



# **Effective Pre-Purchase Process Strategies for Improving Online Sales of antiaging Skin Care Products**

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**THIS INDEPENDENCE STUDY SUBMITTED IN THE PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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**TITLE OF RESEARCH :** Effective Pre-Purchase Process Strategies for Improving Online Sales of antiaging Skin Care Products

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### Abstract

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### Abstract

With advancement in skin care technology and emergence of negative notions related to aging, use of anti-aging products has become inevitable taking the antiaging industry growth and potential to new highs. Advent of ecommerce, most businesses today urge to move towards online platforms which are much more cost efficient and easily accessible to the users. Online businesses with its plus sides also has some challenges relating to user trust and inability of the user to get real time feel of the product to make a purchase decision. This has led to study of designing the pre-purchase experience of the user, which ultimately would translate into purchase decision. Many website factors including; putting positive first impression on the user, development of trust on website along with visual and functional aspects of website, and product factors including; searchability, appeal, attributes, sales promotions and cost and policies related to products effect the purchase intention of the user. This positive purchase intention ultimately translates into purchase which ultimately results in increased sales. Antiaging online businesses can now formulate an effective successful sales strategy from the framework established at the end of study and make this pre-purchase process strategy part of the overall strategy for sales improvement. Recommendation for implementation of this study on executive, managerial and functional level along with practical recommendations for other businesses and industries have also been given in this study.

**Keywords:** Online Sales, Skin Care, Pre-purchase, Antiaging Products.

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## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Research Background**

Skin being the most evident and important organ of the body, contributes to be the most distinct and evident feature that contributes mainly to the way people appear to the world. It also serves as the main contributor to age calculation as skin has the ability to tighten or loosen with time thus showing visible clues to the age of the person. Thus, for this reason skin care had always been a part of human lives since ancient times (Sahu, Sahu, Sharma, &Jha, 2014). Even with major and evident traces of existence of skin care routines in old scriptures and cultures, the first ever reported skin care business is said to be born around a century ago by Helena Rubinstein. Helena Rubinstein, the trend setter was an enterprising woman whose famous words still catch the attention of many. She stated that there are no ugly women in the world, except those who underestimate the power of taking care of themselves. She was brilliantly successful in coming up with such a unique business idea at that time and captured the interest and attention of thousands of women around the world. Her first line of skin care products, gave birth to the commercial aspect of skin care which is now a huge industry in itself (Brandon, 2013).

Skin care products that are said to possess the capacity to deal or fight aging, producing positive effects on the skin by reducing wrinkling of the skin, causing the individual to look much younger than the original age is called anti-aging skin care products. With the ever-increasing research in the areas of skin care today, the topic of antiaging has attained substantial importance and growth. Not only as an industry, anti-ageing today has also become one of the latest trends that people follow worldwide. One of the most basic reasons why antiaging serves as the most followed and latest trend in the industry has its roots in the continuous generation of negative ideas and feelings that have been lately associated with aging (Sahu, Sahu, Sharma, &Jha, 2014). Skincare highlighting antiaging treatments though had been a part of ancient beauty and skin care, today have become a part of culture that is obsessed with the ideas of ever youth and beauty. Thanks to advertising and others factors in the market that have been portraying increasing age as a serious medical condition and introducing and devising products to fight against its effects. This trend mostly took its tool during the 1980s with the advancements in the

fields of human growth hormones being used as a potential treatment for aging. The antiaging industry steaming up in the 90's reaching sky high with the advent of the twenty-first century. With companies and businesses now reaching massive populations through internet and social media other than with print and tv ads could convince more and more people to spend a fortune in fighting the worse effects of aging (Gorsuch, 2010).

Today, with the advent to E-commerce, businesses now have a novel alternative to carrying out businesses other than the most traditional ways. Use of Internet medium has also made the processes much easier. Even business transactions have become more convenient and much cheaper than before (Santos, 2013) which serve as a great platform especially for small and home businesses to jump on the bandwagon and become a part of this industry without too much investment on brick and mortar. Huge escalations have also been noted in the fields of vanity and lifestyle consumerism all over the world since the last fifteen years especially. With the beauty market today reaching the ultimate high with growth of more than around 12%. Alone in the Middle East, Beauty product account between 25/30% of the overall retail space, marking Gulf States as one the highest spenders on beauty products (Wells, 2006) whereas India alone documents galloping sales in the fields of skincare products in recent years. This trend is still on fire with the ever-growing size of internet market and introduction of new anti-aging and skin care products in the market on everyday basis (Parameswaran, & Cardoza, 2007).

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Our research problem helps us study in detail on how anti-aging skin care products can be effectively sold leading to the formation of online sale strategy. Keeping the growth potential of antiaging skincare product along with the era of online businesses in mind, our topic of study is of great importance. The beauty market reaching new highs of around 12% with lots of potential growth (Wells, 2006) along with boom in advertising, with businesses reaching more potential customers, antiaging industry has now gained the position of being a billion-dollar success story. Technological advancements that have led to influx of information and continuous access of knowledge by a common man has lead man to gain obsession with new lifestyle ideas such as natural, organic, vegetarian along with a technology and media-driven obsession with ageless beauty (Gorsuch, 2010).

Anti-aging products that deal or fight against aging and have the capability to reduce wrinkling effects on the human skin have now become a must have for everyone (Sahu, Sahu, Sharma, & Jha, 2014) as age is being introduced as a serious illness or medical condition that needs treatment leading humans to be molded into a society that is obsessed with the ideas of ever youth and beauty (Gorsuch, 2010). Our research problem will help online businesses antiaging skin care businesses to identify ways in which they can benefit from this ever-increasing trend in skin care industry and increase overall online sales. This study will also help businesses establish effective strategies for establishing successful skin care businesses online.

### **1.3 Research Objective**

The main objective of this research is to device and formulate an effective strategy that could help online skin care businesses to sell or increase sales of their anti-aging products online. This research will help businesses place their products online and build a great pre-purchase experience of the customer. This positive experience will build up positive purchase intentions which will ultimately maximize chances of increasing sales. Not only will this research provide with a framework for factors that can improve sales but in the same process help you design a positive customer experience that can ultimately translate into loyalty of customer by making them repeated customers which will also increase sales at the end of the day.

The main challenge that businesses need to understand is that in this type of selling requires selling a product that is tangible, which has intangible long-term outcome or results, along with the challenge of being sold on an intangible service platform (website). All these challenges require to be dealt with some serious effective strategy points or planning to ensure that the product is presented for selling in a way that the concept becomes tangible and understandable to the customer and they are motivated to buy the product. This research will focus on the visual features of online product presentation and help get insight of antiaging product user psychology that will businesses to present products with the best appeal to attract users and help them in building a positive purchase intention.

Online small businesses usually are privileged in the sense of having direct connections with customers and with a much greater amount of flexibility to comply with the ever-emerging needs



of the customer according to the latest trends. Online businesses can now cultivate a much more positive perception about their products (antiaging products) and then gradually build up a customer base and demand for their products (Smart, 2010). The main objective of this research is to identify ways in which small businesses and home businesses can benefit from research and latest trends in the market related to antiaging products. Now businesses can increase their sales through strategy formulated in this study and make more profits by finding out more ways of making the concept of antiaging more tangible to the potential customers.

#### **1.4 Scope of Study**

With aging being an inevitable natural phenomenon, galloping increase in the use of internet and ecommerce websites along with emergence of the global trend leading people to get more and more cautious regarding aging, the study in the area of antiaging and online selling of antiaging products can be greatly beneficial for businesses around the world.

This research will cover a complete study on the factors that can help design a positive pre-purchase user experience that will improve sales of anti-aging products online. It will cover necessary factors that positively contribute to making an online sale through a website. All the important factors will then be molded into an effective framework that can help businesses to benefit by placing and implementing these strategies in their business. This documentary research in the end will also make recommendations on the corporate, managerial and functional level for improvements in skin care, antiaging products and online selling of these products along with making recommendations for other business that can benefit from this research.

#### **1.5 Research Significance**

The first ever skincare business established a century ago by Rubenstein with an amount of £250 at that time bolstered into a success by generating around £100,00 at that time that can be estimated at an \$15.3 million equivalent today (Brandon, 2013) since its inception skin care industry is on an upward spiral, reaching rocket high sales in the latest times. Skincare today is no longer considered to be the domain of females in fact it now also involves the huge potential of the male market part. The image of a well-groomed male counterpart has definitely impacted

the skin care industry in a positive way. Recent reports by Horizon Research Consultant Group along with Shanghai Fashion Media Company reported that today one in every three men in the large and developed cities spends quite a lot of money on skincare and cosmetic products on a monthly basis thus proving that this new trend will be of great significance and benefit to the skin care businesses and industry. Male skincare business market in the world over all can be considered as the new potential goldmine and can prove to be an inexhaustible source of wealth for skin care companies. (LiQian, 2007).

Our research topic gains further importance when we also consider the upward trend of more and more businesses going online. The potential in antiaging skin care product market combined with the potential of ever increasing number of users turning towards internet for shopping, make our topic of great significance. The market trends and positive business insights have led to the significance of our research and made this topic very beneficial for business interested in increasing sales and making more successful websites to grab good market for their products leading to increased sales.

## Literature Review

**Anti-aging skin care as business:** Skin care products possess the capacity to deal and fight signs of aging hence producing positive effects of a youthful skin and reducing the number of wrinkles. These wrinkles being the major cause the individual looks older or aged. Antiaging products according to businesses make you look much younger than the original age. Advancement in research and skin care has led to sophisticated anti-aging products. These products have gained substantial importance in the modern era and has caused greater growth in the antiaging skin care industry. Anti-ageing today is not just an industry but has become the latest trends worldwide (Sahu, Sahu, Sharma, &Jha, 2014). Being a culture obsessed with advertising created beauty standards of looking youthful and nothing less, have caused people to spend millions in fighting against aging and antiaging products. Treating aging as a medical condition, is now a trend worldwide generating billion-dollar success as an industry (Gorsuch, 2010) motivating businesses worldwide to join every growing potential of this sector.

**This business when online can face several challenges which can be:**

**- Trust Development Issues:** One of the basic principles of trust development is that it is formed once the user and the business is in real communication. One of the main challenges in online shopping is that even if there is a contact feature present on the website, there is always some delay in correspondence or lag in response time from the product or website owner which sometimes lets the user loose interest in the product as people do not tend to pursue things later unless they are really motivated to do that (Hanai, & Oguchi, 2009)

**- Credit card and other online transaction problems:** The reassurance of security in online transactions had always been a major concern when it comes to shopping online. Credit card and other financial frauds are something that usually turn people off from online buying (Teo, 2006).

**-High shipping costs and time delays:** Usually savings from online shopping are spent on putting up with the shipping costs. Whereas sometimes users are also put off with the time delays in delivery times (Teo, 2006).

**- Lack of product quality assurance:** In physical shopping consumers can examine products before making the purchase and are able to clear any doubts with the salesperson in real time. Consumers during the online shopping experience do not get a chance to examine the quality of product before making the purchase. Even with product details and information available it is difficult for consumers to be absolutely sure about the product quality (Teo, 2006)

**- High user switching rate due to many competitive options available :** The rate of switching to competitor's sites is usually high in online shopping due to lots of competition in the antiaging and ecommerce business sector. If ever a website lacks information or there is delay in response from business the consumer has an option to quickly switch to competitor website with a simple click in such a case. (Hanai, & Oguchi, 2009)

**- Fear of No after sales service associated with online businesses:** Users usually worry due to the uncertainty and risk associated with online stores because of lack of physical existence or evidence (Teo, 2006).

**-Lack of Product Tangibility:** Lack of tangibility becomes a challenge when products are placed in an online environment. This lack of tangibility in case on online product buying intangibility of product has negative consequences and cause difficulty for consumers (Verhagen, Vonkeman, & Van Dolen, 2016).

### **Improvement of Sales in Antiaging Skin Care Business:**

Customer Purchase of anti-aging skin care product will consist of three phases that include:

Pre-purchase Phase: Getting information and building up buying intentions is usually the first part of the purchasing process which is dealt in the pre-purchase phase

Purchase Phase: The product purchasing phase corresponds to the phase or process during which the purchase activity is carried out

Post-purchase Phase: This phase included after purchase activities (Pavlou, & Fygenson, 2006).

By improving the Pre-purchase process, the user develops purchase intentions which ultimately lead to positive purchase phase or Buying which ultimately results in sales increase.

**Factors that positively effect Pre-Purchase Phase:** When user interacts with a website he comes in contact with the a. website b. product. The individual factors of each positively affect the purchase intention of the user. Let us examine the factors in detail.

## **2.1 Website Factors that positively effect Pre-Purchase Phase :**

### **a. First Impression:**

**Website Loading Speed:** The time taken by a website to appear on the browser is very important and creates the first impression on the user of the website. Studies reveal that download delay, amount of time taken by a website in displaying a page requested by the user from a Web server, relates to the website's response time and is the main factor associated with the user's lower intention to use the system as it makes the user less interested in the process (Pavlou, & Fyngenson, 2006). Usually graphics and heavy images that are the main cause of this delay are added solely for the purpose of serving as an "eye candy", we need to reconsider adding them. As a general rule of thumb the web page must load within eight seconds time for the server (file aggregate size must not 56k bytes) (Falk, Sockel, & Chen, 2005).

Download delay also negatively relates to the time needed for performing a task which results in negative impact on the user's intention to use a system. These delays also negatively impact the users attitude toward getting information which ultimately results in negative impacts on the purchase decision of the user (Pavlou, & Fyngenson, 2006). Websites must ensure quick downloading for a positive impact on the user.

**Attention Grabbing or Hook:** The look and feel or the visual design of a website is said to be a great in building up the first impressions and studies on this subject of first impression have revealed that 41% of users immediately abandon websites if the visual design or outlook of the website appears outdated to them (Schiller, 2011). Positive first impression of a website is crucial for the success of any webstore. When the viewer first opens a site, it should have the tendency to hook the users to it and keep them engaged at that point to explore further. The visual attractiveness of a website is positively associated with quality perceptions of the user regarding the site. Users also have a tendency to associate visual appeal of a website with trustworthiness on the retailer thus making visual layout and appeal of a website to be one of the most important among all element leading to effectivity and ultimately success. Researches also demonstrates that well designed graphics, optimal text display and the appeal of interface to the users in general improves the users interest and hooks the user to the website. Visual design acts as the attention-grabbing aesthetic of a Web page. Its elements are said to be dealing with

balance, aesthetics, uniformity and emotional appeal of the overall graphical look and are said to be the most effective attributes of a website (Karimov, Brengman, & Van Hove, 2011).

**Navigation:** Ease of navigation is major component of usability of a website. A website must facilitate its user and allow him to find his way across the web. Navigation and search options on a website must be prominent and easy to use requiring a minimal amount of effort to be invested in them (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012).

Studies reveal that the best-looking websites in the world tend to lose consumer attachment to the website if the navigational structure of the website is not effective and leads to dead ends. It is for this reason that the operations and layout of a website site put a major impact on the consumers behavior and his/her decision to use the website and continue to shop online with the website (Falk, Sockel, & Chen, 2005).

#### **b. Website Design Elements:**

**Visual Design:** E-Retailers must understand the importance of a visual design and must invest on this side for it being the first thing that the user comes in contact with and makes impressions about. Visual design definitely is one of the key factor that can help in molding online shopping experience of online shopping (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012). Visual design can be defined as the attention-grabbing aesthetic as well as visual quality of a Web page. Elements of a visual design are said to be dealing with balance, aesthetics, uniformity and emotional appeal of the overall graphical look and are said to be the most effective attributes of a website (Karimov, Brengman, & Van Hove, 2011).

**Store Layout:** Not only performance but visual appearance of a webstore has also has proven to be a major factor in improving a buyers' consideration for making a purchase from the store (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012). An aesthetically pleasing e-commerce website therefore is generally more liked and valued by consumers, thus ultimately leading to increased sales and ROI. Studies suggest that the visual appeal of an e-commerce website greatly affects how a consumer's shops and leads into a trend or urge for impulsive buying online (Jiang, Wang, Tan, & Yu, 2016)

Store design being one of the most important features in an online business, its layout must be designed on the basis of studies conducted on previous successful web store designs accompanied with the knowledge of consumer psychology, emotions, and attitudes. Tactics or types of appeals that compel consumers to buy from a webstore must also be carefully planned and implemented in the product and store design, whereas the technology part must ensure efficiency and accuracy of the web store (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012).

**Usability Factor:** Ease of navigation is also another major component of usability of a website and a stores layout must facilitate a consumer and allow him to find his way across the store Usability of a website determines whether the design of a websites enables users to accomplish the desired tasks that are expected from the user with effectivity, efficiency and while attaining satisfaction that ultimately combine together to provide use with a great experience. Usability studies, determining the experiences of the end-users while they interact with a website, leads to the identification of important factors that ultimately help a website in taking design decisions to enhance the overall experience (Wilkie, Romance, & Rosendale, 2012).

Facilitate of consumer to find their ways across a web store is crucial for any retail success for the reason that a confusing environment may lead the user to move to consumer's site which is just a click away (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012). Studies reveal that the best-looking websites in the world sometimes lose consumer brand attachment at quick rates if the navigation of the website would lead to dead ends. This is the reason the operations and layout of a website site put a major impact on the brand of organization (Falk, Sockel, & Chen, 2005).

**Interaction Factor:** The interactions between users and products can be characterized based upon product properties, tasks, user characteristics and other contextual features and users tend to instantly form impressions of a website. Investigation of attitude formation upon interaction with a website is a very important aspect and can help us shape up the interaction of the user with the site thus resulting in the intended behaviors we require and avoidance of user switching to another alternative or competitive website (Jiang, Wang, Tan, & Yu, 2016).



### **c. Website Trust Development**

Studies reveal that a strong relationship exists between website trust, consumer satisfaction level and consumer intention to buy. Thus, it becomes the responsibility of the business website to satisfy consumers needs and help them develop trust on them which would be beneficial for the business in the longer term. Users demand for trust usually comprises of tangible (web security, Esurance of delivery time) along with the intangible aspects (feelings of happiness from the purchase). Consumer are said to be comfortable with the website and satisfied to develop a purchase intension if they perceive high levels of trust and competence regarding the website. Trust therefor is the most essential element for users who intend to buy from a website online. Impact of trust on consumer satisfaction level is very high which indicate that higher levels of trust in a webstore will ensure consumer satisfaction and will positively influence purchase decisions (Beyari, & Abareshi, 2016).

**FAQ:** Credibility of website increase when there is ample and clear information on the website along with detailed frequently asked questions that have details relating to important factors such as security of personal information, security of transactions along with product return or shipping costs (Teo, 2006). The quality of Information refers to the most recent, correct and absolute information presented on the website. In an online shopping website, consumers will depend and make buying decisions on the basis and extent of information that is provided on the website.

**Policies:** Lots of information related to policies and procedure of website and help in building up user reliability on the website and thus improve trust factor. Information quality (recency and truth) has direct impact on trust level of online consumer thus it can be stated also that when websites are able to provide most accurate and updated information, related to products, policies and services, they gain the position of being trustworthy organization in the eyes of consumer.

**Making Business Image Tangible for Trust Development:** Webstore being an intangible service needs clues that ensure the existence of business. A Good idea can be to put up images of working staff or work setting in order to improve the element of reliability on the business,

while creating trust on the website which helps users in forming positive emotions for making a purchase (Hanai, & Oguchi, 2009).

In this modern ecommerce world users fear that fact that the stores might not have physical existence or any person responsible enough to carry out the desired task required to be carried out from the business side. They are also unsure of the fact as if someone is present at the other end and issues if they may arise during or after purchase. Detailed information on all contact points including email, phone or fax numbers of the business would increase user confidence and positively influence the users intention to make a purchase due to the trust in business (Teo, 2006).

## **2.2 Factors that positively effect Pre-Purchase Phase of Product**

### **a. Searchability of Antiaging product:**

**Product Search:** Product searchability is the first product related website feature that needs to be properly designed to ensure a positive user experience. The webstore must be designed in a manner to facilitates product search in a short amount of time. This feature would help in minimizing disorientation and would provide website users with sense of control over the interaction. Navigation and search options on a website must be prominent and easy to use and should require minimal amount of effort to be invested in them (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012).

**Listing:** It is observed generally that products that appear at an early position on a list usually are able to draw more user attention towards them but the fact that whether and how sorting of different products in a list are able to affect a consumers' decision to purchase a product cannot be calculated exactly. One idea from the business side to maximize profitability can be to populate the top of a list with high-end pricey products to encourage consumers purchase (resulting in increased profits) (Shun Cai, & Yunjie, 2008).

**Hierarchical quality sorting:** Quality attributes usually refer to product attributes that constitute the configuration of the product. In this sorting of products, the products are:

a. Firstly, sorted by attributes that are most important to consumers.

b. Secondly, for the products that have the same value in the ‘most important attribute’ collection is then again sorted by the second most important attribute and this continues to go on.

**Average Perceived Quality Sorting:** The average perceived quality of a product is usually the average of the subjective quality perception. This average perceived quality summarizes multiple quality attributes into an overall perception.

The basic advantage to consumers related to hierarchical quality sorting is that it makes product comparisons much easier but does not sort products by an average perceived quality.

**Price Sorting:** Studies reveal that price sorting has powerful effects on a consumers’ decision to buy whereas the ease of processing quality information is said to boost the weightage of quality in the decision making of the consumer (Shun Cai, & Yunjie, 2008).

## **b. Product Appeal**

Society’s attitude towards ageism (negative stereotyping against people getting old) has opened doors wide open for the anti-aging industry which is continuously trying to persuade or motivate aging people to remain ever youthful by using their products. A study shows that anti-aging websites always added images or text displaying the before and after effects of product usage or a time lapse and the resulting photos differed in conveying objectives of age goals that were based on gender. Product appeals play a great role in attracting and motivating the users or creating a purchase intension in the user. The popular appeals for antiaging creams include:

- a. Fear Appeal
- b. Scientific Appeal
- c. Youth Appeal

**Motivating through Fear of Aging :** Aging in the latest times is taken as something to be fearful about. Antiaging businesses play the fear game and promote their products by convincing people to use them or otherwise they will develop signs of aging (Laware, & Moutsatsos, 2013).

**Motivating through Scientific Appeal:** Scientific appeals always connive people and create more credibility of the product thus contributing positively towards the user intentions to purchase the product. The Brand manager at Olay Professional confirmed the fact that consumers are looking for more scientific and technological proofs for skin care products which opens doors for more dermatology-backed skincare products in the market and marketing and advertising companies to develop the right scientific appeal (Wang, 2009).

**Celebrity Endorsements:** Visibility of old celebrities and models in advertisement of antiaging products has always inspired women to use these antiaging products. Popular brands including L'Oréal's RevitaLift and Age Perfect have aimed at women in ages of 40 and 50 by showing popular celebrities of the same age in their advertisements and thus contributing to an aura of authenticity towards antiaging products (Laware, & Moutsatsos, 2013).

**Youth Appeal:** A study on anti-aging websites showed that they promoted image or text displaying the before and after effects of product usage and the resulting photos differed based on gender. Sites aiming anti-aging products for men focused on the fact that the visual effect of antiaging product on men:

- a. Increased performance in work athletics
- b. The power to turn women on

Sites aiming anti-aging product for women customers focused that anti-aging products on women could lead to:

- a. Youthful women whose bodies had been de-wrinkled, toned or made radiant by the use of these products
- b. They appear more attractive to men.

Ads advocated continuous consumption of antiaging products to stop sinking into the well of old age. While the anti-aging industry urges you to buy their products so that aging does not become visible and you try to look younger than your age as long as possible (Harris, 2011). Set the website appeal with appropriate images that are in harmony to the appeal.

### **c. Product Information**

**Brand Image and Trust on Product:** Trust in product is important in creating purchase intentions. Since the fact that online consumers are vulnerable in varying ways that include the risk involved in doing wrong product quality assessment, chances of receiving the wrong product or chances of becoming a victim of fraud, brands trust plays a great role in making purchase decisions as the user already believes in getting a certain quality standard from the brand. Trust in the brand. For product purchasing brand trust means that the vendor will deliver, stand behind and fulfill whatever promises he has made (Pavlou, & Fygenon, 2006)

**Quality Assessment of Products:** Quality is said to influence consumer's purchasing decision to a great extent. From the customer's point of view, the obvious drawback with online shopping is that consumers get no chance to examine the products before making the purchase. Even in case of products where information was detailed, and complete specifications were made, consumers couldn't absolutely be sure about the quality feature of the product. Therefore, people mostly buy branded products quality or either products where quality is not critical which drops out a large number of products from the list of buyable items. It is therefore critical somehow to make product quality and attributes of a product tangible to the user (Pavlou, & Fygenon, 2006).

Lack of tangibility mostly associated with services becomes a challenge for products when products in an online environment. This is the reason why studying of this concept relating to online consumer decision making context becomes very important. Buyers in the real world want to see and experience tangible product qualities such physical existence of product, material, texture, quality or workmanship. This lack of tangibility in case on online product buying usually has negative consequences and cause difficulty for consumers such as:

- Greater difficulty in evaluating a product
- Greater perceived processing effort
- Higher risk perceptions
- Lower levels of customer engagement.
- This all usually also increases the chances of product returns (Verhagen, Vonkeman, & Van Dolen, 2016).

**Tangibility:** Studies on the topic of tangibility reveal that when consumers are able to grasp a mental picture of the product they somehow become able to feel that the physical aspects of that product have become visible and accessible to their senses. This state helps to lead users into the understanding of product specific qualities. This understanding ultimately makes them feel their shopping experience to be closed to reality and successful. This understanding also provides them with enough product information which assists them in making an evaluation about the product. This evaluation then leads to the consumers purchase decision about the product. Higher levels of mental and physical tangibility thus help the user to along with specificity increase the perceived diagnostic.

**Product Presentation Formats for Making Product Tangible:** Product presentation formats make products to be felt more tangible ultimately leading to product evaluations that result in aiding the consumer purchase decisions. Apply more technologically advanced presentation formats in order to create and facilitate tangibility of products. Today to provide users with more detailed, rich, interactive and dynamic product presentation formats to make them create a sense of physically seeing or touching a product and providing them with a satisfying product evaluation experience. Richer and interactive product presentation formats help in providing consumers with a set of relevant cues relating to the product functionality and features. These formats also help consumers to:

- a. Form a clear mental representation of the product
- b. Get somewhat clear sense of physical characteristics of the product
- c. Generate an insight into specific characteristics of the product

These formats include:

- a. Traditional, static format (still pictures)
- b. Moderately dynamic and rich format (360 spin rotation)
- c. Highly rich and dynamic format emulating actual product trials (virtual mirror)

Virtual mirrors are the most desirable product representation format which helps the customer to experience the most tangibility of the product. The second in comparison is the 360-spin rotation tool which generates a higher three-dimensional level of tangibility than static pictures

(Verhagen, Vonkeman, & Van Dolen, 2016) and is the best format for the antiaging skin care product presentation.

**Copy Text:** The importance of content cannot be overlooked as it is responsible for enhancing the online experience overall. Text alongside with effective image formats plays a great role in product display (Falk, Sockel, & Chen, 2005). The copy text must therefore be interesting, attention grabbing and correct description of the product and its benefits.

**Product Details:** Product purchasing process is contingent upon getting product information which develops a sequential relationship between getting information about product and purchasing. This product information reduces uncertainty level, thus motivating the user to develop purchase intentions and facilitate purchase process.

#### **d. Shipping Cost and Payment Options**

## **Recommendations**

### **4.1 Recommendations for Functional Level**

**Develop Quick response or Systems for Trust Development:** Online world being different from regular retail environment requires businesses to work on the development of quick customer response systems. Online businesses must establish proper set of procedures and processes for responding to the client to ensure that the basic principle in trust development, in an online environment, is met well as customers intend to develop more trust in the business when the user and the business are in real communication. Any delays in response usually results in serious feelings of distrust from the consumer which can ultimately translate into loss of interest from the consumer side (Hanai, & Oguchi, 2009).

It is therefore highly recommended that businesses must develop proper and quick response systems in place for ensuring increase in the level of client satisfaction which ultimately will lead to increase of sales.

**Ensure Timely After Sales Service:** . On time response to customer enquiries is one of the most important factors to create a positive customer experience, resulting into customer loyalty as quick and timely after sales services can help business put positive impressions on the customer and avoiding losing of a good customer (Teo, 2006).

Business must ensure proper teams or call centers to be implemented to ensure that customer complaints or enquiries are dealt promptly after the sale has been made as this will leave a positive customer experience resulting in repurchasing and increase of sales.

**Design and Develop Professional Web Store:** Professional and effective web store designs are great tools to attract customers and engage them into a sale. A professional design would result in greater customer experience and result in increased chance of sales as store design is one of the most important features of an online business.

Store layout must cater to consumer psychology, emotions, and attitudes. Tactics or types of appeals that influence consumers to buy must also be planned through product and store design



whereas the technology part must ensure efficiency and accuracy (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012). Businesses must ensure proper professionals are put to work when designing a store layout.

### **Design Appropriate Product Appeal for promoting Antiaging Product:**

Motivating women of the target audience through the right advertising appeal is very important therefore it is necessary to ensure that your website consists of adds, banner and sayings that contain women of the target age to ensure authenticity towards the antiaging products (Laware, & Moutsatsos, 2013). Designing of appropriate product appeal would attract consumers in the best possible way and will motivate them to make purchase thus increasing sales of the product. Designers must have a marketing knowhow to develop a clear design with proper text and image elements to be placed in the webstore.

### **Make Products Tangible with Presentation Formats:**

Making a product appear tangible on the website is one thing that has highest probability of increasing the chances of sales of a product. For increasing tangibility of your product opt for a 360-spin rotation rather than for a flat image. Reason being that the mental and physical tangibility along with specificity are elicited more by 360-spin rotation tool which provides a dimensional level of tangibility than static pictures. Designers must concentrate on presentation formats for product (Verhagen, Vonkeman, & Van Dolen, 2016).

Businesses must ensure that the design teams are in coordination with the marketing teams to works on designing the presentation format that makes the product tangible.

## **4.2 Recommendations for Managerial Level**

### **Ensure provision of Explicit Information on website to discourage user switching:**

The rate of switching to competitors is really high in an online shopping environment. If ever a website lacks product information or has a question that is not instantly addressed at the point, as users do not go through delayed process of questioning by email or other means, users tend to lose interest in that website. This loss in interest will allow them to switch to competitive options. It is necessary for businesses to ensure the fact that all aspects of product and service

are addressed, all information given and FAQ section available on the website to avoid losing customers interest (Hanai, & Oguchi, 2009).

Managers must put lots of emphasis on information provision and ensure addition of details and copy to the images on the webstore so that complete information is available to the consumers which will ultimately result in better understanding of product features ultimately resulting into increased sales.

**Ensure that Information representation on website is more real and trustworthy to**

**increase trust:** Ensure that information available on the website s made more realistic to increase the users trust in the business. Business and staff pictures on the website can make a website more realistic (Hanai, & Oguchi, 2009). Managers must promote employees to share workplace images from the website on the internet/social media to improve trust level of the consumers and convince them to buy from the business as they will no more doubt the existence of the business.

**Ensure affordable or Free shipping options for products to improve sales:**

Users usually have a mindset that that the saving and convenience of buying online are offset by the shipping cost of the product along with the unease of waiting time (Teo, 2006). This results in loss of customers interest in making a purchase online.

Managers must develop and design a smooth and economic logistics system to ensure quick and economical delivery of products and offer free or minimal shipping costs to keep customers satisfied and happy.

**Manage Product Reviews:**

Managers must control the quality of the reviews online as they help in shaping up the purchase decision of the consumer. The theory that ‘excessive positive reviews can imply a negative effect’ is true when it comes to the subject of online reviews on a product. Consumers are usually skeptical of reviews if they are too much positive. Too much positive product reviews in actual create suspicion among the users which can ultimately result into negative effects on purchase intention. Moderate reviews or a balance of good and bad reviews are said to put a positive effect rather than extreme reviews (Maslowska, Malthouse, & Bernritter, 2017). Managers must

ensure that the product reviews are balanced in order to get the maximum positive impact on the consumer.

### **4.3 Recommendations for Corporate Level**

#### **Ensure that proper contact information is present on the website as a policy:**

Online companies usually avoid giving physical addresses and contacts on the website for the reason that they are not brick and mortar businesses. This leads the users to fear the fact that the online store does not have a physical presence or might be some kind of fraud. Putting more contact ways on the website, emails and phone number help consumer develop trust on the existence of online business (Teo, 2006).

Adding clear lines of contacts on the website and not keeping them secretive, must be implemented as a policy of the company to ensure that users develop solid trust into the business.

#### **Define Vision and encourage marketing teams to work in that direction and develop the right marketing appeal for the products:**

In the latest anti-aging market, one can safely say that anything marketed to silver hair or old people can be considered a bad marketing tactic. Te Revesz, an associate director of Find/SVP, defines that the secret of selling antiaging products is not to consider the target markets chronological age but to focus on their self-image creation or to make them feel younger (Davis, 2005).

Setting correct direction of advertising appeal can serve long term benefits. Company must develop culture suitable for the marketing team or a culture that can help in development of an environment that can cultivate innovation and creativity to ensure the positive and profitable direction of the marketing appeal is set and the whole teams work towards it. The website, social media or any online presence of the business selling the product must deliver the same consistent message.



## Findings

User	Website First Impressions	(Pavlou, & Fygenson, 2006) (Falk, Sockel, & Chen, 2005) (Schiller, 2011) (Karimov, Brengman, & Van Hove, 2011) (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012)
User	Website Trust	(Beyari, & Abareshi, 2016) (Teo, 2006) (Hanai, & Oguchi, 2009)
User	Website Design Element	(Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012) (Karimov, Brengman, & Van Hove, 2011) (Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012) (Wilkie, Romance, & Rosendale, 2012) (Falk, Sockel, & Chen, 2005) (Jiang, Wang, Tan, & Yu, 2016)
User	Website Store Layout	(Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012) (Jiang, Wang, Tan, & Yu, 2016)
User	Product Searchability	(Porat, & Tractinsky, 2012) (Shun Cai, & Yunjie, 2008)
User	Product Appeal	(Laware, & Moutsatsos, 2013) (Wang, 2009) (Harris, 2011)
User	Product Tangibility	(Pavlou, & Fygenson, 2006). (Verhagen, Vonkeman, & Van Dolen, 2016)
User	Product Information	(Pavlou, & Fygenson, 2006) (Verhagen, Vonkeman, & Van Dolen, 2016) (Falk, Sockel, & Chen, 2005) ( Teo, 2006)
User	Product Shipping	(Falk, Sockel, & Chen, 2005) (Teo, 2006)
User	Product Policies	(Teo, 2006) (Maslowska, Malthouse, & Bernritter, 2017).

Table 3.1 Table of Findings



# Established Framework

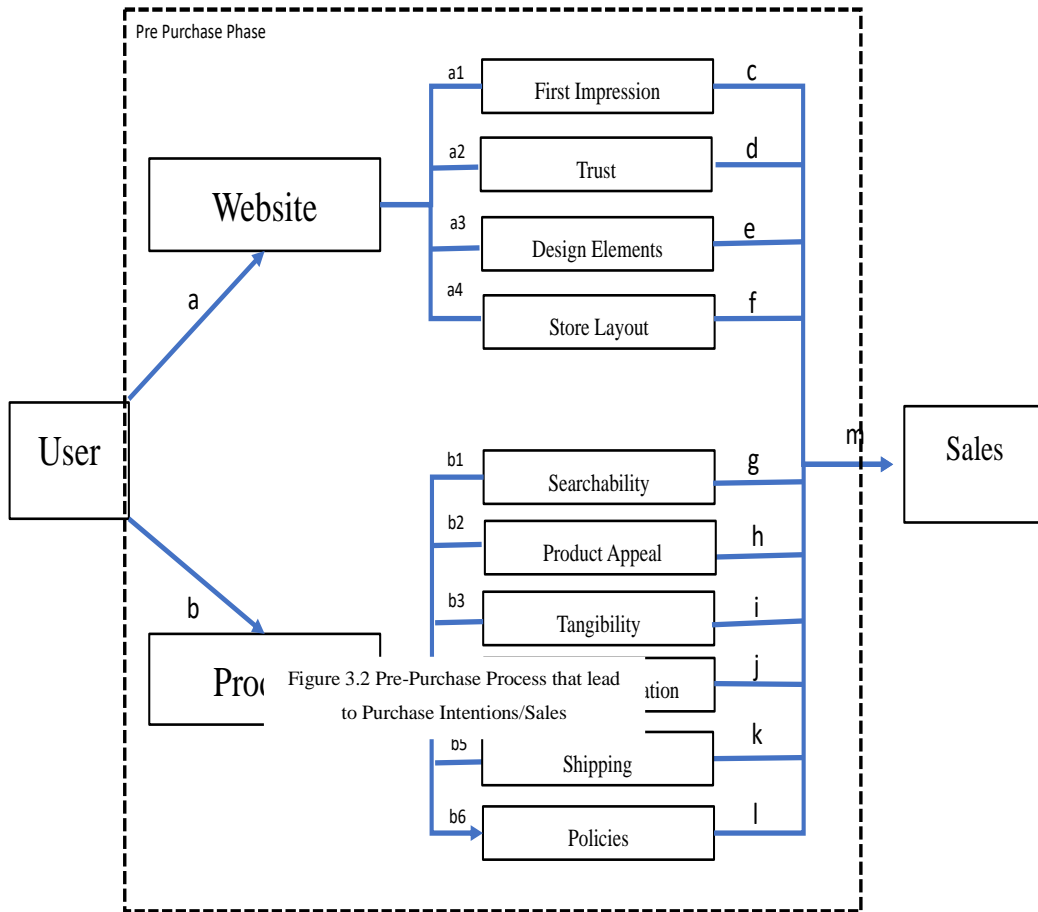


Figure 3.2 Pre-Purchase Process that lead to Purchase Intentions/Sales





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