

Online Shopping: Benefits for Customer and Marketer.

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Abstract

The economy of both developed and developing is growing at a faster pace. This has created a boundaryless market and an open venue for marketers to provide their products worldwide. This is the era of online marketing which provides convenience, saves time, and provide the huge discount. All these have shifted people from offline to online markets. Families are becoming nuclear day by day and dual income has increased the disposable income of customers. This disposable income has opened a venue for many marketers to provide varieties of products to customers. Now both males and females are highly interested in self-grooming products. They are more interested in their looks. For their look's upgradation, they are ready to spend more on cosmetic products. They are also concerned about the environment and interested in purchasing environment-friendly products. This has opened a new market known as green cosmetics. Companies which will follow ethics in their marketing strategies will get more market share.

Introduction

The Internet is the fastest medium of communication with low cost and 24x7 availability. It has changed the way consumers purchase decisions. It has become the third option for getting product information, previously they trusted information from their acquaintances and information provided by sellers. Online marketers are putting more effort into understanding their customers' tastes and preferences. These are some of the reasons for its popularity in recent years. The Internet provides a boundaryless platform for marketers. Internet connectivity has increased the market size and reach of online marketers.

Customers get detailed information about products easily with the help of the Internet. E-tailing has reduced the financial cost of facility setup, manpower, advertising, renting costs, etc. It simplifies the whole process of reaching end customers. It allows marketers to interact directly

with customers, and help in resolving customers' issues quickly. It provides a platform for real-time response and convenience.

Online marketing is growing as it has solved many problems of customers like it saves long traffic hours' time, providing products at the doorstep, discounts, providing products that are not available at nearby stores, and many more. This era is different from the previous era, now customers have more disposable income compared to the previous era. This has created an opportunity for marketers to provide varieties of products. Previously cosmetic products were used only by women but now males are also interested in looks. They are also interested in cosmetic products targeting their needs. This has also made new product segments and marketers are making products by targeting their special requirements. The cosmetic industry is flourishing as an increase in the number of customers has increased the demand for products.

The internet has made customers more informative and knowledgeable. Customers now want eco-friendly products. They are concerned about product ingredients, packaging material, and product disposal. They are inclined towards those companies who are concerned about the environment, plant more trees, and do lots of social activities like child education, pure water for poor people, and many more.

Literature review

"On gender difference in consumer behavior for online financial transactions of cosmetics" by Won-Yu-Liu, Chun Cheg Lin, Yang Sun Lee, and Der Jiunn Deng mentioned online market is growing worldwide. They have researched gender differences regarding cosmetics products. Every marketer is competing for online financial transactions through online marketing. Their study found that male skin care products have a wide variety of growth potential. Marketers should put focus more on this market segment as there is a huge scope for success. The main purpose of their study is to find whether gender difference exists or it is just perception. They also worked on finding the importance of financial transactions in cosmetics. The significant difference they found in their study was on different criteria like the amount of money spent per purchase, time spent on shopping cosmetics, amount of money spent monthly, and satisfaction level. They also found significant differences in brand reputation, fresh scent, natural ingredients, pricing, appropriateness, service personal professionalism, etc. Compared to male and female respondents who are more concerned about online transactions.

Marketers should pay more attention to providing secure financial transactions. They have suggested that marketers should offer different pricing or discounting methods to attract male customers to shop online. Female customers are highly attracted to online pricing strategies. Male respondents scored higher on the following factors as compared to female respondents they are product guarantee, fast product delivery, and quality of service provided by the service provider. Marketers should focus more on providing faster, safer, and quality products to satisfy their female customers. Male customers are more brand conscious or give importance to reputed brands as compared to the female study they found in their studies. Female respondents give importance to products with natural ingredients, fresh fragrance, proper pricing, skin suitability,

service personal attitude towards professionalism, advertisement recommendation, and ease of use. Online vendors should consider above mentioned factors to formulate their strategies to attract more both male and female potential customers and make existing customers loyal.

Yam B. Limbu, Long Pham, and Thuy Thi Thu Nguyen their article "*Predictors of green cosmetics purchase intentions among young female consumers in Vietnam*" have used the (IMB) Information- Motivation- Behavioral skills model as their theoretical framework. They have studied green cosmetics and motivation factors regarding green cosmetics. Green cosmetics are made up of organic and natural products. Its ingredients are based on fruits and are free from chemicals, additives, or fillers. Green cosmetics formulators aim to preserve the environment. It is produced without any pesticides, or harsh chemicals and has not been tested on animals. Informative customers of this era are highly inclined toward green customers. Young educated female customers are attracted to green cosmetics. They are motivated to purchase chemical-free products with minimum harmful effects on the environment. IMB model is used by authors in predicting and explaining young women's green cosmetic purchases and their growth. They explained that knowledge about green cosmetics will contribute to purchasing more green cosmetics. Their research results show the direct relationship between attitude and purchase intention of customers for green cosmetics.

Customers willing to purchase green cosmetics are more knowledgeable and environmentally conscious. Young Vietnamese women are more inclined towards organic and natural cosmetics. Their research highlighted that knowledge, attitude, and subjective norms increase young women's inclination toward green cosmetics. They have suggested that marketers should focus more on advertising and marketing campaigns to provide more information to customers about green cosmetics benefits. They also suggested marketers should recruit more opinion leaders with expert knowledge about green cosmetics. They also mentioned that marketers should focus more on celebrity endorsement and focus more on trustworthiness. Young customers are influenced by social media nowadays. So, marketers should exploit this medium to provide more product information. Green cosmetic marketers should focus more on the positive impacts of their products. Their marketing strategy should emphasize ecology, natural beauty and support environmental sustainability. They should work on planting more trees, reducing plastic wastage, or recycling waste by this they can create a distinctive image in customers' minds.

"A study of consumer behavior towards the purchase of cosmetic products through online portals" by Taavishree Sharma and Dr. S. Boopathy has mentioned that nowadays people want to live a healthier life and now they are more knowledgeable regarding what they are putting on themselves. Today customers are more informed about the ingredients of products. This has compelled cosmetics manufacturers to formulate their products with organic and natural compounds. The increase in disposable income in the past decades has raised the demand for self-care products. They also mentioned that an increase in the earth's temperature led to increasing demand for sun care products. In their paper, they have done research on discounts,

pricing, and advertisement on buying behavior of customers during online shopping of cosmetic products. Indian customers are more price-sensitive and more responsive toward discounted pricing. The Indian cosmetics industry is growing at a faster pace as both men and women are conscious about their looks and paying attention more to self-grooming. They considered product advertisements and found there is a correlation between the frequency of advertisements and the frequency of purchases. They found people get irritated by a higher number of advertisements and decide not to buy a product of that particular brand. The second variable of their study was price. Pricing plays a very important role in customer purchasing behavior. Discount provided by e-retailers has shifted people's shopping behavior from offline to online stores. Customers go online to avail of maximum discounts and benefits provided by e-retailers. They found a low correlation between motivation by advertisement and motivation by discounts. They also found that the young customer segment is highly motivated by advertisements and discounts as compared to the older group of customers. They have also mentioned that women purchase twice the cosmetic products as compared men.

Vam Lock Kwan, Rahilah Ahmad, and Rohizan Ahmad in their research paper "*Cosmetic advertisement: A study on self-esteem and buying behavior of young women in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*" have mentioned that advertisement today seems to be a major communication medium. It persuades customers in such a way that advertised products can fix all flaws of customers and make them more attractive. They also claim that if the customer uses beauty products advertised by marketers will make them the same as the person featured in the advertisement. Beauty products advertise their products in such a way that it creates beauty standards. The cosmetic industry is putting target women's self-esteem and making them feel they are not beautiful enough without using cosmetic products. They target more vulnerable young customers through their advertisements and make them feel they can also become more attractive like the models. The cosmetic industry is growing at a faster pace in both developed and developing countries. Women show a lot of importance to personal grooming products and are more concerned about their outer look. Working women are ready to buy premium personal care products for upgrading their look. In their study, they found that young female customers who wear cosmetic shows more self-confidence than those who don't wear them.

Companies promise that cosmetic products represent the perfect image of women. Young women believe that cosmetic products lift their self-esteem and confidence. They make advertisements in such a way young women feel that their self-confidence will go to a higher level. It changes the opinion of customers and makes them feel the product is a necessity. In their study, they also found that advertisement influences young women purchasing behavior. Advertisements are considered motivation sources for customers. Advertisement built trust among customers and persuades them to shop for the advertised products. Cosmetic marketers market their products psychologically and put pressure on young females continuously on their physical appearance and skin tone compared with models. By this young female customers loses their self-confidence by comparing them with models. This results in low self-esteem and self-confidence regarding their physical appearance and body image. The researchers suggested that

marketers should follow ethics during their product promotion. They have also suggested that advertisements should include models with different body sizes and skin tones to represent diversity among young females' age, backgrounds, etc. This will reduce pressure among young females and will be able to accept themselves the way they are. This will also increase their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Conclusion

This is the era of online marketing. An increase in dual-income has increased the disposable income of families. Both male and female customers are interested in their looks and ready to spend more on cosmetic products. Customers are not willing to spend hours in traffic and this has created an opportunity for online marketers. Marketers have taken this opportunity by providing a variety of products at their doorstep in a single click. The cosmetic industry is flourishing nowadays everyone is interested in their outer look and ready to spend more on it. This has created more demand in the market. Customers are more demanding and knowledgeable. They are more informative about the ingredients of products. It is difficult to make a fool of them. The cosmetic industry puts lots of pressure on customers' self-confidence by them feel they are not beautiful without using their cosmetics, which is not ethical. Customers are now inclined towards green cosmetics as they are interested in saving their environment. They are interested in buying chemical-free natural products. This will save their health and environment too. Online marketing is growing faster pace as it provides convenience, saves time, huge discounts, etc. They should provide a safer and more secure platform for financial transactions.

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