

# Journal of Strategic Management



**ISSN Online: 2616-8472**

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Peer Reviewed Journals & books

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**ISSN: 2616-8472**

# **Events Marketing as a Strategic Communication Tool towards Performance of Telecommunication Firms: A Case of Safaricom Plc, Kenya**

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***How to cite this article: Wanyeri, I., W. (2020). Events Marketing as a Strategic Communication Tool towards Performance of Telecommunication Firms: A Case of Safaricom Plc, Kenya. *Journal of Strategic Management*, 4(3), 30-49***

## **Abstract**

The traditional means of marketing communications have begun to lose their luster and companies are racing to find alternatives and modern tools to communicate with its stakeholders to achieve various marketing objectives. The study investigated how promotion of events, sponsorship of events, participation in online events and participation in trade show events as strategic marketing communication strategies influence performance in Safaricom Company. The study was anchored on four theories namely; AIDA theory, social exchange theory, relationship marketing theory and diffusion of innovations theory. The descriptive research design was utilized.. The target population comprised of 2045 employees. The unit of analysis included consumer Business unit division, Enterprise Business unit division, financial services division, corporate affairs division and strategy and innovation division. The units of observation were top managers, middle managers and junior officers. The study used a sample size of 354 respondents. The study administered questionnaires to gather the data. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to organize, code and analyze information to generate the quantitative report. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics were presented in averages, frequencies distributions and percentage distributions while the inferential statistics included the correlation coefficient. The findings of the study established that trade shows & fairs, sporting events, entertainment events, charity events, and roadshows were the most event marketing activities used by Safaricom PLC Company. The study also found that event marketing strategies included participation in physical events, participation in online events and sponsorship of events. The study concluded that participation in physical events and company's performance was positively and significantly

associated ( $r=.724$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Participation in online events and the company's performance was positively and significantly associated ( $r=.542$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Participation in online events was positively and significantly associated with company's performance ( $r=.683$ ,  $p=.000$ ). The study recommended that management at Safaricom Plc need to emphasize much on event marketing activities such as trade shows & fairs, sporting events, entertainment events, charity events, and roadshows. It is also recommended that during participation in physical events, the company need to offer free sample and gifts at the events and create a social setting for attendees to raise their satisfaction level. It is also recommended that there should be online advertising during live stream events. The Company should emphasize much on online adverting because online advertising can be used to drive traffic to the site and build brand awareness. Safaricom Company needs also to be involved in the sponsorship of events. Sponsorship increases reach and exposures to new clients, customers and businesses.

**Keyword:** *sponsorship of events, online events, physical events, performance, Safaricom Plc,*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Event marketing is a relatively new phenomenon that emerged in the 1980s, but its origins date back over a hundred years to philanthropy and sponsorship (Cunningham, Taylor & Reeder 1993). Positively, the increased prominence of integrated marketing communications (Finne and Gronoos, 2009) creates an environment more favorable to the integration and expansion of less renowned methods, such as events, as it is an approach that seeks to align and optimize the communication impact of various methods (Kitchen P., Kim, I. and Schultz, D.E. (2009). The term event is used for describing different activities designed for different purposes. These activities can be art, sports, tourism and social activities, and can also be activities organized by giant organizers more professional and more formal (Argan, 2007). Public or private, commercial or charitable, celebratory or commemorative-events bring people together to share an experience and produce a measurable outcome (Silvers, 2004).

The performance of a firm can be expressed in terms of financial and non-financial metrics. In financial performances, it focuses on the analysis of the economic indicators such as the profits; return on investments (ROI) and return on assets (ROA) (Agrawal, Mohanty & Totala, 2019). The measures of marketing performance in any institution cut across several parameters. The companies' performance behaviors are analyzed based on the contributions to the members in the society in understanding the company (Lins, Servaes & Tamayo, 2017). The competition in the market is what defines the external environment of the organization. All the events have their own mission and vision statements. Mission statements describes the objective of that particular event whereas vision statement is a description of what an organization will like to achieve or accomplish with the help of that particular event in the longer term (Bowdin & al. 2011, 6.)

Sponsorship is a common procedure in events industry. Many companies have identified sponsorship as a public relations tool that will connect them directly to their target market thereby helping them to partly fulfill their objectives. In event management, a sponsor is an individual, group or company that provides various resources in exchange of business opportunities. Sponsorship should benefit both event and sponsors. In many cases, sponsors are not ready to provide financial backing unless they see some growth potential of the company. At this stage event manager should be very sharp and effective to attract the required sponsor (Shone & Parry 2010.)

Promotions of the events by the company are beneficial and reliable in attracting customers in short-run and especially during periods in which the demand is low (Genchev & Todorova, 2017). Events aimed at promoting the visibility of the company can be influenced by initiating effective techniques such as buy one get one free and price discounts. Sales promotion activities increase the awareness to the customers who are not aware of the existence of the products in the market (Atik, 2017). Mirzaei, Carter and Schneider (2018) established the primary objective of promotion strategies in marketing is to make the public aware of your product, to influence them to purchase it and to create a long-term relationship that will make them be bonded in buying from the company and not switching to the competitor in the market offering similar products and services.. In the process of event marketing, the company can get an opportunity to refine the overall corporate image and make it be well known and distinguished from its competitors. Moreover, event marketing for business-to-business companies is a useful instrument of promotion to generate leads, achieve growth in market share, increase brand awareness and get valuable contacts (Preston, 2012).

Sponsorship of events in the community can be a handy and reliable marketing tool as it will cover out a wide range of audiences in the market. Events allow the business owners to associate with the customers directly (Amoako, Dartey, Dzogbenuku & Junior, 2012). In the process of organizing events, the salespeople should evaluate the customer based on the need for the product. The organizing of the events is critical and the salesperson get an opportunity to ask questions to reveal the current situation, the source of any problems, the impact of the issues, the benefits of the solution and the interest of the buyer (Seukindo, 2017). The salesperson ensures the customer is satisfied and establishes a good relationship with the customer, which creates long-term sales success during the events (Konyimbih, Mbura & Paul, 2017).

Event marketing is a technique marketers use to advance the image of the company's products and can be administered online or offline (wamalwa, 2014). It increases the public awareness, corporate image, community involvement, target markets, brand positioning and the management interest of the company and that of the consumer. The main objective is to target a specific group in which the participants are offered free samples, discounts and many fun activities to keep them feel included and motivated to engage in the different activities and realize the benefits of the products of the company (Wangu, 2016).

Sponsorship of activities such as sports and cultural activities attracts many participants and those attending the markers in the event can use the opportunity to introduce a brand to the market that has some unique cultural meaning. Thus, sponsorship of events offers marketers an opportunity to connect with people when they are experiencing or undertaking an activity that they enjoy and have chosen to be involved in (Lyndah, 2014). Additionally, sponsorship of events is considered as one of the marketing communication tools with the most significant potential, which allows the company to create a good relationship with its customers (Cheptoo, 2016). Furthermore, participation in the online events connects the presenters and the participants through the web-based interface (Mbugua, 2014). As traditional revenue models are losing their effectiveness can event marketing contribute positively to organization's overall performance?

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The traditional means of marketing communications has started to gradually decline and become less satisfying due to rising costs, increased clutter and reduced efficiency. Firms are also facing challenges in reaching the consumer effectively and successfully. Event marketing is reasonably a different modern phenomenon and has the potential of taking over the world as the fastest growing form of marketing but in Kenya there is a common belief that traditional means of communication that is Radio advertisements, print advertising, online banner ads and TV commercials are the most effective means of communication.

Further Integrated Marketing communications has become very significant to firms hence creating a more favorable environment for expansion and integration of less popular and different marketing methods such as events to reach the consumer. This study is timely as the world is quickly changing and in so doing firms need to specialize and engage themselves in new modern and alternative methods of marketing such as event and experiential marketing.

Perhaps one of the key challenges is that there is some overreliance on traditional means of communications as firms are not fully aware of the strengths and benefits that events marketing have to offer in influencing the customers positively and increasing the performance of the firm. Majority of firms are keen and concerned with how they spend their money now than they have been before because of the economic decline leading them in sticking to traditional forms of marketing communications.

This study therefore sought to investigate events marketing as a strategic tool towards performance of telecommunication firms' in Kenya – a case of Safaricom PLC.



### 1.3 Objectives of the Study

- i. To establish which event marketing activities are used by the telecommunication firms.
- ii. To determine which event marketing strategies contribute to telecommunication firm's performance
- iii. To explore is there a relationship between event marketing strategies and Telecommunication firm's performances.

### 1.4 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 depicts the relationship between events marketing such as promotion of events, sponsorship of events, participation in online events and participation in trade shows as strategic marketing communication tool and performance of telecommunication firms.

#### Independent Variables

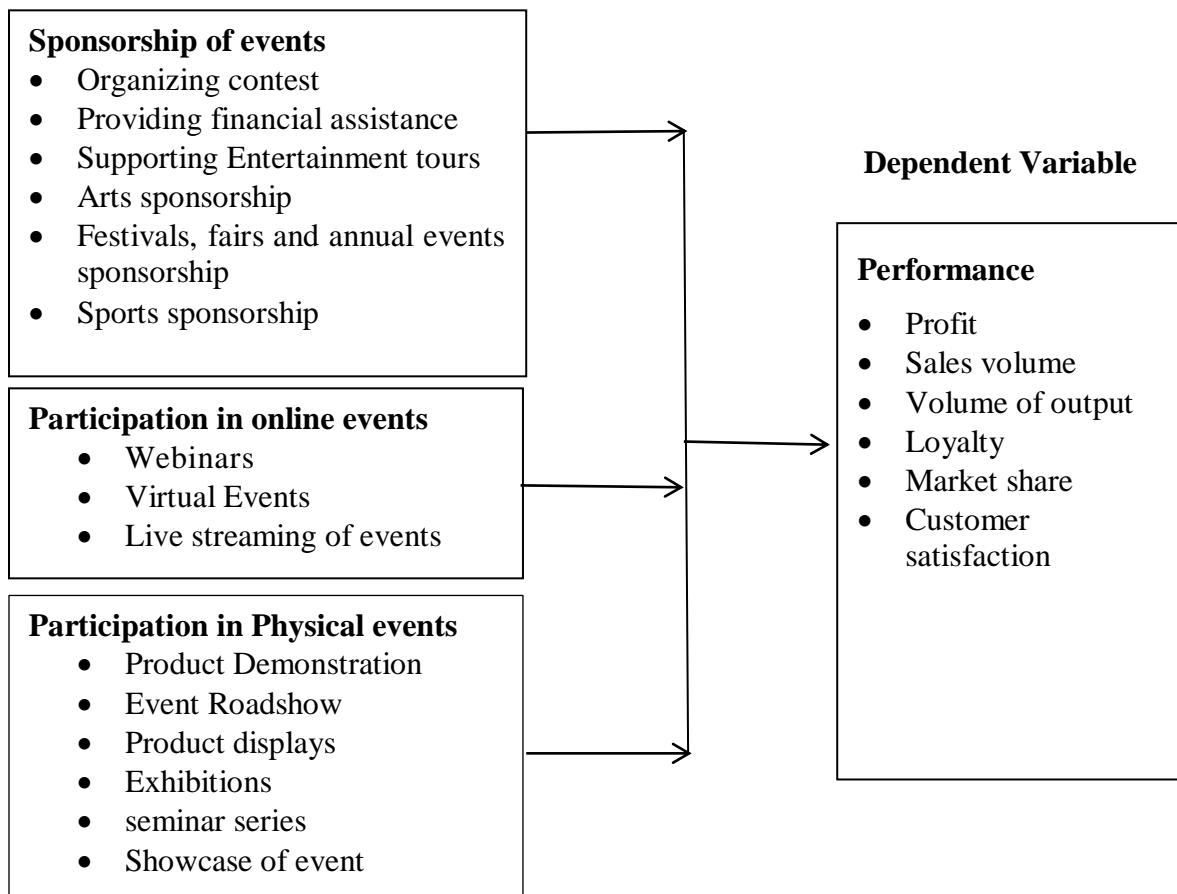


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical Review.**

#### **2.1.1 Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action (AIDA) theory**

The AIDA theory was developed by the American businessman, Elmo Lewis in the year 1898 (Hadiyati, 2016). According to Lewis the fundamental purpose was to maximize the sales calls, particularly the interaction between the seller and the buyers concerning the product (Pashootanzadeh & Khalilian, 2018). The AIDA theory of selling is one of the most known theories and is the basis for training materials across numerous organizations. The AIDA is an acronym and stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action. Further, Lewis established that the product must attract the customers' attention and that the consumers' interest should be aroused.. Additionally, when the interests in the products have been initiated, it becomes the seller's task to persuade the customer that they want to own this product and this must be transferred into action, that is, the purchase (Tanaka, 2017).

The adoption of the theory by firms promotes tremendous growth of the companies in terms of client base and revenue (Prathapan, Sajin S. & Zakkariya, 2018.) AIDA model had a positive and significant relationship with increasing the level of customer attraction and satisfaction. Companies that have used the model as a promotional strategy have improved in the performance level and the growth and sustainability increased over time (Basil & Bolls, 2018). Therefore, this theory was relevant to the current study since it helped the study to assess the extent of promotion of events as a strategic marketing communication tool and performance of Safaricom Company.

#### **2.1.2 Social Exchange Theory**

Social Exchange Theory was developed by sociologists Blau (1964); Homans, (1961) and Thibaut and (Kelley 1959) who focused on the rational assessment of self-interest in human social relationships (Coyle & Diehl, 2018). The theory states that the market exchanges happen efficiently and more successfully when both customer and company expect to gain value by participating in the exchange. The theory mostly emphasized on how participation in an activity will give a benefit to everyone participating in a certain activity without one benefiting at the expense of another one (Ghafari, Yakhchi, Beheshti & Orgun, 2018). Social exchange theory is very crucial and companies can invest in these relationships in order to improve their image and establish a favorable market exchange and finally gain value. The Social exchange theory was very relevant to the current study and it was used to illustrate the role of sponsorship of events as a strategic marketing communication tool and performance of Safaricom Company.

#### **2.1.3 Relationship marketing theory**

Relationship marketing theory was proposed by American marketing scholars Berry (1983) and Jackson (1985). Berry (1983) claimed that relationship marketing is associated with enterprises

to obtain, maintain and promote effective relationships with customers. Moreover, Berry 1983 argued that the marketing of the products is not only to get new customers but to maintain the existing customers as well, thus, improve the long-term interests of both the parties through cooperative relationships. Also, the cost of retaining an old customer is far lower than the price of developing a new customer. Moreover, Jackson (1985) argued that the essence of relationship marketing is to attract, establish and maintain a close relationship with enterprise customers. The theory is very much applicable and establishes that relationship marketing differs from other forms of marketing in that it recognizes the long term value of customer relationships and extends communication beyond intrusive advertising and sales promotional messages (Felix, Rauschnabel & Hinsch, 2017). With the growth of the internet and mobile platforms, relationship marketing has continued to evolve and move forward as technology opens more collaborative and social communication channels. A fundamental principle of relationship marketing is the retention of customers through varying means and practices to ensure repeated trade from preexisting customers by satisfying requirements above those of competing companies through a mutually beneficial (Payne & Frow, 2017). The theory applied to the current study and was utilized to determine the effect of participation to online events as a strategic marketing communication tool and performance of Safaricom Company.

#### **2.1.4 Diffusion of Innovations Theory**

Diffusion of innovation theory was developed by Rodgers (1995) to explain how marketing communication tools, as well as interpersonal contacts, provide information and influence opinion and judgment of the target audience. According to Rogers (1995), the Model consists, of four stages, which are invention, diffusion, or communication through the social system time and consequences. The theory further states that the rate of adoption always depends on the product's complexity, relative advantage, compatibility and the business organizations should strive to deliver marketing messages through a variety of marketing communication tools to increase the rate of adoption of a new product. The theory is relevant in the marketing of the products and outlined that the interrelated network group joint together to solve the problems for a common goal. The theory proposes the importance of considering the ability of people to make decisions of their own and their ability to implement it voluntarily and make a decision concerning the products (Simpson & Clifton, 2017). This theory was relevant to the current study since it helped the study assess the extent of the effect participation in trade shows events as a strategic marketing communication tool and performance of Safaricom Company.

#### **2.2 Empirical Review**

Pembi, Fudamu and Adam (2017) conducted a study in Nigeria to investigate the impact of sales promotional strategies on organizational performance. The specific objectives of the study were to analyze the influence of Consumer Promotion, hosting free events, planning of the events and sale Force Promotion on the organizational performance regarding Flour Mills Maiduguri, Borno State Nigeria. The research used the census to collect data and thus, the entire staff of the Flour



Mills. The study employed both the primary and secondary sources of data collection. The descriptive research design was adopted. The findings of the study established that Consumer Promotion, Trade Promotion, Sales Promotion and sale Force Promotion had positive and significant effects on organizational performance.

Genchev and Todorova (2017) conducted a study on the influence of sales Promotion Activities as a useful Tool of Marketing Communication Mix. The study interviewed 60 men and women, aged 18 to 64 years by detailed a questionnaire. The overall conclusion of this study is that we find a positive attitude from clients towards all promotional activities techniques. The study confirms that sales promotion is a useful tool and has a positive direct impact on the client's intention to buy. If an organization effectively gives reliable and accurate information, it will not only increase its orders, but it will also increase the sales efficiency of the entire organization. The study confirmed that sales promotion is a useful instrument which has a positive direct impact on users purchase behavior. Additionally, the study established that sales promotion is one of the best tools to attract new customers and retain old ones, including marketing activities by adding more value to the products for a limited period to stimulate consumer purchases and effectiveness of intermediaries.

Cheptoo (2016) conducted a study on factors influencing the adoption of sports sponsorship as a marketing tool by Kenyan firms in the telecommunication industry. The specific objectives were to find out how brand awareness, corporate image, promotion of local events and media fragmentation influences the adoption of sports sponsorship by telecommunication companies in Kenya. The study employed a case study as its research design. Primary data was collected using an interview guide. Data collected was analyzed using the content analysis technique. The study concluded that brand awareness, corporate image and media fragmentation influence the adoption of sports sponsorship as a marketing tool by Kenyan firms in the telecommunication industry. The study also concluded that competition, management attitude and sales performance also influence the adoption of sports sponsorship as a marketing tool by Kenyan firms in the telecommunication industry.

Oluwafemi and Adebayo (2018) investigated the effect of customer loyalty and integrated marketing communications among subscribers of telecommunication firms in Lagos, Nigeria. This study focused on unified marketing communications and customer loyalty in the telecommunications industry in Nigeria. The survey design was adopted for the study. Cross-sectional data were collected across the twenty local government areas in Lagos State with the aid of a structured questionnaire. Using descriptive statistics, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity, the data collected were analyzed. The findings reveal that integrated marketing communications (IMC) has a significant positive effect on customer loyalty. The result further shows that each of the proxies of IMC studied influenced customer loyalty at varying degrees, ranging from high to weak extent.

Rubi (2018) conducted a study on the influence of competitive strategies on the performance of supermarkets in Nairobi central business district. The study variables used were differentiation strategy, cost leadership strategy and focus strategy on the performance of supermarkets in Nairobi Central Business District. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design and the targeted population was the supermarket customers enrolled in loyalty programs Tusksys, Naivas, Carrefour, Ukwala, and Uchumi. The population was sampled using simple and stratified sampling method to get a sample size. Moreover, the questionnaire was administered to collect the data. The qualitative data were coded and analyzed by the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Both regression and correlation analysis was done to determine the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables. The findings of the study established that differentiation and cost leadership had a positive influence on the performance of the supermarkets. Additionally, despite focus strategy not been fully adopted, the regression and correlation analysis revealed that it had a positive impact on the performance.

Petrova (2014) conducted a study on participation in Trade Shows as a Method of Improving Marketing Performance in Finland. The specific objectives of the study were to examine the influence of exhibitions, Product Demonstration and service shown in improving the overall performance of the company. Data was obtained from both the primary and secondary sources. The primary data was acquired in interviews with the case company managers, discussions with the company's staff who were responsible for trade show planning, conversations with stand visitors at a trade show and personal observations by the author. Moreover, the study adopted a descriptive research design. The conclusions of the study showed that planning is a unique undertaking, which facilitates maximizing the achieved results and reaching the desired goals and the developed trade show planning model created a firm foundation for further planning and performance improvement.

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The descriptive research design was utilized to investigate and additionally clarify the present status of affairs about the events marketing. The target population comprised of 2045 employees. The sample size was 354. The unit of analysis included consumer business unit division, enterprise business unit division, financial services division, corporate affairs division and strategy and innovation division. The units of observation were top managers, middle managers and junior officers. Data was collected using the questionnaires. The data was analyzed using the descriptive and inferential statistics.

### **4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Descriptive Statistics**

##### **4.1.1 Descriptive statistics of event marketing activities**

The descriptive statistics of event marketing activities is presented in Table 1

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics of event marketing activities**

Activity	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Trade shows & Fairs	5.80%	14.60%	9.40%	40.10%	30.10%	3.74	1.20
Sporting events	6.10%	18.40%	7.80%	36.60%	31.10%	3.68	1.26
Entertainment events	11.30%	17.50%	7.10%	38.50%	25.60%	3.50	1.34
Charity events	3.90%	19.40%	12.30%	43.00%	21.40%	3.59	1.14
Road shows	2.60%	6.80%	8.10%	36.90%	45.60%	4.16	1.01
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.73</b>	<b>1.19</b>

Based on the descriptive statistics presented in Table 1, 70.2% agreed that trade shows & fairs are used to improve the performance, 20.40% disagreed and 9.40% were neutral. The mean score of the activity was 3.74 with a standard deviation of 1.20. This implied that most of the respondents (employees) agreed that trade shows & fair is used and enhances performance. Moreover, 67.70% of the respondents agreed that sporting events improve performance, 24.50% disagreed and 7.80% were neutral. The mean score of the Sporting events was 3.68, with a standard deviation of 1.26. Moreover, 64.10 of the respondents agreed that entertainment events are used to improve performance, 28.80% disagreed and 7.10% were neutral. The mean score of the event activity was 3.50 with a standard deviation of 1.34.

Moreover, 64.40% agreed that charity events are used and they influence performance, 23.30% disagreed and 12.30% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.59 with a standard deviation of 1.14. Finally, 82.50% of the respondents agreed that Roadshow are used and they influence performance, 9.40% disagreed and 8.10% were neutral. The mean score of the event activity was 4.16 with a standard deviation of 1.01. The average mean score of the event activities was 3.73 with a standard deviation of 1.19. This implied that most of the respondents agreed that Trade shows & Fairs, Sporting events, Entertainment events, Charity events and Roadshow were significant and influenced the performance. Among the activities mentioned, the Roadshow was the most activity that was used to improve the performance.

#### **4.1.2 Descriptive statistics of participation in physical events**

The descriptive statistics of whether the company involves in participation in physical events is presented in Table 2

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics of participation in physical events**

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Offering free sample and gifts at the events influences the consumer buying decision	6.50%	15.30%	7.80%	40.90%	29.50%	3.72	1.22
Events create a social setting for attendees and help raise attendee's satisfaction level.	4.70%	11.40%	6.80%	33.10%	39.00%	3.80	1.33
Product and market testing at shows helps to gain general opinions and feedback about your products services	10.10%	12.00%	10.70%	24.40%	42.90%	3.78	1.37
Marketing events effectively promotes and focuses the customers on your products and services	5.80%	9.70%	8.40%	39.90%	36.00%	3.91	1.16
The company achieves most of the marketing objectives by participating in physical events.	7.80%	13.00%	9.70%	45.50%	24.00%	3.65	1.20
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.77</b>	<b>1.26</b>

Based on the descriptive statistics presented in Table 2, 70.40% (40.90%+29.50%) agreed that offering free samples and gifts at the events influences the consumer buying decision while 21.80% (6.50%+15.30%) disagreed with the statement. Those who remained neutral to the survey question were 7.80%. The mean score of the survey question was 3.72 with a standard deviation of 1.22. The mean score of 3.72 implied that most of the respondents agreed with the statement, but their view varied as indicated with a standard deviation of 1.22. The standard deviation shows the level of dispersion from the mean score. Those who agreed that events create a social setting for attendees and help raise attendee's satisfaction level were 77.10% while those who disagreed with the statement were 16.80%. Those who remained neutral to the statement were 6.80%. The mean score of the survey question was 3.80 with a standard deviation of 1.33.

Further, 67.30% of the respondents agreed that product and market testing at shows helps gain general opinions and feedback about their products services, 22.10% disagreed and 10.70% were neutral. The mean score of the stamen was 3.78 with a standard deviation of 1.37. Moreover, 75.90% agreed that marketing events effectively promote and focus the customers on their products and services, 15.50% disagreed and 8.40% were neutral. The mean score of the survey question was 3.91 with a standard deviation of 1.16. Lastly, 69.50% agreed that the company achieves most of the marketing objectives by participating in physical events, 20.80% disagreed and 9.70% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.65 with a standard deviation of 1.20. The average mean score of the survey questions relating to participation in physical events was 3.77 with a standard deviation of 1.26. This mean score of 3.77 implied that majority of the respondents agreed with the survey questions. The standard deviation indicated the measures the spread of the data about the mean value and this indicated the dispersion was not extreme.

#### 4.1.3 Descriptive statistics of participation in online events

The descriptive statistics of participation in online events is presented in Table 3

**Table 3: Descriptive statistics of participation in online events**

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Online advertising messages during live stream events affect consumer behavior. This repetition serves as a reminder to the consumer.	7.10%	17.50%	10.40%	35.10%	29.90%	3.63	1.27
Online events strengthen customer interactions with advertisements on the Web	5.80%	13.70%	8.10%	41.90%	30.50%	3.80	1.17
Online events make it easy to market products effectively and promote services.	3.20%	10.40%	8.40%	33.80%	44.20%	4.05	1.11
The company achieves most of the marketing objectives by participating in online events.	3.90%	9.70%	12.70%	43.50%	30.20%	3.86	1.07
Live TV Means Plenty of Live Viewers who are the perfect target audience	2.60%	6.80%	8.10%	36.70%	45.80%	4.16	1.01
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.90</b>	<b>1.13</b>



Based on the descriptive statistics presented in Table 3, 65% of the respondents agreed that online advertising messages during live stream events affect consumer behavior and serves as a reminder to the consumer, 24.60% disagreed and 10.40% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.63, with a standard deviation of 1.27. Besides, 72.40% agreed that online events strengthen customer interactions with advertisements on the Web, 17.50% disagreed and 8.10% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.80 with a standard deviation of 1.17. Furthermore, 78% agreed that online events make it easy to market products effectively and promote services, 13.60% disagreed and 8.40% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 4.05 with a standard deviation of 1.11.

Moreover, 73.70% agreed that the company achieves most of the marketing objectives by participating in online events 13.60% disagreed with the statement and 12.70% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.86 with a standard deviation of 1.07. Finally, 82.50% agreed that Live TV Means Plenty of Live Viewers who are the perfect target audience, 9.40% disagreed and 8.10% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 4.16 with a standard deviation of 1.01. The average mean score of the survey question relating to participation in online events was 3.90. This indicated that majority of the respondents agreed with the survey questions and their response did not vary much from the mean score as supported by a small deviation of 1.13.

#### **4.1.4 Descriptive statistics of sponsorship of events**

The descriptive statistics of sponsorship of events is depicted in Table 4

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics of sponsorship of events**

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Sponsorship improves customer relations, thus improving performance.	7.50%	13.60%	5.20%	40.60%	33.10%	3.78	1.25
The company receives significant stakeholder interactions through sponsorships	6.50%	15.30%	4.20%	30.50%	43.50%	3.89	1.29
Sponsorship increases reach and exposure to new clients, customers and businesses.	3.20%	10.10%	6.50%	49.70%	30.20%	4.07	1.30
Sponsorship leads to Brand exposure and recognition	4.20%	15.60%	8.40%	45.80%	26.00%	3.74	1.13
Sponsorship generates strong leads that can easily be converted into sales and an opportunity for more revenue.	5.20%	12.30%	8.80%	36.70%	37.00%	3.94	1.19
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.88</b>	<b>1.23</b>

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 4 show that 73.70% of the respondents agreed that sponsorship improves customer relations, thus improving performance, 21.10% disagreed and 5.20% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.78, with a standard deviation of 1.25. Further, 74% of the respondents agreed that the company receives significant stakeholder interactions through sponsorships, 17.80% disagreed and 4.20% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.89, with a standard of 1.29. Furthermore, 79.90% of the respondents agreed that sponsorship increases reach and exposure to new clients, customers and businesses, 13.30% disagreed and 6.50% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 4.07 with a standard deviation of 1.30.

Moreover, 71.80% of the respondents agreed that sponsorship leads to brand exposure and recognition, 19.80% disagreed with the statement and 8.40% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.74 with a standard deviation of 1.13. Lastly, 76.70% of the respondents agreed that sponsorship generates strong leads that can easily be converted into sales and an opportunity for more revenue, 17.50% disagreed with the statement and 8.80% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.94 with a standard deviation of 1.19. The average mean score of the survey questions concerning sponsorship of events was 3.88 with a standard deviation of 1.23. This implied that most of the respondents agreed with the survey questions and their opinions did not vary much from the mean.

#### 4.1.2.4 Descriptive statistics of company’s performance

The descriptive statistics of company’s performance is depicted in Table 5

**Table 5: Descriptive statistics of company’s performance**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Events marketing enhance customer satisfaction.	3.60%	11.70%	8.80%	40.30%	35.70%	3.93	1.11
Events marketing increases our sales revenue performance.	5.80%	14.70%	10.10%	41.90%	27.50%	3.80	1.06
Event marketing has increased the market share in the industry	4.60%	13.40%	4.40%	51.60%	26.00%	3.86	1.03
Sales volume has increased due to events marketing	2.90%	9.70%	11.70%	43.80%	31.50%	4.05	1.08
The loyalty of the customers has improved after conducting regular events	2.60%	6.80%	8.10%	36.70%	45.80%	4.16	1.01
Events marketing have Improved profitability.	5.50%	18.80%	9.40%	42.50%	23.70%	3.60	1.19
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.90</b>	<b>1.08</b>

As indicated in Table 5, the majority (76%) of the respondents agreed that events marketing enhances customer satisfaction, 15.30% disagreed with the statement and 15.30% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.93, with a standard deviation of 1.11. Besides, 69.40% of the respondents agreed that Events marketing increases the sales revenue performance, 20.50% disagreed with the statement and 10.10% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.80, with a standard deviation of 1.17. Moreover, 77.60% agreed that event marketing had increased the market share in the industry, 18% disagreed and 4.40% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.86 with a standard deviation of 1.03. Furthermore, 75.30% of the respondents agreed that sales volume has increased due to events marketing, 12.60% disagreed and 11.70% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 4.05 with a standard deviation of 1.08. In addition, 82.50% agreed that the customers' loyalty has improved after conducting

regular events, 9.40% disagreed, and 8.10% were neutral. The mean score of the survey question was 4.16 with a standard deviation of 1.01. Lastly, 66.20% agreed that events marketing have improved profitability, 24.20% disagreed and 9.40% were neutral. The mean score of the statement was 3.60 with a standard deviation of 1.19. The average mean scores of all the survey questions of the company's performance were 3.90 with a standard deviation of 1.08. This implied that most of the respondents agreed with the survey questions of the company's performance and their opinions were close to the mean as supported by a standard deviation of 1.08.

#### 4.2 Correlation Analysis

The correlation Correlation Matrix is presented in Table 6

**Table 6: Correlation Matrix**

Variable		Company's performance	Participation in physical events	Participation in online events	Sponsorship of events
<b>Company's performance</b>	Pearson Correlation	1.000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
<b>Participation in physical events</b>	Pearson Correlation	.724**	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000			
<b>Participation in online events</b>	Pearson Correlation	.542**	.397**	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		
<b>Sponsorship of events</b>	Pearson Correlation	.683**	.515**	.441**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	

The correlation results depicted in Table 6 establishes there is a positive and significant association between Participation in physical events and the Company's performance ( $r=.724$ ,  $p=.000$ ). A positive and significant association exists between Participation in online events and the Company's performance ( $r=.542$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Moreover, a positive and significant association existed between the Sponsorship of events and the Company's performance ( $r=.683$ ,  $p=.000$ ). The results concurs with the findings of Pembi, Fudamu and Adam (2017) who found that consumer promotion, trade promotion, sales promotion and sale force promotion had positive and significant effects on organizational performance. Also, Mbugua (2014) revealed that

pharmaceutical firms had increased the usage of personal selling strategy to market their products and it positively improved performance in terms of profits increase and high levels of sales. Moreover, Rubi (2018) established that differentiation and cost leadership positively influenced the performance of supermarkets. Supriyanto and Ariyanti (2018) showed that sales training and personal selling partially have a significant influence on sales force performance. Also, Wamiri (2016) reported that Nairobi International Trade Exhibition is an essential instrument in the marketing of goods and services since it provides companies a focused platform for communication and exchange with customers from different backgrounds.

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS**

The study concluded that event marketing activities that influence the performance of Safaricom plc include trade shows & fairs, sporting events, entertainment events, charity events, and roadshow. Roadshow were the most event activities used by Safaricom Plc to improve on the performance. Most of the respondents agreed with the survey questions developed to gather information concerning event marketing activities (trade shows & fairs, sporting events, entertainment events, charity events, and roadshow) and event marketing strategies (Participation in physical events, Participation in online events and sponsorship of events).

It is concluded that a positive and significant association existed between the event marketing strategies and the performance.. The event marketing strategies included participation in physical events, participation in online events and sponsorship of events. It is concluded that participation in physical events included offering free samples and gifts while participation in online events included online advertising during live stream events. Participation in physical events and the company's performance was positively and significantly associated. Further, participation in online events and the company's performance was positively and significantly associated. Lastly, participation in online events was positively and significantly associated with the company's performance.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the management at Safaricom Plc need to emphasize much on event marketing activities such as trade shows & fairs, sporting events, entertainment events, charity events, and roadshows. The company needs to emphasize much on the roadshows since it has the most effect on the performance. In addition, Safaricom Company need to emphasize much on the event marketing strategies. The study's findings showed that all the event marketing strategies (Participation in physical events, Participation in online events and sponsorship of events) had a positive and significant association.

It is recommended that during participation in physical events, the company need to offer free samples and gifts and create a social setting for attendees to raise their satisfaction level. Also, there should be product and market testing at shows to gain general opinions and feedback about the products or services. Safaricom needs to use free samples since it increases customer's



intention to purchase products hence increases sales volume. The direct interaction with the customer enables the company to know what their customers need and want. The use of samples encourages customers to buy products and services.

It is also recommended that there should be an online advertising during live stream events. The company should emphasize much on online adverting because online advertising can be used to drive traffic to the site and build brand awareness. Effectively targeted campaigns can create brand influencers and reach complementary audiences. The online display enables brands to focus on their ideal audience and tailor messages that improve both recall and engagement.

Safaricom Company need to be involved in the sponsorship of events. Sponsorship increases reach and exposure to new clients, customers and businesses. Based on the study's findings, the importance of sponsorship is that it leads to brand exposure and recognition. Moreover, it raises brand awareness, creates preference, and provide attractive content for various products and services. Further, Safaricom needs to increase the sponsorship of events to reduce the cost of other promotion campaigns. Finally, it is recommended that further research should be done on the other companies in the Telecommunication industry to get comprehensive information on the effect of events marketing strategies on performance. Conducting studies in other companies will be key compared to the results of the current study and further identify more research gaps for future studies.

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