

The nexus between digital marketing and students' choice of university in South Africa

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Abstract

The advancement of technology led to changes in consumer behaviour and as such universities need to be cognisance of the influence the advancement in technology has in attracting new students to their institutions. Digital marketing involves the use of digital technology tools like social media marketing, online marketing, and e-advertising that led to acquisition and retention of new customers. The aim of this study is to examine the influence of online marketing strategies on students' choice of universities. The study found significant predictors of students' choice of the university are online information availability, brand image and online advertisements. Descriptive research design was used, and data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire. The scale was adopted from previous studies. Purposive sampling was used to collect data from 199 participants who were enrolled at a university in South Africa. The collected data was analysed using SPSS version 25. The findings noted that information availability, brand image and e-advertisement are significant predictors of the students' choice of university in which they wish to attend. The study made recommendations to senior managers and policy makers in universities and in higher education to sell their institutions' unique offerings through online platforms. The use of artificial intelligence in e-marketing enables students to get information which enables them to select the university of their choice.

Keywords: Advertising, Brand Image, Higher Education, Online Marketing, Social Media.