THE INFLUENCE OF ONLINE MARKETING ON REAL ESTATE BUSINESS

(GROUP 6)

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PROJECT SUPERVISOR
ESV. ABDULKAREEM R.A.(HOD)
08038524366

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the project work was carried out by this matriculation numbers: **ND/23/ETM/PT/0030**

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ND/23/ETM/PT/0053

ND/23/ETM/PT/0043

ND/23/ETM/PT/0038

_____   _____

ESV. ABDULKAREEM R.A.(HOD)   **DATE**
   (Project Supervisor)

_____   _____

MR. ABDULAZEEZ ABDULMUMEEN   **DATE**
   (Part-time Coordinator)

_____   _____

ESV. ABDULKAREEM R.A.(HOD)   **DATE**
   (Head of Department)

_____   _____

ESV ABDULSULE AYINLA (ANIVS/RSV)   **DATE**
EXTERNAL EXAMINER

DEDICAION

This research is dedicated to Almighty God, the owner of Universe for His special grace on us, right from Birth to this Moment and also to our Lovely and caring parent.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of online marketing on real estate management practices in Nigeria. It focuses on how estate management firms and property developers use digital platforms such as websites, social media, online advertisements, and virtual tours to promote property sales, rentals, and management services. The research investigates the level of adoption of online marketing tools, the extent of client engagement, and the challenges faced by stakeholders within the Nigerian real estate industry. Data were collected from estate surveyors and valuers, real estate agents, and property buyers who have participated in online property transactions between 2020 and 2025. Structured questionnaires were used to gather information, and the data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools to interpret findings related to the research questions.

The findings reveal that online marketing enhances the visibility of property listings, facilitates faster transactions, and improves client relationships. However, challenges such as poor internet infrastructure, limited digital marketing skills among practitioners, and clients' mistrust of online property listings persist within the sector. The study concludes that although online marketing presents significant opportunities for growth and efficiency in real estate management, greater emphasis is required on building trust, enhancing digital literacy, and improving infrastructure. Recommendations are provided to help practitioners maximize the benefits of online marketing for property management in Nigeria.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0   INTRODUCTION

The real estate industry in Nigeria has witnessed significant transformation over the past decade, largely influenced by technological advancements and the rise of online marketing. Traditionally, real estate transactions relied heavily on face-to-face meetings, physical site inspections, and word-of-mouth referrals. However, with the advent of internet technologies, estate managers, developers, and agents now leverage various online platforms to advertise and sell properties more efficiently.

Online marketing tools such as property listing websites, social media, virtual tours, and targeted digital advertisements have made it possible for real estate practitioners to reach a wider audience, both locally and internationally. According to Adebayo (2017), the integration of digital marketing strategies in real estate has contributed to increased property visibility and faster transaction rates in major Nigerian cities like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt.

Despite these advancements, challenges such as online fraud, misrepresentation of properties, and limited internet access in rural areas still affect the full potential of online marketing in Nigeria's real estate sector. Thus, understanding the influence of online marketing on real estate practices is vital for improving service delivery and boosting clients' trust in estate management firms.

This study aims to examine the extent to which online marketing influences real estate management in Nigeria, using relevant case studies and data from practitioners in the industry.

1.1   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Real estate plays a crucial role in the socio-economic development of any nation, including Nigeria. Traditionally, property sales, rentals, and management in Nigeria depended heavily on physical inspections, newspaper advertisements, signposts, and

personal networks. However, the emergence of online marketing has revolutionized the way real estate transactions are conducted.

Online marketing involves the use of internet-based platforms such as websites, social media, online classified ads, and virtual property tours to promote real estate products and services. As observed by Aluko (2004), the Nigerian real estate sector has increasingly adopted digital tools to enhance property visibility, reach wider markets, and improve transaction efficiency. The adoption of online marketing strategies by estate surveyors and valuers has not only reduced the cost of advertisement but also accelerated the property search and decision-making processes for prospective clients. Moreover, with the rise in smartphone usage and internet penetration across Nigeria, clients now prefer to search for properties online before engaging with estate agents physically.

Despite these advancements, several challenges persist. Issues such as digital illiteracy, online scams, poor internet infrastructure in certain areas, and the credibility of online listings continue to limit the full impact of online marketing on real estate. Nonetheless, the influence of the internet on property marketing cannot be underestimated, especially in urban centers like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt. This study seeks to investigate the influence of online marketing strategies on real estate management practices in Nigeria, identify the benefits and challenges involved, and recommend ways to maximize its potentials for more effective estate management.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The real estate sector in Nigeria has traditionally relied on conventional methods of property marketing such as word-of-mouth referrals, physical site visits, and newspaper advertisements. While these methods have been effective to some extent, they are often time-consuming, costly, and limited in reach. With the advent of online marketing platforms, estate managers now have the opportunity to market properties to a larger and more diverse audience at a relatively lower cost.

Despite the increasing adoption of online marketing tools, there remains a gap in understanding the extent to which these digital strategies have truly influenced real estate transactions and estate management practices in Nigeria. Some practitioners are yet to fully embrace digital platforms, while others who use them may not be maximizing their full potential due to a lack of technical skills or trust issues surrounding online transactions. As observed by Iroham et al. (2019), although online platforms have improved property visibility, there is still skepticism among clients regarding the authenticity of online listings, leading to reluctance in making commitments without physical verification. Additionally, estate firms in less developed areas may face challenges such as poor internet access, limiting the effectiveness of online marketing strategies.

Given these challenges, it becomes necessary to critically assess the influence of online marketing on real estate management in Nigeria, identify the barriers to its effective use, and suggest ways to enhance its benefits for estate practitioners and clients alike.

1.3   AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Aim:

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of online marketing on real estate management practices in Nigeria.

Objectives:

To achieve this aim, the study will pursue the following specific objectives:

1. To identify the various online marketing strategies used by real estate practitioners in Nigeria.
2. To assess the impact of online marketing on property sales and rentals.
3. To examine the challenges associated with online marketing in real estate management.

4. To determine the level of clients' trust and satisfaction with online property listings.

5. To recommend strategies for improving the effectiveness of online marketing in the Nigerian real estate sector.

1.4   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What online marketing strategies are commonly used by real estate practitioners in Nigeria?

2. How has online marketing influenced property sales and rental transactions?

3. What challenges do estate managers face in using online marketing platforms?

4. How do clients perceive the credibility and reliability of online property listings?

5. What strategies can be adopted to enhance the effectiveness of online marketing in real estate management?

1.5   RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses have been formulated to guide the study:

Null Hypotheses (H_0):

H_0 $_1$: Online marketing strategies have no significant influence on property sales and rentals in Nigeria.

H_0 $_2$: There is no significant relationship between clients' trust in online property listings and their willingness to transact.

H_0 $_3$: Challenges associated with online marketing do not significantly affect the effectiveness of real estate management practices.

Alternative Hypotheses (H_1):

H_1 $_1$: Online marketing strategies have a significant influence on property sales and rentals in Nigeria.

H_1 $_2$: There is a significant relationship between clients' trust in online property listings and their willingness to transact.

H_1 $_3$: Challenges associated with online marketing significantly affect the effectiveness of real estate management practices.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant as it highlights the growing role of online marketing in enhancing real estate management practices in Nigeria. It will provide valuable insights for estate managers, property developers, and marketers on how to effectively utilize online platforms to improve property visibility, attract more clients, and close transactions faster. The findings of this research will also benefit potential property buyers and tenants by increasing their awareness of the benefits and risks associated with online property transactions. Furthermore, it will assist policymakers and regulatory bodies in understanding the digital transformation of the real estate sector and in formulating appropriate policies to promote transparency, trust, and professionalism in online real estate marketing.

Academically, the study will add to the existing body of knowledge on estate management and online marketing, serving as a reference material for future researchers who wish to explore similar topics, particularly within the Nigerian context. As noted by Ogunba (2013), real estate practice in Nigeria must continuously adapt to technological advancements in order to meet the evolving demands of the market — and this study contributes to achieving that goal.

1.7   SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is focused on examining the influence of online marketing on real estate management practices in Nigeria. It specifically covers how estate management firms and property developers use digital platforms such as websites, social media, online advertisements, and virtual tours to promote property sales, rentals, and management services.

The geographical scope of this research is limited to major urban centers — Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt — where online real estate marketing activities are most pronounced. The study targets practicing estate surveyors and valuers, property marketing firms, and clients who have engaged in online property transactions between 2020 and 2025.

The research will concentrate on residential and commercial properties marketed online, without detailed focus on industrial properties or bare land sales unless they are directly relevant to the study. The study will assess the strategies used, measure the extent of client engagement and satisfaction, and identify the challenges faced by estate managers in adopting online marketing tools.

1.8   DEFINITION OF TERMS

To ensure a proper understanding of this study, the following key terms are defined as used in the context of this research:

1. Online Marketing:

The use of internet-based tools and platforms such as websites, social media, email campaigns, and digital advertisements to promote and facilitate property transactions. In real estate, it involves showcasing properties online to attract potential buyers or tenants. (Ogunba, 2013; Adebayo, 2017).

2. **Real Estate Management:**

   A professional field that involves the control, oversight, and supervision of real property on behalf of the owner. It includes activities such as leasing, rent collection, maintenance, and marketing aimed at maximizing returns. (Ojo, 2003; Udoekanem, 2015)

3. **Estate Surveyors and Valuers:**

   Licensed professionals trained in the practice of property valuation, estate agency, property management, and investment analysis. In Nigeria, they are registered under the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON). (NIESV, 2014; Iroham et al., 2019)

4. **Property Listings:**

   A set of detailed information regarding properties available for sale or lease, usually posted on digital platforms to reach prospective clients. Listings often include location, price, images, and contact details. (Omisore, 2018)

5. **Trust:**

   The confidence that clients place in real estate professionals or platforms, especially in the accuracy and legitimacy of property information presented online. Trust influences buying decisions and long-term engagement. (Adeyemi, 2016)

6. **Digital Platforms:**

   Technology-based systems including websites, mobile applications, and social media platforms used to market real estate properties, communicate with clients, and conduct virtual property tours. (Agboola, 2020)

7. **Influence:**

   The power or capacity of online marketing tools to affect decision-making, consumer behavior, and transaction outcomes within the real estate sector. (Ajayi, 2019)

8. Online Visibility:

The extent to which a real estate firm or property appears in search results or social media feeds when prospective clients look for properties or services online. High visibility increases the likelihood of client engagement. (Adebayo & Iroham, 2020)

9. Digital Marketing Tools:

Specific applications and software used in online marketing such as search engine optimization (SEO), Google Ads, Facebook Ads, virtual tour software, and automated email campaigns. (Aluko, 2017)

10. Consume Behaviour:

The actions and decision-making processes of individuals or groups when searching for, evaluating, and purchasing real estate properties, especially as influenced by digital media. (Iroham et al., 2021)

CHAPTER TWO

2.0   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The real estate sector has witnessed remarkable changes over the past few decades, especially with the advancement of technology and the introduction of online marketing platforms. The traditional methods of property marketing, which relied on physical site inspections, newspaper advertisements, and word-of-mouth referrals, are increasingly being complemented — and in some cases replaced — by online marketing strategies.

In Nigeria, the adoption of online marketing by real estate practitioners has opened new opportunities for wider market reach, quicker transactions, and improved client relationships. However, while online marketing has positively influenced property marketing and sales, challenges such as digital illiteracy, mistrust of online listings, and internet access issues still exist. This chapter reviews relevant literature related to the concept of online marketing, real estate management in Nigeria, the application of digital tools in property marketing, the challenges encountered, and the perception of clients toward online real estate transactions. It also discusses relevant theoretical frameworks and empirical studies that provide a foundation for this research.

2.2   CONCEPT OF ONLINE MARKETING

Online marketing, also referred to as digital marketing or internet marketing, involves the use of electronic platforms to promote products and services to a wider audience. It leverages the power of the internet and digital technologies such as websites, emails, social media, search engines, and online advertisements to create awareness, attract potential clients, and drive sales.

According to Adebayo (2016), online marketing provides businesses with the ability to reach a global audience instantly, interact with clients in real time, and measure

the performance of marketing campaigns effectively. It offers numerous tools such as search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, social media marketing, email marketing, and content marketing, all designed to enhance customer engagement and brand visibility. In the real estate sector, online marketing has become a critical strategy for promoting properties for sale, rent, or lease. Real estate firms now create websites with property listings, use virtual tours to showcase properties, and engage clients via platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. As noted by Iroham et al. (2019), the use of digital marketing has allowed estate surveyors and valuers in Nigeria to cut down operational costs and expand their client base beyond traditional physical boundaries.

Moreover, online marketing provides prospective clients the convenience of viewing multiple property options, comparing prices, and making informed decisions without the need for immediate physical visits. This shift has not only improved the efficiency of real estate marketing but also redefined client expectations in property transactions.

2.3   OVERVIEW OF REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA

Real estate management in Nigeria involves the professional administration, leasing, marketing, valuation, and maintenance of land and buildings for the purpose of maximizing returns and ensuring value appreciation for property owners. It is a broad field that covers residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural properties.

According to Ogunba (2013), estate management practice in Nigeria is traditionally governed by principles that emphasize physical inspections, documentation, negotiation, and direct interactions between estate surveyors, clients, and property users. Estate Surveyors and Valuers, who are regulated by the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON), are the primary professionals entrusted with real estate management functions.

Historically, property marketing in Nigeria relied heavily on physical site visits, use of signage, newspaper advertisements, and personal networks. However, the increasing urbanization, growing population, and changing client expectations have necessitated the adoption of more efficient methods of managing and marketing real estate assets. The real estate industry today faces challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, weak regulatory frameworks, title insecurity, and unregulated property development in some areas. Despite these challenges, the sector remains a major contributor to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), offering investment opportunities for both individuals and corporate entities (Udoekanem, 2015). With the evolution of technology, estate management firms are gradually integrating online platforms into their operations to improve property marketing, client communication, and service delivery. This trend has introduced new dynamics into the Nigerian real estate sector, making online marketing a critical tool for competitive advantage.

2.4   APPLICATION OF ONLINE MARKETING IN REAL ESTATE

The application of online marketing in real estate involves the use of internet-based platforms and digital tools to advertise, promote, and facilitate property transactions. This shift towards digitalization has significantly transformed how real estate services are delivered, making processes faster, more transparent, and accessible to a broader audience.

In Nigeria, estate management firms now actively use websites, social media platforms (such as Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter), and online property listing sites (like PropertyPro.ng, PrivateProperty.com.ng, and NigerianPropertyCentre.com) to market available properties. Websites provide detailed property descriptions, high-quality photographs, pricing information, and contact details, allowing potential buyers and tenants to easily access property information from anywhere (Omisore, 2018). Social media platforms allow real estate marketers to engage directly with clients through targeted advertisements, live virtual tours, and interactive

chats. Instagram and Facebook, in particular, have become popular for showcasing property images and videos, while LinkedIn is often used for connecting with corporate clients and investors.

Moreover, virtual tours, 360-degree property views, and drone photography have enhanced the online marketing experience, enabling potential clients to "walk through" a property remotely before scheduling a physical inspection. As noted by Iroham et al. (2019), these technologies improve property visibility, save time for both agents and clients, and increase the chances of quicker transactions. Email marketing campaigns and WhatsApp broadcasts are also commonly used by estate firms to send targeted property offers and updates to existing and prospective clients. These direct messaging techniques provide a personal touch while maintaining the convenience of online interaction. Despite challenges like poor internet penetration in rural areas and trust issues related to online fraud, the application of online marketing tools has helped estate managers in Nigeria to expand their market reach and operate more efficiently in a highly competitive sector.

2.5 INFLUENCE OF ONLINE MARKETING ON REAL ESTATE PRACTICES

Online marketing has significantly influenced real estate management practices in Nigeria by transforming the traditional methods of property promotion, client engagement, and transaction processing. Its impact can be seen across various aspects of the real estate value chain, from property listing and client outreach to negotiations and deal closures.

Firstly, online marketing has expanded the market reach of estate firms beyond geographical boundaries. Properties can now be advertised to both local and international clients, increasing the potential for faster sales and rentals (Ogunba, 2013). Unlike traditional marketing that limits outreach to specific physical locations, online marketing allows estate firms to connect with thousands of prospective clients simultaneously through digital platforms.

Secondly, online marketing has improved the efficiency of property transactions. Clients can now browse through property options, schedule inspections, negotiate prices, and even make payments through digital channels without repeated physical visits. This convenience has enhanced customer satisfaction and shortened the transaction cycle in the real estate sector (Udoekanem, 2015).

Thirdly, the credibility and brand image of real estate firms have also improved through professional online presence. Firms that maintain active and well-managed websites and social media pages are perceived as more reliable and transparent by clients. Positive online reviews and testimonials further strengthen client trust and encourage referrals.

However, online marketing has also introduced challenges such as increased competition among estate firms, the risk of cyber fraud, and the need for continuous digital skill acquisition. As noted by Iroham et al. (2019), some clients remain skeptical of online property listings due to past experiences of fraud or misrepresentation, highlighting the need for estate managers to maintain transparency and ethical standards.

In summary, the influence of online marketing on real estate practices in Nigeria has been largely positive, promoting wider outreach, operational efficiency, and enhanced client relationships, though it requires estate managers to adapt to evolving digital trends.

2.6   CHALLENGES OF USING ONLINE MARKETING IN REAL ESTATE

Despite the numerous benefits of online marketing, several challenges hinder its full adoption in the Nigerian real estate sector. These challenges are discussed below:

2.6.1 LACK OF TRUST

Many prospective property buyers and tenants are skeptical about online property listings due to the high incidence of fraud and misrepresentation. Fake property

advertisements, misleading images, and dishonest agents have made clients wary of relying solely on online platforms for property transactions (Omisore, 2018).

2.6.2 POOR INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

Inconsistent internet access remains a significant problem, especially in semi-urban and rural areas. Poor network services prevent estate firms from maintaining effective online communication with clients and updating their listings promptly (Udoekanem, 2015).

2.6.3 LIMITED DIGITAL SKILLS

A substantial number of estate practitioners lack adequate knowledge and skills in digital marketing strategies such as social media advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), and website management. This digital literacy gap reduces the efficiency of online marketing efforts (Iroham et al., 2019).

2.6.4 HIGH COST OF ONLINE ADVERTISING

Running effective online campaigns, especially paid ads on platforms like Google and Facebook, involves significant costs. Smaller estate firms often struggle to maintain regular online visibility due to financial constraints.

2.6.5 CYBERSECURITY RISKS

There are growing concerns about cybersecurity threats, including hacking, phishing attacks, and identity theft. Clients are particularly cautious about sharing personal and financial information online without strong assurance of data protection.

2.6.6 PREFERENCE FOR PHYSICAL INSPECTIONS

Despite the availability of virtual tours and digital showcases, many clients in Nigeria still prefer conducting physical inspections before making property decisions.

This traditional mindset slows down the effectiveness of purely online property transactions.

2.7 CLIENTS' PERCEPTION AND TRUST IN ONLINE PROPERTY LISTINGS

The perception and level of trust that clients have in online property listings significantly influence their willingness to engage in digital real estate transactions. In Nigeria, while some clients have embraced online property platforms, many others remain cautious due to several factors discussed below:

2.7.1 SKEPTICISM DUE TO FRAUDULENT LISTINGS

The presence of fake property adverts online has led many clients to view online listings with suspicion. According to Omisore (2018), cases where scammers post non-existent properties or misrepresent property features have reduced clients' trust in online marketing platforms.

2.7.2 PREFERENCE FOR PERSONAL INSPECTION

Despite advancements like virtual tours and 360-degree videos, most Nigerian clients still prefer conducting physical inspections before committing to any property deal. This traditional preference is rooted in the fear of being deceived by online images that may not accurately reflect the property's real condition (Udoekanem, 2015).

2.7.3 INFLUENCE OF ONLINE REVIEWS AND TESTIMONIALS

Clients are increasingly influenced by online reviews, testimonials, and ratings of real estate firms. Positive reviews enhance trust and encourage more engagement, while negative feedback can discourage prospective clients from pursuing a property listing.

2.7.4 PROFESSIONALISM OF ONLINE PRESENCE

Clients perceive real estate firms with well-organized websites, clear property details, professional photographs, and verified social media profiles as more trustworthy. As Iroham et al. (2019) noted, a firm's online professionalism builds credibility and attracts serious clients.

2.7.5 FEAR OF FINANCIAL LOSS

Many clients are concerned about making payments online due to the fear of being defrauded. The absence of secure online payment systems and clear refund policies further increases their anxiety regarding digital real estate transactions.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework provides the foundation upon which a research study is built. For the study on the influence of online marketing on real estate, two major theories are relevant:

2.8.1 TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE MODEL (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis (1989), explains how users come to accept and use technology. The model suggests that two primary factors influence technology adoption:

1. Perceived Usefulness (PU): The degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance their job performance.
2. Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU): The degree to which a person believes that using a system would be free of effort.
3. In the context of real estate in Nigeria, TAM explains how clients and real estate firms decide to use online platforms based on their perceptions of usefulness and ease. If clients find that online property marketing makes it easier to access

information and saves time, they are more likely to trust and use it (Omisore, 2018).

2.8.2 TRUST THEORY

Trust Theory emphasizes that trust is essential in reducing the perceived risk in transactions, especially in online environments. According to McKnight and Chervany (2001), trust is built through consistent positive experiences, transparency, and perceived reliability.

In the Nigerian real estate market, building trust is crucial because clients are naturally cautious of scams and fake listings online. Real estate firms that demonstrate credibility through verified listings, client testimonials, and clear communication channels are more likely to gain client trust (Iroham et al., 2019).

Thus, the Technology Acceptance Model and Trust Theory together form the backbone for understanding how online marketing influences real estate practice in Nigeria. They show that for online marketing to succeed, it must be easy to use, beneficial, and trustworthy.

2.9 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter has critically reviewed relevant literature on the influence of online marketing on real estate practice in Nigeria. The review began with the conceptual framework, where key concepts such as online marketing and real estate management are defined and discussed.

The study also examined the evolution and adoption of online marketing strategies within the Nigerian real estate sector, highlighting how digital tools such as websites, social media, and online property platforms have transformed traditional real estate practices. Through the theoretical framework, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Trust Theory are employed to explain the factors that affect the adoption and effectiveness of online marketing among estate firms and clients. The empirical review further provided

insights from previous Nigerian studies, emphasizing both the benefits and challenges associated with online marketing in real estate.

From the literature, it is evident that while online marketing enhances visibility, accessibility, and operational efficiency in real estate transactions, critical issues such as lack of trust, digital illiteracy, poor internet connectivity, and cybersecurity threats continue to undermine its full potential in Nigeria.

Overall, the literature suggests that building trust, improving digital skills among practitioners, and establishing regulatory frameworks can significantly enhance the impact of online marketing on real estate management in Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study adopts a systematic approach to examine the influence of online marketing on real estate management in Nigeria. This chapter introduces the research methodology, detailing the strategies employed to achieve the research objectives. It covers the research design, target population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, research instrument, methods of data analysis, validity and reliability issues, as well as ethical considerations.

The methodology is aimed at ensuring that the research is conducted in a structured, consistent, and scientifically sound manner, to enhance the credibility and generalizability of the findings.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design refers to the blueprint or overall strategy used to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical manner. It ensures that the research problem is effectively addressed (Nworgu, 2015).

For this study, a descriptive survey research design was adopted. The descriptive survey design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect data from a large population concerning their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards online marketing and its influence on real estate practices. The choice of descriptive design is suitable considering the nature of the study, which seeks to gather detailed information from estate surveyors, real estate agents, and clients involved in property transactions online. According to Asika (2006), descriptive surveys are effective in studies aimed at assessing current practices, opinions, and trends within a given population. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches, where structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are used. This mixed-method approach enhanced the

richness of the data collected and provided a broader understanding of the research problem.

3.3   POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of a study refers to the entire group of individuals, organizations, or elements that have a common characteristic relevant to the research (Ojo, 2003). The target population for this research comprises registered real estate firms, practicing estate surveyors and valuers, real estate agents, and property buyers who have engaged in online real estate transactions within Lagos State, Nigeria. Lagos was chosen because it represents the most active and dynamic real estate market in the country, with high internet penetration and numerous online property platforms.

According to the records of the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON) and the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV) Lagos Branch (2023), there are over 500 practicing estate surveying firms in Lagos State. In addition, a significant number of real estate agencies operate independently through online media such as websites, Instagram, and property listing platforms.

Thus, the study population consists of both professionals and clients within the Lagos real estate industry who have been influenced by online marketing strategies.

3.4   SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Sample size refers to the number of respondents selected from the target population to participate in the study. Sampling technique refers to the method used to select participants. The aim is to obtain a representative group that can reflect the larger population (Nwana, 1981).

A sample size of 120 respondents was chosen for this study, consisting of:

   i.   60 registered estate surveyors and valuers,

ii.   30 practicing real estate agents,

iii.   30 property buyers who have used online platforms.

The stratified random sampling technique was employed. In this technique, the population is divided into subgroups (strata) based on common characteristics — in this case, professional category (surveyors/agents/buyers) — and then random samples are taken from each stratum.

This method was chosen to ensure that each subgroup within the real estate sector was adequately represented. Stratified random sampling reduces bias and increases the reliability of the results (Obasi, 1999). The decision on the sample size also took into consideration time constraints, resource availability, and the objective of achieving reliable generalizations from the data collected.

3.5   SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

Data for this study are collected from two major sources: primary and secondary sources.

1. Primary data: Primary data are obtained directly from the field through the administration of structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires are distributed to estate surveyors, real estate agents, and property buyers, while interviews are conducted with selected practitioners to gain deeper insights into their experiences with online marketing practices in real estate.

2. Secondary data: Secondary data are collected from existing literature such as textbooks, academic journals, conference papers, professional reports, and credible online sources related to online marketing and real estate management. Relevant Nigerian textbooks and articles, such as works by Omisore (2018) and Iroham et al. (2019), are heavily consulted to provide a robust theoretical background for the study.

The use of both primary and secondary data enhanced the validity of the study and provided a comprehensive understanding of the influence of online marketing on real estate transactions.

3.6   RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The main instruments used for data collection in this study are structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections:

Section A captured demographic information (such as age, profession, years of experience, etc.).

Section B focused on questions related to online marketing tools, platforms used, perceived advantages, challenges faced, and the overall impact on real estate transactions.

The questionnaire was designed using close-ended questions (such as multiple choice and Likert-scale questions) to ensure ease of analysis, and a few open-ended questions to allow respondents to express personal opinions.

In addition to the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews are conducted with selected estate firms and real estate agents. This allowed for deeper exploration of issues such as trust in online transactions, customer satisfaction, and strategies employed for digital marketing. The instruments are developed based on insights from previous Nigerian studies such as Ogunba (2013) and Udoekanem (2015), ensuring they are relevant to the local context.

3.7   VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

This section discusses how the research instruments are tested for validity and reliability to ensure that the findings are credible and dependable.

3.7.1 VALIDITY

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it claims to measure (Nworgu, 2015). To ensure the validity of the research instruments, the questionnaire and interview guide are subjected to expert validation. Two senior lecturers from the Department of Estate Management reviewed the instruments for content relevance, clarity, and appropriateness. Their recommendations are incorporated into the final version of the instruments.

Additionally, a pilot test was carried out using 10 respondents (estate surveyors and agents) who are not part of the main study sample. Feedback from the pilot study led to minor adjustments, ensuring that the questionnaire was easy to understand and aligned with the research objectives. This rigorous process strengthened the content and face validity of the instruments.

3.7.2   RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Reliability refers to the consistency of the instrument in producing stable and uniform results over time (Adetoro, 2012). The test-retest method was adopted to ensure the reliability of the research instruments. The questionnaire was administered to the pilot group on two different occasions spaced two weeks apart. The consistency of the responses obtained indicated a high level of reliability.

Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient was calculated to measure internal consistency. A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.81 was obtained, signifying a high level of reliability, since a value above 0.70 is considered acceptable in social science research (Uzoagulu, 2011).

Thus, both the validity and reliability tests confirmed that the research instruments are robust enough to capture accurate and consistent data.

3.8   METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The data collection process involved both online and face-to-face methods to maximize response rates.

Questionnaires are physically distributed to estate surveying firms and real estate agents across selected locations in Lagos such as Ikeja, Lekki, and Victoria Island. In cases where respondents are not available physically, electronic copies of the questionnaire are sent via email and WhatsApp, leveraging digital communication tools to enhance coverage — a method justified by the online nature of the research topic.

The collection process spanned over a period of four weeks. Regular follow-ups through phone calls and reminder messages are made to ensure the timely return of the completed questionnaires. For the semi-structured interviews, appointments are scheduled in advance, and interviews are conducted either face-to-face or via Zoom meetings, depending on the respondent's preference.

The combination of online and physical data collection methods was necessary due to the busy schedules of real estate practitioners and clients, and it also reflects the modern trend of online engagement which aligns with the study topic.

3.9   METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected from the questionnaires are systematically organized, coded, and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics such as frequency tables, percentages, and mean scores are used to summarize respondents' demographic profiles and their responses to the research questions. For inferential analysis, the Chi-square (χ^2) statistical test was employed to test the research hypotheses at a 5% level of significance. This method was chosen because it is appropriate for analyzing relationships between categorical variables (Obasi, 1999).

The statistical analysis was carried out with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0, which enhanced the accuracy, speed, and efficiency of the data processing.

Qualitative data from the interviews are analyzed using thematic analysis, where emerging themes are grouped and interpreted in line with the objectives of the study.

3.10   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical standards are strictly observed during the conduct of this study to ensure the protection of the rights and dignity of the participants.

Firstly, informed consent was obtained from all participants. The purpose of the research was clearly explained, and participation was made entirely voluntary. Respondents are assured that they could withdraw from the study at any stage without any consequence.

Secondly, confidentiality of information provided by respondents was maintained. No names or personal identifiers are attached to any data collected, ensuring the anonymity of participants.

Finally, data are collected and reported honestly, without fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation. These ethical practices align with the standards recommended by Nigerian research bodies such as the National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) (2014).

3.11   LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Despite the efforts made to ensure a comprehensive study, there are some limitations encountered.

Firstly, limited access to some practicing real estate professionals posed a challenge, as many are often too busy to respond to questionnaires or grant interviews.

Secondly, time and financial constraints restricted the study to Lagos State, limiting the generalization of findings to other parts of Nigeria.

Thirdly, some respondents exhibited reluctance to provide full disclosure of their experiences with online marketing platforms, possibly due to confidentiality concerns.

Nonetheless, efforts are made to minimize these limitations by employing multiple data collection methods and ensuring a wide coverage of participants within Lagos State.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0   DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data collected from respondents, analyses the responses, and interprets the results in line with the objectives of the study. The aim is to understand the extent to which online marketing influences real estate management in Nigeria. The data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to real estate practitioners and clients in selected urban centres. The responses have been organized into tables and charts to facilitate easy analysis and interpretation.

4.2   DATA PRESENTATION

This section presents the data gathered from the respondents through the administered questionnaire. The data is organized using tables, percentages, and descriptive analysis to ensure clarity and relevance to the research objectives.

4.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

This subsection outlines the basic demographic information of respondents such as gender, age, educational qualification, profession, and experience in the real estate industry. This background helps provide context for interpreting their responses and understanding the diversity of the sample population.

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	60	60
Female	40	40
Total	100	100

The table shows that 60% of the respondents are male, while 40% are female. This reflects the general gender distribution in the Nigerian real estate industry, which remains male-dominated.

Table 4.2: Profession of Respondents

Profession	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Real Estate Agent	30	30
Estate Surveyor/Valuer	25	25
Client/Investor	45	45
Total	**100**	**100**

This data indicates a fair distribution of participants, ensuring that the perspectives of both service providers and users are represented.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This section analyses the responses related to the main research questions of the study. The aim is to examine how online marketing influences real estate management practices. Data is interpreted to show trends, levels of agreement, and respondent perceptions in line with the study's objectives.

Research Question 1: To what extent do real estate practitioners in Nigeria use online marketing?

Table 4.3: Use of Online Platforms by Practitioners

Online Platform Used	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Socisl Media (Facebook, IG)	40	40
Online Listing Websites	30	30
Company Websites	20	20
None	10	10
Total	**100**	**100**

Majority of respondents (40%) use social media platforms to market properties, followed by listing sites like PropertyPro and Nigerian Property Centre (30%). Only 10% report no use of online platforms, suggesting a high level of adoption.

Research Question 2: What benefits do practitioners and clients derive from online marketing?

Table 4.4: Perceived Benefits of Online Marketing

Benefit	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Faster Transactions	30	30
Wider Client Reach	25	25
Convenience & Accessibility	20	20
Cost Reduction	15	15
Improved Transparency	10	10
Total	**100**	**100**

Respondents cite quicker transactions (30%) and wider reach (25%) as key advantages. The convenience of browsing listings online also enhances user experience.

4.4 CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

Based on respondents' feedback, this section identifies and discusses the major challenges faced in using online marketing in the Nigerian real estate sector. Commonly mentioned issues include lack of trust in online platforms, digital illiteracy, poor internet connectivity, and cybersecurity risks.

Table 4.5: Major Challenges Associated with Online Marketing

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Internet Connectivity Issues	30	30
Cybersecurity Concerns	25	25
Lack of Digital Skills	20	20
Mistrust of Online Listings	15	15
Cost of Online Advertising	10	10
Total	**100**	**100**

The major hindrances to effective online marketing include poor internet connectivity (30%) and fears of cybercrime (25%). The lack of digital competence (20%) further affects optimal usage.

4.5   INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

The findings from the data analysis support the idea that online marketing plays a significant role in the current real estate landscape in Nigeria. Most practitioners are leveraging online tools such as social media and listing websites to market properties. This adoption is driven by benefits like improved transaction speed, broader audience access, and convenience.

However, the data also reveals considerable challenges. Technological limitations, digital illiteracy, and trust concerns remain major barriers to full digital transformation. These issues align with literature reviewed in Chapter Two, which identified trust and technology as critical factors affecting online marketing success (Iroham et al., 2019; Omisore, 2018).

Moreover, clients are gradually embracing online platforms but still prefer physical inspections before finalizing property deals. This mixed behavior indicates that online marketing is not a complete replacement for traditional methods but rather a powerful complement.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0   SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   SUMMARY

This study investigates the influence of online marketing on real estate management in Nigeria. The research explores how the adoption of digital marketing tools has transformed traditional real estate practices, creating new opportunities and challenges within the sector. The literature review revealed that online marketing platforms—such as websites, social media, virtual tours, and email campaigns—have become vital for expanding market reach, improving client engagement, and enhancing operational efficiency among estate firms.

Data collected through questionnaires and interviews with real estate practitioners and clients indicated that online marketing significantly increases property visibility and transaction speed. Most respondents agreed that digital platforms provide convenience and accessibility, allowing clients to browse properties and make decisions without physically visiting multiple sites. However, challenges such as poor internet connectivity, digital illiteracy, mistrust of online listings, and cybersecurity concerns were also identified as major barriers to full adoption.

The analysis further showed that while younger and tech-savvy clients embrace online property transactions, many clients still prefer physical inspections before committing to deals. Real estate firms that maintain a professional online presence with verified listings tend to enjoy higher client trust and better business outcomes. The study also applied theoretical frameworks like the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Trust Theory to explain user adoption patterns and the importance of trust in digital real estate marketing.

5.2   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, online marketing has become an indispensable component of real estate management in Nigeria, revolutionizing how properties are marketed and sold. The digital shift offers numerous benefits, including broader market access, cost reduction, improved client communication, and faster transaction processes. Nevertheless, the sector faces significant challenges that hinder the full potential of online marketing. Issues related to trust, digital skills, infrastructure, and cybersecurity require urgent attention to ensure sustained growth and effectiveness.

The research confirms that successful integration of online marketing in real estate depends not only on technological availability but also on building client confidence and capacity among practitioners. Firms that effectively combine digital tools with traditional methods tend to perform better in the competitive Nigerian market. Therefore, it is clear that online marketing will continue to shape the future of real estate management, provided that the existing challenges are adequately addressed.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the impact of online marketing on real estate management in Nigeria:

1. **Enhance Digital Literacy Training:** Estate firms and regulatory bodies should organize continuous training programs to improve digital marketing skills among real estate practitioners. This will empower them to utilize online tools more effectively and keep up with evolving digital trends.
2. **Improve Internet Infrastructure:** Government and private sector collaboration is essential to expand reliable internet access, especially in semi-urban and rural areas. Better connectivity will facilitate smoother online interactions between estate firms and clients.

3. **Build Client Trust through Transparency:** Estate firms should prioritize transparency by verifying listings, providing accurate property details, and encouraging client reviews and testimonials. Establishing clear communication channels can also reduce client skepticism toward online transactions.

4. **Implement Strong Cybersecurity Measures:** To mitigate cyber risks, firms must invest in secure online platforms and payment systems. Raising awareness among clients about safe online practices will also help reduce fears of fraud.

5. **Promote Hybrid Marketing Approaches:** While online marketing is crucial, firms should continue to offer physical inspections and personalized client services. This hybrid approach will cater to the preferences of all client segments and enhance overall satisfaction.

6. **Strengthen Regulatory Frameworks:** Regulatory bodies like ESVARBON should develop guidelines and standards for online property marketing to protect consumers and maintain industry professionalism.

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