chance of being included in the sample, which allows for statistical inferences. This allows researchers to answer research questions and to achieve purposes that require them to estimate statistically the characteristics of the population inferred from the sample. Probability sampling is often associated with survey and experimental research strategies. In contrast, in non-probability sampling, it is not possible to make valid inferences about the population. All non-probability samples rely on personal judgments somewhere in the process, which implies that such samples derived from non-probability sampling are not necessarily representative of the entire population. In this study, the intention is to gather

information about the effects that e-marketing has on hotel performance in Ghana. Since it is not a study that relies on any specific case study but rather on a large population, this research was conducted, using probability sampling in which samples were randomly drawn based on the hotel databases obtained.

4.6.3 Data Sources and Collection Method

There are two basic types of data collection methods; primary data collection method and secondary data collection method. The critical distinction between the types of data is that the researcher collects primary data specifically for the purpose for which the data are required. Secondary data is data that has been collected for another primary purpose (i.e. all secondary data have been primary data themselves for other earlier studies). It must be noted that both primary and secondary data sources can yield either qualitative or quantitative data (Babbie, 2004). While primary data may be collected using observation, interviews or questionnaires, secondary data may include both raw and published summaries such as data collected by other researchers, organizations, governments and other statistical institutions. Routine data collected by institutions participating in an activity could be exceptionally good sources of secondary data which could be replicated by primary data collection without unreasonable expense. The use of secondary data could result in cost and time savings (Saunders et al, 2009).

In this study, it was necessary to get relevant information from respondents on their opinions concerning the introduction of the internet and other electronic media into their operations. Secondary data on the other hand was limited hence the decision of the researcher to resort

to primary data, specifically generated from the administered questionnaires to the hotel players.

4.6.4 Data Collection

Based on the purpose of this study, a non-contrived research setting was adopted. Data was collected from people who are working in hotels in Ghana. Hence, making it possible to gather information from the natural setting and bring to the minimal influences from the researcher. It was relevant to get information directly from the respondents on their views and opinions concerning the use of electronic means of marketing their hotel's services. A questionnaire in Oppenheim's (1992) argument is not some sort of official form with casually jotted down questions, but rather an important instrument of measurement in research. In fact, being a commonly used approach in marketing research (Churchill, 1995), a questionnaire which constitutes a formalized set of questions for obtaining information from respondents represents a typical sub-element of the data collection procedure (Malhotra et al., 2007). The advantages associated with the use of questionnaires includes the simplicity to tabulate and analyze (Peterson, 2002), and the reliability it churns because of the framework of fixed alternatives (Smith & Albaum, 2005). However, the fact that the respondent could be coerced to choose an option which may not exactly represent the true situation, as he does not have the possibility to answer in his own words, strikes a disadvantage (Churchill, 1995).

The researcher was however mindful of the disadvantages associated with written questionnaires. There is the possibility that written questionnaires will be misunderstood and interpreted differently by different people. To overcome this problem, the researcher carried

out an initial pre-testing of questionnaires to evaluate respondents understanding of the research area. To further minimize the errors associated with written questionnaires, respondents were given the opportunity to request for any further explanations regarding the questionnaire. This was helpful in achieving content validity; a self-evident measure that relies on the assurance that the researcher demonstrates an adequate coverage of the known field, after critically reviewing the literature and constructing questions or instruments to cover the known content represented in the literature (Malhotra et al., 2007).

The prime step of specifying what information needed is rooted in the thorough review of components of research questions, hypotheses, and other characteristics that influence the research design (Malhotra et al., 2007). The researcher employed a structured questionnaire for the study and took the form of self-administered personal interviews because as Churchill (1995) purports, through this mode, respondents can either seek clarification on points of confusion in the presence of the interviewers. For automobile users, this method allowed the respondents to seek clarification from the researcher. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the questionnaires were undisguised and structured, where the purpose of the project was disclosed to respondents, and the questions presented in exactly the same wording across board and ordered with fixed alternatives respectively.

4.6.5 Statistical Analysis Technique

With regard to data analysis, quantitative analysis is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations/data for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations/data reflect whilst qualitative analysis refers to the non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations for the purpose of discovering

underlying meanings and patterns of relationships (Babbie, 2004). Alvesson and Sköldbry (2009), state the three ways for drawing conclusions. These are Inductive, Deductive, and Adductive. Inductive method is used to draw conclusions based on empirical findings. This method is normally used when established theories in the field of study are limited and the purpose is to form a new theory. Deductive method is used when drawing conclusions perceived as valid when they are logically connected. Usually in deductive studies, theories and literature that have been established already are used as foundation for the new research. Adductive method is similar to Inductive method. Here the researcher starts with the empirical facts, just as in the inductive method. However, theoretical pre-conceptions are not rejected. In adductive method a separate case is interpreted according to the theoretical pattern as if it was true, would explain the case. The result is then confirmed based on the new observations. The new observation from the study is then compared with the theoretical frame of reference. Based on the explanations above, the method of analysis for this thesis is based on the deductive since the hypotheses tested were based on a review from extant literature on electronic adoption and the effect it has on businesses. A number of studies on electronic adoption (Grandson& Pearson, 2004; Hinson & Boateng, 2007) have used structured questionnaires.

4.6.6 Factor analysis

Factor analysis attempts to identify underlying variables, or factors that explain the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables. Factor analysis is also used in data reduction to identify a small number of factors that explain most of the variance that is

observed in a much larger number of variables. The purpose of data reduction is to remove redundant (or highly correlated) variables from the data.

In this analysis, principal component analysis was used, which is similar, more reliable and conceptually less complex than “traditional” factor analysis. Principal component analysis is concerned with establishing what kind of linear components that exist in the data and how each variable might contribute to that component (Hair et al., 2003). For simplicity, principal component analysis will just be called factor analysis as both methods are very similar.

4.6.7 Regression analysis

A regression describes and evaluates the relationships between a given dependent variable and one or more independent variables. Earlier research focusing on similar subjects has found significant results using regression analysis (Peng & Luo, 2000). One can therefore assume that regression is an appropriate statistical method in order to confirm or disconfirm the chosen hypotheses. Multiple regression analysis represents a family of techniques that can be used to explore the relationship between one continuous dependent variable, and a number of independent variables (Malhotra et al., 2007). It has been adopted as a system of analysis for this survey because; it can address the issues of:

- How well a set of variables is able to predict a particular outcome?
- Which variable in a set of variables is the best predictor of an outcome; and
- Whether a particular predictor variable is still able to predict an outcome when the effects of another variable are controlled?

During the regression analysis, important assumptions for a valid regression was elaborated and tested in order to ensure that the final regression models are not flawed. In this research context, it was decided that the most important tests would be assessing the appropriate number predictors compared to the sample size, testing the normality of the dependent variable, testing the included variables for multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity, and inspect if there are very influential cases and/or outliers.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the output of the analysis of the data collected for the study. Here empirical data collected through self-administered questionnaires on Ghanaian hotel users are presented. The overarching goal of this thesis is to build up an answer to the question, how electronic marketing usage affects performance of hotel. Following from the previous chapters, which discussed the literature review and the research methodology for this study respectively, this chapter provides an insight into the hotel sector preliminary data assessments including data screening and cleaning, demographic profile of respondents, reliability of the various scale items and the descriptive statistics.

5.1 Electronic Marketing in Ghanaian Hotels – An Overview

The hotel industry in Ghana has shown a booming era in recent years. These trends have necessitated the industry to customize their process for developing brand image and improving their performance. Acquiring any service from a hotel is a complex buying behavior phenomena in consumer purchase decision-making process. In the hospitality industry, global consolidation and increasing demand are among issues leading to fierce competition. Hotel operators are scrambling to offer more features at lower costs and coupling them with the most attractive financing options offered to consumers in years. Likewise, consumers are better informed than before and in a much more powerful negotiating position. Furthermore, they've become accustomed to quick results and

individualized attention, due to the immediacy the internet has provoked in various forms of business.

The hotel sector in Ghana can be categorized under six main categories – 5-star, 4-star, 3-star, 2-star, 1-star and budget hotels. The highly rated star hotels are targeted mainly at the upscale and business class in society while the lower rated star and budget hotels are rather affordable.

5.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Respondents for the survey have been profiled in according to their gender, marital status, age, educational qualifications and the online platform used by their hotel. Out of the two hundred and twenty (220) questionnaires administered, 20 of them had to be discarded either due to inadequacies or they contained large sections of missing relevant data leaving with 200 hundred (200) questionnaires for the study. This according to Malhotra and Birks (2007) is very good for data analysis since about 98% of the administered questionnaire were retrieved. The tables below provide the results of the demographic statistics obtained from the study.

Table 5.1: Demographic of Profile

Profile	Measurements	Freq.	Percentage
Age	21-30	74	37
	31-40	63	31.5
	41-50	46	23
	51-60	17	8.5
	Total	200	100
Gender	Male	120	60
	Female	80	40
	Total	200	100
Academic Qualification	SHS and Below	11	5.5
	Diploma	52	26
	First Degree	102	51
	Masters	30	15
	Ph.D.	5	2.5
Total	Total	200	100.0
Marital Status	Single	70	35
	Married	106	53
	Divorced	24	12
	Total	200	100

Out of the two hundred (200) valid questionnaires obtained, one hundred and twenty (120) were from males whilst eighty (80) were females representing 60% and 40% respectively. This was done to ensure that the study was not skewed to any particular gender and to include views from both gender so as to present a fair demographic result. It is fair to say that the ratio of men to women in this study is not biased and therefore does not affect the responses in any significant way. This could be justified by the fact that the database obtained from the hotel users indicated that there were more male hotel users as compared to females. The marital status of the respondents shows that 106 representing 53% of them, making up a majority were married while divorcee lurked behind with only 24(12%)

respondents and a fair number of single respondents, 70 representing 35% of total population.

The table indicates the ages of the respondents used for the study. The results show that a lot of the respondents (37%) were within the ages of 21-30 followed by those within the range of 31-40 (31.5%) and 41-50 (23%). The lowest number of respondents fell within the range of 51-6 (8.5%) years. This could be an indication that majority of hotel users in Ghana belong to the working class since most of the respondents came from the working class age group.

With respect to the educational qualifications of the respondents who took part in the study, majority of them had more than just a secondary education (95.7%). This is an indication that

majority of the people who patronize hotel services in Ghana are well educated. They are also likely to understand the complications of the intellectual processes which they go through when doing business through the electronic media. Thus, although hotel operators deploy different methods in convincing consumers, they are able to interpret these campaigns and make purchases on various electronic platforms. The table below displays the results of the educational qualifications of the respondents.

An analysis of the online platforms used by respondents for the study was also presented. From table VI below, respondents who use all three electronic platforms represented the highest frequency of 77 (38.5%) meaning most hotel users interact with their respective

hotels through more than one platform. A good number, 45 (22%) of the respondents were also conversant with e-mail and website. Respondents conversant with website and social media represented 32 (16%) and E-mail and social media 4 (2%). A number of respondents were only conversant with a single platform where they interacted with their hotels; Website 23 (11.5%), E-mail 16(8%) and social media 3 (1.5%).

Table 5.2: Online Platform Usage

	Frequency	Percentage%
E-Mail	16	8
Website	23	11.5
Social Media	3	1.5
Social media and Website	45	22.5
E-Mail and Social Media	4	2
Website and Email	32	16
E-Mail, Social Media and Website	77	38.5
Total	200	100

It must be noted that the responses were obtained from the respondents based on availability, capability, willingness and readiness to partake in the study without being prejudiced towards any specific hotel or its customers.

5.3 Data Analysis

5.3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The t -test table below displays the means and standard deviations of the various variables used and these indicate the extent to which the respondents disagreed or agreed with the statements in the questionnaire. The mean results of the variables indicate how each statement performed from the 410 respondents' points of view. From the table the highest mean was 3.75 (Feedback received from other customers online enhances my service

experience) whilst the lowest was 3.28 (Other customers provide assistance to customers facing challenges on my hotel's social media pages.

Table 5.3:One Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
My hotel regularly updates their websites with relevant information	200	3.4950	1.07972	.07635
My hotel's website content is able to engage my attention	200	3.5000	1.06096	.07502
I can interact with my hotel through their website effectively.	200	3.3600	1.11653	.07895
Customers of my hotel are able to transact business on our website	200	3.4900	.99743	.07053
The website provides a mechanism that allows for service evaluation (customer feedback).	200	3.3050	1.06661	.07542
I think that the website of my hotel is a very important tool for conducting business.	200	3.6100	1.00146	.07081
My hotel uses emails to send me personalised account information.	200	3.3150	1.03009	.07284
My name and personal information is always used by my hotel in online communication with me.	200	3.3300	1.13470	.08024
My hotel gives personal attention to complains online.	200	3.3900	.96569	.06828
I am assured of quick response when i send e-mails to my hotel.	200	3.4200	1.14022	.08063
Interaction with my hotel via e-mails is clear and understandable.	200	3.5500	1.01620	.07186
E-mails from my hotel are a reliable medium for information and support services.	200	3.4150	.96823	.06846
My hotel 's social media pages engage my attention.	200	3.4400	.86611	.06124
I contribute to conversations on my hotel's social media pages.	200	3.3300	.88602	.06265
I interact with my hotel through their social media pages.	200	3.3150	.98009	.06930
Complaints sent through social media are fairly acknowledged and responded to.	200	3.2850	.97906	.06923
Other customers provide assistance to customers facing challenges on my hotel's social media pages.	200	3.2800	1.01328	.07165
Feedback received from other customers online enhances my service experience.	200	3.7500	4.07930	.28845
There is sufficient support from the top management for the use of websites,social media and e-mails.	200	3.4300	.96943	.06855
Management has committed enough resources to the success of our online activities.	200	3.3150	.93281	.06596
Management has implemented a distinct corporate culture that supports our online activities.	200	3.7400	4.25829	.30111
Employess of the hotel are well trained to implement e-marketing initiatives successfully.	200	3.4000	.97197	.06873
The implementation of e-marketing requires expertise to be successful.	200	3.4000	.99243	.07018
The marketing team within my hotel considers our online platforms very useful.	200	3.4350	1.10083	.07784
The hotel provides excellent services.	200	3.6000	.82059	.05802
The service delivery standards at the hotel are high.	200	3.5800	.88743	.06275
The service delivered at the hotel are tailored to my needs.	200	3.4150	.85230	.06027
The employees of the hotel are quick to address customer needs.	200	3.6200	.69137	.04889
The hotel guarantees customer satisfaction.	200	3.5500	.89527	.06331
The hotel provides timely services.	200	3.4750	.85029	.06012
Customer complaints are treated as important and resolved immediately.	200	3.4650	.90713	.06414

5.3.2 Normality and Reliability of Variables

One way of assessing the normality of distribution is by examining the skewness and kurtosis values of the data. Skewness is the measure of the symmetry of a distribution. According Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson and Tathan (2006) the comparison is made to a normal distribution and is between the ranges of -1 to +1. The values obtained, with the exception of accuracy as indicated in table 4.4 falls within the range. This shows that almost all the variables are normally distributed and suitable for the study.

Kurtosis measures the flatness of a distribution when compared with a normal distribution. This should be between the ranges of -3 and +3. All the values obtained as indicated in table 4.4 falls within the range. This shows that all the variables are normally distributed. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of reliability. This measurement of coefficient assesses the consistency of the entire scale (Cronbach, 1951). The generally agreed upon lower limit for the alpha value is 0.70, although a lower limit of 0.60 is accepted (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1978). All the Alpha values obtained fall within the threshold. This indicates that all the variables used in the study are reliable as indicated in table 4.4.

Table 5.4: Normality and Reliability of Variables

	Mean	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
E-mail	2.79	0.00	-0.18	0.65	5
Website	3.88	-1.15	1.96	0.84	5
Social Media	3.41	-0.24	0.27	0.63	4
Hotel performance	3.54	-0.98	1.07	0.88	4

Regression Analysis**Table 5.5: ANOVA**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	39.074	7.000	5.582	11.582	0.000
Residual	114.226	237.000	0.482		
Total	153.300	244.000			

R 0.505

R Square .255

Adjusted R Square .233

The ANOVA table (table 4.5) indicated a sig. value of 0.000. The model summary also indicated an R square value of 0.255. The sig. value of 0.000 statistically indicates that there is a strong significant relationship between electronic marketing and hotel performance in the Ghanaian hotel industry. According to Hair et al (2006), a model is deemed fit if its sig value less than 0.05. This is in line with a study by Beatson et al., (2006) which revealed that E-marketing usage increased hotel performance and enhanced customer satisfaction.

The R square value in the table indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, hotel performance, can be explained by the independent variables (website, email and social media) in this study. Thus, R square value of 0.255 also indicates that 25.50 per cent of variations in hotel performance in the Ghanaian hotel industry is explained by the use of E-marketing. This is to say that customers regard the introduction of E-marketing

tools, in this case the use website, email and social media as an important strategy in the Ghanaian hotel industry.

Table 5.6: Regression Analysis Results

	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.605	0.303		5.305	0.000
E-mail	-0.085	0.076	-0.072	-1.121	0.264
Website	0.176	0.052	0.225	3.401	0.001
Social Media	0.053	0.024	0.131	2.234	0.026

a. Dependent Variable: Hotel performance

Table 4.6 indicates the individual contribution of the selected dimensions of E-marketing in this study. It reveals that E-mail, Website and Social media jointly contribute to determine hotel performance in the Ghanaian hotel industry. This implies there is a strong and significant reliability among the dimensions to satisfactorily predict hotel performance.

Results from the regression model above indicates that, website ($\beta=0.255$; $t=3.401$; $p=.001$) and social media ($\beta=0.131$; $t=2.234$; $p=.0026$) both have a positive and significant relationship with the dependent variable (hotel performance). However, e-mail ($\beta=-0.072$; $t=-1.121$; $p=.264$) had an inverse relationship with the dependent variable because of the negative coefficients. Thus, e-mail had no significant influence in predicting hotel performance compared to website and social media.

Statistically, the results above indicate that, a unit change in website would lead to a 25 per cent increase in hotel performance whereas a unit change in social media would increase

hotel performance by 13.1 per cent. However, a unit change in email would lead to a 7.2 per cent reduction in hotel performance.

In summary, the most significant predictor of hotel performance among hotels in Ghana is website followed by social media. E-mail however, has no influence on hotel performance. This could further explained to mean that, e-mails are not necessarily used by customers who desire hotel services compared to website and the social media platforms. For instance, customers would prefer booking for a room through the hotel's website rather than sending an email.

5.4 Discussion of Findings

Results from this study reveal, that E-marketing and hotel performance are closely related considering that two of the selected dimensions of E-marketing in this study statistically predict hotel performance, that is, social media and hotel website. These findings indicate that Web Marketing and Social media Marketing are the most commonly used E-Marketing tools. In addition, E-mail Marketing rarely used among Ghanaian hotel operators. This finding is consistent with previous research works on the various tools of E-marketing (Chung & Law, 2003; Baloglu & Pekcan, 2006).

Tourism is in the forefront of information communication technologies (ICTs) adoption and e-business in the area of e-marketing (E- Business Watch, 2006) because the use of new technologies facilitates tourism services in reaching their customers. It also aids in offering customized services, and in competing effectively with other intermediaries and distribution channels. Internet technology is an important 'communication channel' between offer and

demand in modern tourism. The internet has proven to be an effective medium for tourism promotion and sales, so distribution of products and services no longer depends on the quantity of printed catalogues and brochures, but information on tourism products and services can reach millions of internet users, and overbooking has become almost impossible because all communication problems have been removed. The number of studies on the role of Information Technology within the business it supports is on the rise. The role of IT is constantly evolving and has changed significantly from the days when the IT organization was often referred to as “data processing”. Today, in many industries, IT enables some businesses to differentiate themselves from their competitors (Hamidi & Safabakhsh, 2011).

The growing importance of the use of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram among others in the business world, requires scientific studies to put forward relationships (Sigala, 2001; Owyang, 2009). This would determine how these technological tools can improve business performance (El-Gohary, 2012). In recent years, there has been a change in the type of content published on the internet, notably in its socialisation aspect, both in its inter-personnel relationships and through the so-called online social networks, as well as its creative facet, with individual users now being the major content providers on the net (Assis-Dorr, Palacios-Marques & Merigo, 2012). Many times, however, businesses create a corporate profile on social networks simply to keep in step with current trends, rather than it being any part of their corporate business strategy, consequently achieving only unsatisfactory results. This article shows that those companies with a greater degree of involvement in social networking develop organizational learning practices, which improve their results.

Social networks are created in an environment that greatly favours user participation, allowing them to add content. This encourages collaboration and cooperation, aspects which are requisites for achieving an atmosphere of effective learning (Owyang, 2009). According to Lindblom and Tikkanen (2010), organisational education is achieved through mental models, knowledge and shared perspectives. This further add that this is founded on accumulated knowledge and past experiences which are included as part of the report (Ibid).

The involvement of businesses in technological social networks corresponds to a current trend rather than to any type of strategic rethinking procedure, which is why in the majority of cases, this type of endeavour does not result in improvements to business operations (Lin et al. , 2010; Chao, 2011). Market orientation should be supported by tools, which encourage interaction with the user, in the sense of social networking, as these are implemented in a friendly atmosphere and encourage knowledge transfer procedures (Oltean, Gabor & Contiu, 2014). To be effective, knowledge transfer emanating from consumers should bring about an improvement to either the organisational procedures or a change to the product attributes. This would enable businesses to adapt to consumer requirements. If this were not the case, social networks on their own would only serve to generate interaction with clients but would not result in improvements to the management of the business. Knowledge about the user continues to grow as long as the social networks manage to maintain relations with their existing members, as well as attracting other members that share similar interests (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). This allows businesses to create routines, which allow their members to develop shared values and knowledge based on their experiences (Becker, 2010).

The major aims of this research are to explore the effect of Electronic Marketing (E-Marketing) on hotels performance; to explore the different forms, implementation levels and tools of E-Marketing used by these hotels. It aims to develop a theoretical model that can help to understand and interpret these relationships and seeks to evaluate the potential of E-Marketing for the hospitality sector, specifically hotels in developing countries (Ghana). This work builds on previous research in the fields of E-marketing and SBEs and adds to the relatively limited empirical research that has been conducted on E-Marketing in a small business context. This research develops and validates a conceptual model based on systematic analysis of the literature in the field.

This research finds that E-Marketing adoption by Ghanaian hotels is significantly affected by the level of commitment that the managers and employees of the hotel attach to the e-marketing intervention. Internal factors such as owner skills and support, available resources, organizational culture, type of products, international orientation were found to be among the factors that manager and employees were committed to. These findings indicate that Web Marketing and Social media Marketing are the most commonly used E-Marketing tools. In addition, E-mail Marketing has not yet gained enough popularity among Ghanaian hotel operators. The adoption and proper use of E-marketing has a strong positive impact on current and future marketing performance of Ghanaian hotels. Overall, the field of E-marketing is still in its infant stage and is not yet well established. This study can be considered as a step towards theory building in the field of E-marketing.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.0 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the empirical tests and results found in the study. This concluding chapter provides a summary of the research conclusions, implications and direction for future study. The chapter also highlights the critical lessons drawn from the study and makes some recommendations for stakeholders of the study.

6.1 Summary of the Study

The study meant to explore the benefit that hotels seek to gain when they incorporate electronic marketing interventions into the daily operations. Thus, the study sought to find answers to the question: what is the relationship between electronic marketing and performance in Ghanaian hotels? An important premise that raises the issue of electronic marketing adoption and use as far as hotels are concerned is that the internet has potential to radically change business to customer interactions, which dramatically alters the performance of many hotels. In order to answer this question posed in chapter one, the study reviewed existing literature on Electronic marketing, internet marketing, electronic commerce and electronic business.

From previous studies in these areas (Boateng & Hinson, 2007; Saffu, Walker & Hinson, 2008; Brodie et al, 2007; Oltean, Rozalia & Contiu, 2014; Nieves & Cipres, 2015; Boadi et al, 2007) three elements were identified as seven (7) factors were identified as suitable to

electronic marketing when it comes to hotels – Hotel website, Social Media and electronic mail management commitment and employee training.

A conceptual model was thus developed from the various theories, which culminated into the formulation of relevant hypotheses. This was done by adopting a survey approach in which two hundred valid questionnaires were obtained from respondents out of the total administered within a span of three weeks representing a response rate of approximately 100%. The questionnaire was developed for the study based on the theoretical framework and objectives for the study. The respondents who were randomly selected from within the Accra metropolis, were targeted at places of work, shopping centers and academic institutions. These included top business executives, public service personnel, and private business owners who do business with various hotels in Accra. The appropriateness of using the survey strategy in this study was to help identify and explain statistically, the relationship that exist between electronic marketing usage and hotels performance in Ghana based on previous scholarly approaches (Easterby-Smith et. al.,1991; Robson, 1993; Holt, 2006; Bughinet *al.*, 2010).

Furthermore, the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression. This was premised on the fact that quantitative data analysis techniques enable numerical representation and manipulation of observations/data for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomenon which reflects the observations/data. Also a significant number of studies on emarketing (e.g. Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Holt, 2006; Lin and Chang, 2003; Litvinet *al.*, 2008; Bughinet *al.*, 2010) have made use of such techniques in analysing data. The analysis was performed using Statistical Package for

Social Science (SPSS) version 18.0 as an instrument which helped generate tabular and numerical results for the model. In all there were 240 males and 170 females who took part in the study representing 58.5% and 41.5% respectively.

6.2 Conclusions

This study examined the relationship between website marketing and performance of star rated hotels in Ghana. As Braun (2002) indicated, firms suffer from a lack of a strategic sense of how to move forward in the e-marketplace. Considering e-marketing tools in this study (emails, website and social media), some of the hotels web sites allowed electronic payment. The overall, the results showed that hotels use their web sites primarily to provide information and transaction, rather than for interacting with customers.

Findings from the study also indicates hotels only use the internet mainly to promote their property through a Web site. They have no clear e-business strategy incorporated into their business to assist them in their internal and external business processes. Therefore, there is likely to be a challenge for hotels to realize the full potential of e-marketing as a driver to increasing productivity, performance and profit, by making it an integral part of their strategy and operations. Their ability to embrace e-marketing can become will be a vital determinants of success an make them competitive in this era of unprecedented growth and opportunity in the digital economy.

This study provides an important implication for hotel managers. The results suggest that the e-marketing tools is positively associated with firm performance. Furthermore, not only a positive relationship was found but complementarities among the web site orientations were observed. The internet has enabled a new era of user-generated content especially with

social media platforms. Given the increasing popularity of internet usage worldwide, managers should take advantage of full range of features of the internet for both site interactivity and functionality. As a result, hotel managers should avoid a simple presence on the internet or having social media platforms (merely informational) and instead pursue a more interactive presence directed to interaction with potential customers and build a new business model for providing free content-sharing services. However, there is still room for improvement considering the digital marketing adoption rate for the Ghanaian market. The e-marketing tools used by hotels' were reviewed at one point, and then compared with hotel performance. However, the study did not compare any historical data to ascertain to long-term effect on hotel performance. Thus a longitudinal study could enrich the findings. A comparison between star rated and non-star rated regarding their adoption and use of e-marketing tools and its effect on their performance will be interesting to research into.

6.2.1 Determining the relationship between electronic marketing tools and performance in Ghanaian Hotels.

This is the main objective of the study. As stated earlier in this chapter a review of existing literature on electronic marketing (Sandeep, 2006; Nieves and Cipres, 2015; Oltean, Rozalia & Contiu, 2014; Lin & Chang, 2003) uncovered three major elements that most hotels consider in their electronic marketing intervention.

These electronic marketing elements have in most cases been studied in isolation with respect to the performance of different businesses and not many articles and scholarly work was found that integrated all three elements into one study. It is fair to also mention that

many of these studies were also conducted in Western worlds and employed the use of different sectors and industries, which yielded in different results and models. However, most of these findings revealed positive effects of the variables on performance.

The major finding for the first objective reveals that within the Ghanaian context, the emails are not significant enough, that is to say among the three elements of e-marketing, electronic mail does not positively affect the performance in most hotels. Management and employees of hotels have not committed enough to the success of interacting with e-mails with their customers. However social media and website were found to be positively involve in the electronic marketing success of most Ghanaian hotels.

6.2.2 Examining the extent of management commitment and employee training on electronic marketing performance.

The second objective was to also examine the contextual findings in the light of the extent to which management and employee commitment affected the performance of electronic marketing in Ghanaian hotels. Findings from the current study reveal that among all the factors examined on electronic marketing with respect to the commitment of management and employees, website was ranked highest. This is fair especially in everyday life where consumers consider to a large extent log on to company website when they need any information on any product or service.

6.3 Recommendations

This study did not find extensive use of e-mails by Ghanaian hotels as in some contexts evident in the literature review. On this premise, it is recommended that, hotels in Ghana should use emails more as it provides personalization to customers.

In addition, this study recommends that, hotels should update website often as a means to provide current information to customers. Hotel customers are well informed; placing less emphasis on information updates on the website is likely to militate performance of these hotels. Managers are advised to commit more resources to e-marketing activities within hotels. Since social media is becoming an alternative and more cost effective medium, there should be enough commitment to tap into its opportunities.

It is important to create conditions that are in favor of e-marketing tools and to eliminate barriers that prevent people from participating in an e-marketing tools especially for internal employees. Adequate utilization of E-marketing is only possible when the appropriate infrastructure and technology is in place. This infrastructure may include high-speed telecommunications, i.e. broadband Internet services and connectivity and the high quality software which is required for effective adoption and usage by both customers and staff.

6.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

The current research has the following limitations:

- Geographical limitation
- Focus limitation

- Methodology limitation

this thesis examined respondents only from the Accra Metropolis, premised on the fact that a metropolitan area such as the capital is populated by people with various demographic variables. In the light of this, the scope of the study is limited geographically and numerically in terms of the sample size used for the study. In addition, the study is limited in terms of focus in lodging industry. The study focused on star rated hotels in the Accra Metropolis to the neglect of other accommodation facilities like, hostels, guesthouses and motels. The methodology used may prevent an in-depth understanding into the issues that go into the use of E-marketing tools in Ghanaian hotels.

Despite these inadequacies, the generalizability of the results to the entire hotel user population is deemed representative with a high confidence. This study recommends the inclusion of other E-marketing tools in ascertaining the performance of hotels in Ghana. A similar study could also be conducted in other sectors.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, D.A., Kumar, V., & Day, G.S. (1995). *Marketing research* (5th ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Abor, J. (2005). Technological innovations and banking in Ghana: an evaluation of customers' perceptions. *IFE Psychologia: An International Journal*, 13(1),170.
- Adam, L. (1996). Electronic communications technology and development of Internet in Africa. *Information Technology for Development*, 7(3), 133-144.
- Adam, S., Mulye, R., Deans, K. R., & Palihawadana, D. (2002). E-marketing in perspective: a three country comparison of business use of the Internet. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 20(4), 243-251.
- Ainscough, T. L. (1996). The Internet for the rest of us: marketing on the World Wide Web. *Journal of consumer marketing*, 13(2), 36-47.
- Akar, E., & Topcu, B. (2011). An examination of the factors influencing consumers' attitudes toward social media marketing. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 10(1), 35-67.
- Akin Aksu, A., & Tarcan, E. (2002). The Internet and five-star hotels: a case study from the Antalya region in Turkey. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 14(2), 94-97.
- Albaum, G. S., & Smith, S. M. (2005). *Fundamentals of marketing research*. Sage Publication, London.
- Aleke, B., Ojiako, U., & Wainwright, D. W. (2011). ICT adoption in developing countries: perspectives from small-scale agribusinesses. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*, 24(1), 68-84.
- Alvesson, M., & Sköldbberg, K. (2009). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research*. Sage.

- Amarantunga, D., Baldry, D., Sarshar, M., & Newton, R. (2002). *Quantitative and Qualitative research in built environment; application of mixed research approach, Work Study*, 54(1), 17-31.
- American Marketing Association (2013). Definition of Marketing. Retrieved on 4th May, 2015 from: <https://www.ama.org/AboutAMA/Pages/Definition-of-Marketing.aspx>.
- Amidu, M., Effah, J., & Abor, J. (2011). E-accounting practices among small and medium enterprises in Ghana. *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, 12(4), 146-155.
- Arnott, D. C., & Bridgewater, S. (2002). Internet, interaction and implications for marketing. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 20(2), 86-95.
- Ashcroft, L., & Hoey, C. (2001). PR, marketing and the Internet: implications for information professionals. *Library Management*, 22(1/2), 68-74.
- Asiedu, A. B. (1997). Prospects for an emerging tourism industry in Ghana. *Research Review*, (13).
- Assis-Dorr, H., Palacios-Marques, D., & Merigó, J. M. (2012). Social networking as an enabler of change in entrepreneurial Brazilian firms. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 25(5), 699-708.
- Attewell, P., & Rule, J. B. (1991). Survey and other methodologies applied to IT impact research: experiences from a comparative study of business computing. *The Information systems research challenge: survey research methods*, 3, 299-315.
- Avlonitis, G. J., & Karayanni, D. A. (2000). The impact of internet use on business-to-business marketing: examples from American and European companies. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 29(5), 441-459
- Babbie, E. (2004). *Survey research: The practice of social research*. New York: Cengage Learning.

- Babbie, E. (2015). *The practice of social research*. New York: Cengage Learning.
- Badu, E. E., & Markwei, E. D. (2005). Internet awareness and use in the University of Ghana. *Information development, 21*(4), 260-268.
- Baggott, C. (2011). *Email marketing by the numbers: How to use the world's greatest marketing tool to take any organization to the next level*. River Street, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Baloglu, S., & Pekcan, Y. A. (2006). The website design and Internet site marketing practices of upscale and luxury hotels in Turkey. *Tourism Management, 27*(1), 171-176.
- Barnes, D., & Hinton, M. (2007). Searching for e-business performance measurement system. *The Electronic Journal of Information System, 10*(1), 1-8.
- Beatson, A., Coote, L. V., & Rudd, J. M. (2006). Determining consumer satisfaction and commitment through self-service technology and personal service usage. *Journal of Marketing Management, 22*(7-8), 853-882.
- Becker, M. (2010). *Mobile marketing for dummies*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Benbasat, I. (1984). An analysis of research methodologies. *The information systems research challenge, 47-85*.
- Benbasat, I., Goldstein, D. K., & Mead, M. (1987). The case research strategy in studies of information systems. *MIS Quarterly, 369-386*.
- Benckendorff, P. J., & Black, N. L. (2000). Destination marketing on the Internet: a case study of Australian Regional Tourism Authorities. *Journal of Tourism Studies, 11*(2), 11-21.

- Bergin-Seers, S., & Jago, L. (2007). Performance Measurement in Small Motels in Australia:(Funded by the Sustainable Tourism Co-operative Research Centre). *Tourism and hospitality Research*, 7(2), 144-155.
- Berthon, P., Pitt, L., Katsikeas, C. S., & Berthon, J. P. (1999). Virtual services go international: international services in the marketplace. *Journal of International Marketing*, 84-105.
- Bhat, S., & Reddy, S. K. (1998). Symbolic and functional positioning of brands. *Journal of consumer marketing*, 15(1), 32-43.
- Bilton, C., & Cummings, S. (2010). Creative strategy: reconnecting business and innovation (Vol. 3).John Wiley & Sons.
- Boadi, R. A., Boateng, R., Hinson, R., & Opoku, R. A. (2007).Preliminary insights into m-commerce adoption in Ghana.*Information Development*, 23(4), 253-265.
- Boateng, R., Heeks, R., Molla, A., & Hinson, R. (2008). E-commerce and socio-economic development: conceptualizing the link. *Internet Research*, 18(5), 562-594.
- Bottini, R., Cassán, F., & Piccoli, P. (2004). Gibberellin production by bacteria and its involvement in plant growth promotion and yield increase. *Applied microbiology and biotechnology*, 65(5), 497-503.
- Boyle, B. A. (2001). The Internet in industrial channels: its use in (and effects on) exchange relationships. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 16(6), 452-469.
- Brady, M., Saren, M., & Tzokas, N. (1999).The impact of IT on marketing: an evaluation. *Management Decision*, 37(10), 758-767.
- Braun, P. (2002). Networking tourism SMEs: e-commerce and e-marketing issues in regional Australia.*Information Technology & Tourism*, 5(1), 13-23.

- Brodie, R. J., Winklhofer, H., Coviello, N. E., & Johnston, W. J. (2007). Is e-marketing coming of age? An examination of the penetration of e-marketing and firm performance. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 21(1), 2-21.
- Brodie, R. J., Winklhofer, H., Coviello, N. E., & Johnston, W. J. (2007). Is e-marketing coming of age? An examination of the penetration of e-marketing and firm performance. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 21(1), 2-21.
- Brodie, R. J., Winklhofer, H., Coviello, N. E., & Johnston, W. J. (2007). Is e-marketing coming of age? An examination of the penetration of e-marketing and firm performance. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 21(1), 2-21.
- Brown, D., & Lockett, N. (2004). Potential of critical e-applications for engaging SMEs in e-business: a provider perspective. *European Journal of Information System*, 21-34.
- Brown, J., Broderick, A. J., & Lee, N. (2007). Word of mouth communication within online communities: Conceptualizing the online social network. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 21(3), 2-20.
- Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2011). *Business research methods 3e*. Oxford university press.
- Brynjolfsson, E., & Smith, M. D. (2000). Frictionless commerce? A comparison of Internet and conventional retailers. *Management science*, 46(4), 563-585.
- Buabeng-Andoh, C. (2012). An exploration of teachers' skills, perceptions and practices of ICT in teaching and learning in the Ghanaian second-cycle schools. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 3(1), 36-49.
- Bughin, J., Doogan, J., & Vetvik, O. J. (2010). A new way to measure word-of-mouth marketing. *McKinsey Quarterly*, 2, 113-116.

- Buhalis, D., & Main, H. (1998). Information technology in peripheral small and medium hospitality enterprises: strategic analysis and critical factors. *International Journal of contemporary hospitality management*, 10(5), 198-202.
- Bui, T. X., Le, T., & Jones, W. D. (2006). An exploratory case study of hotel e-marketing in Ho Chi Minh City. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 48(3), 369-388.
- Burgess, L. C. J., & Cooper, J. (2000). *E-Commerce: "A Report on Emerging Business Models"*. Working Paper, School of Information Technology and Computer Science. University Of Wollongong. Australia.
- Burke, K. (2008) .Smoothing a Bumpy Ride.31(8).Target Marketing.
- Burns, A. C., & Bush, R. F. (2006).Marketing research.Globalization, 1, 7.
- Burns, R. B. (1997). *Introduction to research methods*. Addison Wesley Longman.
- Byrd, T. A., & Turner, D. E. (2001).An exploratory analysis of the value of the skills of IT personnel: Their relationship to IS infrastructure and competitive advantage. *Decision Sciences*, 32(1), 21-54.
- Cavaye, A. L. (1996). Case study research: a multi-faceted research approach for IS.*Information systems journal*, 6(3), 227-242.
- Chaffey, D. (2000). Achieving Internet marketing success. *The Marketing Review*, 1(1), 35-59.
- Chaffey, D. (2007). *E-business and E-commerce Management: Strategy, Implementation and Practice*.Pearson Education.
- Chaffey, D. Ellis-Chadwick, F. Johnston, K. & Mayer, R.(2006). *Internet Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice*.

- Chang, T. Y., & Hsu, J. M. (2010). Development framework for tourism and hospitality in higher vocational education in Taiwan. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, 9(1), 101-109.
- Chathoth, P. K. (2007). The impact of information technology on hotel operations, service management and transaction costs: A conceptual framework for full-service hotel firms. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 26(2), 395-408.
- Chivhanga, B. M. (2000, December). An evaluation of the impact of the Internet in Africa. In *Aslib Proceedings* (Vol. 52, No. 10, pp. 373-383). MCB UP Ltd.
- Cullen, R. (2003). The digital divide: a global and national call to action. *The Electronic Library*, 274.
- Cho, W., & Olsen, M. D. (1998). A case study approach to understanding the impact of information technology on competitive advantage in the lodging industry. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 22(4), 376-394.
- Christie, I., Fernandes, E., Messerli, H., & Twining-Ward, L. (Eds.). (2014). *Tourism in Africa: Harnessing tourism for growth and improved livelihoods*. World Bank Publications.
- Chung, T., & Law, R. (2003). Developing a performance indicator for hotel websites. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 22(1), 119-125.
- Churchill, J. G. A. (1979). A paradigm for developing better measures of marketing constructs. *Journal of marketing research*, 64-73.
- Churchill, G.A. (1995): *Marketing Research: Methodological Foundations*. 6th ed. Fort Worth: Dryden Press
- Cline, R. S., & Warner, M. M. (1999). *Hospitality 2000: the technology*. BOTTOMLINE-AUSTIN-, 14, 13-20.

- Coviello, N., Milley, R., & Marcolin, B. (2001). Understanding IT-enabled interactivity in contemporary marketing. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 15(4), 18-33.
- Crabbe, M., Standing, C., Standing, S., & Karjaluoto, H. (2009). An adoption model for mobile banking in Ghana. *International Journal of Mobile Communications*, 7(5), 515-543.
- Creaco, S., & Querini, G. (2003, August). The role of tourism in sustainable economic development. In *ERSA conference papers* (No. ersa03p84). European Regional Science Association.
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *psychometrika*, 16(3), 297-334.
- Dabholkar, P. A. (1996). Consumer evaluations of new technology-based self-service options: an investigation of alternative models of service quality. *International Journal of research in Marketing*, 13(1), 29-51.
- Davis, M., Guhathakurta, P., Konidaris, N. P., Newman, J. A., Ashby, M. L., Biggs, A. D., ... & Small, T. A. (2007). The all-wavelength extended growth strip international survey (AEGIS) data sets. *The Astrophysical Journal Letters*, 660(1), L1.
- Day, G. S., & Bens, K. J. (2005). Capitalizing on the internet opportunity. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 20(4/5), 160-168.

- Day, G. S., & Bens, K. J. (2005).Capitalizing on the internet opportunity. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 20(4/5), 160-168.
- Deighton, J. (1997). Commentary on “Exploring the implications of the Internet for consumer marketing”. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 25(4), 347-351.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000).*Handbook of qualitative research* (2.ed.).Thousand Oaks, US: Sage.
- Deshpandé, R., & Farley, J. U. (2002).Looking at your world through your customer's eyes: Cross-national differences in buyer-seller alliances. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 1(3-4), 3-22.
- Dev, C. S., & Olsen, M. D. (2000). Marketing challenges for the next decade. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 41(1), 41-47.
- Dlodlo, N., & Dhurup, M. (2013).Drivers of E-Marketing Adoption among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Variations with Age of Business Owners.*Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(14), 53.
- Dominici, G. (2009). From marketing mix to e-marketing mix: a literature overview and classification. *International journal of business and management*, 4(9), 17-24.
- Dominici, G. (2009). From marketing mix to e-marketing mix: a literature overview and classification. *International journal of business and management*, 4(9), 17-24.
- Doolin, B., Burgess, L., & Cooper, J. (2002). Evaluating the use of the Web for tourism.A case study from New Zealand. *Journal of Tourism Management*, 557–561.
- Doolin, B., Burgess, L., & Cooper, J. (2002).Evaluating the use of the Web for tourism.A case study from New Zealand. *Journal of Tourism Management*, 557–561.

- Doolin, B., Burgess, L., & Cooper, J. (2002). Evaluating the use of the Web for tourism marketing: a case study from New Zealand. *Tourism management*, 23(5), 557-561.
- Duckett, T., & Nehmzow, U. (1998). Mobile robot self-localisation and measurement of performance in middle-scale environments. *Robotics and Autonomous Systems*, 24(1), 57-69.
- E- Business Watch. (2006). *E-Business Repot*. Brussels: European Commission.
- Easterby-Smith, M. T. R. and Lowe, A. (2002). *Management research: An introduction*.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Snell, R., & Gherardi, S. (1998). Organizational learning: diverging communities of practice?. *Management learning*, 29(3), 259-272.
- Eid, R., & Elbeltagi, I. (2006). The influence of the internet on B-to-B international marketing activities: An empirical study of the UK companies. *Journal of Euromarketing*, 15(2), 51-73.
- Eid, R., & El-Gohary, H. (2013). The impact of E-marketing use on small business enterprises' marketing success. *The Service Industries Journal*, 33(1), 31-50.
- Eid, R., & Trueman, M. (2004). Factors affecting the success of business-to-business international Internet marketing (B-to-B IIM): an empirical study of UK companies. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 104(1), 16-30.
- El-Gohary, H. (2012). Factors affecting E-Marketing adoption and implementation in tourism firms: An empirical investigation of Egyptian small tourism organisations. *Tourism Management*, 33(5), 1256-1269.

- El-Gohary, H. (2012). Factors affecting E-Marketing adoption and implementation in tourism firms: An empirical investigation of Egyptian small tourism organisations. *Tourism Management*, 33(5), 1256-1269.
- El-Gohary, H., Trueman, M., & Fukukawa, K. (2008). The Relationship between E-Marketing and Performance: Towards a Conceptual Framework in a Small Business Enterprises Context. *Journal of Business and Public Policy*, 2(2), 10-28.
- Ellis-Chadwick, F., & Doherty, N. F. (2012). Web advertising: The role of e-mail marketing. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(6), 843-848.
- Ellis-Chadwick, F., & Johnston, K. (2009). Internet marketing: strategy, implementation and practice. D. Chaffey (Ed.). Pearson Education.
- Ellis-Chadwick, F., McConnell, D., & Doherty, N. F. (2007). The applicability of e-procurement in the UK public sector: an exploratory analysis.
- Engström, A., & Salehi-Sangari, E. (2007). *Assessment of Business-to-business (B2B) E-marketplaces' Performance* (Doctoral dissertation, Industrial marketing & e-commerce research group, Luleå University of Technology).
- Ergen, M. (2009). Mobile broadband: including WiMAX and LTE. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Evans, J. R., & King, V. E. (1999). Business-to-business marketing and the world wide web: Planning, managing, and assessing web sites. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 28(4), 343-358.
- Fatima, E. (2015). Tourism Development in Ghana: Towards Poverty Reduction for Sustainable Development. A Case of Abrafo Community.
- Fletcher, R., Bell, J., McNaughton, R., & McNaughton, R. B. (2004). International e-business marketing. Cengage Learning EMEA.

- Frambach, R. T., & Schillewaert, N. (2002). Organizational innovation adoption: A multi-level framework of determinants and opportunities for future research. *Journal of Business Research*, 55(2), 163-176.
- Ghalayini, A. M., & Noble, J. S. (1996). The changing basis of performance measurement. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 16(8), 63-80.
- Ghana Statistical Service (2013). Population and Housing Census 2000. Retrieved on 20th March, 2015 from: <http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/nada/index.php/catalog/3>.
- Ghana Tourism Authority (2015). UNWTO Boss endorses Ghana as preferred tourist destination. Retrieved on 15th April, 2015 from <http://www.ghana.travel/news/201503/245.php>.
- Ghanaweb (2011). Ghana is eleventh friendliest nation – Forbes. Retrieved on 17th March, 2015 from <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php>.
- Gibbs, J. L., & Kraemer, K. L. (2004). A cross-country investigation of the determinants of scope of e-commerce use: an institutional approach. *Electronic Markets*, 14(2), 124-137.
- Graham, J. R., & Harvey, C. R. (1996). Market timing ability and volatility implied in investment newsletters' asset allocation recommendations. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 42(3), 397-421.
- Grandon, E. E., & Pearson, J. M. (2004). Electronic commerce adoption: an empirical study of small and medium US businesses. *Information & management*, 42(1), 197-216.
- Grandson, E., & Pearson, J. (2004). Electronic Commerce Adoption: An Empirical study of Small and Medium US Business. *Information and Management*, 197-216.

- Grandson, E., & Pearson, J. (2004). Electronic Commerce Adoption: An Empirical study of Small and Medium US Business. *Information and Management*, 197-216.
- Greger, K. R., & Peterson, J. S. (2000). Leadership profiles for the new millennium. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 41(1), 16-29.
- GTA (2010) List of licensed accommodation facilities: June, 2010, (Kumasi: Ghana Tourism Authority Office Archives).
- Hair, J. F. (2010). Multivariate data analysis.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., & Tatham, R. L. (2006). *Multivariate data analysis* (Vol. 6). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Hair, J. F., Celsi, M. W., Money, A. H., Samouel, P., & Page, M. J. (2003). *Essentials of business research methods*. ME Sharpe.
- Hair, J. F., Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., & Mena, J. A. (2012). An assessment of the use of partial least squares structural equation modeling in marketing research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 40(3), 414-433.
- Hair, J., Bush R., & Ortinon D., (2006). Marketing research within a changing environment.
- Ham, S., Gon Kim, W., & Jeong, S. (2005). Effect of information technology on performance in upscale hotels
- Ham, S., Kim, W. G., & Jeong, S. (2005). Effect of information technology on performance in upscale hotels. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 24(2), 281-294.
- Hamidi, A., & Safabakhsh, M. (2011). The impact of information technology on E. marketing. *Procedia Computer Science*, 3, 365-368. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 24(2), 281-294.

- Hamidi, A., & Safabakhsh, M. (2011).The impact of information technology on E. marketing.Procedia Computer Science, 3, 365-368.hotels. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 24(2), 281-294.
- Hamill, J. (1997). The Internet and international marketing. International Marketing Review, 14(5), 300-323.
- Hanson, W. A., & Kalyanam, K. (2000).Principles of Internet marketing.South-Western College Pub.
- Hardaker, G., & Graham, G. (2001). *Wired Marketing: Energising Business for e-Commerce*. New York: Wiley.
- Hardaker, G., & Graham, G. (2001).Wired Marketing: Energising Business for e-Commerce. New York: Wiley.
- Harridge-March, S. (2004).Electronic marketing, the new kid on the block.Marketing Intelligence & Planning, 22(3), 297-309.
- Hart, C., Doherty, N., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2000).Retailer adoption of the Internet-Implications for retail marketing. European Journal of Marketing, 34(8), 954-974.
- Heinen, J. (1996). Internet marketing practices. Information Management & Computer Security, 4(5), 7-14.
- Hinson, R. (2006). The internet for academics: towards a holistic adoption model.*Online Information Review*, 30(5), 542-554.
- Hinson, R. E., & Boateng, R. (2007).Perceived benefits and management commitment to e-business usage in selected Ghanaian tourism firms.The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries, 31.

- Hinson, R. E., & Boateng, R. (2007). Perceived benefits and management commitment to e-business usage in selected Ghanaian tourism firms. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, 31.
- Hinson, R. E., & Boateng, R. (2007). Perceived benefits and management commitment to e-business usage in selected Ghanaian tourism firms. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, 31.
- Hinson, R. E., & Boateng, R. (2007). Perceived benefits and management commitment to e-business usage in selected Ghanaian tourism firms. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, 31.
- Hinson, R., & Abor, J. (2005). Internationalizing SME nontraditional exporters and their internet use idiosyncrasies. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 4(2), 229-244.
- Hinson, R., & Amidu, M. (2006). Internet adoption amongst final year students in Ghana's oldest business school. *Library Review*, 55 (5), 314-323.
- Hinson, R., & Sorensen, O. (2006). E-business and small Ghanaian exporters: Preliminary micro firm explorations in the light of a digital divide. *Online Information Review*, 30(2), 116-138.
- Hinson, R., & Sorensen, O. (2006). E-business and small Ghanaian exporters: Preliminary micro firm explorations in the light of a digital divide. *Online Information Review*, 30(2), 116-138.
- Hoffman, D. L., & Fodor, M. (2010). Can you measure the ROI of your social media marketing?. *Sloan Management Review*, 52(1).
- Hoffman, D. L., & Novak, T. P. (1996). Marketing in hypermedia computer-mediated environments: conceptual foundations. *The Journal of Marketing*, 50-68.

- Hoffman, D. L., & Novak, T. P. (1998). Bridging the Digital Divide: The Impact of Race on Computer Access and Internet Use.
- Hoffman, D. L., Novak, T. P., & Peralta, M. (1999). Building consumer trust online. *Communications of the ACM*, 42(4), 80-85.
- Holland, C. P., & Naudé, P. (2004). The metamorphosis of marketing into an information-handling problem. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 19(3), 167-177.
- Holt, D. B. (2006). Toward a sociology of branding. *Journal of consumer culture*, 6(3), 299-302.
- Hsu, C. W., Chang, C. C., & Lin, C. J. (2003). A practical guide to support vector classification.
- Hsu, H. Y., & Tsou, H. T. (2011). Understanding customer experiences in online blog environments. *International Journal of Information Management*, 31(6), 510-523.
<http://thechronicle.com.gh/booming-hospitality-industry-boosts-economic-growth/>
(accessed on 17 March, 2015).
<http://www.ghanahotelsassociation.com/contents/view/29> (accessed on 17 March, 2015)
- <http://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh>.
- <http://www.ghanaweb.com>.
- Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1994). *Data management and analysis methods*.
- Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1994). *Data management and analysis methods*. Sage Publication, London.
- Huo, Y. H. (1998). Information technology and the performance of the restaurant firms. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 22(3), 239-251.

Iacobucci, D., & Churchill, G. (2009). *Marketing research: methodological foundations*. Cengage Learning.

IFAD (2010). Ghana country programme evaluation. Retrieved on 20th March, 2015 from : <http://www.ifad.org/>.

Intan Salwani, M., Marthandan, G., Daud Norzaidi, M., & Choy Chong, S. (2009). E-commerce usage and business performance in the Malaysian tourism sector: empirical analysis. *Information Management & Computer Security*, 17(2), 166-185.

International Financial Corporation(2012). IFC invested Serena Hotel creates 10 jobs per room. Retrieved on 17th March, 2015 from: <http://www.ifc.org>.

International Telecommunication Union. (2014). <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/default.aspx>.

International Telecommunications Union(2014). ICT Indicator Database. Retrieved on 21st March, 2015 from: <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/publications/wtid.aspx>. ISSER (2013). The state of the Ghanaian economy. retrieved on 22nd March, 2015 from: http://isser.edu.gh/files/Press_Kit.pdf .

International Tourism Union(2014). Telecommunications Statistics. Retrieved on 4th May, 2015 from: <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>.

Irvine, W., & Anderson, A. R. (2008). ICT (information communication technology), peripherality and smaller hospitality businesses in Scotland. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 14(4), 200-218.

Isaksen, S., & Tidd, J. (2006). *Meeting the innovation challenge*. UK: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

- Johnson, & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.
- Johnston, R., & Jones, P. (2004). Service productivity: Towards understanding the relationship between operational and customer productivity. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 53(3), 201-213.
- Johnston, R., & Jones, P. (2004). Service productivity: Towards understanding the relationship between operational and customer productivity. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 53(3), 201-213.
- Jones, M. V. (1999). The internationalization of small high-technology firms. *Journal of International Marketing*, 15-41.
- Ju, H., & Gwinner, K. P. (2003). Internet retail customer loyalty: the mediating role of relational benefits. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 14(5), 483-500.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
- Karadag, E., & Dumanoglu, S. (2009). The productivity and competency of information technology in upscale hotels: The perception of hotel managers in Turkey. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 21(4), 479-490.
- Keen, P. G., Mougayar, W., & Torregrossa, T. (1998). *The business Internet and intranets: a manager's guide to key terms and concepts*. Harvard Business Press.
- Kiang, M. Y., & Chi, R. T. (2001). A Framework for Analyzing the Potential Benefits of Internet Marketing. *J. Electron. Commerce Res.*, 2(4), 157-16.

- Kiang, M. Y., Raghu, T. S., & Shang, K. H. M. (2000). Marketing on the Internet—who can benefit from an online marketing approach?. *Decision Support Systems*, 27(4), 383-393.
- Kim, S. S., & Prideaux, B. (2005). Marketing implications arising from a comparative study of international pleasure tourist motivations and other travel-related characteristics of visitors to Korea. *Tourism Management*, 26(3), 347-357.
- Kim, W. G., & Kim, D. J. (2004). Factors affecting online hotel reservation intention between online and non-online customers. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 23(4), 381-395.
- Kitchen, P. J., & Burgmann, I. (2004). *Integrated marketing communication*. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2010). *Principles of marketing*. Pearson Education.
- Kotler, P., Bowen, J. T., Makens, J. C., Xie, Y., & Liang, C. (2006). *Marketing for hospitality and tourism (Vol. 893)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kuan, K. K., & Chau, P. Y. (2001). A perception-based model for EDI adoption in small businesses using a technology–organization–environment framework. *Information & management*, 38(8), 507-521.
- Kumar, R. (2005): *Research Methodology: A Step-By-Step Guide For Beginners*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications
- Lam, S. Y., Chiang, J., & Parasuraman, A. (2008). The effects of the dimensions of technology readiness on technology acceptance: An empirical analysis. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 22(4), 19-39.
- Lazer, W., & Shaw, E. H. (2000). Global marketing management: At the dawn of the new millennium. *Journal of International Marketing*, 8(1), 65-77.

- Levenburg, N. M., & Magal, S. R. (2004).Applying importance-performance analysis to evaluate e-business strategies among small firms.*E-service Journal*, 3(3), 29-48.
- Levenburg, N. M., & Magal, S. R. (2004).Applying importance-performance analysis to evaluate e-business strategies among small firms.*E-service Journal*, 3(3), 29-48.
- Levitt, T. (1986).*Marketing Imagination: New*.Simon and Schuster.
- Lewis, R. C., & Booms, B. H. (1983).The marketing aspects of service quality.Emerging perspectives on services marketing, 65(4), 99-107.
- Liao, Z., & Cheung, M. T. (2002).Internet-based e-banking and consumer attitudes: an empirical study. *Information & Management*, 39(4), 283-295.
- Lin, M. Y., & Chang, L. H. (2003). Determinants of habitual behavior for national and leading brands in China. *Journal of product & brand Management*, 12(2), 94-107.
- Lin, R. J., Chen, R. H., & Kuan-Shun Chiu, K. (2010). Customer relationship management and innovation capability: an empirical study. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 110(1), 111-133.
- Lin, Y. S., & Huang, J. Y. (2006). Internet blogs as a tourism marketing medium: A case study. *Journal of Business Research*, 59(10), 1201-1205.
- Lindblom, A., & Tikkanen, H. (2010). Knowledge creation and business format franchising. *Management Decision*, 48(2), 179-188.
- Lindblom, A., & Tikkanen, H. (2010). Knowledge creation and business format franchising. *Management Decision*, 48(2), 179-188.
- Litvin, S. W., Goldsmith, R. E., & Pan, B. (2008).Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management.*Tourism management*, 29(3), 458-468.
- MacDonald, J. B., & Smith, K. (2004).The effects of technology-mediated communication on industrial buyer behavior. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 33(2), 107-116.

- Mack, T. (2000). Electronic marketing: What you can expect. *Futurist*, 34(2), 40-44.
- Malhotra, N. K. (2012). *Basic marketing research: Integration of social media*. Pearson.
- Malhotra, N. K., Birks, D. F., Palmer, A., & Koenig-Lewis, N. (2007). Market research: an applied approach. *Journal of marketing management*, 27, 1208-1213.
- Malhotra, N., Hall, J., Shaw, M., & Crisp, M. (1996). *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation*. India: Pearson Education.
- Martey, A. (2004). ICT in distance education in Ghana. *Library Hi Tech News*, 21(5), 16-18.
- McDonald, M., & Wilson, H. (1999). *E-marketing: improving marketing effectiveness in a digital world*. Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- McWilliam, G. (2012). Building stronger brands through online communities. *Sloan management review*, 41(3).
- Melewar, T. C., & Smith, N. (2003). The Internet revolution: some global marketing implications. *Marketing intelligence & planning*, 21(6), 363-369.
- Mensah, I. (2009). *Management of tourism and hospitality services*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Ministry of Tourism (2013). Licensed hotels in Ghana. Retrieved on 20th March, 2015 from: <http://www.mofep.gov.gh/sites/default/files/pbb/1%20GHANA%20MINISTRY%20OF%20TOURISM%202013>.
- Miyazaki, A. D., & Fernandez, A. (2000). Internet privacy and security: An examination of online retailer disclosures. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 19(1), 54-61.
- Mohamad, R., & Ismail, N. A. (2009). Electronic commerce adoption in SME: The trend of prior studies. *Journal of Internet Banking and Commerce*, 14(2).

- Morosan, C., & Jeong, M. (2008).Users' perceptions of two types of hotel reservation Web sites. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27(2), 284-292.
- Myers. (1997). Interpretive research in information systems. *Information systems: An emerging discipline*, 239-266.
- Narteh, B., Agbemabiese, G. C., Kodua, P., & Braimah, M. (2013). Relationship marketing and customer loyalty: Evidence from the Ghanaian luxury hotel industry. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 22(4), 407-436.
- Neely, A., & Bourne, M. (2000).Why measurement initiatives fail.*Measuring business excellence*, 4(4), 3-7.
- Neti, S. (2011).Social media and its role in marketing. *International Journal of Enterprise Computing and Business Systems*, 1(2), 1-15.
- Neuman, W. L. (2006). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*.US: Pearson Education.
- Neuman, W. L., & Neuman, W. L. (2006).*Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*.
- Nieves, J., & Segarra-Ciprés, M. (2015). Management innovation in the hotel industry. *Tourism Management*, 46, 51-58.
- Nieves, J., & Segarra-Ciprés, M. (2015).Management innovation in the hotel industry. *Tourism Management*, 46, 51-58.
- Novak, T. P., Hoffman, D. L., & Yung, Y. F. (2000).Measuring the customer experience in online environments: A structural modeling approach.*Marketing science*, 19(1), 22-42.
- Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1978). *Psychometric theory*.McGraw-Hill, New York.

- O'Connor, J., Galvin, E., & Evans, M. J. (2004). *Electronic marketing: Theory and practice for the twenty-first century*. Pearson Education.
- O'Connor, P. (2011). Social media adoption by international hotel companies: A benchmark and exploration of best practices. *Conference on social media in hospitality and tourism*, Oct. 21-22, 2011, in Verona, Italy.
- Oltean, F. D., Gabor, M. R., & Conțiu, L. C. (2014). Relation between Information Technology and Performance: An Empirical Study Concerning the Hotel Industry in Mures County. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 15, 1535-1542.
- Oppenheim, A. N. (1992). *Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Owyang, J. (2009). The future of the social web: In five eras. 2010-02-27]. <http://www.web-statelist.com/blog/2009/04/27/future-of-the-social-web>.
- Pantano, E., & Di Pietro, L. (2013). From e-tourism to f-tourism: emerging issues from negative tourists' online reviews. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 4(3), 211-227.
- Parasuraman, A., & Zinkhan, G. M. (2002). Marketing to and serving customers through the Internet: An overview and research agenda. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 30(4), 286-295.
- Paul, P. (1996). Marketing on the Internet. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 13(4), 27-39.
- Peattie, K., & Peters, L. (1997). The marketing mix in the third age of computing. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 15(3), 142-150.
- Peng, M. W., & Luo, Y. (2000). Managerial ties and firm performance in a transition economy: The nature of a micro-macro link. *Academy of management journal*, 43(3), 486-501.

- Perdue, R. R. (2001). Internet site evaluations: the influence of behavioral experience, existing images, and selected website characteristics. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 11(2-3).
- Pervan, G. (1994). *A case for more case study research in group support systems*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the IFIP TC8 Open Conference on Business Process Re-engineering: Information Systems Opportunities and Challenges.
- Peterson, K. (2002). The professional development of principals: Innovations and opportunities. *Educational administration quarterly*, 38(2), 213-232.
- Pires, G. D., Stanton, J., & Rita, P. (2006). The internet, consumer empowerment and marketing strategies. *European Journal of Marketing*, 40(9/10), 936-949.
- Poon, S., & Jevons, C. (1997). Internet-enabled international marketing: a small business network perspective. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 13(1-3), 29-41.
- Potter, W. J. (2013). *An analysis of thinking and research about qualitative methods*. Routledge.
- Qi, S., Ip, C., Leung, R., & Law, R. (2010, May). A new framework on website evaluation. In *E-Business and E-Government (ICEE), 2010 International Conference on* (pp. 78-81). IEEE.
- Quelch, J. A., & Klein, L. R. (1996). The Internet and international marketing. *Sloan Management Review*, 37(3).
- Reedy, J., Schullo, S., & Zimmerman, K. (2000). Electronic marketing.
- Reid, L. J., Smith, S. L., & McCloskey, R. (2008). The effectiveness of regional marketing alliances: a case study of the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership 2000–2006. *Tourism Management*, 29(3), 581-593.

- Reza Kiani, G. (1998). Marketing opportunities in the digital world. *Internet research*, 8(2), 185-194.
- Robson, C. (2002). *Reel World Research* (2nd Ed) Blackwell, Oxford; Patton.
- Robson, J., & Robson, I. (1996). From shareholders to stakeholders: critical issues for tourism marketers. *Tourism Management*, 17(7), 533-540.
- Rowley, J. (2001). Remodelling marketing communications in an Internet environment. *Internet Research*, 11(3), 203-212.
- Saffu, K., Walker, J. H., & Hinson, R. (2008). Strategic value and electronic commerce adoption among small and medium-sized enterprises in a transitional economy. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 23(6), 395-404.
- Salant, P., & Dillman, D. A. (1994). *How to conduct your own survey* (pp. 137-148). New York: Wiley.
- Samiee, S. (1998). The internet and international marketing: is there a fit?. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 12(4), 5-21.
- Sandeep, K. (2006). Introducing E-MARKPLAN: A practical methodology to plan e-marketing
- Sandeep, K. (2006). Introducing E-MARKPLAN: A practical methodology to plan e-marketing activities. *Business Horizons*, 51-60.
- Saunders M., Levis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research for Business Students* (5th Ed), Pearson Education, Edinburgh Gate, England.
- Saunders, M. N., Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2011). *Research methods for business students*, 5/e: Pearson Education India.
- Scott M. Smith, & Gerald S. Albaum. (2005). *Fundamentals of marketing research*. Sage..

- Sheth, J. N., & Sharma, A. (2005). International e-marketing: opportunities and issues. *International Marketing Review*, 22(6), 611-622.
- Sheth, J. N., & Sharma, A. (2005). International e-marketing: opportunities and issues. *International Marketing Review*, 22(6), 611-622.
- Sigala, M. (2001).Modelling e-marketing strategies: Internet presence and exploitation of Greek Hotels.*Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 11(2/3), 83-104.activities. *Business Horizons*, 51-60.
- Sigala, M. (2001).Modelling e-marketing strategies: Internet presence and exploitation of Greek Hotels.*Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 11(2/3), 83-104.
- Sigala, M. (2003).The information and communication technologies productivity impact on the UK hotel sector.*International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 23(10), 1224-1245
- Sheth, J. N., & Sharma, A. (2005). International e-marketing: opportunities and issues. *International Marketing Review*, 22(6), 611-622.
- Sigala, M. (2005).Integrating customer relationship management in hotel operations: managerial and operational implications. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 24(3), 391-413.
- Siguaw, J. A., Enz, C. A., & Namasivayam, K. (2000).Adoption of information technology in US hotels: strategically driven objectives. *Journal of Travel Research*, 39(2), 192-201.
- Singh, A. J., & Kasavana, M. L. (2005).The impact of information technology on future management of lodging operations: A Delphi study to predict key technological events in 2007 and 2027. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 6(1), 24-37.

- Singh, T., & Hill, M. E. (2003). Consumer privacy and the Internet in Europe: a view from Germany. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 20(7), 634-651.
- Sirakaya, E., Teye, V., & Sonmez, S. (2002). Understanding residents' support for tourism development in the central region of Ghana. *Journal of travel research*, 41(1), 57-67.
- Smith, J. A. (Ed.). (2007). *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. Sage.
- Smith, P. R., & Chaffey, D. (2008). *eMarketing Excellence*. Routledge.
- Sterne, J. (1995). *World Wide Web marketing: integrating the Internet into your marketing strategy*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Stewart, K. L., & Barr, J. (2005). Promotional methods used by hospitality-related firms in close proximity to Pennsylvania Rail-Trails. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 13(2), 55-65.
- Straub, Boudreau, M.-C., & Gefen, D. (2004). Validation guidelines for IS positivist research. *The Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, 13(1), 63.
- Strauss, J., & Frost, R. (1999). *Marketing on the Internet. Principles of Online*, Prentice-hall, upper saddle river, NJ.
- Strauss, J., & Frost, R. (2001). *Building effective web sites*. Prentice Hall Professional Technical Reference.
- Strauss, J., Frost, R., & Ansary, A. I. (2009). *E-marketing*. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Sue, V., & Ritter, L. (2007). *Conducting on-line surveys*: Sage Publications. New York

- Sweeney, S. (2000). *Internet marketing for your tourism business: proven techniques for promoting tourist-based businesses over the Internet*. Maximum Press.
- Tatnall, A., & Lepa, J. (2003). The Internet, e-commerce and older people: an actor-network approach to researching reasons for adoption and use. *Logistics Information Management*, 16(1), 56-63.
- Taylor, M. J., & England, D. (2006). Internet marketing: web site navigational design issues. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 24(1), 77-85.
- Teixeira, T. S. (2014). The rising cost of consumer attention: why you should care, and what you can do about it.
- Tettey, W. J. (2002). ICT, local government capacity building, and civic engagement: An evaluation of the sample initiative in Ghana. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 1(2), 165-192.
- Teye, V. B. (2000). Tourism development experience in Ghana. *DPMN Bulletin*, 7(1), 8-12.
- Teye, V., Sirakaya, E., & Sönmez, S. F. (2002). Residents' attitudes toward tourism development. *Annals of tourism research*, 29(3), 668-688.
- Theodosiou, M., Kehagias, J., & Katsikea, E. (2012). Strategic orientations, marketing capabilities and firm performance: An empirical investigation in the context of frontline managers in service organizations. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41(7), 1058-1070.
- Tippins, M. J., & Sohi, R. S. (2003). IT competency and firm performance: is organizational learning a missing link?. *Strategic Management Journal*, 24(8), 745-761.
- Tsiotsou, R., & Ratten, V. (2010). Future research directions in tourism marketing. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 28(4), 533-544.

- Tsiotsou, R., & Ratten, V. (2010). Future research directions in tourism marketing. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 28(4), 533-544.
- Tull, D. S. & Hawkins, D.I.(2002). *Marketing research meaning measurement and method A* text write cases (5th Ed) Macmillan, New York.
- UNWTO <http://www2.unwto.org/annual-reports> (accessed on 17 March, 2015)
- Varadarajan, R., & Yadav, M. S. (2009). Marketing strategy in an internet-enabled environment: a retrospective on the first ten years of JIM and a prospective on the next ten years. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 23(1), 11-22.
- Vázquez, R., Santos, M. L., & Álvarez, L. I. (2001). Market orientation, innovation and competitive strategies in industrial firms. *Journal of strategic marketing*, 9(1), 69-90.
- Wan, C. S. (2002). The web sites of international tourist hotels and tour wholesalers in Taiwan. *Tourism Management*, 23(2), 155-160.
- Wang, H., Lee, M. K., & Wang, C. (1998). Consumer privacy concerns about Internet marketing. *Communications of the ACM*, 41(3), 63-70.
- Wang, Y., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2006). Identifying the success factors of web-based marketing strategy: An investigation of convention and visitors bureaus in the United States. *Journal of Travel Research*, 44(3), 239-249.
- Wang, Y., & Qualls, W. (2007). Towards a theoretical model of technology adoption in hospitality organizations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 26(3), 560-573.
- Watson, R. T., Pitt, L. F., Berthon, P., & Zinkhan, G. M. (2002). U-commerce: expanding the universe of marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 30(4), 333-347.

- Webster, J., & Watson, R. T. (2002). Analyzing the past to prepare for the future: Writing a literature review. *Management Information Systems Quarterly*, 26(2), 3.
- White, G. K. (1997). International online marketing of foods to US consumers. *International Marketing Review*, 14(5), 376-384.
- Wilson, S. G., & Abel, I. (2002). So you want to get involved in e-commerce. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 31(2), 85-94.
- Woldie, A., Hinson, R., Iddrisu, H., Boateng, R., Волді, А., Хінсон, Р., ... & Боатенг, Р. (2008). Internet banking: an initial look at Ghanaian bank consumer perceptions.
- World Tourism Organization (1999). Tourism Revenue Africa. Retrieved on 5th May 2015 from <http://www2.unwto.org/search/node/revenue>.
- World Tourism Organization (2006). World Tourism. Retrieved on 1st May, 2015 from: <http://www2.unwto.org/search/node/world%20tourism>.
- World Tourism Organization (2009). World Tourism Ranking. Retrieved on 5th May 2015 from <http://www2.unwto.org/search/node/ranking>.
- World Travel and Tourism Council (2013). Tourism Contributions to GDP. Retrieved on 20th March, 2015 from: <http://www.wttc.org/>.
- Wu, F., Mahajan, V., & Balasubramanian, S. (2003). An analysis of e-business adoption and its impact on business performance. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 31(4), 425-447.
- Yan, A., Md-Nor, K. H. A. L. I. L., Abu-Shanab, E. M. A. D., & Sutanonpaiboon, J. (2009). Factors that affect mobile telephone users to use mobile payment solution. *International Journal of Economics and Management*, 3(1), 37-49.

- Yang, X., Ahmed, Z. U., Ghingold, M., Sock Boon, G., Su Mei, T., & Lee Hwa, L. (2003). Consumer preferences for commercial web site design: an Asia-Pacific perspective. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 20(1), 10-27.
- Yang, X., Ahmed, Z. U., Ghingold, M., Sock Boon, G., Su Mei, T., & Lee Hwa, L. (2003). Consumer preferences for commercial web site design: an Asia-Pacific perspective. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 20(1), 10-27.
- Ye, Q., Law, R., & Gu, B. (2009). The impact of online user reviews on hotel room sales. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28(1), 180-182.
- Yin, R. K. (2013). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Sage publications.
- Yuan, Y. L., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2000). Preparing for the new tourism economy: The use of the Internet and intranet in American convention and visitor bureaus. *Information Technology & Tourism*, 3(2), 71-85.
- Zikmund, W.G. 1994. : *Business Research Methods*. 4th Ed. Fort Worth: The Dryden Press.

Appendix: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

This study is being conducted to ascertain the influence that electronic marketing has on the performance of hotels in Ghana. As a participant I will therefore indulge on your assistance to respond to the following questions as sincere and honestly as possible. You are encouraged to respond to all questions and your results will be kept with utmost confidentiality. Thank you for your cooperation.

Name of hotel _____

Part One: Demographic information (Please tick [√])

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Marital Status: Single [] Married [] Divorced [] Other []
3. Age: 20 or under [] 21-30 [] 31-40 [] 41-50 [] 51-60 [] 61+ []
4. Level of education: SHS and below [] Diploma [] First degree [] Masters [] Ph.D. []
5. Online Platforms: Does your hotel use any of the following online platforms in interacting with customers?(you can tick more than one where applicable)
 - a) E-mail [] b) Website [] c) Social Media [] d) None []

Part Two: Electronic Marketing and Hotel Performance

Tick the appropriate number on the Likert scale: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree and 5-Strongly Agree.

		1	2	3	4	5
Websites						
6.	My hotel regularly updates their website with relevant information.					
7.	My hotel's website content is able to engage my attention.					
8.	I can interact with my hotel through their website effectively.					
9.	Customers of my hotel are able to transact business on our website.					
10.	The website provides a mechanism that allows for service evaluation (customer feedback).					
11.	I think that the website of my hotel is a very important tool for conducting business.					
Electronic Mail						
12.	My hotel uses emails to send me personalized account information.					

13.	My name and personal information is always used by my hotel in online communication with me.					
14.	My hotel gives personal attention to my complaints online.					
15.	I am assured of quick response when I send e-mails to my hotel.					
16.	Interaction with my hotel via e-mails is clear and understandable.					
17.	Emails from my hotel are a reliable medium for information and support services.					
Social Media						
18.	My hotel's social media pages engage my attention.					
19.	I contribute to conversations on my hotel's social media page.					
20.	I interact with my hotel through their social media pages.					
21.	Complaints sent through social media are fairly acknowledged and responded to.					
22.	Other customers provide assistance to customers facing challenges on my hotel's social media pages.					
23.	Feedback received from other customers online enhances my service experience.					
Management Commitment						
24.	There is a sufficient support from the top management for the use of website, social media and e-mails.					
25.	Management has committed enough resources to the success of our online platforms.					
26.	Management has implemented a distinct corporate culture that supports our online activities.					
Employee Involvement						
27.	Employees of the hotel are well trained to implement e-marketing initiatives successfully.					
28.	The implementation of e-marketing requires expertise to be successful.					
29.	The Marketing team within my hotel considers our online platforms very useful.					
Performance measures						
30.	The hotel provides excellent services.					
31.	The service delivery standards at the hotel are high.					
32.	The services delivered at the hotel are tailored to my needs.					
33.	The employees of the hotel are quick to address customer needs.					
34.	The hotel guarantees customer satisfaction.					
35.	The hotel provides timely service.					
36.	Customer complaints are treated as important and resolved immediately.					