

# Live-Stream Interactivity as a Strategic Information Resource for Purchase Intention

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined how live-stream interactivity influences consumer purchase intention by exploring the psychological mechanisms linking engagement and buying behavior. It was conducted to clarify why interactive features in live-streaming e-commerce heighten purchase tendencies and to identify the internal states that mediate this effect. Using the stimulus-organism-response model, interactivity was treated as the stimulus, while presence, authenticity, and trust represented organismic mediators. Data from 540 online consumers were analyzed through partial least squares structural equation modeling. The results showed that interactivity significantly enhanced presence and authenticity, which in turn fostered trust and ultimately strengthened purchase intention. Direct effects of interactivity on intention were nonsignificant, confirming full mediation through these psychological variables. The findings suggest that technological interactivity alone does not drive sales; rather, its strategic value lies in cultivating immersive, authentic, and trust-based relationships that convert engagement into purchase motivation.

## KEYWORDS

Information Resource Management, Live Streaming Commerce, Interactivity, Digital Strategy, Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR), PLS-SEM

## INTRODUCTION

The practice of live-streaming e-commerce is a transformative force in the retail landscape, merging real-time entertainment with interactive shopping to create a uniquely immersive consumer experience (Hu & Chaudhry, 2020; Sun et al., 2019). Live-streaming has experienced rapid growth, reshaping online buying behaviors and becoming a primary marketing tool for businesses aiming to engage consumers in a dynamic digital environment (Ding et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2022). Unlike traditional e-commerce, which is often a solitary activity, live-streaming fosters a sense of community and immediacy, allowing for direct, two-way communication between streamers, brands, and viewers (Chen & Lin, 2018). This interactivity is a key distinguishing feature, enabling consumers to ask questions, see products demonstrated in real-time, and interact with fellow shoppers, which significantly reduces the uncertainty often associated with online purchasing (Li et al., 2023).

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From an information resource management perspective, these interactive exchanges can be understood as a stream of digital information resources (e.g., product explanations, seller signals, peer feedback, and incentive cues) that consumers must interpret and evaluate in real time. Accordingly, this study views live-stream interactivity as an information-processing environment in which consumers continuously acquire, filter, and integrate information cues to form judgments and make decisions. This framing situates the study within research on digital consumer behavior, where purchasing outcomes depend not only on technology features but also on how consumers cognitively and affectively process information embedded in mediated interactions.

Despite the widespread adoption and commercial success of live-streaming e-commerce, the underlying psychological mechanisms that drive consumer purchase intentions in this context remain an area of active investigation (Hu & Chaudhry, 2020). While interactivity is acknowledged as a critical component, its influence is not always direct and is often mediated by complex internal states within the consumer (Bao et al., 2016). To understand these relationships, this study focuses on three crucial psychological constructs: presence (the feeling of “being there” in the virtual environment), authenticity (the perception of the streamer and their content as genuine and sincere), and trust (the consumer’s confidence in the streamer, the platform, and the product). These factors are essential for translating engagement into tangible commercial outcomes.

To explore these dynamics, this research adopts the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model as its theoretical foundation (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Under the SOR view, external cues (S) shape an individual’s internal state (O), which subsequently drives the behavioral outcome (R). In the context of this study, interactivity is conceptualized as the primary stimulus (S). The consumer’s resulting psychological experiences of presence and authenticity, along with the formation of trust, represent the organismic states (O). The final behavioral outcome is the consumer’s purchase intention (R). By applying this framework, this study aims to investigate the complex pathways through which interactivity influences purchase intention, both directly and indirectly, through these critical mediating variables.

This study makes several significant contributions to the existing literature. Theoretically, it extends the application of the SOR model to the live-streaming e-commerce context, providing a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between technological features and consumer psychology. It systematically examines the sequential mediating effects of presence, authenticity, and trust, offering a comprehensive model that clarifies the intricate process of purchase intention formation. From a practical standpoint, the findings offer valuable insights for marketers, platform operators, and streamers. By understanding the critical role of creating a sense of presence, fostering authenticity, and building trust, stakeholders can develop more effective strategies to enhance consumer engagement, cultivate loyalty, and ultimately drive sales in the competitive live-streaming market.

This paper is structured as follows: First, a comprehensive literature review is presented to develop the theoretical framework and research hypotheses. This is followed by a detailed description of the methodology, including data collection and analytical procedures. Subsequently, the results of the data analysis are reported, followed by a thorough discussion of the main findings, theoretical and managerial implications, limitations of the study, and directions for future inquiry. Finally, the paper concludes with a summary of the study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

### SOR Model

The SOR model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) has emerged as one of the most influential theoretical frameworks in environmental psychology and consumer behavior research (Hochreiter et al., 2022). The model postulates that environmental stimuli (S) lead to an organism’s internal reaction (O), which subsequently influences behavioral responses (R) (Zhao, 2025b). This framework suggests that an organism’s internal feelings or behavior are fundamentally influenced by external

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