

The Role of Information Communication Technology in Online Shopping Platforms

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ABSTRACT

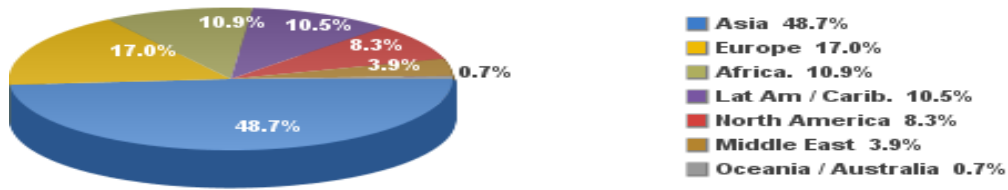
Now a day's information and communication technology plays an important role in customer buying process. Today e-shopping has become an integral part of everyday life. Accessibility to e-shopping platforms is not a privilege but rather a necessity for most people, particularly in the urban areas. There are alternative e zones available for almost every aspect of our lives, starting from purchasing of everyday household items to online shares and commodities. "e-commerce" is defined as the application of information and communication technologies (ICT) which support all the activities and realms of business concept of e-shopping platforms has been evolving since a number of years and is causative to the economic growth of several developed and developing economies. Out of the key factors responsible for the growth of e- shopping ICT is a leading one. Being aware of the significant role of ICT(internet) in our day to day life especially customer purchase decisions, Online shopping portals like amazon ,eBay etc. are wise enough in implementing the strategies to empower ICT in supporting online purchase of products in virtual shopping zones. In marketing environment ICT IS Used in searching the product using search engines, compare the products according to their values, adding the product into carts and online payment process. We have formed factor matrix which compile different factors of online shopping into different categories according to their relevance. This paper concluded that the role of Information communication technology in customer shopping behaviour would benefit the customers

Key Words: Customer, ICT, Marketing environment, online shopping, Shopping behaviour.

I. INTRODUCTION

ICT refers to technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications. It is similar to Information Technology (IT), but focuses primarily on communication technologies. This includes the Internet, wireless networks, cell phones, and other communication mediums. In modern society information and communication technology is ever-present, with over three billion people having access to the digital phenomena called Internet with approximately 8 out of 10 Internet users owning a smartphone, information and data are increasing by leaps and bounds. Since the advent of information communication technology humans have benefited immensely from it. one of the most notable effect can be seen from the ways we shopped now a days. However, does ICT really improve all aspects of our shopping experience? This rapid growth, especially in developing countries, has led ICT to become a keystone of everyday life, in which life without some facet of technology renders most of clerical, work and routine tasks dysfunctional. The most recent authoritative data, released in 2017, shows "that Internet use continues to grow steadily, at 6.6% globally by 2025. As of the most recent reported period, the number of internet users worldwide was 3.58 billion in 2017, up from 3.39 billion in 2016.

Internet Users in the World by Regions - December 31, 2017



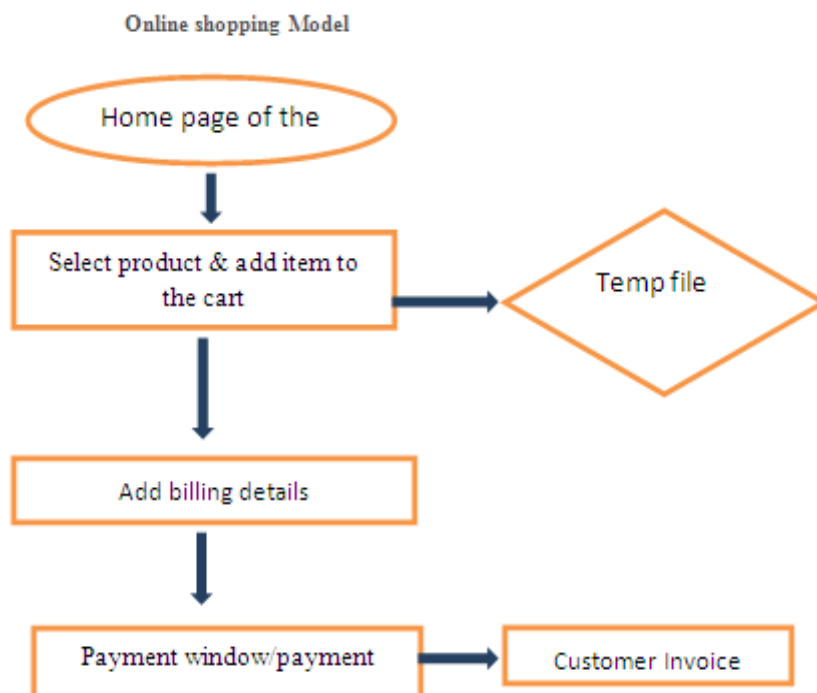
Source: Internet World Stats - www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
 Basis: 4,156,932,140 Internet users in December 31, 2017
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II. INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY MODEL IN ONLINE SHOPPING

The Internet burst between 2000 and 2002 which slowed down the rage in the financial market, the Internet infrastructure continues to grow and becomes an integral part of market strategic portfolio for many organizations. In order to be successful in the Internet niche, many retailers engage in business model reengineering to keep up with changes in how customers acquire goods and services. Based on in-depth interviews and a follow-up survey, the present study depicts a common online shopping process and identifies three common online shopping components: interactivity, transaction, and fulfilment. These components and their respective factors form one's online shopping experience. Managerial implications and future research directions are offered.

III. RISE OF TECHNOLOGY IN RETAIL SECTOR

Information and communication technology has now started a new war of thoughts in the retail industry i.e. “online v/s offline shopping”. Although the fact of the matter is that online shopping is getting more and more popular, there are many who still feel that the traditional way of shopping is truly a good experience. However, with changes in the lifestyle and perceptions, the growing Commerce sphere has truly influenced those who have been shopping the conventional way. Shopping at a mall might be a great way to catch up with friends, but fighting through a super crowded maddening rush during the sale season, is an area of frustration. If you still feel the need to rush out to a market or a mall every time a sale is announced, here are a few reasons why you might be missing out. Online is a better place to avail discounts and offers on the online shopping portals. Often we see festive discounts and off-season sales where one can avail discounts from 20% to 70% at any time of the year. One can also get notifications of such deals when you subscribe, which is not possible in the conventional way of shopping. When you buy online, there is an option to avail and discount coupon from coupon sites. Moreover, there are cash back sites which provide cash back over and above the discounts you get, and thus, result in huge savings.



e- Shopping is a type of electronic business which enables customers to straightforwardly purchase merchandise or services from a dealer over the Internet utilizing a web program. Customers discover a result of enthusiasm by going to the site of the retailer specifically or via seeking among elective sellers utilizing a shopping search engine, which shows a similar item's accessibility and valuing at various e-retailers. Customers can shop durable as well as non-durable items. An online shop brings out the physical similarity of purchasing products from shopping mall; the procedure is called business-to-customer (B2C) online shopping. At the point when an online store is set up to empower organizations to purchase from other organizations, the procedure is called business-to-business (B2B) web based shopping. An online store empowers the customer to peruse the company's variety of products and services, see photographs or pictures of the products, along data about the item particulars, highlights and costs. Online stores regularly provide customers to utilize "search highlights to discover particular models, brands or things. Online clients must approach the Internet and a legitimate technique for instalment with a specific end goal to finish an exchange, for example, a MasterCard, an Interact-empowered platinum card, or an administration, for example, PayPal. For physical items (e.g., soft cover books or garments), the e-rear ships the items to the client; for advanced items, for example, computerized sound documents of melodies or programming, the e-posterior regularly sends the record to the client over the Internet.

IV.FACTORS AFFECTING ONLINE SHOPPING IN ICT ENVIRONMENT

1. External Environment

- Legal Framework: It protects the consumers from any kind of laws in online shopping transactions. It also sort disputes come across e-business.
- Third Part Recognition: Third party ensures trustworthiness of online vendors which develop trust of customer to online shop.
- Number of Competitors: The numbers of internet online stores that provide same service and products that create great opportunity to the customer to buy products and services at lowest rate.

2. Geographical Factor

- As per studies geographical distances have positive impact on online shopping as distance of customer and retailer does not matter. After an order has shipped, you can track your packages on online shopping sites. From Your Orders, you can find tracking information in your order details. If an order includes multiple items, each may have separate delivery dates and tracking information.

3. Personal characteristics

- A new study from Business Insider Intelligence confirms that men are doing a lot of shopping online. So men are thereby helping drive malls into the ground, which are already struggling on multiple counts. "When it comes to e-commerce, men drive nearly as much overall spending online in the US as women. The conventional wisdom is that women drive shopping trends, since they control up to 80% to 85% of household spending," BI Intelligence reports. The report noted that 40% of men ages 18-to-34 "would ideally buy everything online." Women, on the other hand, seem to still care for traditional in-store shopping experiences at times with only 33% of women agreeing they feel the same.

4. Job

- Nature of Job is not directly related with online shopping behaviour of buyer but it is also seen that people who have more time available from work life tend to do more online shopping.

5. Age

- Age of buyer plays a vital role in online shopping. Young people from age group of 18 to 35 years chose online shopping as their preference.

6. Internet experience:

- The international standard on ergonomics of human system interaction, ISO 9241-210, defines user experience as "a person's perceptions and responses that result from the use or anticipated use of a product, system or service". According to the ISO definition, user experience includes all the users' emotions, beliefs, preferences, perceptions, physical and psychological responses, behaviours and accomplishments that occur before, during and after use. The ISO also list three factors that influence user experience: system, user and the context of use. Connectivity to internet and habit of being more social via networking sites also influence shopping preference to Online shopping from traditional method. Proficiency in internet usage largely affects online shopping behaviour.

7. Digitalization

- According to article published by **Linda Dauriz, Nathalie Remy, and Nicola Sandri (Luxury shopping in the digital age)** Three out of four luxury shoppers own a smartphone and about half own a tablet, according to our

interviews with more than 3,000 luxury customers in six major luxury markets. Not shockingly, while they're at work they depend generally on desktop or portable work station computers, but while commuting, dining, or shopping, they're more likely to utilize smartphones, particularly to look for items. In fact, more than half of extravagances, shoppers look and more than one in five of the shoppers said they often or always do some research on a mobile device before making a luxury purchase.

8 .Vender/service/product characteristics

- Products which are not available in nearby markets and additional services like home delivery and ease of order also make online shopping more popular among users.

9. Website Quality Security/Privacy:

- Websites which are certified by visa or any other payment gateway are more popular among buyers because of high safety measures.

10. Attitude towards online shopping

- Attitude towards online shopping is changing positively from last decade due to enhancement in knowledge.

11. Intention to online shopping

- Intention for online shopping is depending on nature of product. Products having more complex features and require detailed analysis before taking buy decision are more popular for online shopping.

12. Decision making/info seeking

- Online shopping platforms give many options for a single product. Freedom of making choice of decision to buy a product is important factor as online shopping depends upon quick buy option and order must be placed immediately.

13. Consumer satisfaction

- Level of satisfaction from previous purchases made encourage or discourage future buying decision of buyer. If buyer is satisfied from past online shopping results, it provides more confidence to him for next deal positively. If the buyer is dissatisfied from the product bough from online shopping sites the buyer can return the product instantly by a single click

14. Numbers of Brands

- Choice of brands is a factor which influence mind of modern buyer. Online shopping gives more choice and selection of brands which are available world-wide. Hence consumers seeking wide variety of brands tend to select online shopping as their preference.

15. 24/7 Service

- Spending habits of buyers are largely affected by mode of shopping as numbers of available variants with small price change make buyer spend more than pre-decided budget. Online shopping has number of options available with slight price change as a result buyers spend more in online shopping.

16. Payment options

- Cash on delivery is a revolutionary option introduced in online shopping world. It has increased confidence level of normal buyer who has fear of being cheated, now the same buyer prefer online shopping as payment is to be made at end on receiving of product.

17. Cheque

- As we all know cash was the only mode of buying goods, but with introduction of online shopping number of payment mode are now available for buyer. Cheque is one of them. It gives high value transactions an added security.

18. Electronic money:

- Electronic money is fast and secure mode of making payment for online shopping. NEFT, RTGS, Debit Card, Credit Card etc. are some of the well-known electronic modes of payment.

19. Invoice:

- Invoice is another term used for billing system. Online shopping also provides e-bill or invoice in electronic form which can be printed for reference as documentary proof.

CONCLUSION

Online shopping is a new experience and has greatly impacted the lives of consumers in its short time of existence. It is expected to grow constantly in years to come with advancements in technology. With the popularity of Internet, the number of Internet users will continue to grow and more Internet users will become online consumers, even regular online buyers. However, the evolution of E-commerce will bring new problems. The changes in business operation, business environment, and economic condition etc. will affect consumer online shopping behaviour.

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