

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Today's society is experiencing a period of rapid development of the Internet, the trend of the real economy is becoming more and more obvious, and the major enterprises are trying to cater to the increasing consumer demand by means of network. All along, Word-of-mouth marketing is the focus of business attention. The traditional meaning of Word-of-mouth mainly in the online mode, generally occurs in the process of human interaction with people, usually by distance and time constraints, with the increase in distance and time, word-of-mouth spread of the effect and influence also quickly weakened. Therefore, online Word-of-mouth mode of network emerged, it not only overcome the limitations of traditional word-of-mouth, the spread of fast, wide impact, free from geographical space and time constraints, but also has its own unique advantages. For example, under the network background of Word-of-mouth model, Word-of-mouth sender can more easily avoid the risk of revealing real identity information, choose the form of anonymous evaluation in favor of consumers to release more authentic and reliable word-of-mouth information; with the network as the carrier, the form of Word-of-mouth has become diversified, not only through the form of words, can also be through pictures, video and other more intuitive and vivid means of presentation.

Online comment is one of the important forms of Internet word-of-mouth. According to the Professional Research institute data, more than 90% of consumers before the purchase of products or select services, the relevant product or service review information, whether it is the choice of online mode or offline mode, this conclusion is established. It is self-evident that on-line comments compared with the traditional means of promotion, its influence, the spread of the impact of the population and the resulting superposition effect, is the traditional offline evaluation model can not be compared.

Online commentary as one of the important forms of network word-of-mouth, comments content through the Internet to the general public,

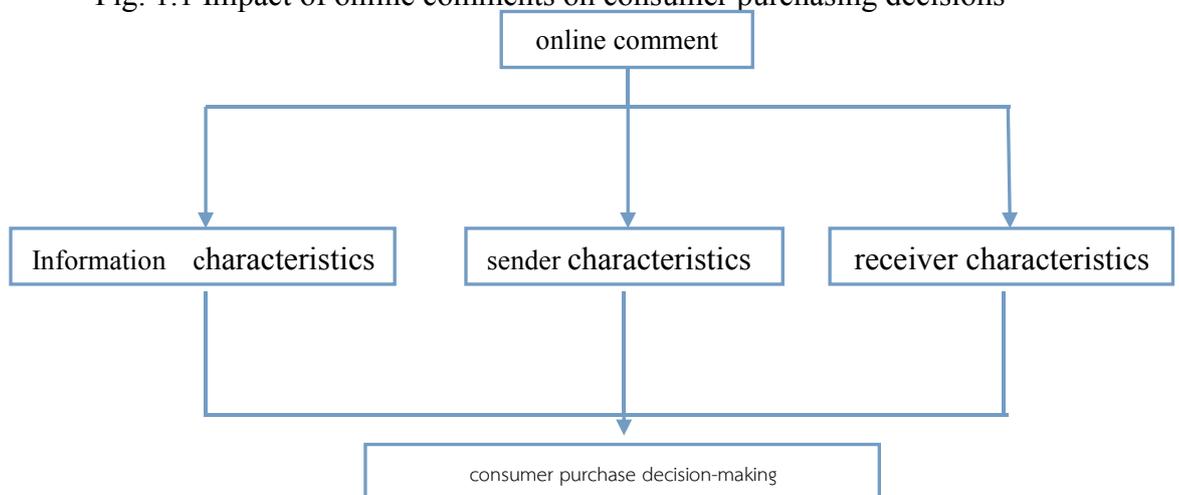
businesses and consumers can also be through the Internet Platform for information dissemination and communication. In some specific areas, the study of modern economics and marketing theory has proved that online comments have a much greater impact on consumers ' choice of products or services than traditional television and advertising.

1.2 Research purposes

The online comment information studied in this paper refers to the comments of the products or services created by the online shoppers, which do not include editorial and expert reviews, or comments on economic, social and political issues.

The research direction of online commentary can be clearly seen in Figure 1.1, which is divided into three areas. Compared to the first aspect (information characteristics), the information collection and analysis of the latter two aspects (sender characteristics and receiver characteristics) is less controllable. At the same time, businesses and enterprises can be based on the relationship between the variables, the development of more scientific and reasonable incentive policies and marketing programs, so as to guide consumers to make more favorable online comments. Therefore, this paper intends to study the effect of consumer purchase decision-making on the basis of the first research, that is, the information feature as the independent variable.

Fig. 1.1 Impact of online comments on consumer purchasing decisions



In the past literatures, it is found that the research dimension of online commentary information features is not comprehensive, and only from one or several dimensions, the consideration is incomplete and comprehensive. For example, most of the literature only studies the three dimensions of online commentary information potency, information quantity and information quality. As a result, these three aspects should be part of the study.

However, enterprises can refer to the content and conclusions of this article, combined with their own actual situation, on-line comment on Word-of-mouth marketing to develop more in line with its strategic planning and development strategy. This paper aims to effectively avoid the waste of enterprise resources by combing the relationship between the online comment information and the consumer purchase decision, and provide suggestions and advice for enterprises to establish effective marketing communication strategies.

1.3 Research significance

Online commentary, as the inheritance and development of the traditional Word-of-mouth model, is of great value both in the field of marketing theory research and in practice. Therefore, the research on online commentary is more and more valued by experts and scholars, and also by the attention of entrepreneurs.

Under the traditional consumption pattern, information asymmetry is an important obstacle for consumers to make rational and effective decision, and under the background of the era of Internet technology and mobile payment, the transparency of information is increasing, and the potential purchaser can inquire the information of related products or services through various ways and means. With the improvement of online comment system, consumers are no longer simple to judge the content of the sellers ' propaganda, but through reference to the purchase or experience information released by the previous consumers, it is an objective and effective way to understand the relevant information. Based on the above analysis, it can be found that the online comment system is quietly changing people's purchasing decision-making patterns and consumption habits.

According to the report of the internationally renowned Research institute,

more than 90% of consumers have been browsing online for comments about products or services before choosing a product or service, both in the form of online or offline models. Thus, before buying a decision, consumers can not only take into account that they have not considered the full part, fully understand the various aspects of the product or service information, but also can fully reduce the decision-making process of the non-system risk and uncertainties. In recent years, the major businesses and enterprises have recognized the importance of online commentary in their marketing process, online comments on the significance of sellers has far exceeded the traditional promotional methods brought about by the impact.

From the view of online commentary information features, this paper chooses seven specific dimensions, establishes theoretical models, puts forward research hypotheses, validates models and hypotheses through empirical questionnaires, and finally obtains research conclusions. Based on the features of online commentary information, this paper takes into account as many dimension variables as possible, and takes scientific rigorous research methods and processes, which has some theoretical research significance.

In the process of the research and analysis, the actual demand of each big seller and the enterprise, and its operability in the following practice, the research contents are practical and instructive.

1.4 Theoretical framework

Experts and scholars in the industry to explore the online comments, mainly can be divided into three parts. First, from the perspective of online commentary information features, based on the more common feature variables (potency, length, quantity and quality) that not only include online comment information, but also the study of relatively few feature variables (presentation form, type and timeliness), the study validates how online comments affect consumer purchasing decisions; Starting from the characteristics of the online comment message sender, to explore and test its effect on consumers ' purchasing attitude, willingness and decision-making; Thirdly, from the characteristics of online comment information receivers, the paper studies

the influence mechanism of online commentary according to the customer's familiarity degree and involvement degree of the product. This paper focuses on the first aspect, which is based on the features of online commentary information, from the perspective of the different dimensions of online commentary information features, comprehensively and fully analyzes the effects of variables on consumer purchasing decision-making and purchase behavior.

1.5 concept of the operational definition

The various manifestations of network word-of-mouth have some intrinsic relations and some differences. Many forms of expression rely on the Internet as a carrier to spread, but in the process of transmission have their own unique, there is a certain difference. Online commentary, as one of the most important components of network Word-of-mouth, has its unique advantages and strengths. First, online commentary is more influential than other forms of online commentary, and the impact is greater in scope and field. This is determined by the features and attributes of online commentary, which are mostly from user review sites, which have the features of storage and openness that can be focused on the widest possible audience. Second, different methods and tools are needed to study online reviews and other forms of online commentary. For example, Weibo, forums and other forms of unstructured text information, research is difficult to quantify these information, but the use of qualitative analysis of research methods;online comments are usually divided into 2 components, both quantitative indicators and the information of the culture, Qualitative analysis is also used as an auxiliary analytical research method to comprehensively and objectively examine the information of hypothetical model frame and variables. On the basis of qualitative analysis, the results of quantitative analysis are obtained by analyzing the results. Third, compared to other ways of online commentary, online evaluation from the comments on the content, as well as the release and reading of the number of consumers, have a number of advantages, not specific to a particular category of products or consumer groups, more research value, a wider scope of application. The definition and characteristics of various forms of network word-of-mouth are summarized to table 1.1.

Form	Description	Characteristics of Word-of-mouth
Consumer comment	The platform for consumers to post comments on personal products exists on product websites, commercial sales websites, personal pages or consumer complaint sites	Often lasts more than a year, daily information can be more easily obtained by a consumer
Mail package	Including consumer, reader reviews or feedback, on websites of various organizations such as consumer product manufacturers, service providers, magazines, or news organizations	Sustainable for quite some time
Online comments	Including electronic bulletin boards, news groups, etc., for a specific topic for discussion of the platform	Sustainable for quite some time
Mailing Lists	Send comments, experience, etc. to the members of the mailing list via e-mail	Need to archive for information content
Personal e-mail	Individuals send information to another person or group of people	
chatroom	Members of the online group discuss the pending issues immediately	Information can be obtained during the discussion, after which the information disappears and can not be reviewed
Instant messaging	Instant online conversation between individuals and individuals or groups	Can keep the conversation information

Table 1.1 Characteristics of network Word-of-mouth manifestation

In a word, despite the fact that many online Word-of-mouth forms are different, each has its own unique characteristics, but the essence is consistent, in the final analysis is a form of network Word-of-mouth, is a consumer release of information about products or services, is an informal between individual consumers, not to profit for the purpose of non-commercial exchange behavior. It is worth mentioning that online commentary as one of the most important forms of expression, in the influence of other forms can not be compared, the number of many at the same time, quantitative research and qualitative research combined with the research methods, therefore, was discussed and studied the most extensive and deep.

Brooks first introduced the principle of word-of-mouth dissemination into the field of marketing, to explore how it affects the sale of new products. However, experts and scholars in the field of marketing have paid attention to the value and

significance of Word-of-mouth, and after Arndt's research on Word-of-mouth, Arndt studies have found that consumers' willingness to buy, attitude and decision-making and the final purchase behavior are significantly influenced by Word-of-mouth. Since then, the study of Word-of-mouth has been widely used in various fields of research, including marketing, consumer behavior and other major areas can be seen in the study of Word-of-mouth. Since the concept of word-of-mouth, not the same industry experts have to define and explain the concept of word-of-mouth. Anderson's research further points out that Word-of-mouth can be positive and negative; Westbrook also recognizes that Word-of-mouth is an informal form of communication, and further details the content can be related to the attributes of the product, applicable feelings and experience, as well as the experience of the service and so on. Tax further will be summed up as consumers positive or negative communication about the product or service information behavior. In foreign experts and scholars on the basis of the research, domestic experts and scholars have also made a more comprehensive and accurate definition of Word-of-mouth. Guo regard Word-of-mouth as a kind of product or service view, this kind of view has the long-term, the unification and the stability and so on characteristic, the view content involves the product attribute, the service attitude and so on many kinds of information. Sankru to describe Word-of-mouth as a use of experience, the strength of Word-of-mouth has a non-commercial character, and is the process of consumers to spread the results of the formation of the potential consumers have a reference role. Ying and Zhu Shunde further define the word of mouth as a two-way interactive behavior, it emphasizes that the sender of Word-of-mouth is independent third party with certain knowledge and information processing ability, which is not controlled and manipulated by other parties, while further broadening the scope of word-of-mouth dissemination content, all things can make people think of a product or service information are included. Although the definition of Word-of-mouth is not exactly the same as that of domestic and foreign experts and scholars, different scholars have a slightly different focus on the definition of Word-of-mouth, but the definition of the essence of Word-of-mouth is consistent. These definitions of Word-of-mouth are all related to the three aspects of Word-of-mouth, that is, word-of-mouth content itself and the link between the two

ends of Word-of-mouth consumers. Summing up the study of the experts and scholars found that the content of Word-of-mouth communication is related to the product or service information, Word-of-mouth information sender and receiver are the general consumer individuals, not a specific field of experts. The spread of Word-of-mouth is not a formal process, does not have any commercial characteristics, nor is it for profit. Word-of-mouth is the process from the sender of information to the recipient of the information, which can spread both positive viewpoints and negative viewpoints. Word-of-mouth from consumers to other consumers, the result is the impact of potential buyers will, attitude, decision-making and behavior. Internet Word-of-mouth is the extension and continuation of traditional word-of-mouth. Network Word-of-mouth has many different names, but the essence is the same. On the basis of traditional word-of-mouth, experts further clarify the concept and characteristics of network Word-of-mouth, and define its specific and accurate concept. Summarize the concept of network Word-of-mouth, you can have a more profound and more explicit understanding of network Word-of-mouth. Traditional Word-of-mouth is the basis of network Word-of-mouth. Network Word-of-mouth is the continuation and development of traditional word-of-mouth. With the continuous progress of Internet technology and more and more accepted by the public, network Word-of-mouth will be injected with new vitality and vitality. The internet Word-of-mouth has changed the old traditional word of mouth to rely on people and people face to mouth of the traditional model, the network as the carrier, to break through the old frame, the line of Word-of-mouth to expand to the line, spread the scope of the wide, the speed of transmission and influence of the traditional line of public praise can not Collate the relevant network Word-of-mouth industry research, which has a high degree of representativeness and recognition of the concept, summed up to table 1.2:

Table 1.2 definition of online word of mouth

Author (time)	Definition
Christiansen and Tax (2000)	Internet users (word of mouth sender) posting articles on the network behavior, is equivalent to word of mouth communication between people, but the form of information presented by the auditory (auditory) into written form.
Newman (2003)	Computer-mediated exchange of text between two or more consumers.
Dellarocas (2003)	Online customer feedback system, also known as reputation system, that is, using the network's two-way communication capabilities, individuals on the network to share experiences and opinions on the company, products, services or even some event.
Hennig-Thurau etc. (2003)	Including the consumer's presentation of the product experience, as well as the evaluation of the product's price, performance and other characteristics.
Hennig-Thurau etc. (2004)	Potentially, the positive or negative comments that current, or previous, consumers make to products or businesses can be made positive or negative through the internet.
Datta etc. (2005)	A large number of potential, current or former consumers use online experience to communicate with context.

1.6 Online comments and consumer buying behavior

In the previous part of the industry study, it has been mentioned that experts and scholars have pointed out that online comments have a certain effect on the decision-making and behavior of potential purchasers, so the relevant research conclusions are widely applied in the field of marketing. In view of the fact that online commentary has the same direction as Word-of-mouth and Internet Word-of-mouth, online commentary in different directions affects consumers' individual buying behavior differently, and it is worth mentioning that positive online comments and negative online comments are not entirely consistent in their impact on consumer buying behavior. Some experts and scholars have pointed out that there is also a certain amount of effect, compared to positive online comments, negative online comments have a greater effect on the potential buyer's attitude, and once there is a negative comment on the product or service, it is not an equivalent positive comment that can be redeemed and remedied.

Based on the seven dimensions of online comment information, this paper it includes not only the more common feature variables (valence, length, quantity,

quality and type) of online comment information, but also the study of relatively few feature variables (presentation form and timeliness), and then explores the effect of the seven-dimension variables on the consumer's final purchase decision.