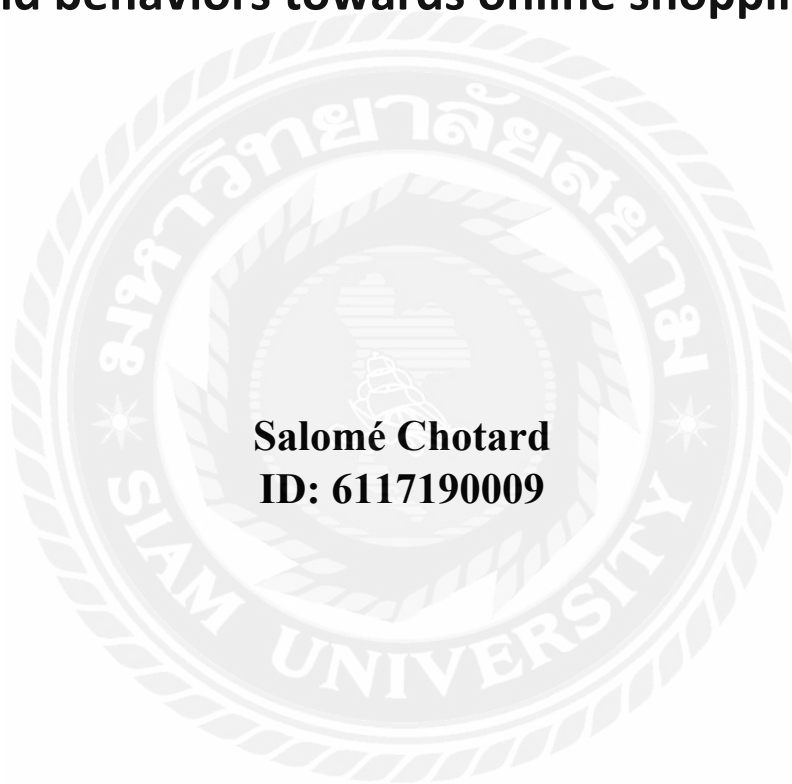




A comparison of Thai and French consumer's attitudes and behaviors towards online shopping.



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Abstract

The growing use of the Internet in France and in Thailand provides a developing prospect for E-marketers. There has been an emotional change in the way consumers have modified their methods for shopping. The Internet is regularly utilized by both consumers and businesses to purchase and sell their products and services around the world. If E-marketers know the factors influencing online behaviors of French and Thai buyers' behavior and the connections between these factors, the type of online buyers, and the kind of online purchasers; at that point they can additionally build up their showcasing techniques to change over potential clients into dynamic ones, while holding existent online clients. This paper was part of a more extensive study and focused on factors which French and Thai buyers keep in mind while shopping online. It also investigates how different types of online purchasers perceive websites differently.

This research found that website security was the dominant factor which influences consumer perception of online shopping. Some other factors influence consumers' perception of online shopping such as website design, reliability, and customer service.

The goal of the research was to suggest to French and Thai governments what factors that need to be improved and how to improve them to expend E-commerce.

Keywords: Consumers' behavior, Consumers' attitudes, E-Commerce, Online shopping, Culture.



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Introduction

The internet quickly emerged from being a domain of networking between institutions to being a worldwide platform for transactions between retailers and consumers. (Delafrooz et al.2010).

Years after years, consumers change their way of shopping because most of the world's population are living in a consumerist society, in which everything is made to increase the consumption of goods and services (Dauvergne, 2008).

Therefore, it is essential to understand and to compare consumer's online shopping behaviors and attitudes between two different countries: Thailand and France.

Technologies, more precisely, the Internet becomes more accessible due to the availability of information, and the interaction through the Internet emerges. Consequently, people are using more on the Internet. In fact, due to the globalization, which is the internationalization of markets and corporations (Wheelen, Hunger, Hoffman, Bamford, 2018) and the recent technological revolution, consumers' wants and needs are frequently changing, so companies have seen the opportunity to develop their business through internet. It does also mean that now, a company's competitiveness might have to be traditional and online. Extending its activity on the internet is a genuine open door for companies to reach new customers.

Online shopping turns out to be increasingly more prominent with the ease and availability of high-speed Internet service, and online shopping is increasing rapidly. Every day, the number of people who use the Internet increases, but few of them still hesitate to purchase online.

It is interesting to compare the consumer's attitudes and behaviors between French and Thai people, such as consumer's characteristics (age, gender), and thanks to which device they order online (mobile phone, computer, tablets), and which payment method do they use (credit card, cash on delivery). According to Cleveland, Naghavi and Shafia (2017), the fundamental shaper of consumer behavior, it means that depending on each country, customers will not have the same requirements and expectations, along with their purchasing process will differ. Each person and a group of person has its behavior when it comes to consumption.

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 Number of Internet Users in the World

The number of Internet users in the world increased every year since 1997. In 2005, the first billion of internet users was reached, the second billion hit five years later. The third billion appears in 2015. Nowadays, “there are more than four billion people around the world using the internet,” according to the new 2018 Global Digital (www.digitalreport.wearesocial.com, 2018).

In 2018, the most significant number of internet users was in Asia with 49%, followed by Europe with 16.8% of internet users as shown in Figure 1. (www.internetworldstats.com, 2018)

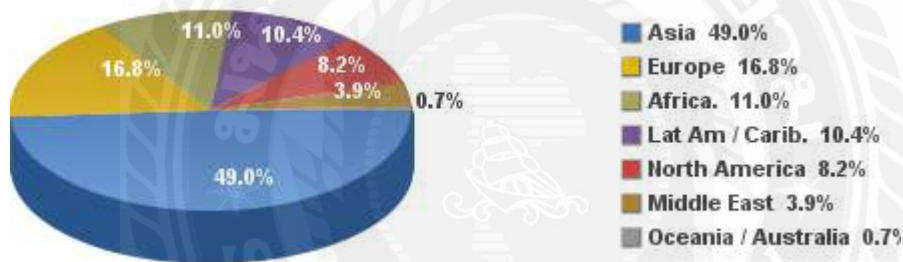


Figure 1: Percentage of Internet Users in the world in June 2018.

According to Internet World Statistics website, in December 2017, 57 million people, out of a total population of 69 million, are internet users in Thailand while France is 60 million of people out of a total population of 65 million people are internet users in France. (www.internetworldstats.com, 2017)

1.1.2 Evolution of e-commerce in the world

First of all, Michael Aldrich created Online shopping in 1979, by associating domestic TV to a real-time computer to the telephone. Since his creation, online shopping is one of the most prominent online activities, according to Statista (www.statista.com, 2018).

Internet's easy access and low internet subscriptions prices have driven customers to shop online. (Cole, 2000). Moreover, the Internet's evolution has led to new consumption habits linked to the technological development of peripheral devices (Tablets, phones). Currently, most of the world population is living in a consumerist world, in which everything is made to increase business (Kotler, 1972). Over the past years, people want to buy with ease and as quickly as possible through the internet due to technological advancements and the internet's development. Accordingly, consumers' change their way of shopping, even if they continue to do shopping in a physical store, at the same time. As reported by Chen and Chang (2003), the two reasons for online shopping have been convenience and price. Online shopping is convenient as you do not have to go to a physical store, and it is easier to compare price with competitor's products. In addition to that, online items are accessible 24 hours per day, so people can shop whatever they want and they need.

As shown in figure 2, the revenue of e-commerce has raised 968 billion of dollars in the world from 2014 to 2017. (www.emarketer.com)

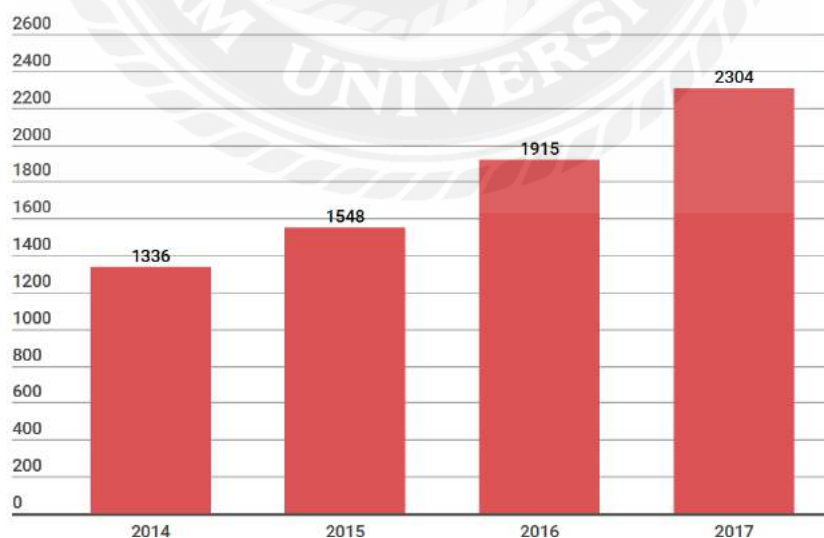


Figure 2: Worldwide e-commerce revenue in billions of dollars from 2014 to 2017

1.1.3 E-commerce in France and Thailand

Thailand is a developing country; it was the second largest business to consumer e-commerce market in South East Asia of the gross merchant values on all e-commerce platforms in 2018. E-commerce in Thailand grew the most in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), according to Electronic Transactions Development Agency (ETDA), the market value of e-commerce in Thailand was 3.06 billion baht in 2018.

France has the third place on e-commerce in Europe. In 2018, the market value of e-commerce in France was 81.7 milliards euros. French e-commerce is increasing, thanks to the democratization of new devices. Indeed homes are increasingly equipped with digital tools, and French people start to be more comfortable with internet use. The proliferation of e-commerce websites and the expansion of the offer had a high impact on e-commerce in France.

1.2 The problem to be investigated

E-commerce can be a noteworthy motor for exchange and advancement. The advent of e-commerce provides access to the global market at a cost that has never been so low, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2004). It is a real challenge for companies to attract many people on online shopping, because of various markets, consumers' consumption behaviors. They have to pay attention to some factors such as your website appearance, the number of internet users who differ from a country to another, the delivery and payment service offers. All of these factors influence consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward online shopping.

The problem investigated by this study is to show the factors that affect the e-commerce situation towards French and Thai consumers' behaviors and attitudes. France represents a developed country in the e-commerce market, while Thailand represents an emerging market in e-commerce.

1.3 The objective of the study

The objective of this study is to show the factors that influence the relationship between attitude and online shopping intentions and to examine the elements that impact buyers' attitude towards purchasing online

The objectives are:

- To consider factors that affect online shopping attitudes and behaviors between Thai and French consumers.
- To understand the differences between Thai and French consumers' attitudes and behaviors.
- To understand what are the factors that need to be improved to expand e-commerce in Thailand and France.

1.4 The scope of the study

The global Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) sector, is evolving drastically, the progressions are driven by a combination of market, business, and technological forces. Customers awareness and knowledge is expanding they want services that satisfy their unique needs and demands reliable service delivery at competitive (Xevelonakis, 2005)

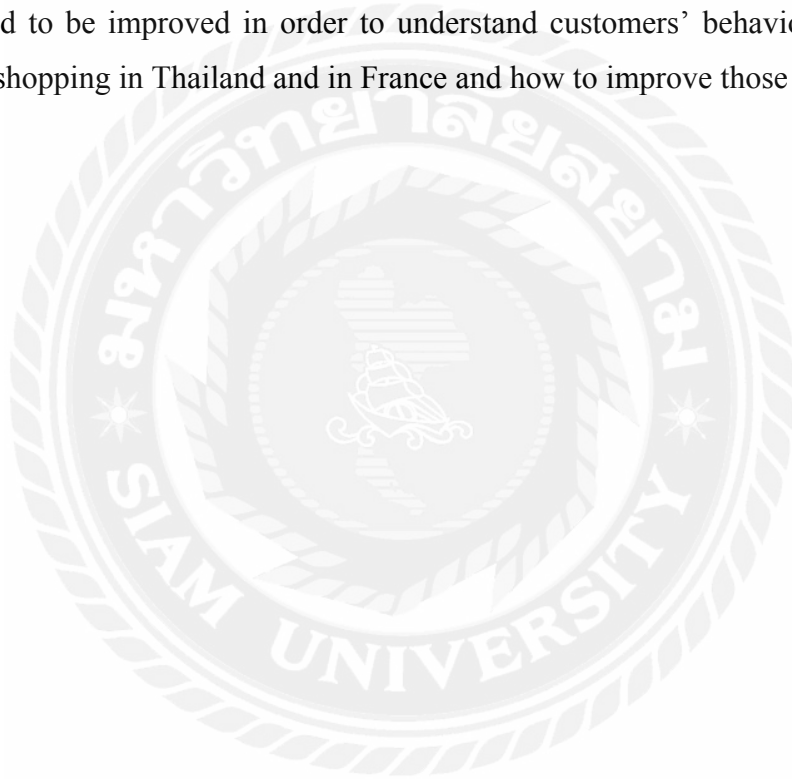
Consumer attitudes toward online shopping usually been determined by two factors: trust, and perceived benefits (Hoque, Ali, & Mahfuz, 2015 Hoque, M. R., Ali, M. A., & Mahfuz, M. A. (2015).

This study focuses on French and Thai consumers' attitudes and behaviors in online shopping. France, is an established global power, founding member of the European Union. Thailand is a founding member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations. These two countries, with a genuinely different culture, distinct lifestyles, and different approaches in their way of buying online.

1.5 Research significance

There are previous research papers related to consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward online shopping. No one has brought face to face two countries such as France and Thailand. Those two countries have distinct cultures, but due to globalization, more and more exchanges are getting developed between them.

This research paper aims to highlight the critical success factor for customers who want to buy online. The finding of this paper could help the government and companies what factors that need to be improved in order to understand customers' behaviors and attitudes towards online shopping in Thailand and in France and how to improve those factors are.



Literature Reviews

E-commerce business is growing all over the world due to technology proliferation and considering the increase in the internet's usage and smart devices. Convenience and omnipresence are promoting factors of e-commerce.

According to Brodie (2007) and Gonzalez (2008), e-commerce, has become a significant technological advancement for businesses in changing business practices. It is essential to know who your clients are and what they need has turned into an undeniably critical challenge for today's e-commerce platforms, while remaining concentrated on new customer acquisition. Nowadays, the ability to use a real understanding of a customers' purchase decision results in the capacity to deliver better product proposals and create better shopping experiences. Research has gained significant progress in our comprehension of effect, demonstrating that moods, feelings, and emotions are related to all parts of consumption behavior (Arnold and Reynolds, 2009).

The presence of online stores today provides many adjustments in the buying behavior of the community. According to Katawetawaraks and Wang, (2011), the online system makes it easy to communicate and approach customers and online stores are becoming more fun for consumers as it comes to consumers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Online store applications give more advantages to consume. Direct applications help shoppers find their options more easily. Furthermore, online applications help address issues, such as security and service guarantees to consumers. The interaction between the consumer and the application system helps to cope with direct contact with the salesman where a few people prefer not to interact with the salesperson (Parks, 2008). In the opinion of Haver (2009), younger consumers are more familiar and choose online shopping preferences. As stated by Richa (2012), demographic aspects are influenced by gender, age, income, and marital status. Therefore, demographic factors can affect consumers' preferences in shopping.

A few analysts have completed investigations in their push to inspect the variables impacting consumers' mentality and recognition to make internet business buys through web-based shopping. Frames of mind toward online shopping are characterized as a consumer's positive or negative sentiments identified with achieving the acquiring conduct on the web (Chiu et al., 2005; Schlosser, 2003).

2.1 Cultural factors

“Culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871).

Cultural factors impact the shopper conduct either socially or mentally. The way of life delineates the lifestyle and attributes of a specific group of people, including how they talk, dress, think, shared norms, values, and myths (Kaur and Chawla, 2016). Since every group, every country is different; the culture presents slight changes among them. Many researchers have directed studies on culture’s topic. Mantovani (2000), defines religion in many ways; one of the researchers, Professor Geert Hofstede (1991) emerges in term of dedication to this topic.

During, 1967 to 1973, he has conducted interviews with a large number of IBM workers in more than 40 different countries and an excess of 60 cultures. He has gathered a considerable amount of data to analyze and base its future world study.

According to Professor Geert Hofstede’s convictions culture is the aggregate programming of the human personality that recognizes the individuals from one human from those of another. However, a nation’s way of life is an intangible and complicated thing; naturally, it is unclear to apprehend and understand. Culture is an arrangement of all in all held and shared qualities (Hofstede, 1991).

According to Hall (1976), “Culture affects everything people do in their society because of their ideas, values, goals, attitudes, and normative or expected patterns of behavior. Culture is not genetically inherited, and cannot exist on its own, but is always commonly shared by society and its members”. Researchers have asserted that consumers’ choice making for online shopping be may motivated by their identity, attitude, perception and another external environment such as culture, friends, family (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007).

2.2 Consumers attitudes factors

First of all, examining consumers' attitudes is highly crucial because attitude in this context plays a significant role in their repurchase choices and furthermore fundamentally influences the selection aim of different purchasers based on the information and views that they get from early adopters (Van der Heijden, 2003; Hsu et al., 2014)

According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), attitude can be described as the learning of disposition to perform reliably great or unfavorable way concerning a given object. Researchers explain that approach has an influencing factor on online shopping.

There are two sorts of attitude can be recognized. The first one is attitudes toward objects, and the second one is attitudes toward behaviors.

Attitude toward a behavior refers to the degree to how much an individual has an idea or negative evaluation or examination of the action to be followed up on (Taylor and Todd, 1995). In other words, attitude toward a behavior can be alluded to as a person's positive or pessimistic assessment of relevant conduct and is composed of an individual's notable convictions concerning the apparent results of playing out a behavior (Kim and Karpova, 2010; Al-Debei et al., 2013). These definitions highlight the emotional idea of attitude.

Park and Kim (2003) demonstrated that consumer attitude toward online shopping was unequivocally affected by their intention to search product information from the internet. Wu (2003), stated that the relative factors like demographics (gender, age, and income), shopper preference, ways of life, and advantages perception impact consumers' attitude toward their decision.

2.3 Consumer behavior factors

Cleveland, Naghavi, and Shafia (2017) said that the fundamental shaper of consumer behavior was culture, it means that in the function of each country, customers will not have the same requirements and expectations, and their purchasing process will significantly differ.

Solomon, Russell-Benett, and Previte (2013) defined consumer behavior as the investigation of individuals and the products that help to characterize their identities. It is the study of the process involved when people analyze, select, buy used, or surrender products, services to satisfy their needs and desires. Nevertheless, purchasing is a concept because individuals or gatherings may decide to purchase the product. According to Arnould and Thompson (2005), “a social arrangement in which the relations between lived culture and social resources, between meaningful ways of life and the symbolic and between material resources on which they depend, are all mediated through consumerist markets.” Indeed, each group of people has its cultural differences that shape and influence their purchasing behavior (Cleveland, Naghavi and Shafia 2017). The aim of this analysis is to understand why people want to buy this service or this product along with how they would settle on their purchase decision (Horner and Swarbrooke, 1996).

Consumer behavior has an undeniable impact on online shopping. Kaur and Chawla (2016) believe that the people’s decision and request patterns of various administrations and products rely on traditions, convention, and cultural values of a specific area or community. In their suppositions, global strategies must be confined by studying the way of life of a particular gathering, because each group has distinctive necessities according to their revenues, and more importantly for this study, their traditions and customs.

2.4 Customers motives factors

Customers motives toward online shopping are numerous and influence consumers in identified with how they make purchasing decision. The final decision, the process starts a long time before the actual purchase and continue after the purchase (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004).

Personal characteristics can be described as a group of definite client highlights that may impact their online shopping attitudes and behavior.

The two principals' factors that influence consumers in purchasing decision during shopping are: Convenience and time saving (Robinson, Riley, Rettie and Wilsonz, 2007). According to Wang et al., (2005), the convenience factor is an essential asset for online shopping.

Convenience factor refers that it is easier to search the information, the product through online compared to traditional shopping. It also means that it is available for customers around the clock (Hofacker, 2001; Wang et al., 2005). Convenience does not concern only products but also for online services, even after business hours, some companies have online customer services available 24 hours, so you can ask questions, and have assistant support, which has provided consumers' convenience (Hermes, 2000).

Consumers' life is more accessible because with online shopping because they can be anywhere and anytime and purchase online, so they save time because they don't have to wait in checkout lines or to wait in the fitting room (Childers et al., 2001).

Usability is also crucial, refers to the degree to which a website facilitates users to use its function effectively and suitability (Calisir, Bayraktaroglu, Gumussoy, Topcu, and Mutlu, 2009). Accordingly, consumer's attitudes toward online shopping would be influenced by the design and appearance of the online retailer site. The higher the quality of the web site is, the more inspirational dispositions of purchasers are toward that online retailer (Zhou, 2011). Web usability can be characterized as making the design simple enough so that customers, who necessarily will tend to be goal-driven, accomplish their task as fast as they want.

According to Hsiao et al. (2010), the higher web site quality usually brought the about higher perception of trust.

To conclude, it is complicated to cover all the potential factors of customers' attitudes and behaviors toward online shopping. This examination paper aim is to develop the most important and applicable factors which influence the consumers to buy online. There are some other factors which affect online shoppers, including price, security, privacy, and after-sales service.



Finding part

The research findings indicated that website security/privacy, website design, website reliability, and website customer service has a crucial influence on all online buyers' perceptions of online purchasing. One of the discoveries additionally demonstrated that distinctive kinds of online buyers, for example, occasional, frequent, regular online buyers have different evaluations of website design and website reliability. However, they have a comparable assessment of site security/protection and site client administration. This implies that the security/privacy issue is an essential point occupying the mind of most online purchasers. Organizational policies, in addition to governmental laws and regulations should emphasize this issue seriously. Hence, an online shopping website should handle all transactions in a secure environment that enjoys strong authentication, authorization, and accountability characteristics.

It is a challenge for E-marketers to low-frequency online buyers into standard buyers through successful website design and by addressing concerns about reliable performance.

The findings reveal that distinctions in age and training of the respondents show differences in attitude toward online shopping. Different age groups have various attitudes toward purchasing behavior (Dias, 2003; Sorce et al., 2005) while gender, monthly income, and frequency of computer usage are not of such significance. From the outcomes, it tends to be inferred that the online retailers and advertisers ought to concentrate on youthful grown-up Thais whose ages are between 26 to 31 years, who live in Bangkok, are knowledgeable, know about PCs and have involvement in online shopping.

The empirical findings of this study demonstrate that trust and perceived benefits determined consumer attitudes toward online shopping. Trust is a result of perceived web quality. For this reason, trust and perceived benefits are key indicators of consumer attitudes toward online shopping. Further, the authors found that higher levels of perceived web quality lead to larger amounts of trust in an online shopping web site. Concerning, perceived web quality and perceived benefit, online shopping retailers' management should focus on these dimensions as major drivers of consumers' attitudes toward online shopping. For instance, online shopping offers time and effort saving, 24 hours and seven days of accessibility, lack of physical hassles such as salespersons, traffic congestion and crowds, and ease of use. These motivations are considered as fundamental for adopting online shopping due to its advantages.

In terms of information abundance, internet shopping enables customers to search, compare, and in turn, make wise decisions.

Consumers also perceive new involvement from online shopping. This discovery is useful for online retailers to explain how consumers' perceive benefits from online shopping and which factors have the most effect on their attitude. Consumers who purchase from websites are interested in the efficiency, capacity of availability, and usefulness of information, so this finding is essential for advertisers in setting up and maintaining websites.

A good website should provide information such as detailed product information, prices, and reviews to consumers to create a positive attitude. The most favored advantage of time-saving shopping was observed to be low prices. It is one of the factors that affect consumers' decision positively to shop online, and price comparison services offered by online retailers give the customers the chance to compare prices from different retailers and purchase from the cheapest one (Delafrooz, Paim and Khatibi et al. 2009).

My research suggests that comments and recommendation system can influence online consumers. By giving some related and reasonable data, remark and proposal frameworks can give the customer positive or negative shopping experience and increase or decrease the level of purchasing satisfaction.

The study findings can help managers in making the right e-marketing and managerial decision as well as designing a proper e-shopping environment to make a long -term success and furthermore to plan their e-marketing strategies and projects to accomplish long haul goals.

Conclusion

There are some factors that influence that differences Thai consumers and French consumers towards online shopping. This study found that website security and privacy, website design, website reliability, and website customer service are the four prevailing components which influence consumer perceptions on their online purchasing experiences. Customers' worries about online budgetary security and protection are intently connected with their impression of how significant the advancements for secure installment components are (Hoffman et al.; 1999) and with the reputation of the vendor (GVU, 1998). Subsequently, it is imperative for E-retailers to adopt advanced encryption technology and post assurances of their online security on their website, to educate online shoppers of their security measures

In accordance with many E-marketing types of research concerning the factors which cause consumer satisfaction in online purchasing experience. First of all, to study consumer behavior is very complex phenomena, as it is a sort of human conduct, and human beings are always not easily understood and are sometimes quite ambiguous. Researchers have done investigations in their effort to examine the factors influencing consumers' attitude and perception to make purchases through online shopping. Attitudes toward online shopping are characterized as customers' positive or negative emotions related to achieving the purchasing behavior on the internet.

In the Web market, efficient customer services should incorporate a well-staffed, responsive service organization, a simple return procedure, and the simplicity of order tracking. Besides, offering assurances and guarantees is an effective way of improving online customer service.

To conclude, online shoppers, are looking for clear information about products and service, efficient, connivance, wide variety of products such as clothes, accessories and a better cost on time are all extremely vital factor for online shopping. Although online shopping is not probably going ever completely to replace our true shopping outings, it keeps on holding extraordinary guarantee for the future.

Recommendation

All marketers should improve their service and promotional strategies to make mindful the client regarding information. According to Solomon (2009), companies exist to fulfill customers' wants and needs. These wants and needs must be fulfilled by understanding the customers that will use the product. Technology services and developing positive recognition to improve the dimension of the utilization of online shopping with a high level of fulfillment.

First of all, to have people purchasing on your site, you need to pull in them so that they will know your site. There are numerous channels to communicate to potential customers. Therefore, marketers need to consider regarding what kind of media will be the best for their target consumers. You can consider: TV, Radio, Internet, the primary concern is to make shoppers' advantage and build brand excitement. It is important to remember that marketers have to collaborate with consumers differently due to generation cohort issues. They also have to improve online shopping in a rural area; more advertisement can be directed through different media. While we conducted this research, we notice that multimedia devices like tablets, phones, and play station portable have contributed to the pattern of consumers moving away from conventional media platforms such as print advertising.

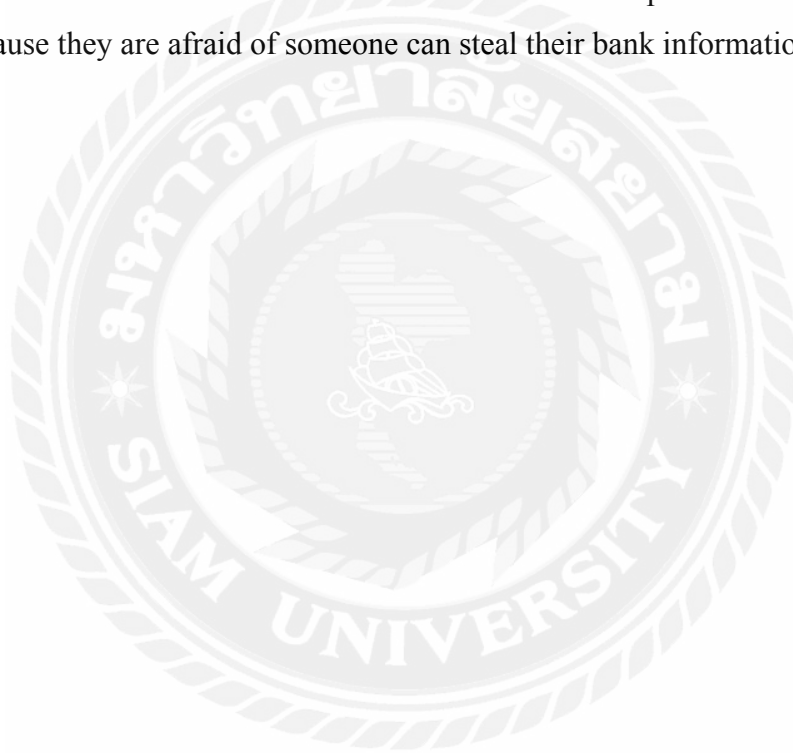
However, influencing factors has a significant impact on French and Thai consumers' behaviors towards online shopping. According to Kotler (2011), there are several factors among functionality, privacy that affect individuals purchasing conduct on the internet. According to Bucko and Vejačka (2011), if your website seems reliable thanks to the security of the environment and connected identification of users, people will buy. Besides, firm notoriety, perceived value is an additional factor that have an impact on consumers' behaviors to buy online. Based on the study findings, the gap present in the capacity of the seller's web link should always be monitor and rapidly solve the problem such as server down, site interface down the problem at the moment of a customer looking for the product information.

Authors suggested an efficient and effective site interface with all fundamental item data accessible on it, so the customer will show more confidence also making a faster

purchase when finding the effective and efficient web link (Spiller et al., 1997). The high-speed website is essential because it could decrease online shopper's time-consuming.

Firm notoriety is always essential to the customers, so this is recommended to the online shopping business to provide complete and reliable firm's information. Most customers will dependably look for a business that can provide better customer value. The better product and service value will always attract the customer for the product to purchase online.

Furthermore, it is likewise proposed that online website may offer to client an e-wallet which exchanges the balance customer online bank account to the store payment system (Masínová and Svandová, 2014). This may help the seller to gain more sales from those who want to buy online service but do not have a credit card or would prefer not to use their credit card online because they are afraid of someone can steal their bank information.



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