

**BEING TEXT OF A LECTURE SERIES ON
PROMOTING CRAFTS INDUSTRY FOR ECONOMIC
TRANSFORMATION**

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1.0 OPENING REMARKS

Let me start by expressing my profound appreciation for the opportunity given to me to serve as one of the resource persons for this important occasion. I equally want to seize this forum to congratulate the National Council for Arts & Culture for the successful staging of the 3rd edition of the African Arts and Crafts Expo tagged “**AFAC 2011**”. The expo with a theme: **Promoting Crafts Industry for Economy Transformation** is an important landmark achievement in the continent quest for a sustainable and virile economy. The topic for discussion which is “*Promoting Crafts Industry for Economy Transformation*” is an important aspect of business which will go a long way in achieving the objective of the forum as it will provide in-depth understanding of promoting import and export business of African Arts and Crafts to buyers world wide and it will enhance the capacities of participants in the area of requisite strategies for promotion of crafts and marketing generally not only from the Nigerian perspective but African perspective at large. A good introduction to the field of marketing and its application to the Nigerian crafts industry can never be over-emphasized.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing is perhaps the most complex and challenging function performed by business firms. Every firm engages in Marketing. How well organizations perform this function ultimately determines their success or failure in the competitive marketing environment. As an indication of the growing importance of marketing, many crafts businesses lies solely on their marketing expertise for the business to thrive but what is marketing in itself and what functions do marketers performed in an effort to get rid of their surpluses?

When asked to define marketing most people would probably say that marketing is merely buying and selling or selling and promoting in order to increase sales. Marketing includes more than buying and selling, it involves whole lots of activities performed by an organization to direct the flow of needs satisfying goods and services from the producer to consumer or user.

Peter Drucker (1975) defined Marketing as the whole business seen from the point of view of its final result, customer satisfaction.

Ryam sees marketing as a bridge between production and consumption while, Jerome M.C. McCarthy defined Marketing as a way of managing a business, so that each critical decision is made with the prior and full knowledge of the impact of that decision on the customer.

Ferrell asserted that Marketing consist of individual and organizational activities aimed at facilitating and expediting exchange within a set of dynamic environmental forces.

America Marketing Association (1935) defined 'marketing as the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from the producer to consumer or user'.

All these definitions provide useful but practical perspectives on the nature of marketing. But the definition that serves our purpose best since it is however rooted in human behavior is as follows

"Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and satisfying needs and wants through exchange process" (Kotler, 1991).

This definition rests on the following core concepts; needs, wants and demands, products (goods, services and ideas), value, cost and satisfaction; exchange, transactions and relationships; markets; and marketing and marketers.

One stage precedes and chronologically leads to its next concepts for instance needs, wants, and demands leads to the creation of products to satisfy them which is term to give value and satisfaction that could be obtained by the customer through exchange, transaction and other relationships.

Crafts Marketers must be making efforts to from time to time be communicating information about their products through aggressive and effective promotional activities. Understanding promotion and it's mix strategies will help in designing the kind of promotion that will meaningful and effectively convincing which will subsequently result to sustainable competitive advantage.

2.0 PROMOTION

Promotion refers to the use of communication with the twin objective of informing potential customers about a product and persuading them to buy it. In other words, promotion is an important element of marketing mix by which marketers make use of various tools of communication to encourage exchange of goods and services in the market.

2.1 Promotion Mix

Promotion of products and services include activities that communicate availability, features, merits, etc. of the products to the target customers and persuade them to buy it. Most marketing organisations undertake various promotional activities and spend substantial amount of money on the promotion of their goods through using number of tools such as advertising, personal selling and sales promotion techniques (like price discounts, free samples, etc.). A large number of decisions are to be taken in each of the area specified above. For example, in the respect of advertising it is important to decide about the

message, the media to be used (example print-media–newspaper, magazines, etc. the objections of customers, etc.).

The success of a market offer will depend on how well these ingredients are mixed to create superior value for the customers and simultaneously achieve their sale and profit objectives.

Let us say a firm would like to achieve necessary volume of sale at a cost that will permit a desired level of profit. But so many alternative mixes can be adopted by a firm to achieve these objectives. The issue before a firm then is to decide what would be the most effective combination of elements to achieve the given objectives. What combination of these elements is used by a firm will depend upon various factors such as nature of market, nature product, the promotions budget, objectives of promotion, etc. Let us first know about these elements in some details.

2.1.1 Advertising

Advertising is perhaps the most commonly used tool of promotion. It is an impersonal form of communication, which is paid for by the marketers (sponsors) to promote some goods or service. The most common modes of advertising are 'newspapers', 'magazines', 'television', and 'radio'. The important distinguishing features of advertising are as follows:

(i) *Paid Form*: Advertising is a paid form of communication. That is, the sponsor has to bear the cost of communicating with the prospects.

(ii) *Impersonality*: There is no direct face-to-face contact between the prospect and the advertiser. It is therefore, referred to as impersonal method of promotion. Advertising creates a monologue and not a dialogue.

(iii) *Identified Sponsor*: Advertising is undertaken by some identified individual or company, who makes the advertising efforts and also bears the cost of it.

Merits of Advertising

Advertising, as a medium of communication, has the following merits:

(i) *Mass Reach*: Advertising is a medium through which a large number of people can be reached over a vast geographical area. For example, an advertisement message placed in a national daily reaches Naira of its subscribers.

(ii) *Enhancing Customer Satisfaction and Confidence*: Advertising creates confidence amongst prospective buyers as they feel more comfortable and assured about the product quality and hence feel more satisfied.

(iii) *Expressiveness*: With the developments in art, computer designs, and graphics, advertising has developed into one of the most forceful medium of

communication. With the special effects that can be created, even simple products and messages can look very attractive.

(iv) *Economy*: Advertising is a very economical mode of communication if large number of people is to be reached. Because of its wide reach, the overall cost of advertising gets spread over numerous communication links established. As a result the per-unit cost of reach comes low.

Criticisms of Advertising

The major criticisms of advertising are stated as follows:

1. Add up to the Cost of Product: The opponents of advertising argue that advertising unnecessarily adds to the cost of product, which is ultimately passed on to the buyers in the form of high prices. An advertisement on TV, for a few seconds, for example, costs the marketers several Naira. Similarly an advertisement in print media say in a newspaper or a magazine costs the marketers a large amount of money. The money spent adds to the cost, which is an important factor in fixation of the price of a product. True, advertisement of a product costs lot of money but it helps to increase the demand for the product as large number of potential buyers come to know about the availability of the products, its features etc. and are persuaded to buy it. The increased demand leads to higher production, which brings with it the economies of scale. As a result, the per unit cost of production comes down as the total cost is divided by larger number of units. Thus, the expenditure on advertisement adds to the total cost but the per unit cost comes down which in fact lessens the burden of consumers rather than adding to it.

2. Undermines Social Values: Another important criticism of advertising is that it undermines social values and promotes materialism. It breeds discontent among people as they come to know about new products and feel dissatisfied with their present state of affairs. Some advertisements show new life styles, which don't find social approval.

This criticism is not entirely true. Advertisement in fact helps buyers by informing them about the new products, which may be improvement over the existing products. If the buyers are not informed about these products, they may be using inefficient products. Further, the job of an advertisement is to inform. The final choice to buy or not to buy anyway rests with the buyers. They will buy if the advertised product satisfies some of their needs. They may be motivated to work harder to be able to purchase these products.

3. Confuses the Buyers: Another criticism against advertisement is that so many products are being advertised which makes similar claims that the buyer gets confused as to which one is true and which one should be relied upon. For example, we may note similar claims of whiteness or stain removing abilities in competing brands of detergent powder or claims of whiteness of tooth or 'feelings

of freshness' in competing brands of toothpaste that it is sometimes confusing to us as to which one to buy.

The supporters of advertisement, however, argue that we are all rational human beings who make our decisions for purchase of products on factors such as price, style, size, etc. Thus the buyers can clear their confusion by analysing the information provided on the advertisements and other sources before taking a decision to purchase a product. However, this criticism cannot be completely overruled.

4. Encourages Sale of Inferior Products: Advertising does not distinguish between superior and inferior products and persuade people to purchase even the inferior products. In fact superiority and inferiority depends on the quality, which is a relative concept. The desired level of quality will depend on the economic status and preferences of the target customers. Advertisements sell products of a given quality and the buyers will buy if it suits their requirements. No advertisement should however, make false claim about the quality of a product. If a firm makes false claims it can be prosecuted for the same.

5. Some Advertisements are in Bad Taste: Another criticism against advertising is that some advertisements are in bad taste. These show something which is not approved by some people say advertisements showing women dancing when not required or running after a man because he is wearing a particular suit or using a particular perfume are certainly not good. Some advertisements distort the relationship like employer employee and are quite offensive.

We have seen the views of the opponents and the proponents of advertising. There may be some chances of misuse of advertising as a tool, which can be properly safeguarded by the law or by developing a code of conduct by the advertisers, for their self regulation.

However, most of the criticisms against advertising are not entirely true. In the changed economic environment of globalization, advertising is considered as an important tool of marketing. It helps a firm in effectively communicating with its target market, increasing the sale and thereby reducing the per unit cost of production. It is not a social waste; rather it adds value to the social cause by giving a boost to production and generating employment.

The 6 Laws of Craft Business Advertising Success

Craft business advertising is a science and an art. Companies often miss the fundamentals of advertising regardless of the size of their business. An understanding of the laws of advertising can reap huge rewards.

According to Small Business Administration, 5% of an entrepreneur's gross sales should be budgeted for advertising. The six laws are presented below:

1. Use One Message: A high response rate ad usually conveys a single message that is simple and compelling. Your craft business advertising needs to quickly communicate its core message in 3 seconds or less.

2. Add Credibility: It has become human nature to distrust advertising. Claims need to be real and credible. Roy H. Williams, best-selling author of the "Wizard of Ads" says, "Any claim made in your advertising which your customer does not perceive as the truth is a horrible waste of ad dollars."

3. Test Everything: Large businesses have a greater margin to waste capital and resources without testing advertising. Craft businesses do not have the luxury. Use coupons, codes, and specials to measure the headline, timing, and placement of your ad. Test only one item at a time and one medium. Testing can be as simple as asking every customer for several weeks how they heard of your business.

4. Be Easy to Contact: Every single brochure, box, email and all company literature should have full contact information including: website and email address, phone and fax numbers, and company address. It seems simple but is forgotten by most companies.

5. Match Ads to Target: Successful Craft business advertising speaks to one target market only. The ads should be targeted to a particular market. An ad in a medical publication preached the cardio-vascular benefits of cross-country skiing to heart patients. Ads in women's magazines discussed the weight-loss and calorie burn from cross-country skiing. Focus the message to the target group.

6. Create Curiosity: Successful Craft business advertising does not sell a product or service; they create ads that generate interest and make the customer want more information.

Having a poor response is not the medium's fault. Often the problem is the message. Craft business advertising is not a quick fix solution to marketing your company. It takes planning, testing and constant exposure to have an impact on your small business. Done correctly, small business advertising can be a winning strategy.

Cheaper Ways of Advertising Your Arts & Craft Business

Never say that you cannot afford to advertise your arts & craft business. Start small and work your way up! These tools work hand in hand with promoting a

successful online business. Here are some ideas to get you started in the right direction.

Low Cost Advertising

Business Cards

With the stationary readily available and a good desktop publishing program you can design a very professional business card for a very small investment. One advantage to printing your own cards is you can print smaller quantities; then as your business changes you can reprint cards. Be sure to include your name, address, telephone, fax, and website address. One neat trick I learned from a customer was to list the type of products you offer on the back of your business cards. This is great for those who "look now and buy later" from either your website or via telephone orders.

Hang tags are a great way to advertise your business. When designing your hang tag include your logo, business name, address, telephone number and website address. Incorporate a space at the very bottom of the tag for selling price, when the item is sold, prior to bagging or wrapping you can cut off the price. Strive for a very professional look so that even when the purchase is given as a gift the tag remains as part of your product. These tags often lead to repeat sales. As your advertising budget grows you can have your tags professionally done with a perforated edge to remove the price.

Magnetic Signage

Consider magnetic signage for both your truck or van and your show trailer. Staples offers a "do it yourself kit" for around \$30 for 2 signs, complete with letters, numbers and extra tape. As an artisan or crafter you can elaborate on the kit and create a sign that is very unique. Magnetic signs can also be purchased through a reputable sign maker, prices will be based on the size, colors and quantity ordered (they usually offer a quantity discount when you order 2 or more).

Sales Brochures are another great tool. You can choose most any style but my favorites are the tri-fold and a post card. The **tri-fold** gives you an opportunity for mail order, web site information, business background , and doubles as a self contained mailer. Desk top publishing programs can help you with a design and you can just fill in the important information. I like to design my brochures as a mini catalog, giving my customers the opportunity to order from the brochure. Often I will include them along with my newsletter bulk mailing.

Start with a basic black and white brochure that can be used as a bag stuffer or as a take one on your sales counter. Tri-fold paper is also available in most stationary stores, pre-creased and in a

multitude of plain to fancy backgrounds. Or they can be photocopied on colored paper and folded at an office supply store very reasonably and will give your brochure a professional look. As your sales and profits grow you can add color and have them professionally printed.

Post cards can be a very powerful advertising tool. They are inexpensive to print and mail. Plus they capture the audience quick. They can be designed either vertically or horizontally for the advertising portion. Remember if you are planning to mail them be sure to use a standard horizontal layout for your address portion or you'll pay a small fortune for postage. Check with your local post office for the nearest Postal Business Center near you and they can offer tips on designing mail pieces.

Newsletters can promote sales. My first newsletter was created as a "*take one*" for my studio/shop and craft shows. The response was so beneficial that I began mailing them and the customers love it. A hard copy newsletter can also be used as an email newsletter. Email newsletters are virtually free and can also be posted on your site giving you an opportunity to add more content that is relevant to your audience and customers. Please remember to have an opt-out message on your email mailing list so you are not flagged for spamming.

Mailing List Now you are thinking - mailing list - this is expensive. Building the actual mailing list is not expensive. You need to think in terms of creating a valuable tool to use as your advertising budget grows. It can be used to notify past customers of a particular show; let them know you are returning to their area on a certain date. You can even incorporate a special just for those customers. As an artisan you may have customers who collect your work; use it to notify those customers when you have new designs to offer. Announce the "Grand Opening" of your website or brick and mortar store....the possibilities are endless how you can use your mailing list effectively.

Press Releases are an excellent way to promote your business. Local newspapers often run a weekly insert promoting what's going on in the "Neighborhood". Things of interest for a press release are: awards you have won, new product release, grand opening of a studio or artisan co-op, business expansion, and community relations (instructional classes given to youth groups or senior citizens). Check your yellow pages for small businesses that specialize in press release writing if you are unable to create one on your own. A well written press release can be worth its weight in gold.

Order stuffers come in many shapes and forms. Some artisans have success purchasing **magnetic business cards** and swear they receive repeat sales from their customers. Bet you have a few magnets stuck on the refrigerator!

Mail order brochures can be used as an order stuffer. Customers often give them to friends and family who do not have internet access or who prefer not to order online.

Co-op order stuffers - an enterprising group of artisans can create advertising packets which include other merchants cards or brochures in their orders. This type of advertising works well when the group has a diversified array of products to offer that compliment one another.

Chamber of Commerce: Most chamber group will have a monthly newsletter offering advertising opportunities, brochure placement, educational seminars, networking and more.

Direct Mail

Remember the mailing list that you started and compile faithfully? Here's some ideas and information on putting it to use!

Post Card Mailings are the best value for your money. First, the post card is first class. Why is this important? First class mail is forwarded for 1 full year, then for the next 6 months it is returned to the sender with address update information if your customer has moved. In addition, by adding the ancillary endorsement "*Return Service Requested*" the post card will be return to you at no charge with a customer's new address. Using these tools will enable you to maintain a clean, up to date mailing list. Next, the postage for a post card is actually cheaper than most bulk rate mailing rates depending on the type of bulk mail you use or your mailing qualifies for. Post cards can also be mailed using a pre-cancelled stamp mailing permit (more information below). Finally, you can design and print them yourself or have them printed at a lower cost than a tri fold mailing. Use your post cards for upcoming shows, grand openings, new products, a sale, holiday promotions, etc.

Bulk Mailings can save you money depending on how you use them. One thing to remember is that an imprint mailing requires you purchase a bulk mail imprint permit and pay an annual fee. In addition, you are required to properly prepare the mailing or you will not receive your discounted postage rate. The biggest savings on a bulk mailing comes when you create a "box stuffer" that is delivered to each and every home on a particular mail route or post office box section. This can be very effective if you have a brick and mortar store. Bulk mailings actually only save you money if you use your permit 2 or 3 times a year or mail a minimum of 1500 pieces (letter size). Bulk mailings do not have the same delivery standards as first class so you will have to plan in advance when using this means of advertising.

Local or Regional Advertising

Consider the neighborhood shopper or weekly newspaper; they are usually cheaper than a full circulation daily newspaper, magazine or other media. Search the Internet for regional papers that are geared towards your products or shop. Some of these papers offer special sections for certain areas of interest for local shopping, craft shows, etc. Contact your local tourist center and inquire about placing your brochure, there is usually a nominal fee for this service.

Monthly Periodicals and Magazines

Monthly publications are usually very expensive but one thing to remember is that the research for rates and fees is free; the only investment is your time. Positioning and marketing your business is very important when you take on this form of advertising; you need to research well to get the best fit for your business. You can take it a step further and contact present advertisers in your target publications and ask if they will share their experiences with the publications you are considering.

2.1.2 Personal Selling

Personal selling involves oral presentation of message in the form of conversation with one or more prospective customers for the purpose of making sales. It is a personal form of communication. Companies appoint salespersons to contact prospective buyers and create awareness about the product and develop product preferences with the aim of making sale.

Features of Personal Selling

- (i) Personal Form:* In personal selling a direct face-to-face dialogue takes place that involves an interactive relationship between the seller and the buyer.
- (ii) Development of Relationship:* Personal selling allows a salesperson to develop personal relationships with the prospective customers, which may become important in making sale.

Merits of Personal Selling

- (i) Flexibility:* There is lot of flexibility in personal selling. The sales presentation can be adjusted to fit the specific needs of the individual customers.
- (ii) Direct Feedback:* As there is direct face-to-face communication in personal selling, it is possible to take a direct feedback from the customer and to adapt the presentation according to the needs of the prospects.
- (iii) Minimum Wastage:* The wastage of efforts in personal selling can be minimized as company can decide the target customers before making any contact with them.

Role of Personal Selling

Personal selling plays a very important role in the marketing of goods and services. The importance of personal selling to businessmen, customers and society may be described as below.

Importance to Crafts Business

Personal selling is a powerful tool for creating demand for a firm's products and increasing their sale. The importance of personal selling to a business organisation may be described as follows:

(i) Effective Promotional Tool: Personal selling is very effective promotional tool, which helps in influencing the prospects about the merits of a product and thereby increasing its sale.

(ii) Flexible Tool: Personal selling is more flexible than other tools of promotion such as advertising and sales promotion. It helps business persons in adopting their offer in varying purchase situations.

(iii) Minimizes Wastage of Efforts: Compared with other tools of promotion, the possibility of wastage of efforts in personal selling is minimum. This helps the business persons in bringing economy in their efforts.

(iv) Consumer Attention: There is an opportunity to detect the loss of consumer attention and interest in a personal selling situation. This helps a business person in successfully completing the sale.

(v) Lasting Relationship: Personal selling helps to develop lasting relationship between the sales persons and the customers, which is very important for achieving the objectives of business.

(vi) Personal Rapport: Development of personal rapport with customers increases the competitive strength of a business organisation.

(vii) Role in Introduction Stage: Personal selling plays very important role in the introduction stage of a new product as it helps in persuading customers about the merits of the product.

(viii) Link with Customers: Sales people play three different roles, namely persuasive role, service role and informative role, and thereby link a business firm to its customers.

Importance to Customers

This role of personal selling becomes more important for the illiterate and rural customers, who do not have many other means of getting product information. The customers are benefited by personal selling in the following ways:

(i) *Help in Identifying Needs:* Personal selling helps the customers in identifying their needs and wants and in knowing how these can best be satisfied.

(ii) *Latest Market Information:* Customers get latest market information regarding price changes, product availability and shortages and new product introduction, which help them in taking the purchase decisions in a better way.

(iii) *Expert Advice:* Customers get expert advice and guidance in purchasing various goods and services, which help them in making better purchase.

(iv) *Induces Customers:* Personal selling induces customers to purchase new products that satisfy their needs in a better way and thereby helps in improving their standards of living. Importance to Society Personal selling plays a very productive role in the economic progress of a society. The more specific benefits of personal selling to a society are as follows:

2.1.3 Sales Promotion

Sales promotion refers to short-term incentives, which are designed to encourage the buyers to make immediate purchase of a product or service. These include all promotional efforts other than advertising, personal selling and publicity, used by a company to boost its sales. Sales promotion activities include offering cash discounts, sales contests, free gift offers, and free sample distribution. Sales promotion is usually undertaken to supplement other promotional efforts such as advertising and personal selling. Companies use sales promotion tools specifically designed to promote to customers (e.g., free samples, discounts, and contests), tradesmen or middlemen (e.g., cooperative advertising, dealer discounts and dealer incentives and contests) and to sales person (e.g., bonus, salesmen contests, and special offers). Sales promotions include only those activities that are used to provide short term incentives to boost the sales of a firm.

Merits of Sales Promotion

(i) *Attention Value:* Sales promotion activities attract attention of the people because of the use of incentives.

(ii) *Useful in New Product Launch:* Sales promotion tools can be very effective at the time of introduction of a new product in the market. It induces people to break away from their regular buying behaviour and try the new product.

(iii) *Synergy in Total Promotional Efforts:* Sales promotion activities are designed to supplement the personal selling and advertising efforts used by a firm and add to the overall effectiveness of the promotional efforts of a firm.

2.1.4 Publicity

Publicity is similar to advertising, in the sense that it is a non-personal form of communication. However, as against advertising it is a non-paid form of communication. Publicity generally takes place when favourable news is presented in the mass media about a product or service. For example, if a manufacturer achieves a breakthrough by developing a car engine, which runs on water instead of petrol, and this news is covered by television or radio or newspapers in the form of a news item. It would be termed as publicity because the engine manufacturer would benefit from such dissemination of information about its achievement by the media but would not bear any cost for the same.

Thus, the two important features of publicity are that: (i) Publicity is an unpaid form of communication. It does not involve any direct expenditure by the marketing firm; and (ii) There is no identified sponsor for the communication as the message goes as a news item. In publicity, as the information is disseminated by an independent source, e.g., the press in the form of news stories and features, the message has more credibility than if that comes as a sponsored message in advertising. Also, as the message goes in the form of a news rather than direct sales communication, it can reach even to those persons who otherwise may not pay attention to paid communication. However, an important limitation of publicity is that as a medium of promotion, it is not within the control of a marketing firm. The media would cover only those pieces of information, which are news worthy and which symbolize some achievement in the field. Thus, a craft marketer can use publicity to actively promote its products.

3.0 DEFINITION OF CRAFT PRODUCTS

Craft products encompass a vast variety of goods made of diverse materials. This diversity makes it incredibly difficult to give a satisfactory definition of the material content, technique of production and/or functional use of craft products. Yet, for a variety of reasons, a working definition of such products is sought by importers, exporters, customs and excise departments, or trade development agencies. Although there is no universally agreed definition of artisanal products, the following characteristics broadly applies to a wide range of the world's crafts:

- They are produced by artisans, either completely by hand or with the help of hand-tools and even mechanical means, as long as the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most substantial component of the finished product;
- There is no particular restriction in terms of production quantity;
- Even when artisans make quantities of the same design, no two pieces are ever exactly alike;
- They are made from sustainable produced raw materials;

- Their special nature derives from their distinctive features, which can be utilitarian, aesthetic, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, functional, traditional, and religiously and socially symbolic and significant.

Crafts are concerned with servicing, installation, maintenance and repair (of transport equipment, household goods or electric appliances, for instance). Services provided by artisans, whether working on commissioned projects or as design consultants, are, however, very much within the scope of this Guide, even though it's primary focus is on the business cycle of craft products. Artisanal products can be classified under broad divisions. These divisions are primarily based on the materials used, or a combination of the materials and the technique. The six main categories are:

- Basket/wicker/vegetable fibre-works;
- Leather;
- Metal;
- Pottery;
- Textiles;
- Wood

Further categories could correspond to various additional animal, mineral or vegetable materials covering those other materials used in craft production that are specific to a given country or region, are rare, or are difficult to work, such as: stone, glass, ivory, bone, horn, shell, sea shells, or mother-of-pearl. Finally, extra categories could be considered when different materials and techniques are applied at the same time. This might be the case, for instance, for arms for ceremonial or decorative purposes or as theatrical properties, decorative items and fashion accessories, jewellery, musical instruments, toys, or works of art.

4.0 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Intellectual property (IP) is the name given to property arising out of human intellectual effort. The output of human intellectual effort often manifests itself as new or original knowledge or creative expression which adds a desirable quality to a marketable product or service. Various elements provide intellectual output with attributes that, in one way or another, enhance the quality of life. These elements may be called human endeavor, ingenuity, creativity, inventiveness, flash of inspiration, sudden insight, or new insight into observed facts. They may or may not involve experimentation, trial and error, skill, team work, craftsmanship, aesthetic sensibility, and so on. They may involve solving a technical problem in making something with more desirable functional qualities, or result in creating something aesthetically pleasing, to satisfy a human need or want, be it utilitarian, sensory, social, cultural, mental, spiritual or religious. These value-adding or 'quality of life' enhancing elements are the basis of IP.

Intellectual property refers to creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names, images, and designs used in commerce. Intellectual property is divided into two categories: industrial property, which includes inventions (patents), trademarks, industrial designs, and geographic indications of source; and copyright, which includes literary works such as novels, poems and plays, films, musical compositions; artistic works, such as drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures, and architectural designs. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, producers of phonograms in their recordings, and those of broadcasters in their radio and television programmes.

5.0 THE CONTRIBUTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP) IN PROMOTING CRAFTS INDUSTRY AND THE ECONOMY

Encourage creativity and economic growth The artisans' and visual artists' communities, as well as a country's economy, may benefit from the IP system. For example, in Australia the craft and visual arts sectors added approximately \$A 160 million to the national GDP in 1996–97. This was comparable to the value added by the record companies and distribution sector (\$A 162 million in 1995–96), but only 40% of the value added by the Australian performing arts industries (\$A 415.7 million in 1996–97). Effective protection and use of IP assets owned by artisans and visual artists would not only enrich the cultural heritage of a country but also increase the contribution of the craft and visual arts sectors to their individual wealth as well as their country's GDP.

6.0 PROMOTING CRAFTS INDUSTRY

Over the years, Nigerian art and craft industry has been neglected and relegated to the background. However, of recent some frantic efforts has been made to promote and reposition the industry in line with international best practices as evident in the colourful exhibitions at the Nigerian pavilion during the concluded world art expo which took place in Shanghai, China. Crafts industry can be promoted in different ways or using different methodologies among which include; Participation in international exhibitions and expos; Hosting Arts and craft workshops/symposiums/Investment forum; Hosting Arts and craft workshops/symposiums/Investment forum; Education Integration or Public Private Partnership as discussed below:

Participation in international exhibitions and expos

Participation in international exhibitions and expos is the best platform to promote and showcase Nigerian art and crafts. During the course of the exhibitions/expos artists interact and gain valuable contacts which can result in fruitful partnerships

Hosting Arts and craft workshops/symposiums/Investment forum

Arts and craft workshops/symposiums/Investment forum always serve as veritable platform for showcasing indigenous African products to the global

market. It normally serves as a rallying ground for domestic artisans to show what they can offer and how creative they are. Aside creating employment for both youths and women, especially among rural populace, the annual hosting of arts and craft workshops/symposiums/investment forum also help in promoting locally manufactured goods which in turn help in reducing influx of foreign goods into the country.

Education Integration

Art and craft can also be promoted by mandating or the least encouraging the teaching of art and craft subjects up to senior secondary level. This will help in not only revealing young talents but it will also help in catching them young.

Public Private Partnership

Both public and private corporate bodies partnership is another good way of promoting art and craft. Both bodies partnership promoting arts should sponsor the art and craft competition at primary and secondary school levels with attractive prizes in sight. This will reveal young talents that would be nurtured to stardom. Other forms of promoting crafts industry for greater economic transformation could be through virtual worlds as discussed below.

7.0 VIRTUAL WORLDS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF CRAFTS BUSINESS: IMPACTS ON THE NIGERIAN ECONOMY, JOBS, AND INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

Virtual Worlds, immersive and collaborative environments on the Internet, also referred to as Web 3D, are likely to transform the global business environment. Developed out of online games, social networking, and Web services, Virtual Worlds benefit from several technologies that enhance their usefulness, including massively scaled games, avatars, cloud/on-demand/grid computing, on-demand storage, and next-generation networks. The convergence of these technologies in a new Virtual World “ecosystem” will change the way crafts businesses operate in the country.

By creating immersive environment platforms accessible through mobile and other handheld devices, Virtual Worlds bring powerful computing, data analysis and decision-making tools to employees of any size. Virtual Worlds not only elicit customer-generated information and ideas, they enhance collaboration within and between businesses. These platforms facilitate a wide range of business activities and opportunities, such as training and education, product and service development, marketing and strategy creation, and finance exchange, that can be executed in new, interactive environments. By enriching and deepening collaboration within and between individuals or firms, Virtual Worlds can transform Nigerian crafts businesses particularly, in this information age.

For the past few decades, business organizations have integrated new technologies into their operations using structures to capture new knowledge and

innovations. Several authors have argued that the corporation should move toward the collaborative enterprise, which incorporates the Internet more fully.

Here we argue that online social networking and Web platforms are likely to transform craft business operations and interactions with suppliers, customers, and supporting services. Virtual Worlds platforms that form the core of a new corporate operations ecosystem will not only allow for horizontal and vertical interactions but will expand the essential business, partner, and management linkages that enhance productivity over the long term.

Virtual World environments promote such changes by helping crafts men and women to develop new products in concert with suppliers as well as with specialized “expert firms” or individual entrepreneurs. In these immersive, collaborative environments, corporate executives and other employees can bring computer simulations and robust databases into Virtual Worlds supported by high-speed, next-generation networks. This allows a wide range of businesses, manufacturing concerns, and services to see the results of business decisions in real time.

Another scenario might result in a modern guild system whereby craftsmen employ extensive Virtual Worlds technology to foster collaboration with both the national and international markets. These expertise-based individuals will be far more capable of amassing specialized knowledge than other, more traditional suppliers or service firms. They also will be better positioned to team up with other “guild system” firms to respond to large projects or to jointly address significant technical challenges. These modern guild firms might be similar to large consulting firms or to today’s highly specialized supplier firms in the country.

7.1 Economic Development

We noted above the dimensions that would lead to the widespread use of Virtual Worlds and on-demand computing in Nigeria. If the Nigerian Arts and Crafts industry are among the first to transit to collaborative enterprises, if they have highly skilled employees who can work with Virtual Worlds and on-demand computing, and if academic institutions supply educated workers who are familiar with these new technologies, the Nigerian economy would certainly benefit.

If Virtual World technologies are to become more integrated into craft business, Nigerian economic development policies at the federal, state, and local level must ensure that they are not difficult for firms to adopt. State and local government might need to help regional and local firms obtain and master these technologies. A national effort might be required to help entrepreneurs change their operations and underlying business technologies. When Virtual Worlds are used for product design and service development together with on-demand, cloud, or grid computing, the number of crafts in a regional supply chain could increase, leading to more competition and, possibly, churning. Local and regional

firms could arrange themselves into industrial clusters by expanding the number of firms collaborating together and extending the geographical reach of partner networks using Virtual Worlds. Geographical reach of certain industries could be expanded if Virtual Worlds enable corporations to create large-firm supplier networks or clusters of skilled guild-like suppliers and partners.

The role of government, however, may have to change to nurture such developments. Regional planning associations, which traditionally confine economic development policies to particular geographic areas, might need to broaden their scope. The rise of Virtual Worlds would mean that local and regional firms would not only have to adopt new technologies, but be ready to join networks of large multinational firms that seek suppliers from around the nation and the world. As a consequence, regional firms would need to look beyond their neighborhoods for new Nigeria or even global partners that enhance their collaboration skills and market position.

8.0 MARKETING CHALLENGES OF THE NIGERIAN CRAFT INDUSTRY

The crafts industry is facing lot of marketing challenges in Nigeria. The marketing challenges come from many directions. At first sight, it would seem that machine-made products could easily be substituted for these essentially hand-made ones, especially in our knowledge-driven high-tech times: modern industry is enabling an increasing degree of mass customization and personalization of product offerings. Another challenge may come from the fact that the products of craftspeople and visual artists are not generally basic needs for consumers. As a result, consumption of these products may decline if consumer spending is down, especially during economic downturns.

A key strength of artisans and visual artists lies in their creativity and craftsmanship in expressing it. This gives their output a distinct traditional, cultural or symbolic flavour, which arouses the interest and matches the emotional needs and aesthetic tastes of discerning customers in specialized niches of domestic and export markets. Even so, attracting and retaining consumers is a daunting task in an overcrowded marketplace, where consumers find ample choice and alternatives and where competitors are constantly searching for successful product trends.

Given today's instant information and communication facilities in Nigeria, coupled with the ease and speed of copying and imitation, the market is flooded with look-alike products or downright copies, which are also known as 'counterfeits' or 'forgeries'. The real challenge for craft business and visual artists is thus not just to produce and market winning new products that cater to changing consumer tastes, but also to prevent – or if unable to prevent then to effectively deal with – unfair competition or theft of their creative ideas. The intellectual property (IP) system is the best available tool for creating and maintaining exclusivity over creative and innovative output in the marketplace, albeit for a specified maximum

period of time. The effective use of IP can also help artisans and visual artists to develop networks and relationships not only with end consumers, but also with all the links in the supply and demand networks.

Other challenges are the inadequate funding of the craft industry which remains the least supported in the country's quest for economic development and poor promotional plans which renders the whole promotional exercise ineffective. This is further demonstrated by the variety of Advertising campaigns that are either not effectively convincing or deceptive in nature due to the fact that most of the promotional messages are not carefully planned or properly implemented.

9.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 Conclusion

It is pertinent to state that new information technologies, such as Virtual Worlds and others are creating immersive and collaborative environments, transforming the global business environment, and revolutionizing the traditional determinants of competitiveness toward greater use of Virtual World technologies. This should be tracked by assessing how extensively craftsmen transform themselves into collaborative entrepreneurs and adopt structures and strategies that incorporate partners, suppliers, and consumers into product and service development operations.

The speed at which craft operators adopt new compute-based technologies will determine how quickly and thoroughly they alter the development and delivery of products and services. Craftsmen or women must be able to acquire new interpersonal and technological skills to work effectively in collaboration enterprises that focus on partnerships, rapid innovation, and quick reactions to changes in markets and consumer tastes which will go a long way in the general transformation of the economy. Transforming the country's economy through the crafts industry "could only be achieved through effective promotion of Nigerian crafts to potential buyers both in national and international markets using effective and result oriented promotional plans as discussed in the course of our lectures today. As part of the move to ensure a meaningful and result oriented promotion of the Nigerian Crafts industry for rapid economy transformation and subsequent growth, the following recommendations were made:

9.2 Recommendations

1. Industry experts, members of the academia, and political leaders in the country need to recognize that craft business through Virtual Worlds could transform Nigeria and global economies as long as there are simultaneous adjustments in crafts business practices, research and educational priorities, and government policies. Government should know the fact that

the country will only compete based on its ability to develop collaborative skills, not traditional business skills.

2. The federal and states governments should promote policies that will enhance faster development of craft marketing by developing innovative training programs that educate businesses and employees about how to use collaborative technologies and integrate them into traditional disciplines for sustainable competitive advantage. The promotion will help heighten the awareness of business, labor, educators, and federal, state, and local politicians and authorities concerning the importance of Virtual Worlds in crafts business and the collaborative enterprise to the economic competitiveness of the nation. It will also help address the need for a technical infrastructure that can support craft marketing and the collaborative enterprise and enhance the technology base of the country.
3. There should be changes in the country's taxation system as it relates to Arts and crafts business so as to encourage investment in collaboration skills, networks of collaborative enterprises, and a new collaborative infrastructure for the business to thrive and boost economic development.
4. Federal government should through the NCAC encourage corporations, business networks, and industry associations to adopt the use of Virtual Worlds and intensive compute resources in the marketing of crafts.
5. A monitoring mechanism on the marketing performance of all arts and crafts business operators in the country should be put in place to help evaluate how well they are doing in their chosen endeavors, as well as identify major problems or challenges confronting them with a view to help overcome them.
6. More effort by the NCAC should be geared toward the promotion of international collaboration of indigenous craftsmen with foreign artists or firms through the use of Virtual Worlds and compute-intensive resources.
7. The intellectual property (IP) laws should be imposed on all erring craft business operators for copy right infringements and other copy right laws offences bedeviling the industry.
8. Nigerians should try to change their negative attitudes towards made in Nigeria goods as against their preference for foreign goods which is having an adverse effect on the craft industry and the economy as a whole.

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