

Chapter 49

Shopping via Instagram: The Influence of Perceptions of Value, Benefits and Risks on Purchase Intentions

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ABSTRACT

This study presents an empirical investigation as to the key determinants of purchase intention towards clothing on Instagram. A conceptual model has been created, based upon the relevant literature and research questions of this study, which has subsequently been evaluated through a quantitative methodology. A convenience sample of 200 Thai customers was selected in order to complete the questionnaire. The accumulated data was analysed via multiple regression in order to test the study's hypotheses. The results suggest that four aspects contribute positively towards customer purchase intentions (perceived social value, perceived price value, perceived quality value and perceived benefits) while, in contrast, risk perceptions have been found to adversely impact upon customer purchase intentions. Two other aspects, perceived emotional value and electronic word of mouth, have been found to have no significant influence upon purchase intentions.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, social media have become a part of everyday life. Consumers are increasingly using the Internet to search for information related to products and services and social networking sites for value co-creation related activities (Paredes, Barrutia, & Echebarria, 2014). On the other hand, many

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e-marketers and e-sellers have begun to offer their products and services via social networking sites. Social networks can enhance online marketing by providing an effective advertising platform (Duffett, 2015) as well as by offering up-to-date information, products and services, which can be very important for fast-moving industries that rely on trend-setting, such as fashion (Kang & Johnson, 2013; Kim & Ko, 2010; Park & Cho, 2012)

A number of studies have discussed online customer purchase intentions in relation to fashion. While previous studies have investigated the purchase intentions held by online customers towards apparel, most research has focused on e-commerce websites (Almousa, 2010; Almousa & Brodsahl, 2013; Dawson & Kim, 2010; Erdil, 2015; Kim & Kim, 2004; Kwon & Noh, 2010; Loan, Fah, & Samadi, 2015; Rodriguez & Fernandez, 2016). While a small number of previous studies have investigated the relationship between purchase intentions and social media sites such as Facebook (Duffett, 2015; Kwahk & Ge, 2012; Nadeem, Andreini, Salo, & Laukkanen, 2015; Napompech, 2014), studies on other social networks that have a different scope and function remain scarce.

Consequently, this study examines what factors influence customer intentions towards buying apparel via Instagram. More specifically, the study's research objectives are, first, to examine which factors among various perceptions have a significant influence upon Thai customer purchase intentions towards apparel available to buy on Instagram and, secondly, how various perceptions towards apparel as given on Instagram impact upon customer intentions. To this end, this study examines seven potential antecedents of online purchase intentions, namely, perceived social value, perceived price value, perceived quality value and perceived emotional value as well as perceived risk, perceived benefits and, finally, the impact of electronic word of mouth.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Social Commerce

Social commerce is an evolution of e-commerce and a new way of undertaking online business, available as a result of the dramatic growth of social media sites and their active users. Social commerce uses a Web 2.0 infrastructure and social media applications to support online interactions and user contributions for the acquisition of products and services (Liang & Turban, 2011; Liang & Turban, 2012). Yadav et al (2013) define social commerce as "...exchange-related activities that occur in, or are influenced by, an individual's social network in computer-mediated social environments, where the activities correspond to the need recognition, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages of a focal exchange..." The unique features that differentiate social commerce from e-commerce are that the former makes it possible for consumers and sellers to generate content and for both to interact with each other at any time and from anywhere (Kim & Park, 2013). Web 2.0 applications enable the interactions of online users, with the information shared among users being able to help in the decision-making in relation to products and services (Hajli, 2014). Aside from assisting users in seeking and exchanging information, social media also facilitate the sharing of opinions and the purchasing of products and services online (Constantinides, 2014). This makes social commerce a powerful channel for online businesses while simultaneously supporting customer-centric contexts, such as customer services and understanding customer personae (Liang & Turban, 2012).

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