Music Marketing in a Digital Age: Perspectives of People within Ibadan Metropolis of Oyo State in Nigeria

By

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Abstract

Civilization has brought about many changes in which the world of music is not left out. This has made it more convenient in the choice of various outlets available to music lovers in contemporary times. Also, conventional marketers of already produced music are not spared from the effect of digital age on their music business. This study therefore examined perspectives of people within Ibadan metropolis of Oyo State as regards digital marketing of music in Nigeria. The descriptive survey employed the use of tree research questions and two research instruments. The data collected were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative analytical approach. The result showed that people go online to download music while some also share music via phones, and there are roadside music distributors who share music with people from their laptops at affordable cost. These led low demand of audio and audiovisual music discs in the market, and thus has economic implication on music marketers. This digital age in sum, demands music marketers to step up their business in this digital era so as to make them more relevant in music industry.

Keywords: Digital Age, Music Artist, Music Consumers, Music Industry, Music Marketing.

Introduction

Historical record reported that Thomas Edison Invented phonograph in 1877, the machine which was used to record human voices when singing. Thereafter, music industry keeps changing since then. After Vinyl records came cassettes, and in

1960s, James Russell invented Compact Disc which later replaced cassettes in the 80s. The replacement of cassettes by CD led to the commercial sales of music to get to its apex in 1990s. Since late 1990s, the demand for full-length albums obviously has been on the decrease. People started replacing cassettes tapes with CDs. According to Adedeji (2023), the discussion within the music industry is about technology in recent times centred around digitalization and the impacts on the music industry, in terms of production, performance, distribution, consumption and generation of remuneration for the practitioners.

From the beginning of 21st century, there was emergence of digital era which is dynamic in nature. Social media is one of the biggest opportunities the internet has offered. Its inception has affected music lovers' media consumption, Ibadan in southwestern Nigeria is not left out. This capital of Oyo state is the largest city in Africa, South of the Sahara. As an historic city, it began as a military camp in the 1800s, while the divers' neighborhoods in Ibadan provide a unique and insightful view of the city's culture and tradition. In his ethnographic investigation of the place of musicians in the flood disasters of Ibadan, Olusegun (2017) reported that Ibadan is known for engaging popular musicians. The advent of digital technology therefore, no doubt, has been observed by all and sundry to be a channel through which the musical compositions of many music composers spread to peoples' door steps.

The arrival of social media in different forms in human environment, Ibadan town inclusive, is obviously creating new access to choice of music. Emerging communities see the digital era as a means of bringing novel ideas for product development and opportunities for digital social interaction among its members in form of video, audio and text. The advancement in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) led to emanation of internet file sharing and digital music, which have contributed a great impact on the music industry as regards music and distributions. In the digital era, the entertainment economy has emerged as a transformative force, reshaping the ways individuals consume content and interact with media (Wu, 2025). Sharing of music with friends is what brought about social networking sites for music, which are platforms and means of distribution, marketing and promotion of music.

In the years past, music marketing in Nigeria was controlled by major record labels handling the discovery of artists and music distribution. Today, the case is different, there are opportunities through which music career of an artist could be developed without any assistance from record label. At the same time, music streaming services make it possible for artist to upload their content directly onto various platforms without record label involvement (Johnning and Angelova, 2021). Advancement in technology through advent of digital mp3 ruled out music hard copies and paved way for digital distribution platforms. Music consumption models changed from physical units in the form of DVDs, CDs, Cassettes, Vinyl records, to online music consumption through streaming and downloads (Pinzaru, Mitan and Zbuchea, 2016). Consumers and producers discover up-and-coming music artist via social media, and as a result, producers help artists signing record deals and bring them to spotlight while consumers have access to unlimited music online.

The music business has been re-engineered by the internet most especially in the area of music creation and distribution. Electric media such as radio and television still exist but not as prominent as digital platforms, such as Apple Music, Youtube, Spotify, Boomplay which has brought transformation into the music economy and culture and provide African artists with the opportunity to distribute their work to the global audiences without any intermediary. It can be argued that with the advent of digital music marketing, music has become easily available at consumers' disposal. Ahmed (2025) reveals that streaming platforms have revolutionised the way African music reaches international audiences by breaking down geographical barriers and democratising music access. The digital distribution platforms through which music downloaded are paid for have shown the relevance of digital music in the music industry, whose development has greatly transformed the traditional music industry's structure.

Prior to the advent of internet, recorded music was scarce and expensive, and there were intermediaries in the supply chain of music production. These are middlemen between the artists and the music consumers.

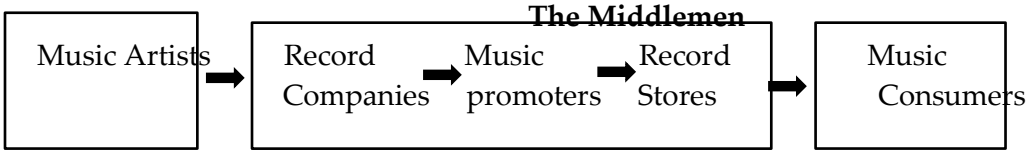


Fig. 1: Middlemen in the Supply Chain of Music Production (Source: The author)

The Intermediaries affect the cost and make huge profit, which in turn result to higher prices of music production. The digital means of music distribution has led to elimination of physical retailing and distribution of music products which minimizes entry hindrance. This gives flexibility and vivacity to present music industry which have paved way for digital music companies and as well as creation of novel business opportunities such as Apple, iTunes likewise company like Spotify. Also, artists now have freedom to market their music to their audience globally without the assistance of physical distribution networks, record labels or any traditional gatekeepers. This is also made possible through other platforms such as Boomplay, Apple Music and YouTube. On the part of consumers, they now have the opportunity of listening to music online via YouTube and other platforms and share music through Video Clips and Facebook.

Some of the digital distribution platforms where music can be sold online in Nigeria include Notjustock.com, Pulse.ng, Jaguda.com, 9jaFlaver.com, Naijarvibes.com, mp3bullet.ng, Tooxclusive.com, 360nobs.com and Last Naija Music among others. Ahmed (2025), also assert that the success of streaming platforms in globalizing Africa music is evident in the achievements of numerous African artists who have risen to international prominence such as Burna Boy's "Twice as Tall", and Wizkid's "Essence".

Free distribution of music tends to be economical when it comes to marketing by record labels and musicians. It is also a strategy to increase fan base on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. The rise of digital streaming has transformed the media and entertainment industries, making streaming performance a critical indication of success (Chukwu and Newman, 2025). Operation of digital music website is based on blanket licensing agreement with music stakeholders (such as Songwriters, record labels) which will permit unlimited access to music while subscribing. Smith and Green (2024) stated that platforms employ algorithms and personalized recommendations to enhance user's experience and driven content consumption, which significantly impacts streaming metrics. Online music streaming allows opportunity to music by connecting to the internet but failed to have the file source. But at the same time, it is considered cheaper when comparing with cost of purchasing a particular music. Lovers of music and music marketers in contemporary Nigeria on many occasions have relatively expressed their views as to the various music marketing means available in the contemporary times. Hence, the need for this study therefore became very significant.

Statement of the Problem

Music industry makes its progress from the phonograph to analog tape machines to digital recording software and to the present internet-based distribution and streaming services, which help music lovers to download any music of their choice through file-sharing platform for free. Although, there are paid music digital distribution platforms, the most notable one is iTunes, likewise streaming services such as Spotify, Netflix, Pandora among others. Sen (2010) confirmed that technological innovations have dramatically changed the way music and songs are bought and consumed. From the World over, wider acceptance is given to digital music as a result of it mass-production, convenience, low costs of distribution, and portability which is responsible for re-engineering of music business.

Despite the contribution of the digital platforms to music industry sales, the return on investment has not returned to what it was in the 90s when music sales reach its peaks. This perhaps is as result of the emerging digitalization that is highly affecting music marketing in various places. Uche and Chukwuka (2025), argued

that numerous new monitisation channels have surfaced, despite the decrease of traditional revenue streams including physical sales, which according to IFPI accounted for only 19% of worldwide music revenue in 20213. The situation is a challenge and this study becomes essential to all and sundry as a result the study examined music marketing in a digital age: perspectives of people within Ibadan metropolis of Oyo state in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine perspectives of people in Ibadan metropolis of Oyo state about the marketing of music in digital age. The study assessed how lay-citizens perceive music marketing in this digital age, as well as music marketers and roadside music distributor's assessment of music business in the digital age.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study.

1. How do lay-citizen perceive music marketing in the digital age?
2. What are the music business owners' assessment of music business in the digital age?
3. Is there prospects in local music marketing in the digital age?

Scope of the Study

The study covered perspectives of sampled people in Ibadan metropolises on contemporary situation of the music marketing in a digital age. The sampled people includes music marketers and retailers in Ogunpa market and Agodi-Gate all in Ibadan, as well as some roadside music distributors who engage in the act of sharing music file with indigenes. The interview also included the music consumers in real life.

Methodology

The research design used was descriptive survey. It determined and reported the way things were. It involved collection of data to answer research questions concerning the digitalization of music marketing in Nigeria.

Population

The population of this study comprised music marketers and retailers in Ogunpa and Agodi-Gate markets in Ibadan where music marketers appear concentrated. Some of the road side music distributors who share music files with people at a particular cost and some music consumers in Ibadan metropolis were also part of the study population.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Purposive and random sampling techniques were used to select participants for the study. The criteria for the purposive sample was that the participants must be either: music lover; people in the music business either as music marketers or retailers. In all 58 respondents (46 music consumers, 4 music marketers and 8 roadside music distributors) participated in the study.

Instrumentation

The two Instruments used for the data collected are Music Consumers' Opinion Questionnaire (MCOQ) and Roadside Music Distributors and Music Marketers Questionnaire (RMDMMQ) which were designed by the researcher with due consideration to relevant literature in line with the focus of the research questions. The Instrument were validated by experts and peer reviewed while copies of MCOQ were administered to ten participants that were not part of the sample used in other to determine its reliability using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool. A reliability valuable of .75 obtained was considered suitable for the study.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentage and bar chart.

Results

The finding of this study are presented in line with the research questions.

Table 1: Age Distribution of the respondents (Music Consumers)

Years	Total No.	Percentage
10 - 20	20	43.5
21 – 30	19	41.3
31 – 40	4	8.7

41 & above	3	6.5
	46	100

As shown in table 1, the percentage of the ages of the respondents (music consumers) that fall between 10 and 20 years is 43.5% followed by age range between 21 and 30 (41.3%), age range between 31 and 40 is 8.7% while the age range of 41 and above is 6.5%. It implies that most of the respondents who are music consumers that participated in the study were youths.

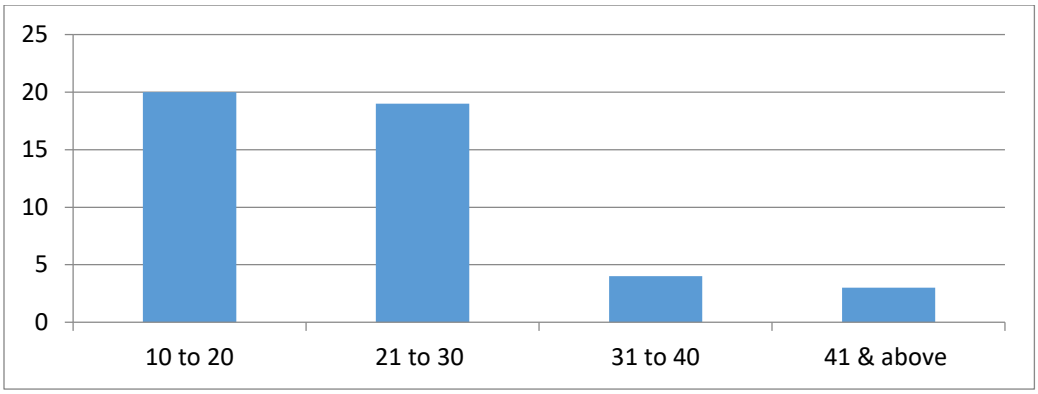


Figure 2: Bar chart showing the age range of the respondents (music consumers) that participated in the study.

Majority of the respondents interviewed are youths whose age range falls between 10 and 30 years while those whose age range fall between 31 and above are very few (figure 2)

Research Question1: How do lay - citizens perceive music marketing in digital age?

Table 2: Lay-Citizens perception of music marketing in the digital age.

S/N	Perception of Music Marketing by Lay-Citizens	Frequencies/Percentages	
		Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Internet and social media platforms have been of help for music enjoyment	43 (93.5)	3 (6.5)

2.	I like listening to music	46 (100)	-
3.	I get my favorite music from internet	29 (63.0)	17 (37.0)
4.	I get my favorite music from friends	37 (80.4)	9 (19.6)
5.	I enjoy free downloading from digital distribution platforms or blogs like pulse.ng, 9jafaver.com, Mp3bullet.ng, Jaguda.com, Last – NaijaMusic, Notjustock.com, Tooxclusive.com, naijaloaded.com.ng and Amebo9ja.	30 (65.2)	16 (34.8)
6.	I often consider getting music from roadside music distributors a welcome development	8 (17.4)	38 (82.6)
7.	Getting favorite music from digital distribution and selling platforms is cheap	35 (76.1)	11 (23.9)
8.	I like streaming any music of my choice	33 (71.7)	13 (28.3)
9.	Despite the availability of social media, I still enjoy my favorite music via DVD/VCD sometimes	21 (45.7)	25 (54.3)
10.	I have it in mind to become a music artist/musician in the digital age	20 (43.5)	26 (56.5)
	Average (%)	**302 (65.7)**	**158 (34.3)**

Table 2 reveals that larger percentage of the lay-citizens who are music consumers are in support of digitalized music marketing with the average percentage of 65.7% compared with their counterpart of 34.3% who are not in support of digital marketing.

Research Question 2: What are the music business owner's assessment of music business in the digital age?

Table 3: Music Business Owner's Assessment of Music Business in the Digital Age.

S/N	**Music Business in the Digital Age**	**Frequencies/Percentages**	
		Yes (%)	**No (%)**

1.	Daily income from music business in digital age is encouraging.	8 (66.7)	4 (33.3)
2.	I have plans to improve on my music business in the digital age.	12 (100)	-
3.	Digital age music business has encouraged music business.	8 (66.7)	4 (33.3)
4.	There are risk attached to the music business in a digital age.	12 100)	-
5.	Music business in the digital age is interesting to me.	8 (66.7)	4 (33.8)
6.	I feel like going into music performance or becoming a music artist in the digital age.	2 (16.7)	10 (83.3)
7.	Music digital distribution platforms in the digital age have taken over from DVD/VCD.	11 (91.7)	1 (8.3)
	Average (%)	**61 (72.6)**	**23 (27.4)**

Table 3 shows that 72.6% of people who are into the business of music are in support of digital music distribution especially the roadside music distributors while 27.4% who are into selling of music Compact Disk (CD) which is the analog form affirmed that the emergence of digital music distribution has brought about adverse effect on their business. Out of the four marketers interviewed only one of them insisted that despite the emergence of digital music marketing, the sale of compact disc will still exist concurrently in the digital age.

Research Questions 3: Is there prospect in local music marketing in the digital age?

From Item number 3, 4 and 5 (table 2) of the data collected from lay-citizens who are the music consumers, it is indicated that 63.0% of the respondents get their favorite music from internet, 80.4% of them get music from friends through file sharing and 65.2% of the respondents enjoy free downloading from digital distribution platforms or blogs. These indicate that local music marketing in the digital age has low prospects as internet is making improvement in music industry. Moreover, data collected from music business owners, music marketers and roadside music distributors also support the claim that there is low prospect

in local music marketing in the digital age. From the data collected (table 3), item number 3 shows that 66.7% of music business owners in the digital age testified that daily income is encouraging while 91.7% of the marketers (one out of the four marketers interviewed) attested that music digital distribution platforms in the digital age have taken over from DVD/VCD.

Discussion of Findings

The findings on research question one reveal that larger percentage of the respondents who are music consumers agreed that digital music marketing is a welcome development. The novel ways of music distribution has brought about by internet have been of help to people.

In the interpretative approach used describe the opinions of some of the respondents, that is, lay-citizens (community people) on their perception of musical marketing in the digital age within Ibadan metropolis, some respondents further buttressed thus:

> *Respondent (Consumers/Lay Citizen) 1: Instead of buying music CDs and the likes from local music stores, music could be purchased online by consumers. Digital distribution and selling platforms on internet has been a very cheap source of getting favorite music.*

This finding consolidate the affirmation of Jaris, Mikko and Matti (2013) who affirmed that due to the digitalization of music, emergence of social media technology, and popularity of social media, producers can now reach potential music consumers via social networks.

> *Respondent (Lay Citizen) 2: I get my favorite music from friends due to the lack of adequate access to the internet facilities, and this is a big challenge, even a serious economic in Ibadan township.*

The results from research question two reveal that daily sales from sharing of music files by roadside music distributors are encouraging when the four marketers confirmed that the sales from Compact Disk are not encouraging, and also complained about the high rise in the cost of CD as at the time of collecting the data.

Respondent 3 (Music Business Owner) :The weekly production of musical and home videos have often resulted in a lot of goods being stocked up on shelf for months in shops even years which remained unsold.

Respondent 3 (Music Business Owner): Money spent on upcoming music artist is a waste most times. He gave an example of an upcoming artist in which when 2,500 copies of his music were produced, only two (2) copies were sold since over a year ago.

From research question 3, the results show that the prospect in local music marketing in the digital age is low. This is because larger population of music consumers have switched over to internet to get their favorite music and also share music files from friends.

Respondent 3 (Music Business Owner): People get music from roadside music distributors at a low cost.

Respondent 4 (Consumer). I enjoy free downloading from digital distribution platforms and blogs.

These indicate that local music marketing in the digital age would continue to dwindle, as internet is making a positive impact on music industry and marketing of all sort of music. All these put together are making music digital distribution platforms in the digital age to take over from DVD/VCD. It becomes very clear as found out in this study that the town's people of Ibadan are making use of digital facilities and sub-outlets as well as social media platforms to have access to music of their choice. This findings buttressed the assertion of Cole (2019) that one aspect of modern life where the universality of music manifests is the development of social media brought about by the development of technology in music industry. It implies that music marketing is wide spreading in the digital age and in the contemporary society as a universal language. Similarly, Haynes and Marshall (2018) in line with the views of the respondents in this study had earlier pointed out that the use of social media sites can have a direct impact on the stages involved in creating musical arts by musicians. Thus, in Ibadan Township, the platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube as well as social media sites are indeed some of the music marketing digital tools relatively being used to access consumers choices of music for their satisfaction.

Conclusion

In general, there is a revolutionary change in African music industry as a result of digital streaming platforms and artificial intelligence-powered analystics. The findings of the study have shown that the presence of internet has paved way for digitalization of music marketing and also brought about fundamental changes to the way music is been consumed. This has led to the decline in sales of album on Compact Disc (CD) and Digital Versatile Disc (DVD). Therefore the number of the available music marketers has reduced drastically as a result of low demand from customers. It is revealed that there is increase in the demand of music as a result of digital distribution methods which also led to other means of consumption of music. As it is, music consumers can listen to music anytime they want for hours from music streaming services online apart from songs downloading. Success made by internet is as a result of the file sharing capabilities as a result of digital evolution which has not only transformed music distribution but also reformed the structure of the music industrial chain.

Availability of internet helps artists to have their music produced, upload and promote their music without the help of record labels. Digitalization of music marketing made it possible for music artists not to rely on the record labels because the record labels are not in control of music distribution any longer, but they are being forced to adapt so as to survive in the present technological innovation.

However, Piracy as the biggest challenge in music industry still remains a cankerworm to be curbed. Although file sharing services has been of help to artist as means of promoting themselves and help in distributing their work quickly, independent artists criticize music streaming services for low royalty payment.

Onsite observation showed that most of the marketers were not willing to grant interview with the researcher. This might be as a result of their going in and out of court room due to piracy case filed against the roadside music distributors and the DJs (Disk Jockeys) as revealed by one of the marketers interviewed.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that upcoming artists should generate sales revenue through the internet by engaging in marketing strategies while making use of available technology.
2. Music artists should also create niche for their music via social networking to increase their fan base.
3. As regards piracy, Government should make official policies and have proper means of enforcing such policies, so as to protect music artists' intellectual rights.
4. Music marketers should step up their business in the digital era by finding means to be relevant in the Nigeria music industry as times goes on.

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