Social Media Marketing and Customer Relationship Management in Hospitality Industry in Rwanda: A Case of Bethany Investment Group-Hotel (2016-2020)

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzed "Social Media Marketing and Customer Relationship Management in Hospitality Industry. A case of Bethany Investment Group- Hotel (2016- 2020)". The null hypothesis was H0: Social Media Marketing does not influence Customer Relationship Management in Bethany Investment Group- Hotel. Research question was to what extent does social media marketing influence Customer Relationship Management in Bethany Investment Group- Hotel (2016- 2020)? The research used a mix of quantitative and qualitative design and primary data was collected using a questionnaire designed in form of five levels Likert scale composed of open- ended and close- ended questions. The research applied purposive sampling and a sample of 95 respondents including 10 employees and 85 customers. The main findings of the research are the following: (i) Bethany Investment Group- Hotel applies two SMM namely Facebook (mean =4.97), and website (mean =4.92). (ii) SMM does not influence CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel (mean = 1.37 close to 1.00 Strongly Disagree). (iii) Challenges of SMM to Bethany Investment Group- Hotel include: Poor network and separate parts (blocks) not covered by wireless network (mean = 5.00); Culture of routine and not adopting advanced technologies (mean =4.55); Integration of SMM into CRM requires additional staffs (mean =4.37); Underestimation of marketing as intangible work (mean =4.29). (iv) Solutions to cited challenges include: (i) To review IT infrastructure and connect all buildings and areas with wireless (Wi-Fi) for improving customer care service delivery. (ii) To create addresses LinkedIn, WhatsApp, YouTube, Email, and SMS. (iii) To hire an employee in charge of supporting the marketing officer. (iv) To use also traditional mode of marketing such as Radio, TV, posters, and participating in social activities gathering many people. (vi) To optimize its website of the Hotel to search engine (SEO) for easy access for any tourist who want to visit Rwanda. Also its website should be registered to Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) so that Tourists can easily be aware of the services provided by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel.

1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Customer relationship management (CRM) has currently become one of the hottest issues and a focal-center in the business field. Due to the competitive environments among hotels sector, it is essential that hotels should adopt new strategy such as CRM technology to help hotel managers, service customers and to improve organizations performance.

In this line, Jagongo and Kinyua (2013) affirm that social media marketing (SMM) play important role by enabling business ventures to communicate with their customers mutually. The authors argue that SMM can assist business to manage relationships with customers through robust marketing, innovative communication and supply channels, improved

selling of custom-made products, technical support and online interactive community (Jagongo & Kinyua, 2013).

According to Chiang (2014), hospitality industry is a broad category of fields within the service industry that includes lodging, food and drink service, event planning, theme parks, transportation, cruise line, traveling, airline and additional fields within the tourism industry. Hospitality industry concentrates on customer's satisfaction by creating good services and products that will meet their needs. This is a very competitive industry since there can be various types of product and service such as the diversity of cuisine, dining options, drive-through option, variety of beverage, different hotel's themes, etc. Therefore, it is important for service providers to establish a good relationship with customers (Chiang, 2014).

Dyché (2002) defines Customer Relationship Management (CRM) as: "the infrastructure that enable the delineation of an increase in customer value, and the correct means by which to motivate valuable customers to remain loyal, to buy again" (Dyché, 2002). This Dyché's definition brings out the key elements of CRM such as infrastructure, customer value and loyalty. The key infrastructure of CRM is emphasized as people, process and information technology (IT). People contribute to CRM through their involvement in key tasks, such as designing and implementing CRM software, and customer interactions. Peoples' interactions with the customer also play a significant role in customer perception of service quality (Petrillose & Brewer, 2012). The process of CRM determines the way the service is delivered to the customer (Lovelock, Patterson, & Wirtz, 2011). IT is assigned the task of supporting people and processes. It is acknowledged as the key infrastructure that can be used to effectively manage relationships (Chen & Chen, 2014; Ku, 2014).

CRM promotes hostel sector in several ways: (i) CRM is a source of competitive advantage (Mohammed et al., 2014). More specifically, CRM is regarded to be among the best strategies and practices for hotels in order to develop their performance and thus to make sure that their long-term business is survival (Kasim & Minai, 2009; Sigala, 2005; Wu & Lu, 2012; Shamma, 2015). (ii) CRM promotes customer orientation in hotels which indicates the employee's inclination to meet the customers' needs (Fan & Ku, 2010; Ammari, 2014; Mohammed et al., 2014). (iii) CRM increases customer knowledge which in turn leads to customer retention and customer satisfaction (Abdullateef, 2011; Udunuwara, 2015).

The Spring (2013) found 10 reasons why SMM help grow business: (i) Social media does help get the word out by opportunity it provides to grow the relationships with that target audience, strengthen relationships with these connections. (ii) Social media is really popular. The research affirms that with over 1 billion people on Facebook, 200 million people on Twitter, and 200 million more on LinkedIn, social media touch nearly every customer. (iii) Social media sites are free: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and LinkedIn all offer free accounts to users and businesses. (iv) Social media reaches all ages and demographics. (v) Social media users are active (Spring, 2013).

In this line, the use of SMM in hospitality industry- especially hotels- is nowadays mandatory as SMM plays important role in retaining consumers. SMM engages the customer, and through engaging the customer, the business can keep them on its side. This research analyzed the extent to which hostel industry in Rwanda use SMM as CRM technologies. The research used a case of Bethany Investment Group-Hotel Karongi Branch.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

By SMM, the world is becoming "glocal" (from "global" to "local") and is squeezing its economic, social and political boundaries thus giving it a common platform for development. People now rely more on social to learn about events and influenced more than ever by their peers. As a result, Social Medias now play a significant role in forming public opinion. However, Constantinides (2013) list a series of challenges of SMM at global level namely: difficult measuring Social Media Return On Investment (what the business gets back from the time, money and resources you're putting toward social media marketing); Difficult of turning employees into brand advocates; Knowing which social media platform to use; Answering all customer's questions from social media. Hotels in Rwanda are challenged by issue of closing day to day so that some researchers say there are "mushrooming" they appear and disappear at any moment. Kanamugire (2018) and Kalisa (2018) states that by 23 May 2018, dozens of refurbished hotels have closed in the last five years. The author affirms that a one-and-a-half year survey completed in 2018 in Rusizi, Rubavu and the City of Kigali indicates that at least 20 hotels had either been permanently or temporarily closed in the last five years. The researcher listed the following main causes of closure: critical gaps in service delivery; poor management; limited skills in hospitality by some service providers; limited financial literacy (Kalisa, 2018). At these challenges are added the issue of poor

marketing strategies, poor usage of social media marketing and yet Rwandans are increasing mobile phone penetration evaluated at 76.49 in 2019; and lack of customer retention mechanisms. Another issue is the scarcity of literature about the role played by SMM on CRM focusing on Hostels in Rwanda. This research used the case of Bethany Investment Group-Hotel, Karongi Branch and assessed the extent of use of SMM by this Hostel with the aim of providing recommendations to all Hostels in Rwanda facing the same challenges as Bethany Investment Group-Hotel.

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H0: Social Media Marketing does not influence Customer Relationship Management in Bethany Investment Group- Hotel.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

General objective

The general objective of this research is: To assess the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Customer Relationship Management at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch.

Specific objectives

Specific objectives of the research were:

1. To identify Social Media Marketing applied by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch in 2016- 2020.

2. To assess the role of Social Media Marketing in influencing Customer Relationship Management at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch 2016- 2020.

3. To find out challenges faced by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch in relation to Social Media Marketing and to Customer Relationship Management.

4. To suggest solutions to challenges above.

5. THEORETICAL REVIEW: MARKETING MIX THEORY

According to Mintz and Currim (2013), the marketing mix refers to the set of actions, or tactics, that a company uses to promote its brand or product in the market. The term "marketing mix" is a foundation model for businesses, historically centered on product, price, place, and promotion (also known as the "4 Ps"). 4Ps Marketing is simplistically defined as 'putting the right product in the right place, at the right price, at the right time. The contemporary marketing mix, or the 4 Ps, which has become the dominant framework for marketing management decisions, was first published in 1960 (Mintz & Currim, 2013). According to Ivy (2008), Product refers to what the business offers for sale and may

include products or services. Product decisions include the quality, features, benefits, style, design, branding, packaging, services, warranties, guarantees, life cycles, investments and returns (Ivy, 2008). Dominici (2009) defines Price as a set of decisions surrounding list pricing, discount pricing, special offer pricing, credit payment or credit terms. Price refers to the total cost to customer to acquire the product, and may involve both monetary and psychological costs such as the time and effort spent in acquisition (Dominici, 2009). Rafiq (2016) defines Place as the direct or indirect channels to market, geographical distribution, territorial coverage, retail outlet, market location, catalogues, inventory, logistics and order fulfilment (Rafiq, 2016). Hoffman et al. (2010) defines Promotion as the marketing communication used to make the offer known to potential customers and persuade them to investigate it further. Promotion elements include advertising, public relations, direct selling and sales promotions (Hoffman et al. (2010). This theory is related to this research as Bethany Investment Group- Hotel applies several marketing strategies around Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Using social media marketing, the Hotel advertise about its products and services to increase their awareness by customers; the hotel adjust the price to its products and services for challenging competitors; the hotel is located in Karongi District which is a good place as it is a touristic area that could attract more guests. Finally, the hotel has to promote its products and services by improving their presentations to customers such as continuous improvements of its rooms, materials, and mode of service delivery.

6. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

According to Buttle (2014), the concept of customer relationship management started in the early 1970s, when customer satisfaction was evaluated using annual surveys or by front-line asking. In 1982, Kate and Robert D. Kestnbaum introduced the concept of Database marketing, namely applying statistical methods to analyze and gather customer data. The primary goal of customer relationship management systems is to integrate and automate sales, marketing, and customer support. Operational CRM is made up of 3 main components: (i) Sales force automation (It implements sales promotion analysis, automates the tracking of a client's account history for repeated sales or future sales and coordinates sales, marketing, call centers, and retail outlets); (ii) Marketing automation (it focuses on easing the overall marketing process to make it more effective and efficient. CRM tools with marketing automation capabilities can automate repeated tasks, for example, sending out automated marketing emails at certain

times to customers, or posting marketing information on social media.); and (iii) Service automation (through service automation, customers are supported through multiple channels such as phone, email, knowledge bases, ticketing portals, FAQs, and more) (Buttle, 2014). Richards et al. (2008) list the following CRM benefits to customer: (i) Enhanced ability to target profitable customers; (ii) Integrated assistance across channels; (iii) Enhanced sales force efficiency and effectiveness; (iv) Improved pricing; (v) Customized products and services; (vi) Improved customer service efficiency and effectiveness; (vii) Individualized marketing messages also called campaigns; (viii) Connect customers and all channels on a single platform (Richards et al., 2008). Rosman and Stuhura (2013) assessed the Implications of Social Media on Customer Relationship Management and the Hospitality Industry. The research focused on the effect that social media has had on customer relationship management and on marketing for hotels specifically; and how the new social media has affected companies' relationships with their customers, especially as it pertains to the ease of which consumers can now complain or compliment a company. The main findings of the research are the following:

Social Media Marketing promotes CRM
Rosman and Stuhura (2013) found that CRM is important to marketers and brands today as they strive to keep their customers from "straying" to opposing brands. With the advent of the Internet, and social media in particular, it has never been easier to connect with ones consumers than it is now. Traditional CRM helps to manage customer relationships on a huge scale, but it does not help in building mutual trust between buyers and sellers as it is impossible to build trust with thousands of customers over e-mail, mail, or phone. Social Customer Relationship Management is how: The marketer help customers engage with customers, whenever customers need to, wherever customers are, in ways that are convenient to customers; provide customers with the personal experience customers need to keep you engaged, informed, interested and maybe even entertained; transact with each other, or through third parties, in ways that are mutually valuable; get to know each other over time so that marketer can tailor what he/ she does (and how he/ she do it) with customers in mind. This finding is aligned with the research of Woodcock et al., (2011).

Social Media Marketing increases Knowledge about the Customer
Rosman and Stuhura (2013) found that a significant part of CRM, and usually the first step in the relationship process is getting to know your

consumers, their likes, dislikes, and things of that nature. This learning process has been going on for years, especially in the hotel industry, with the comment cards that guests would fill out. Hoteliers have found that review of the information in comment cards enabled them to make management decisions that resulted in improved service operations, increased profitability of the hotel, and increased the loyalty of hotel guests. Social media can make it much easier for companies to learn about their customers, even if it's just by reading what they write online. Through social media marketing, companies should find out what their consumers would like to hear, what they would like to talk about, and what they might find interesting, enjoyable, and valuable; then the company should go about developing and posting content that fits those expectations. These findings are supported by the research of Kaplan and Haenlein (2010).

Social Media Marketing promotes customer retention
Rosman and Stuhura (2013) found that through the use of SCRM a company can get to know their high value customers, and then proceed to market accordingly to those customers, ideally creating the feeling for the customer of being in a one-on-one relationship with the company or brand. In this line, social media has the ability to create a sense of trust between the marketer and the consumer, and it can also lead to better customer service. Through social media marketing, customer service has a strong link to customer satisfaction, which then yields customer loyalty and long-term profitability. And when a company gets their customers involved and engaged through social media marketing, it can lead to lasting working relationships with organizations, and that maintaining ongoing contact is essential to developing and keeping that relationship. These findings are supported by the research of Murphy et al., (2003).

Social Media Marketing increase customer engagement
Rosman and Stuhura (2013) found that through engaging the customer, the marketer can keep them on his/ her side. If marketers are able to engage consumers and move them from just being mildly committed to engaged, they increase the value of that consumer for the company. In this line, different types of social media can have different effects on consumers and consumer brand relationships. A fan page on Facebook allows customers to communicate with one another, and more importantly, to communicate with the company. The use of corporate blogs enables companies to strengthen relationships with their customers. Through SMM, Firms are also

increasingly trying to use online communities to enhance their customer relationships. These fiindings are supported by the research of Hennig-Thurau et al., (2010).

By Social Media Marketing, the "Consumer" becomes "Prosumer"

Rosman and Stuhura (2013) found that with CRM, Social Media Marketing can deliver financial benefits to companies in every sector. The benefits are centered on customer engagement and are not peripheral but fundamental to driving business performance. Financial benefits apply across the customer lifecycle, in acquisition, retention, value development and managing cost to serve. In addition, engaged consumers on social media have the desire to actively engage and to become both **pro**ducers and con**sumers** of information, so called "prosumers". These findings are supported by the research of Woodcock et al., (2011).

Wakaba (2013) analyzed a determination of the extent to which social media marketing is practiced by small and medium hotels in Nairobi. Specific objectives of the research were: to find out the extent to which small and medium businesses practice Social Media Marketing and the other was to establish the problems associated with the practice. In undertaking this study, small and medium hotels in Nairobi were targeted. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The research found that that only 25% of the small and medium hotels had access to the internet. SMM requires that internet connection be available in order to successfully engage in the practice. As a result therefore 14% of small and 36% of medium sized hotels are practicing SMM. The hotels use social networking sites to inform clients of new products as well as give information on directions and how to contact them. A few 33% also use the sites to carry out client satisfaction surveys. The rest of the population relies on traditional media like newspapers, radio, and word of mouth among others for promotional purposes with newspapers being the most favored form of advertising followed by word of mouth. Those engaging in SMM also use the traditional media channels for marketing purposes since SMM is mainly a promotional tool that complements other promotional methods. The study also shows that the most popular networking site used by the respondents is Facebook with 75% of the hotels using it. It is followed by twitter and YouTube with 12.5% each. From the study, one of the advantages identified for using SMM over traditional media is that it is a cheaper media compared to newspapers, television and radio among others and content can be updated in real time. There is also a platform for interaction and feedback can be given instantly as and when required. The findings identify that the problems faced when marketing using social media tools are constant interruptions in network access, cost of internet among those who had no connection, difficulty in reaching all clients and lack of skills to engage in SMM. Other problems included exposure of business ideas to competitors and time consumption when engaging in SMM to which the respondents were of the opinion that a full time manager in charge of SMM only should be employed (Wakaba, 2013).

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study area

This research is limited in space, time and domain. Geographically, this research was conducted on Bethany Investment Group- Hotel located in Bwishyura Sector of Karongi District in Western Province of Rwanda. The Hostel has 52 employees and it has 55 sleeping rooms each one can host 3 people (165 people in total) and 14 VIP rooms. The Hostel has 2 conference rooms one hosting 300 participants and another 80 hosts. This study took into consideration a period of five years (2016- 2020). In fact, adopting a SMM technology can be evaluated as having taken effect after a considerable period of time. Five years are judged enough to get insight on the success of failure of application of any technology. This research is limited on "Marketing" under finance domain. In fact, SMM technologies aim at increasing customers and retaining existing ones. The research focused only on SMM and CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch.

Research design

According to Fischer et al. (2014), research design can be Quantitative, Qualitative or a Mix of both approaches. Quantitative methods emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected mainly through questionnaires or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques. Qualitative Research, on the other side, is primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. Qualitative data collection methods such as include focus groups discussions, individual interviews, and participation/observations (Fischer et al., 2014). This research used a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches: Quantitative approach was applied while collecting statistical data related to the study using a questionnaire designed in form of five levels Likert scale where the scale of measurement was: 1= Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; and 5 = Strongly

Aagree. Qualitative approach was applied by collecting non- numerical data using open- ended questions in the questionnaire.

Sample design

This research used purposive sample of 95 respondents comprising 10 employees of Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch and 85 visitors (consumers) including 62 consumers from abroad and 23 consumers from Rwanda. The technique used to select those respondents is named convenience sampling or purposive. It is a method adopted by researchers where they collect market research data from a conveniently available pool of respondents. The researcher chooses members merely based on proximity and doesn't consider whether they represent the entire population or not (Taherdoost, 2016; Kabir, 2016; Fischer et al., 2014; Majid, 2018). The choice of 85 clients of Bethany Investment Group- Hostel Karongi Branch was done conveniently without making it proportional to the number of customers who consumed the services of the Hostel during past 5 years. The research found convenient to use 85 customers plus 10 employees of the hostel to get insight about Social Media Marketing and Customer Relationship Management in Hospitality Industry. A case of Bethany Investment Group- Hotel (2016- 2020). Among 95 respondents, the research found convenient to include 54 women and 41 men because the researcher noted that women were more than men consuming the services of the Hostel.

Data collection and analysis instruments

Saunders (2012) outlined six data collection methods namely (i) Interviews; (ii) Questionnaires and surveys; (iii) Observations; (iv) Documents and records; (v) Focus groups; (vi) Oral histories (Saunders, 2012). This section describes instruments used in this research as aligned with the collection of primary or secondary data. For collecting primary data from respondents, this research applied a questionnaire that was administrated to a sample of 95 key informants selected by purposive sampling. The questionnaire was designed in form of five levels Likert scale where the scale of measurement was: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree. The questionnaire was composed of open- ended and closed- ended questions. Close- ended questions were to facilitate quick responses and open- ended questions allowed respondents to add new information on the questions prepared by the researcher. The questionnaire was administrated in hard copy papers. Secondary data for this research consists of all information used and that was not provided by the respondents. Such secondary data was collected through internet search and document review techniques. In fact, some information contained in this work was obtained through internet search; but other information was obtained through reading hard copy documents available at Bethany Investment Group- Hostel Karongi Branch. Primary data collected through the questionnaire was designed in form of statistical data where the questions were assigned numbers in a form of tables. Such data was well organized and imported into Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS version 20. This software produced reports in form of descriptive statistics with results in percentages or mean and standard deviation depending on the data. Qualitative data collected through open questions was used to support the results of numerical data.

8. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

8.1. SMM Technologies applied by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel

This is the first objective of the research: To identify Social Media Marketing applied by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch in 2016- 2020. The results are presented in the table below and interpretation is based on mean and standard deviation. The mean between 4.00 and 5.00 means high level of application of SMM; the mean between 3.00 and 4.00 indicates a moderate level; whereas the mean below 3.00 indicates a lower level of application of SMM. The standard deviation below 0.5 indicates homogeneity of answers; while the standard deviation above 0.5 indicates heterogeneity of answers.

Table 1: SMM technologies experienced by Clients at BIG- Hostel (2015- 2019)

SMM technologies	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
I knew Bethany Investment Group- Hotel through Twitter.	85	1.00	.000
I knew Bethany Investment Group- Hotel through Facebook.	85	4.97	.497
I knew Bethany Investment Group- Hotel through LinkedIn.	85	1.00	.000
I knew Bethany Investment Group- Hotel through WhatsApp.	85	1.00	.000
I knew Bethany Investment Group- Hotel through YouTube.	85	1.00	.000
I knew Bethany Investment Group- Hotel through Bethany Website.	85	4.92	.438
I knew Bethany Investment Group- Hotel through Email.	85	1.00	.000
I knew Bethany Investment Group- Hotel through SMS.	85	1.00	.000
Valid N (listwise)	**85**	**1.99**	**.117**

Source: Author's computation of primary data (2020) using IBM SPSS Statistics 23.

The table above shows that Bethany Investment Group- Hotel applies only Facebook (mean =4.97), and website (mean =4.92) as social media marketing techniques.

Table 2: Traditional Marketing Strategies applied by BIG- Hostel (2015- 2019)

Traditional marketing technologies	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Bethany Investment Group- Hotel uses TV in marketing.	10	1.20	.090
Bethany Investment Group- Hotel uses radio in marketing.	10	1.32	.210
Bethany Investment Group- Hotel uses newspapers in marketing.	10	1.11	.160
Bethany Investment Group- Hotel uses posters in marketing.	10	1.19	.250
Bethany Investment Group- Hotel collaborate with staffs at Kigali International Airport as a mean of marketing.	10	2.01	.170
Bethany Investment Group- Hotel use participation in meeting and social events as a mean of marketing.	10	2.18	.060
Bethany Investment Group- Hotel collaborate with staffs of Karongi District as a mean of marketing.	10	4.98	.012
Valid N (listwise)	**10**	**2.00**	**.136**

Source: Author's computation of primary data (2020) using IBM SPSS Statistics 23.

The table above shows that only one traditional mode of marketing is applied by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch: Collaboration with staffs of Karongi District (mean =4.98).

8.2. Role of SMM in influencing CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel

The second objective of the research was "To assess the role of Social Media Marketing in influencing Customer Relationship Management at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch 2016- 2020". This question was asked to employees because they are the ones aware of how SMM influence their SRM. The variables analyzed under Customer Relationship Management are: Customer Knowledge Management (CKM); Customer retention (CR); Lead Management (LM); Customer service (CS); Workflow Automation (WA). The results are presented in the following table below.

Table 3: Influence of SMM on CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel

Influence of SMM on CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
SMM influences Customer Knowledge Management (CKM)	10	1.20	.390
SMM influences Customer retention (CR)	10	1.32	.410
SMM influences Lead Management (LM)	10	1.11	.260
SMM influences Customer service (CS)	10	1.19	.450
SMM influences Workflow Automation (WA)	10	2.01	.270
Valid N (listwise)	**10**	**1.37**	**. 356**

Source: Author, 2021.

The table above shows that there is no influence of SMM on CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel as expressed by the mean value of 1.37 <3.00.

8.3. Challenges of SMM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch

The third objective of this research was "To find out challenges faced by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch in relation to Social Media Marketing and to Customer Relationship Management". The results of the research are presented in the following table.

Table 4: Challenges of integrating SMM into CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel

➢ Challenges to Bethany Investment Group- Hotel

Challenges of integrating SMM into CRM at Bethany Hotel	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Integration of SMM into CRM requires additional staffs.	10	4	5	4.37	.124
Integration of SMM into CRM requires breaking the culture of routine and adopting advanced technologies. This is not easily assimilated by the management of the Hotel.	10	4	5	4.55	.398
The network at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel is not favorable for the promotion of social media. Separate parts (blocks) of Bethany Investment Group- Hotel are not covered by wireless network.	10	5	5	5.00	.177

Integrating SMM into CRM consists of promoting online marketing which is a big task but unfortunately underestimated by employers because it is not tangible work.	10	4	5	4.29	.333
Poor usage of SMM limit the number of guests and the Hostel is not fully exploited.	10	4	5	4.81	.159

Source: Author, 2020.

➢ Challenges to guests

To guests					
Challenges of integrating SMM into CRM at Bethany Hotel	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Poor usage of SMM limits awareness about the Hotel; and currently SMM technologies used (the website and Facebook) provide only limited information on the Hotel.	85	4	5	4.09	.215
Poor usage of SMM limits the conversation between the management of the Hostel and the guest and affect customer retention.	85	4	5	4.37	.164
Due to poor usage of SMM with possibility to get timely feedback, some guests proceed booking and the information does not achieve the concerned staffs and this affect the guest at his/ her arrival.	85	4	5	4.76	.247
Poor usage of SMM affect guests at the Hostel: they are required to use call every time they need service.	85	4	5	4.91	.206
Poor usage of SMM affect service delivery due to the big size of the Hostel and separate blocks without easy way of communication.	85	4	5	4.88	.340

Source: Author, 2020.

Challenges to Bethany Investment Group- Hotel
The table 8 above list challenges of integrating SMM into CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel. 10 employees of the Hotel listed the challenges encountered by the Hotel in implementing SMM: The network at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel is not favorable for the promotion of social media. Separate parts (blocks) of Bethany Investment Group- Hotel are not covered by wireless network (average mean is 5.00); Poor usage of SMM limit the number of guests and the Hostel is not fully exploited (with average mean of 4.81); Integration of SMM into CRM requires breaking the culture of routine and adopt advanced technologies. This is not easily assimilated by the management of the Hotel (average mean is 4.55); Integration of SMM into CRM requires additional staffs (average mean is 4.37); Integrating SMM into CRM consists of promoting online marketing which is a big task but unfortunately underestimated by employers because it is not tangible work (average mean is 4.29).

Challenges to guests of Bethany Investment Group- Hotel
Guests of Bethany Investment Group- Hotel expressed the challenges they encountered due to poor usage of SMM by Bethany Investment Group-Hotel. The main challenges are the following: Poor usage of SMM affect guests at the Hostel: they are required to use call every time they need service (with average mean of 4.91); Poor usage of SMM affect

service delivery due to the big size of the Hostel and separate blocks without easy way of communication (with average mean of 4.88); Due to poor usage of SMM with possibility to get timely feedback, some guests proceed booking and the information does not achieve the concerned staffs and this affect the guest at his/ her arrival (with average mean of 4.76); Poor usage of SMM limits the conversation between the management of the Hostel and the guest and affect customer retention (with average mean of 4.37); and Poor usage of SMM limits awareness about the Hotel and currently SMM technologies used (the website and Facebook) provide only limited information on the Hotel (with average mean of 4.09).

8.4. Solutions to listed challenges
The last objective of the research was "To suggest solutions to challenges above". The question was asked in open- ended mode. The answers provided by respondents are the following: (i) To review its IT infrastructure and connect all buildings and areas with wireless (Wi-Fi) for improving customer care service delivery. (ii) To create addresses LinkedIn; WhatsApp; YouTube; Email and SMS and market hotel's services through those social media for attracting more customers wherever they can be over the world. (iii) To hire an employee in charge of supporting the marketing officer. (iv) To improve Customer Retention through promoting analysis of guests' records about the customers' likes and dislikes and use such results in improving next

services. For example, for guests who book and arrive at the hotel and found that their booking was not captured, such error should be analyzed in deep and solutions should be found in emergency way. (v) To use also traditional mode of marketing such as Radio, TV, posters, and participating in social activities gathering many people. In fact, all modes of marketing have to be improved to market the Hotel. (vi) Trades shows are important especially for the Hotel located in touristic area of Rwanda. Bethany Investment Group- Hotel should have a specialized room for trade shows focusing on crafting activities. This is a recreational activities but also income generating ones. (vii) Lastly, Bethany Investment Group- Hotel should optimize its website to search engine (SEO) for easy access for any tourist who want to visit Rwanda. Also its website should be registered to Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) so that Tourists can easily be aware of the services provided by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel.

9. DISCUSSIONS

This section discusses the main findings aligned with specific objectives. On Objective one, the research found that Bethany Investment Group- Hotel applies only two SMM namely Facebook (mean =4.97), and website (mean =4.92). Through open questions, employees of the hotel affirmed that there is no culture of promoting marketing because the Hotel seem well known and the management does not want to spend much money on marketing. On objective two, the research found that SMM does not influence CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel as expressed by the mean = 1.37. Through open questions employees affirmed that the Hotel is managed in a traditional mode where there is no interest of maintaining relationship with the customer after service. This is aligned with issue of lack of enough staff to run such communication where the staff should be continuously in touch with customers by responding to their queries. This task is conceived as unnecessary. The third objective was about challenges. Main challenges are linked to the network issues at the Hotel where the blocks are separated and are not linked by the wireless which leads the customer always calling for service using traditional mode; the poor culture of SMM; poor mindset about the role of marketing in industry management. Employees affirmed that as long as the Hotel is still performing and always has guests, no efforts to gain competitive advantage will be invested. This led to conclude that there is a need for Bethany Investment Group- Hotel to see far and apply SMM for growth.

The findings from this research refute the findings from other studies. This research found no influence of SMM on CRM and yet other studies found positive influence. A research of Rosman and Stuhura (2013) found that SMM promotes CRM; and CRM is important to marketers and brands today as they strive to keep their customers from "straying" to opposing brands. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) found that SMM influence Knowledge about the Customer. Murphy et al., (2003) found that SMM influence customer retention. Hennig-Thurau et al., (2010) found that SMM increase customer engagement. Woodcock et al., (2011) affirms that Social Media Marketing, the "Consumer" becomes "Prosumer" (Producer-consumer). According to Buttle (2014) and Richards et al. (2008), CRM benefits to customers: (i) Enhanced ability to target profitable customers; (ii) Integrated assistance across channels; (iii) Enhanced sales force efficiency and effectiveness; (iv) Improved pricing; (v) Customized products and services; (vi) Improved customer service efficiency and effectiveness; (vii) Individualized marketing messages also called campaigns; (viii) Connect customers and all channels on a single platform (Buttle (2014; Richards et al., 2008). Nowadays, CRM requires use of SMM as easy and quick tools directing to a wide range of customers over the world. Failure to promote SMM led to poor customer retention as well as poor attraction of new customers. Today, Bethany Investment Group- Hotel is profiting its location in touristic area, but competitors also are aware of that. It is then imperative to shift to modern marketing techniques for sustaining the business in future.

10. CONCLUSION

This research intended to analyze the role of Social Media Marketing on Customer Relationship Management in Bethany Investment Group- Hotel (2016-2020). The null hypothesis was: "H0: Social Media Marketing does not influence Customer Relationship Management in Bethany Investment Group- Hotel". Specific objective were: to identify Social Media Marketing applied by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch in 2016-2020. To assess the role of Social Media Marketing in influencing Customer Relationship Management at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch 2016- 2020. To find out challenges faced by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel Karongi Branch in relation to Social Media Marketing and to Customer Relationship Management. And to suggest solutions to challenges above. The research involved 10 employees and 85 customers. They respondents to a questionnaire designed in form of five level Likert scale and interpretation was based on mean values. Key findings are the following: (i) Bethany Investment Group- Hotel applies two SMM namely Facebook (mean =4.97), and website (mean =4.92).

Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, YouTube, Email, and SMS are not applied. Among traditional mode of marketing namely TV, radio, newspapers, posters, collaboration with staffs at Kigali International Airport as a mean of marketing, participation in meeting and social events as a mean of marketing, and collaboration with staffs of Karongi District as a mean of marketing, the research found that the Hotel uses only Collaboration with staffs of Karongi District (mean =4.98). (ii)The research analyzed the role of SMM in influencing components of CRM namely Customer Knowledge Management (CKM); Customer retention (CR); Lead Management (LM); Customer service (CS); Workflow Automation (WA). The research found that SMM does not influence CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel as expressed by the mean value of 1.37 (close to 1.00 Strongly Disagree). (iii) Challenges of SMM to Bethany Investment Group- Hotel include: The network at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel is not favorable for the promotion of social media. Separate parts (blocks) of Bethany Investment Group- Hotel are not covered by wireless network (average mean is 5.00); Poor usage of SMM limit the number of guests and the Hostel is not fully exploited (with average mean of 4.81); Integration of SMM into CRM requires breaking the culture of routine and adopt advanced technologies. This is not easily assimilated by the management of the Hotel (average mean is 4.55); Integration of SMM into CRM requires additional staffs (average mean is 4.37); Integrating SMM into CRM consists of promoting online marketing which is a big task but unfortunately underestimated by employers because it is not tangible work (average mean is 4.29). Challenges to guests include: Poor usage of SMM affect guests at the Hostel: they are required to use call every time they need service (with average mean of 4.91); Poor usage of SMM affect service delivery due to the big size of the Hostel and separate blocks without easy way of communication (with average mean of 4.88); Due to poor usage of SMM with possibility to get timely feedback, some guests proceed booking and the information does not achieve the concerned staffs and this affect the guest at his/ her arrival (with average mean of 4.76); Poor usage of SMM limits the conversation between the management of the Hostel and the guest and affect customer retention (with average mean of 4.37); and Poor usage of SMM limits awareness about the Hotel and currently SMM technologies used (the website and Facebook) provide only limited information on the Hotel (with average mean of 4.09). The null hypothesis was: "H0: Social Media Marketing does not influence Customer Relationship Management in Bethany Investment Group- Hotel". The research found that there is no influence of SMM on CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel as expressed by the mean value of 1.37 <3.00. Therefore, the research accept the null hypothesis.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Bethany Investment Group- Hotel is recommended the following: (i) To review its IT infrastructure and connect all buildings and areas with wireless (Wi-Fi) for improving customer care service delivery. (ii) To create addresses LinkedIn; WhatsApp; YouTube; Email and SMS and market hotel's services through those social media for attracting more customers wherever they can be over the world. (iii) To hire an employee in charge of supporting the marketing officer. (iv) To use also traditional mode of marketing such as Radio, TV, posters, and participating in social activities gathering many people. (v) Trades shows are important especially for the Hotel located in touristic area of Rwanda. (vi) Lastly, Bethany Investment Group- Hotel should optimize its website to search engine (SEO) for easy access for any tourist who want to visit Rwanda. Also its website should be registered to Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) so that Tourists can easily be aware of the services provided by Bethany Investment Group- Hotel.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research focuses on the extent of integration of SMM into CRM at Bethany Investment Group- Hotel. Further research should analyze "4 Ps" of marketing mix and how it affect the financial performance of the Hotel.

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