

Online consumer behaviors

Psychology



Exploring Online Consumer Behaviors John A. Smith & Jane L. Doe Liberty

Online Consumer Behaviors According to Jander & Swinder (2008), consumer behavior is defined as “ the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society.” By identifying the behaviors that support buying online and those which do not, businesses can help to increase profits and will help to assure their share of the market, as electronic trade may well out-step traditional buying in the not to distant future. There are many variables to consider when outlining behaviors of Internet consumerism. According to the authors Delia Vazquez and Xingang Xu, online consumer behavior is affected by three main things: “ attitudes towards online shopping, motivations, such as price, convenience and hedonic motivations, and online information search” (2009). This research paper will focus on motivation and how it affects online consumer behavior. In the research carried out by Crutsinger, Jeon, and Kim, they identified seven motivators of online auction participants. These motivators were, “ search costs, product assortment and price, brand equity, transaction costs, customer orientation, perceived quality, and social interaction” (2008, p. 31). Never before has there been such a vehicle for buying and selling merchandise and services effectively. Online auctions are tapping into this relatively new trend with more than 1, 660 sites being procured and availed to cater for this type of consumers.

The study on online auctions was done through a questionnaire, based on 36 auction motivators, online behavior, and demographics of participants. The Likert scale was used to determine responses. The participants totaled 410

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and were selected from a pool of college students. Data was retrieved from 341 responses. The collected data revealed 90.9% were regular users of the Internet. A low 20% revealed they had no online auction experience. The remaining who did have experience with online auctions were identified as follows; 5.3% used the Internet daily, 15.2% weekly, 29.9% monthly, and 29.3% said one to two times per year. An interesting note to this research was that although most of those surveyed had participated in online auctions, the majority of them (80.6%) conveyed that they had never sold anything online (Jander & Swinder, 2008).

According to this research the following results showed that, search costs were the most important motivation, followed by product assortment/price, brand equity, transaction costs, customer orientation, and perceived quality. The social interactions were the least important motivators associated with online auction behaviors (Stibel, 2008, p. 36).

Too much information on a website can overwhelm a consumer, and too little can decrease consumer confidence conducted research which included this topic of interest (Stibel, 2008). Simplicity was found to be the key since consumers wanted to navigate with the least amount of effort. Clarity in the web design gives consumers the confidence in their ability to do their online purchases; hence search costs will play the most crucial role in motivation of consumers.

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