

WEB NAVIGATION BEHAVIOUR OF MALAYSIANS IN RELATION TO ONLINE PURCHASING

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ABSTRACT

The Internet has been touted as a global medium that is speedily gaining interest and popularity as the most revolutionary tool for marketing. Most importantly, the Internet has also redefined the global nature of shopping and communications, as it is the perfect vehicle for online shopping. The dramatic influence of online shopping on consumers and businesses is slowly, albeit surely being accepted in Malaysia as an alternative shopping mode rather than visiting bricks-and-mortar stores.

Many studies have been carried out to ascertain the roles of the Web as an information and communications medium, while other studies have examined factors that may influence or hinder shopping on the Internet. However, much of the latter research is primarily conceptual in nature. Very little empirical research exists on issues relating to shopping orientations on the Internet.

Findings indicated that online shoppers were more likely to be well educated with at least a bachelor's degree, aged between 19 to 34 years of age, unmarried, holding an executive or managerial-level job and earning a minimal salary of RM1501 a month. Armed with more than four years of Internet experience, the online shoppers usually accessed the Internet from work and regarded the Internet as a great source for detailed product information. He or she was somewhat comfortable and satisfied with their Internet usage comfort and skills, seeking for information online with a frequency of at least once a month. In addition to that, the web navigation behaviour of these online shoppers was rather advanced, with most being able to seek their first useful piece of

information within the first five to fifteen minutes of their search time, hence contributing to an almost successful rate of online shopping rate. However (among a varied number of reasons), slow downloading rate of web pages seem to be the most dissatisfying online experience held by almost all of the respondents surveyed in this study.

On a final note, it should be clearly understood that marketers ought to consider online shopping not as competitive, but rather complementary to traditional shopping, as it primarily responds to the needs of a specific market segment such as the time-pressured consumers. The critical point here is to get marketers to communicate these unique shopping solutions to their target consumer groups and to educate them on how to make best use of them to their greatest benefit.

Keywords: Online purchasing; e-shopping; Web navigation behaviour.