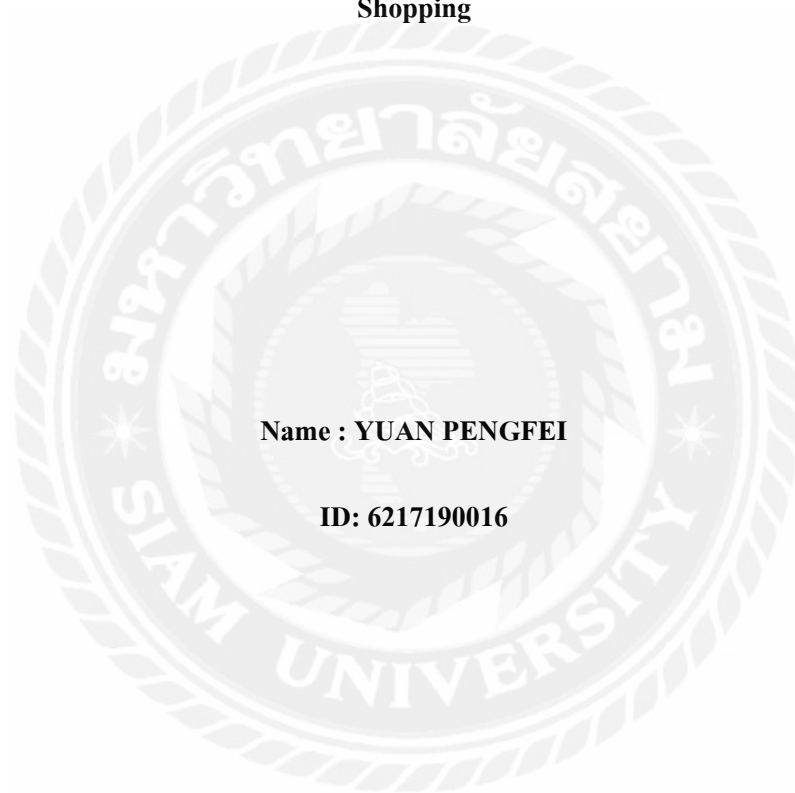




The Change In Consumer Behavior Under The Internet Revolution : A Shift To Online

Shopping



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ABSTRACT

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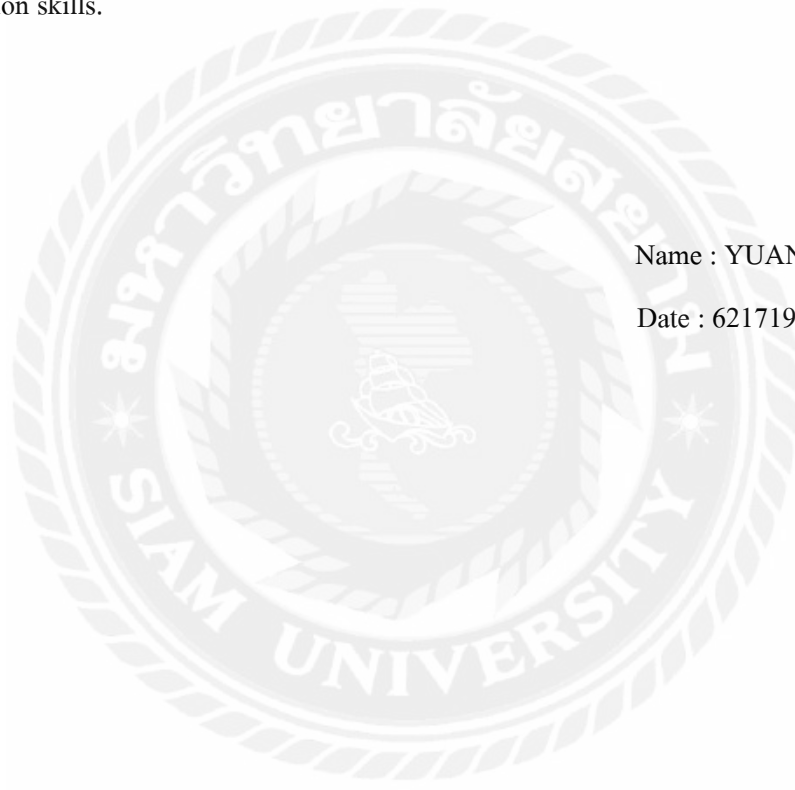
This paper focused on the change in consumer behavior under the Internet revolution and studied how companies can survive and stay competitive in this situation. Recently, a large number of companies were not doing well and even closed down. This paper mainly used documentary research method and found that there are two main factors affecting the change in consumer behavior, the Internet revolution and the popularity of online shopping. This paper first analyzed the background of the current Internet revolution, focusing on the number of users, infrastructure and applications. Then it analyzed the current state of online shopping, focusing on the online payment platform, convenience, and promotions. Next was the research on consumer behavior from two aspects, consumer habit and consumer psychology. It was found that consumer habits were gradually shifting from physical shopping to online shopping and consumer psychology is transforming shopping into something that can be enjoyed. This study suggested that companies should hold some large-scale promotional activities, create their own brand application or website to own both online and offline business, and provide a seamless shopping experience. Therefore, understanding these factors that change consumer behavior is of great significance for businesses.

Keywords: Internet revolution, Online shopping, Consumer behavior.



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CONTENTS

ABSTACT	A
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	B
CONTENTS	C
LIST OF FIGURES	D
CHAPTER	
1. Introduction	
1.1 Research background	
1.2 Research problems	
1.3 Objective of the study	
1.4 Scope of the study	
1.5 Research significance	
2. Literature Review	
2.1 Internet revolution	
2.1 Online shopping	
2.3 Consumer behavior	
2.4 Past research	
3. Finding and Conclusion	
4. Recommendation	
4.1 Recommendation for the top management	
4.2 Recommendation for the middle management	
4.3 Recommendation for the operational management	
4.4 Recommendation for other industries	
REFERENCES	

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

Figure 1: Established framework



1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

As of January 2020, there are nearly 4.54 billion active Internet users in the world, accounting for 59% of the global population. In terms of Internet users, China, India, and the United States come before all other countries. The global online penetration rate is 59%, and Northern Europe ranks first with a 95% Internet penetration rate (Global digital population 2020 | Statista, 2020).

With the rapid development of the Internet and the popularization of the online payment platform, consumer behavior has changed a lot, consumer behavior is gradually shifting from physical shopping to online shopping (Han, Wu, Wang & Hong, 2018). In 2018, approximately 1.8 billion people worldwide purchased goods online, and global electronic retail sales reached \$ 2.8 trillion. 63% of shopping occasions started online, and nearly half of consumers shop more on their mobile phones than in stores (Ten online shopping statistics you need to know in 2019, 2019). The greatest significance of the Internet is that it has changed the structure and operation of society, thereby changing all aspects of society, economy, culture, life, and politics (The Chinese internet boom in charts, 2018).

E-commerce basically related to the website, which sells products or services directly from the website through payment methods such as cards, electronic banking and cash on delivery (Pahwa, Taruna & Kasliwal, 2017). E-commerce has become an important part of the global economy, and its applications have become the main tools for people to find, compare and purchase products (Zhao, Takasu, Yahyapour & Fu, 2019). The web world is like a social channel which facilitates two-way communications with customers, provide detailed information about products or services, and implement various promotional tools to enrich the buying experience (Patodiya & Birla, 2016). E-commerce has grown at an amazing rate over the past decade. There are three main trends driving e-commerce market, increase in income, online and offline are merging, and the popularity of digital payments (Loubere, 2017).

1.2 Research Problems

The progress of digitization is playing an important role in many traditional retailers. The share of e-commerce is increasing, and the traffic and revenue of physical stores are declining (Linzbach, Inman & Nikolova, 2019). In 2018, there are 1.8 billion people worldwide purchased goods online. In the same year, global e-retail sales reached \$ 2.8 trillion, and it is expected to grow by \$ 4.8 trillion by 2021. But as of July 5, 2019, major US retail chains announced the closure of 7,062 stores (Topic: E-commerce worldwide, 2019). Consumer behavior changed from the physical store to online shopping. It saves time for modern people because they are too busy to be willing to spend a lot of time shopping (Rahman, Islam, Esha, Sultana & Chakravorty, 2018). The payment method of shopping has moved away from the traditional cash payment model and adopted mobile payment methods. Consumers will not touch cash during the consumption process, and the payment

process can be completed through a mobile phone. Consumer behavior has changed greatly (Li & Lin, 2015).

With the Internet revolution, consumer behavior has changed and online shopping has become increasingly popular. By studying domestic and foreign literature, we can know that physical stores face many challenges. Physical stores are being affected by online stores, sales are getting lower, and even many companies are facing closure. The current problem is to study the factors affecting the change of consumer behavior and provide guidance for companies to deal with the problem.

1.3 Objective of the study

The objective of this paper is to find out the factors affecting the change of consumer behavior, which can effectively help companies adapt to these changes and develop better. Set the following two goals:

1. To analyze the factors affecting the change in consumer behavior.
2. To provide a guideline for the company to deal with the change in consumer behavior under the internet revolution.

1.4 Scope of the study

In the digital era, consumer behavior has changed a lot. Consumer habit is gradually shifting from physical shopping to online shopping and consumer psychology is transforming shopping into something that can be enjoyed. This paper mainly studies the factors affecting the change in consumer behavior. There are two main factors: the Internet revolution and the popularity of online shopping. Then providing a guideline for the company to deal with the change in consumer behavior.

For this study, I have reviewed a large number of relevant excellent journals and papers. After collating and researching the data, I selected about 40 articles for research, they are referenced at the end of my paper for building up my research points, establishing my framework, making a conclusion and then proposing recommendations for implementation in this area.

1.5 Research Significance

The e-commerce industry is becoming more and more important nowadays. Consumers are increasingly demanding in shopping. Market competition is fierce, and every business is trying to find ways to attract customers' attention, in order to seize the opportunity, this research is very significant for the company to deal with the change in consumer behavior under the internet revolution. Through analyzing factors that affect consumer behavior, merchants can understand consumer psychology better and establish corresponding strategies to help companies develop better. The benefits of this paper are that it can enable the company to adapt to changes in consumer behavior in the digital era and enhance the competitiveness of the company.

In recent years, the rapid development of the mobile Internet has become increasingly important. The

mobile application covers a wide range and almost covers the entire life of consumers, such as mobile payment, mobile shopping, and mobile entertainment. In the mobile Internet environment, consumers have taken more initiative than before. These changes have impacted consumer behavior models and corporate marketing models in the traditional market environment. Therefore, research related to consumer behavior in the mobile Internet environment is particularly important.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Internet revolution

The Internet started with one of the earliest Internet browsers, Mosaic, which was launched in 1993. It is the forefront of non-technical people to access the Internet. The real revolution of the Internet began in 1995 with the launch of commercial websites such as eBay and Amazon. Over the past 24 years, the Internet has grown exponentially and our share of online activities is constantly increasing (Internet growth + usage stats 2019: Time online, devices, users - ClickZ, 2019). According to the International Telecommunication Union, the number of Internet users worldwide has reached 3.9 billion by the end of 2018, the Internet has become one of the preferred channels for people to obtain information (Zhang, Cai, Cheng, Zhang, Zhang & Zhu, 2019).

Faced with uncertain future consumer behavior and unpredictable technological changes, operators must accelerate the deployment of infrastructure to ensure the stability of consumer behavior (Digital Infrastructure Policy and Regulation in the Asia-Pacific Region, 2019). Supporting efficient infrastructure is a top priority for promoting economic growth. Software services are increasingly supporting a wide range of economic activities, not only increasing the productivity and efficiency of companies but also being able to deliver new innovations on a large scale (Institute for Global Change, 2019).

The rapid development and application of the Internet have promoted the growth of the network economy. The internet becomes a simple and comfortable platform to do business and marketing promotion compared with the traditional market. Product introduction and promotion could be showed perfectly through the internet. It will be easier to improve the number of transactions than before (Zhao, Xiong & Fang, 2016). In today's market, almost all large physical retailers have strong online businesses. According to Forbes, only about 28% of small businesses sell through the Internet. This is an opportunity for small physical retailers (How Do Brick and Mortar Stores Compare with Online Retail Sites, 2020).

2.2 Online shopping

Amazon.com in the US and JD.com in China is on the top of the list generating the highest global net sale. Amazon is the world's largest online e-commerce retailer by revenue. In 2018, Amazon's global net sales were \$ 77 billion. JD.com is an online store focused on the national market. Its net e-commerce sales are generated almost entirely in China. The online store was established in 2004 and has net global sales of \$ 61

billion (Berg, N., & Knights, M. (2019).

In the early 2000s, online shopping was not fully accepted by Chinese consumers due to the lack of internet and online payment platforms. After the emergence of affordable mobile devices and many online payment tools such as AliPay and WeChat Pay, online shopping has quickly become popular across the country, reaching a total transaction value of 620 billion USD in 2015. (Chen, Zheng, Zhang & Wang, 2017). CNNIC statistics show that people using digital payments in China are essential for online shopping. The percentage of Internet users using digital payments is almost the same as the percentage of online shopping, 65.5%, and 65.1% (Choi, Chung & Young, 2019).

The main factor affecting online shopping is convenience, people focus more on saving time. The satisfaction of online shopping is that as long as you have an internet connection, you can shop anytime and anywhere (Yeo, Goh & Rezaei, 2017). With the rapid development of the internet, consumers have more flexible access to information. They can have unlimited access to information about products, then getting a wide range of choices to choose cost-effective products and services (Han & Kim, 2019).

Promotions have a significant impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. Nagadeepa points out that various promotions are like surprises to consumers, satisfying their demand for high-quality and cheap products (Nagadeepa, Selvi & Pushpa, 2015). Promotions can further stimulate consumer purchasing vitality. Affected by this, consumer behaviors on product browsing will become more frequent, and frequent browsing will easily make consumers eager to purchase products (Shrestha, 2015).

2.3 Consumer behavior

In recent years, online shopping has become increasingly popular. You can buy almost anything online, from luxury cars to online courses, and even pet health services, the options are endless, people can shop at any time and any place. Online shopping has changed people's daily lives (Online shopping is part of everyday life in China, 2020). In the traditional economic environment, consumers have to go to specific locations to consume. However, the network economic environment allows consumers to break through time and geographical restrictions and make shopping easier (Zhang & Hou, 2019). The popularity of the Internet is the most critical catalyst in the transfer of power from dealers to consumers. This is also a factor in changing consumer behavior (Praneeth, Prabha, Mathipurani & Krishna, 2019). With the development of mobile payment platforms, consumer behavior has gradually changed from traditional payment methods to online payment methods. Consumers are increasingly using the mobile payment for daily online purchases. Trust and habits have been established in using mobile payment systems (Bezovski, 2016).

The rise of the Internet has created a new consumerist group. Consumers in this group can use the Internet to learn about any kind of products and services around the world and ask suppliers to meet their various needs in the most convenient way. As consumers spend less time shopping and spend more time on other jobs, their desire for convenience grows, so their attention has shifted from physical stores to online shopping (Ding,

2020). A major shift in consumer psychology is transforming shopping into something that can be enjoyed, where technology plays a key role. New behaviors such as self-service shopping will define shopping in the coming years, and retailers will need to ensure they meet the needs of consumers (The changing psychology of shopping: three trends set to shape retail, 2019).

2.4 Past research

The consumers in China, Korea, India, and the United States are the most active nations. In recent years, online retailing in India has shown tremendous growth. However, India is still in its initial stage of development compared with other countries (Top 10 Online Shopping Sites in India 2020, 2020). Amazon launched its India market "Amazon.in" in 2013. Amazon has also launched its Prime Now app for customers in Delhi and Mumbai. Mobile phones, electronics, and clothes are the most popular segments among Indian online shoppers now. But in the future, groceries, furniture, and food delivery services will also attract more customers (Top 5 Online Retailers: 'Electronics and Media' Are the Star of E-commerce Worldwide, 2020).

Availability, low prices, and promotions are the three most important points that influence Indian online shopping. Freedom is a special factor affecting consumer behavior in India. The social structure of India prevents women from exercising their independent decision-making power in too many other ways. Shopping has also become a major area where women usually have no independent shopping freedom (Jadhav & Khanna, 2016).

Although the population sizes of China and India are almost the same, the size of the online e-commerce market between China and India is very wide. In 2017, China's online e-commerce market was about \$ 1 trillion, while India's e-commerce market was about \$ 1.8 billion. The market sizes of the two countries differ significantly, income and spending power play an important role in consumers. Alibaba has a closed ecosystem and has won the trust of consumers. But Indian e-commerce is still lagging on this factor. In addition, a large part of the Chinese economy is virtual. In India, most purchases are still offline. Alibaba has strengthened its position in business and consumers in the Chinese market. The consumer market in India is still fragmented. Despite the supply integration between the two foreign companies, Flipkart Group and Amazon, online retail accounts for only a small portion of the entire market (Sekhar, Karthikeyan & Deyi, 2019).

Nowadays, consumers are no longer satisfied with substandard products but demand high-quality products at competitive prices. Consumers can obtain rich information through the Internet, which has led to changes in consumer behavior (Changing Consumer Behaviour in India - BBA|mantra, 2017).

3. Finding and Conclusion

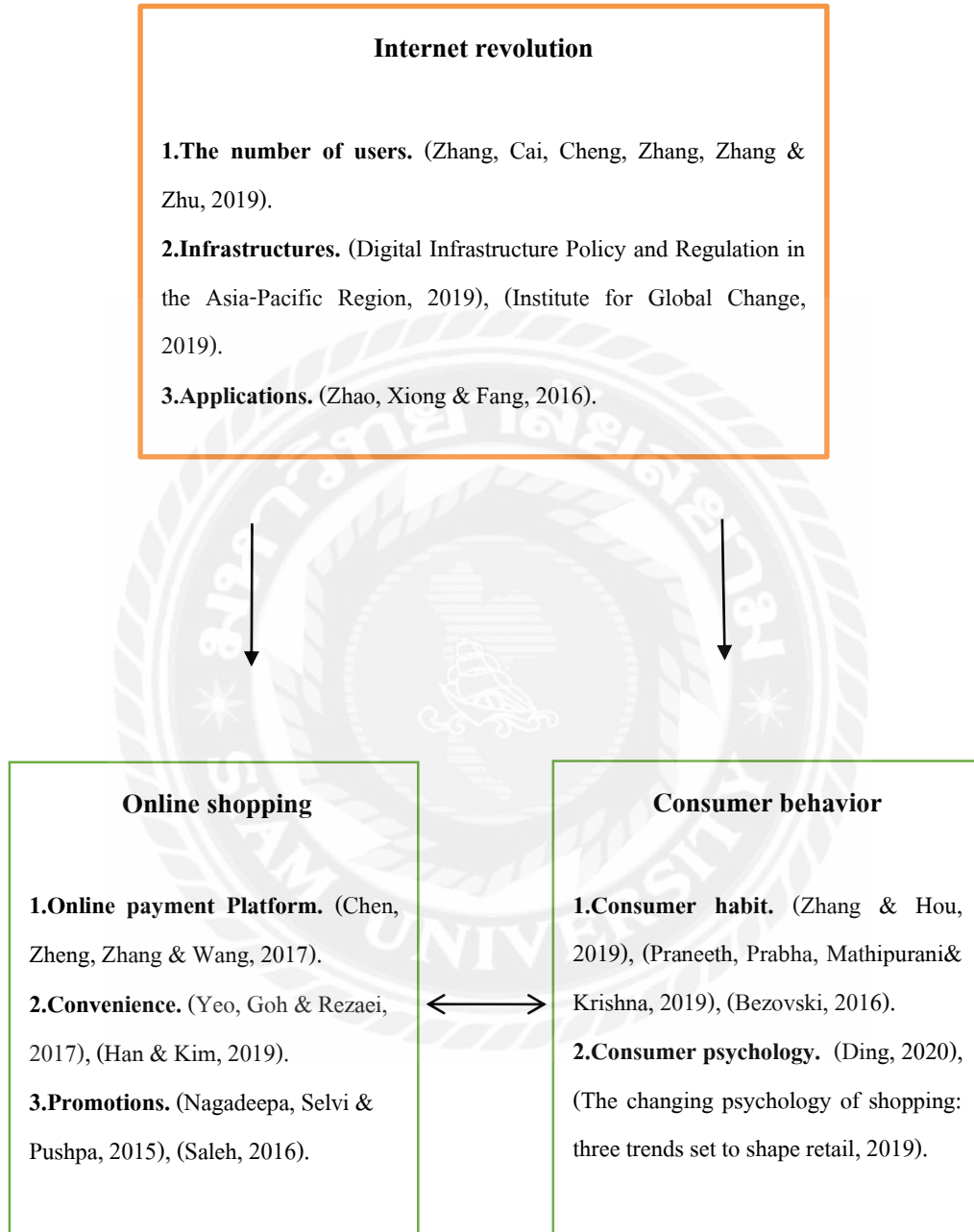


Figure 1: Established framework

This paper mainly used documentary research method to study the change in consumer behavior under the internet revolution. The result shows that there are two main factors affecting the change in consumer behavior, the Internet revolution and the popularity of online shopping.

When studying the Internet revolution, the main focus is on the number of Internet users, infrastructures, and applications. We can find that with the popularity of the Internet and mobile devices, consumers have different consumption options, and online shopping has become more and more popular (Verhoef, 2017). Consumer behavior under the Internet revolution will be more convenient. Consumers can shop regardless of time and space constraints (Tomar, Sharma & Pandey, 2018).

When studying online shopping, the main focus is on online payment platforms, convenience, and promotions. We can find that compared with physical stores, the biggest feature of online shopping is that there are more online shops, which can provide consumers with more choices. A secure payment platform is the foundation of all mobile consumption. Mobile payment platforms have become more and more complete and gradually accepted and trusted by the public nowadays (Johnson, Kiser, Washington & Torres, 2018). Promotion is the key to attracting consumer behavior shift to online shopping, most consumers prefer spending less money to buy the same things as physical stores (Bahaddad, Drew, Houghtoni & Alfarraj, 2018).

When studying consumer behavior, it is mainly studied in consumer habit and consumer psychology. We can find that consumer behavior has changed a lot. Consumer habit is gradually shifting from physical shopping to online shopping and consumer psychology is transforming shopping into something that can be enjoyed (Hou, 2018). There is a very close relationship between consumer psychology and company marketing strategies. They interact with each other. Therefore, research on consumer psychology is an important factor for companies to carry out marketing strategies (Ramya & Ali, 2016).

For this study, I have reviewed a large number of relevant excellent journals and papers. The result shows that consumer behavior has changed a lot. Consumer habit is gradually shifting from physical shopping to online shopping and consumer psychology is transforming shopping into something that can be enjoyed. The result also shows that there are two main factors affecting the change in consumer behavior, the Internet revolution and the popularity of online shopping. In the digital era, retailers have faced great challenges. After clearly understanding what changes in consumer behavior and factors affecting changes in consumer behavior, we can formulate relevant strategies for the company to deal with the problem. If retailers want to adapt to these changes and stay competitive, they must start from these aspects and develop a unique marketing strategy related to these aspects.

4. Recommendation

There is no doubt that the internet revolution is changing consumer behavior, and companies need to adapt to these changes and stay competitive. Here are some recommendations.

4.1 Recommendation for the top management

Businesses should make good use of the Internet era, create their own brand application or website, and own both online and offline business, customers can use both channels depending on their situation. Hundreds of websites and applications are created every year to meet growing consumer demand (Bashir, Mehboob & Bhatti, 2015). The goal is to create products and services online so that potential customers can view different products and then visit local physical stores to make purchases. Companies can use the following ways: Buying items online and pick them up in physical stores, allowing the return of goods purchased online in a physical store, and allowing customers to place orders online in a physical store (Online-To-Offline Commerce, 2019).

4.2 Recommendation for the middle management

Providing customers with useful and relevant information through the right content marketing strategy. Businesses need to ensure that when people see your brand, images, experiences, and feelings related to your brand will emerge and motivate them to buy the company's products. Optimizing the customer experience should be the focus of the business. In the digital era, customers are increasingly valued for the online experience. They are willing to explore multiple brands, and they are willing to leave your brand if they get the wrong experience during the shopping process (How Consumer Behaviors Have Changed in The Digital Age - The Next Scoop, 2019).

Retailers can improve their performance by providing a seamless customer experience. This can help customers find products in stores and even skip the check-out line on their way out. Such services are achieved through the use of cameras and sensors strategically placed across the store. Whenever you take an item off a shelf, the computer tracks it and puts it in your virtual shopping cart. As soon as you leave the checkout sensor, an app will deduct the charge from your credit card (Five ways to adapt to changing Consumer Behavior, 2019).

4.3 Recommendation for the operational management

Companies can constantly use various innovative promotional methods to attract consumers, meet personalized preferences, and then enhance purchase intentions. The most important thing is the price of the product for consumers. Consumers prefer promotions, which is also a means of competition for e-commerce

sites (Yang, 2015). More than 70% of Internet users in the United States claim that discounts during the holidays have the biggest impact on purchasing decisions. 83% of users said they would click on ads that offer discounts or promotions (How Discounts Affect Online Consumer Buying Behavior [Infographic], 2016).

Improving the company's payment system, reduce the frequency of failures, and minimize the number of payment steps while ensuring security, such as using fingerprint payments. Online shoppers are in a virtual environment to complete transactions, so insecure transactions are considered as the biggest problem to online shopping, which is why simple and secure online payment methods are important to customers (De Kerviler, Demoulin & Zidda, 2016). Consumers prefer the simple and secure payment process, which makes purchases with a single click of a button and entering a fingerprint (Bauboniene & Guleviciute, 2015).

Companies need to optimize search engines to make it easier for consumers to find what they want, and intelligently recommend things that consumers might like based on their search history. It is much easier to search the product online than to shop in traditional retail formats. Consumers can find what they want based on categories and compare different stores until they are satisfied, so it would be wise to recommend to consumers based on their search history (Wei, Lee & Shen, 2018).

4.4 Recommendation for other industries

Recommendation for food delivery: Taking advantage of online platforms to provide customers with maximum convenience. By far, the most common form of delivery is the traditional model, where consumers place orders directly over the phone at a local restaurant. But the rise of digital technology is reshaping the market. Consumers used to shop online through apps or websites are increasingly looking to get the same experience when ordering dinner. Online food delivery platforms are expanding choices and conveniences, enabling customers to order from a variety of restaurants with a single tap of their phone (The changing market for food delivery, 2020).

Recommendation for online payment platform: Providing security and privacy guarantees. Whenever personal information is involved, make sure you do your best to show the security measures you have taken and build trust between platform and customers (Martínez-López, Li, Liu & Feng, 2020). From a branding perspective, you'll want to keep everything as consistent as possible. This means using the same colors, fonts, and design on your checkout page as on the rest of your website, so you can raise brand recognition for your business. It's perfectly reasonable for folks to be skeptical when faced with a checkout page that's different from the website they were shopping on. In order to help raise brand awareness, keep your design consistent across all channels, especially your checkout page! (Nine ways to Make the Payment Process Easy for Online Customers, 2013)

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