THE IMPACT OF INTELLIGENT SHOPPING GUIDES ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS

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AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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ABSTRACT

In recent years, with the rapid development of Internet of Things technology and the continuous expansion of the supermarket scale, people have put forward higher requirements for the traditional shopping method, and are more in pursuit of intelligent shopping and a convenient human-computer interaction shopping method . Despite the increasing popularity of intelligent shopping guides, there is a lack of in-depth research on consumers' attitudes and acceptance of them.

The following research objectives were proposed: 1. To explore the influence of intelligent shopping guide features on consumers' purchase intention. 2. To examine the mediating role of perceived trust in the relationship between intelligent shopping guide features and consumers' purchase intention.

This study adopted a quantitative research method of questionnaire survey. A total of 313 questionnaires were collected, and 307 valid questionnaires were obtained. The following conclusions were drawn: 1. The four features of anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability, and intelligence level are significantly positively correlated with consumers' purchase intention; 2. Perceived trust has a mediating effect in the relationship between intelligent shopping guide features and purchase intention, which indicates that perceived trust prompts consumers under social distance to purchase intention.The following recommendations are proposed: 1. Upgrade and iterate intelligent shopping guides to enhance service quality and competitive advantages; 2. Address the limitations of artificial intelligence technology.

Keywords: intelligent shopping guide，perceived trust，purchase intention

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TANG YINGYING

DECLARATION

I, TANG YINGYING, hereby declare that this independent study entitled "THE IMPACT OF INTELLIGENT SHOPPING GUIDES ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS" is result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

(TANG YINGYING)
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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Since the release of the world's first AI synthetic anchor "Xin Xiao Hao" in 2018, organizations have gradually launched the development and application of AI intelligent shopping guides (Liu, 2023).

However, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of 2019, the economy came to a standstill. Many businesses ultimately closed due to insufficient offline sales, and even those that received government support saw their profits significantly reduced (Huang, 2020). However, during the pandemic, the e-commerce industry demonstrated immense potential. Online shopping made it easier for consumers to meet their daily needs, enabling businesses to sell products, break down spatial barriers, expand sales channels, and avoid product backlogs (Guan, 2020). This alleviated some of the pressure the pandemic had placed on businesses, helping them resume operations and production. It also garnered attention from various industries and sectors (Jie, 2020)

In 2020, China's 14th Five-Year Plan emphasised the industrialisation of AI, promoting the application of intelligent shopping guides in retail, healthcare, and other fields (Ding, 2025). By 2021, China's digital economy had achieved new breakthroughs, with the scale of the digital economy reaching 45.5 trillion yuan, representing a year-on-year growth of 16.2%, which was 3.4 percentage points higher than the average GDP growth rate during the same period, accounting for 39.8% of China's GDP (Bawden, 2020). By the end of 2022, generative AI technologies represented by ChatGPT emerged, driving significant advancements in natural language processing (NLP) and intelligent shopping dialogue capabilities, enabling intelligent shopping guides to more accurately understand user needs and generate personalised recommendations (Qi, 2024). After 2024, consumers have shifted from "cautious consumption" to "purposeful consumption", relying more on precise recommendations to save decision-making time, and intelligent guides will become a key tool (Nielsen, 2024). Intelligent shopping guides optimize the consumer experience through personalized recommendations, instant response, and data analysis, improving purchasing efficiency and satisfaction, while potentially reducing labor costs (Rane, 2023).

However, despite the increasing popularity of intelligent shopping guides, there is a lack of in-depth research on their impact on consumer purchase intention in the context of social distance. On the basis of this research, perceived trust is introduced as a mediating variable to study the effect of intelligent shopping guides on

consumers' purchase intention (Li, 2023). Intelligent shopping guides optimize the consumer experience through personalized recommendations, instant response, and data analysis, improving purchasing efficiency and satisfaction while potentially reducing labor costs.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Compared to traditional offline purchases, intelligent shopping guides initially give consumers more ambiguous results. The main problems include consumers' unfamiliarity with the use of intelligent shopping guides and consumers' inability to assess product quality. As a result, consumers' trust in intelligent shopping guided purchases compared to traditional offline purchases is yet to be considered. In addition, the uncertainty of the process of using intelligent shopping guides in purchasing complicates the decision-making process. To address these challenges, this study introduces intelligent shopping guide characteristics: anthropomorphic nature, professionalism, favorability, and intelligence level. It investigates how each feature influences consumers' purchase intention through perceived trust and thus, in the context of using intelligent shopping guides at a social distance.

1. How do intelligent shopping guide features impact consumer purchase intention?

2.How does perceived trust mediate the relationship between intelligent shopping guides features and consumer purchase intention?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the technology acceptance model, this study introduces perceived trust as a mediating variable to investigate the effect of intelligent shopping guides on consumers' purchase intention under social distance. The research objectives are as follows:

1.To explore the impact of intelligent shopping guide features on consumer purchase intentions.

2.To examine the mediating role of perceived trust in the relationship between intelligent shopping guide features and consumer purchase intentions.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focused on offline shopping scenarios using intelligent shopping guides, and analysed the relationship between the four features of intelligent shopping guides: anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability and intelligence level, and

perceived trust and purchase intention. This study adopted a quantitative research method and collected data with a questionnaire survey. A total of 313 questionnaires were distributed, and 307 valid questionnaires were analyzed. The research subjects were "social anxiety" consumers who did not want to have a guide for close range sales in physical stores. When creating the questionnaire, 68 articles were reviewed. The questionnaire was distributed from May to June 2025 for a period of one month.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Theoretical implications:This study provides new perspectives and expands new scenarios for existing research on offline intelligent shopping guided shopping under social distance by exploring the impact of intelligent shopping guided shopping on consumers' purchase intention. Using the technology acceptance model as a theoretical foundation, this study explores how intelligent shopping guides influence consumers' purchase decisions, which helps to promote the development of the theory in digital and social shopping environments.

Practical significance: Enterprises can better grasp the consumer behaviour and psychology, so as to optimize the use of intelligent shopping guide technology, improve consumer satisfaction and loyalty, and more accurately understand the consumer's purchasing intentions, preferences and needs, so as to formulate a more accurate marketing strategy and improve the marketing effect.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

This section a provides clear and accurate definitions of the key terms used in this study, ensuring that readers have a solid understanding of the variables used in this research.

Intelligent shopping guide: Refers to an intelligent shopping system that utilizes technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data analysis, and natural language processing (NLP) to simulate or assist real salespersons, providing personalized product recommendations, shopping consultations, demand matching, and other services to consumers. Its forms include chatbots, voice assistants, recommendation engines, etc., aimed at improving shopping experience, optimizing sales efficiency, and reducing labor costs for enterprises.

Anthropomorphism: Refers to the human-like qualities exhibited by intelligent shopping guide systems or robots during interactions. These qualities make the

intelligent shopping guide not just a cold machine or program, but able to understand and respond to customer needs and emotions like a person, thereby providing more attentive and personalized services. One characteristic of intelligent shopping guides in this study is their anthropomorphism ability, which allows consumer needs and emotions to be understood, helping to enhance purchasing willingness.

Professionalism: This is mainly reflected in its use of advanced technologies and algorithms to conduct in-depth analysis of customer shopping behaviors, providing accurate and personalized product recommendations and shopping services. This allows intelligent shopping guides to better meet customers' shopping needs, enhance the shopping experience, and promote sales growth. One of the features of intelligent shopping guides in this study is that their professionalism enhances the consumer shopping experience, builds trust, and helps increase purchase intention.

Favorability: Refers to the overall feelings and evaluations that customers have towards the intelligent shopping guide service when using it. These feelings and evaluations are typically based on various aspects of the intelligent shopping guide's interactive experience, service quality, and personalized recommendations. In this study, one of the characteristics of the intelligent shopping guide is the favorability towards the intelligent shopping guide process, which helps enhance the willingness space.

Intelligence level: Essentially, it is a comprehensive indicator for measuring one's intelligent shoppingness and technical ability. The intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides is a comprehensive concept that involves their capabilities in understanding user needs, processing information, making decisions, and self-optimizing. This allows intelligent shopping guides to provide users with a more precise and personalized shopping experience. One of the characteristics of intelligent shopping guides in this study is their intelligence level, which helps provide consumers with a tailored shopping experience and enhances their purchasing intentions.

Perceived Trust: Consumers develop trust in the information generated during the use of intelligent shopping guides due to various reasons such as repeated usage and the professional abilities of the assistants. In this study, perceived trust is an important mediating variable that connects the features of intelligent shopping guides with purchase intention.

Purchase Intention: The tendency and preference demonstrated by consumers during the decision-making process. It serves as a prerequisite for purchasing behavior and reflects consumers' attitudes toward specific products or brands. In this study, purchase intention is the main outcome measured, focusing on the impact of various dimensions of intelligent shopping guide characteristics on purchase intention.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the conceptual connotations of intelligent shopping guide characteristics: anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability and intelligence level, perceived trust and consumer purchase intention. As consumers continue to demand more from their shopping experience, understanding how these characteristics influence the consumer decision-making process has become particularly important, not only for the effectiveness of digital transformation of enterprises, but also for the future of human-computer collaboration models in the retail industry.

2.2 Intelligent Shopping Guide

Voropanova (2015) and Park et al. (2015) explores the use of m-commerce to create a sense of 'intelligence' among shoppers through intelligent shopping technologies. It has been a recurring theme in omni-channel research.

Zhang (2012) designed an intelligent shopping guide robot system, which can output corresponding answers according to the user's input questions matched with pre-accessed semantic templates. The system automatically builds and updates the user's personalised knowledge base to predict the user's purchasing tendency and recommend products for customers.Through specific intelligent algorithm in the background, the system records customers 'personalized interests and preferences, automatically establishes customers' personalized knowledge base, and recommends products to customers as a basis for customers to choose and purchase, so as to realize personalized shopping guide service.

In 1990, Japan's robotics field proposed the Uncanny Valley theory and confirmed that the anthropomorphism of robots affects the public's perception of them. Bartneck et al. (2009). reviewed previous studies on public perception of robots and concluded that acceptance of robotic information is mainly influenced by the robots' anthropomorphism, animal-like traits, favorability, and intelligence. Jian et al(2000) categorized assurance, confidence, and safety as factors of human-robot trust and general trust. Xu et al. (2020), based on their research, believe that the anthropomorphism of robots may be a core variable in people's acceptance of robots, while the robust agency of robots could lead to excessive public trust in them. Agency refers to the ability to act, plan, and exert self-control, which is also a fundamental distinction between humans and animals.

Based on the source attractiveness model, two trust theory, and the aforementioned empirical research, this study categorizes the dimensions of intelligent shopping guide characteristics into four dimensions: anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability and intelligence level, according to the research of Bartneck et al. (2009).

When consumers can obtain more reliable information through intelligent shopping guides, they are more likely to choose to purchase due to the comprehensiveness of the information. Through the grounded theory, it was found that consumers believe the objectivity and authenticity of the product descriptions provided by intelligent shopping guides have a strong influence on subsequent behaviors. In the marketing environment, consumers can gain a stronger sense of presence, and the information provided by intelligent shopping guides affects their awareness and actions.

2.2.1 Anthropomorphism

Intelligent shopping guides are formed against the backdrop of digitization and align with people's aesthetics. Therefore, the level of anthropomorphism in intelligent shopping guides visually directly affects the public's recognition and acceptance of them. Du (2020) mentioned Uncanny Valley Theory, which suggests that after the appearance and behavior of robots reach a certain degree of similarity with humans, the public's positive emotions towards them will reach a peak, and then the public will have a negative impact. When the similarity continues to rise to a level closer to humans, the public will regain positive emotions towards them. Even if the design of a certain robot is not as human like as possible, it is still important to match the appearance of the robot with its abilities. An overly anthropomorphic appearance may cause the robot to fail to meet expectations. Zhang (2022) proposed that even if a particular robot's design is not meant to closely resemble a human, it is still crucial to match the robot's appearance with its capabilities, as an overly human-like appearance might lead to expectations that the robot cannot fulfill.

2.2.2 Professionalism

The credibility model of information sources proposed by Hovland et al. (1953) suggests that the more credible the source, the better the persuasive effect of its communication. Whether information is accepted depends on the credibility of the source. Meyer (1988) proposed that the higher the credibility of a source, the stronger its professionalism, and the greater its persuasive power. As a disseminator of product

information, intelligent shopping guides inherently serve as information sources, spreading professional knowledge to the public.

2.2.3 Favorability

Favorability refers to the extent to which people's positive judgments about others are influenced by visual and auditory behaviors of the target. A positive and proactive influence on a person typically leads to a more favorable evaluation of that person. Increasing research indicates that in interpersonal communication, individuals often make significant judgments within seconds of meeting someone. Given the anthropomorphic characteristics of intelligent shopping guides, it can be assumed that people can make similar judgments about them. Dion et al. (1972) mentioned that in the source attraction model, the audience's familiarity, favorability, and similarity with the source play an important role in explaining and persuading.

2.2.4 Intelligence Level

Research shows that observers can easily attribute personality traits, abilities, and emotions to others based on limited information. It has been proven that the level of intelligence of robots significantly affects humans. The anthropomorphic characteristics of intelligent shopping guides make the public expect their working capabilities to be close to those of real people. At the same time, Warner and Sugarman (1986) considered the professional specificity of intelligent shopping guides, their adaptability, knowledge reserve, and social conversation skills will be important aspects for the public to judge the intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides.

2.3 Customer Perceived Trust

Anderson et al. (1990) considered consumer trust as a feeling of trust in a merchant and the belief that the merchant will meet the consumer's demands, Meyerson et al. (1996) considered trust as feeling an expectation of another person's behaviour and believing that this behaviour will be beneficial to oneself. This study focuses more on consumer trust. Zhang (2022) established a definition of trust, which is frequently used in sociology and other related research fields. He believes that trust is an emotional state towards uncertainties that one cannot control.

Su (2023) perceived trust involves an individual's trusting beliefs about the purpose of another person's or organisation's actions and decision-making processes. According to the theory of perceived trust, trust is understood as the level of

confidence an individual holds in assessing the motives behind the other person's behaviour and the expected outcome of the behaviour. This theory emphasises that in social interaction scenarios, a relationship based on mutual understanding and trust is gradually established, in which one party measures and determines the level of trust by speculating on the other party's intention to act.

Consumer perceived trust refers to the trust that consumers develop in the products recommended by intelligent shopping guides due to long-term usage, the professionalism of the intelligent shopping guides, and other factors. In situations where merchants and their products need to establish a trusting bond with consumers, the role of intelligent shopping guides is crucial. The professionalism and intelligence of intelligent shopping guides are significant factors that affect consumer trust. Through regular interactions with consumers and positive word-of-mouth after product use, intelligent shopping guides gradually establish a trust relationship. Under the influence of trust factors, the recommendations made by intelligent shopping guides form a trust relationship with consumers, who are willing to purchase the products.

Trust is defined as the willingness of individuals or groups to bear risks in uncertain situations in order to believe in the behavior of others. Baier (1996) defined trust as a level of confidence we have that others will not harm us, even when we acknowledge the possibility that they might. Psychology views trust as the expectation of reliability in others' actions, focusing on the psychological aspects of trust building. In marketing, trust is considered to be based on credibility and favorability, highlighting the importance of trust in the relationship between buyers and sellers. In the marketing domain, perceived trust refers to one party's perception of the reliability and favorability of the other party, that is, the level of confidence and willingness to rely on trading partners. Cheng (2016) concluded after reviewing relevant literature that there are certain differences in the definition of consumer trust, but overall they reflect a similar core concept. It encompasses key factors such as positive expectations, risks, abilities, favorability, and honesty, which play an important role in consumer decision-making and behavior. Due to information asymmetry and a highly concealed transaction environment in the market, the effects of perceived trust become even more significant, making perceived trust a key factor in consumers' decisions whether to purchase.

Compared to human sales assistants, intelligent shopping guides are more likely to worry about issues such as safety and information exposure. In this situation, consumer perceived trust becomes especially important. Since intelligent shopping

guides make recommendations based on system intelligence, providing detailed product information can enhance consumer perceived trust, making consumers feel that the quality of the information they receive is genuine and reliable. This leads to a positive impression of the product and increases consumer perceived trust, which in turn influences their purchasing intentions through this trust relationship.

2.4 Customer Purchase Intention

Lu and Su (2009), in exploring the factors influencing purchase intention on mobile shopping websites, highlighted that the level of confidence consumers have in their ability to manoeuvre on mobile shopping platforms directly plays a role in the anxiety they develop, which is seen as an emotional hindrance in the process of use. In addition, factors such as the usefulness and convenience of the platform are also important considerations in determining consumers' willingness to purchase. Dachyar and Banjarnahor(2017) showed that purchase intention affects the performance of firms and defined a consumer as a person who holds a positive belief about a product and is considering purchasing these products.

Jiang et al.(2011) explored and proposed that consumers' perceived quality, perceived reliability and other factors are positively correlated with consumers' perceived trust and affect purchase intention. Wang (2017) provided a clear definition of purchase intention, pointing out that it is a psychological state formed by consumers before they make an actual purchase decision, which can significantly affect and predict the likelihood of consumers' purchasing behaviour occurring.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

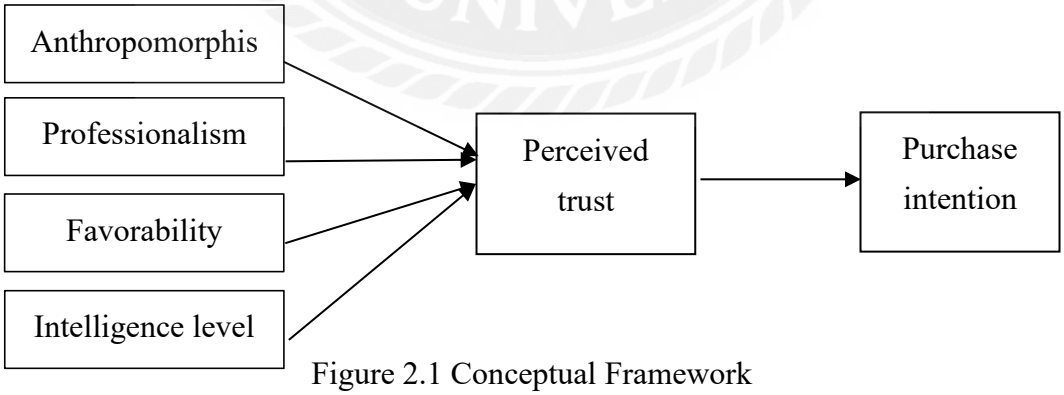

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research methodology and constructed measurement items based on the relevant theories and literature studies in Chapter 2. The factors influencing purchase intention were investigated and research hypotheses were provided. On the basis of existing mature scales, a questionnaire was designed according to the specific application scenarios of intelligent shopping guides, and a five point Likert scale was used.

3.2 Sampling and Sample Size

The focus of this study was on the impact of intelligent shopping guides on consumer purchase intention in the context of social distance. Therefore, the respondents were mainly consumers who enjoy social distance and have used intelligent shopping guides. This study adopted a random sampling method and the sample size was determined at 313.

3.3 Hypothesis

H1a: The anthropomorphism of intelligent shopping guides has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

H1b: The professionalism of intelligent shopping guides has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

H1c: The favorability of intelligent shopping guides has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

H1d: Intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

H2: Intelligent shopping guide features have a significant positive impact on perceived trust.

H3: Perceived trust has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

H4: Perceived trust plays a mediating role in the relationship between intelligent shopping guide features and purchase intention.

3.4 Research Instrument

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of intelligent shopping guides on consumer purchase intention, and further explore how different characteristics of intelligent shopping guides affect consumer decision-making. Considering the nature of the research purpose, this study adopted a quantitative

research method to systematically, objectively, and replicably collect and analyze data. Especially when investigating a large number of samples that were mostly structured, the use of standardized measurement scales and statistical techniques ensured the accuracy and reliability of research results. In addition, quantitative methods can also help collect data from a wide range of consumer groups for comprehensive analysis, providing meaningful insights and influences for the future development direction of intelligent shopping guides.

To achieve these research objectives, this study developed a structured questionnaire based on the intelligent shopping guide Feature Measurement Scale proposed by Liu (2023). The questionnaire aims to capture the four key dimensions of intelligent shopping guides: anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability, intelligence level, and their impact on perceived trust and consumer purchase intention.

The survey questionnaire consists of two main parts:

1. Demographic Characteristics

This section collects demographic and personal data of the respondents, which helps to understand the survey results and context, and analyze potential differences between consumer groups. This section includes the following seven questions, as shown in Table 3.1

Characteristic	Question item
What intelligent shopping guides have the respondents used	(1)Voice and Image Search
	(2)intelligent shopping Fitting Room
	(3)intelligent shopping Shopping Cart
	(4)intelligent shopping Robot
	(5)Self-checkout
	(6)Voice Assistant
	(7)Mobile Payment
	(8)Other
	(9)None
Does the interviewee enjoy close range sales by a salesperson	(1)Yes
	(2)No
Gender	(1)Male
	(2)Female
Age	(1)Under 18 years of age

	(2)19-25 years old
	(3)26-30 years old
	(4)31-40 years old
	(5)41-50 years
	(6)51 years and over
Education level	(1)High School and Below
	(2)Junior College
	(3)Undergraduate
	(4)Master's Degree or Above
Career	(1)Government or Institutional Staff
	(2)Enterprise Staff
	(3)Full-time Technical Staff
	(4)Schoolchildren
	(5)Freelancer
	(6)Other
City	(1)First-tier Cities
	(2)Provincial Capital Cities
	(3)Prefecture Level City
	(4)County and Below
	(5)Other

Table 3.1 Demographic Characteristics

2. Intelligent shopping guide features, perceived trust, and purchase intention.

This section uses validated scales to study core variables, including the four dimensions of intelligent shopping guide features, perceived trust, and consumer purchase intention.

Each item in the questionnaire is measured using a five point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This form allows respondents to express their level of agreement with the statement, providing a structured and flexible method for evaluating respondents' intelligent guides, perceived trust, and purchase intention, as shown in Table 3.2

Variable	Item
Anthropomorphism (AN)	(1)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be conscious
	(2)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be alive

	(3)The intelligent shopping guide's movement looks as smooth as a human's
Professionalism (PES)	(1)This intelligent shopping guide appears to be unbiased
	(2)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be concerned about consumer rights
	(3)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be equipped with the professionalism of a guide worker's
Favorability (FB)	(1)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be friendly
	(2)That intelligent shopping guide looks to be good looking
	(3)This intelligent shopping guide looks like it has feelings
Intelligence Level (IQ)	(1)The intelligent shopping guide looks to be very competent
	(2)The intelligent shopping guide seems to be equipped with a sense of responsibility
	(3)The intelligent shoppingguide appears to be a knowledgeable
Perceived Trust (PT)	(1)Based on the intelligent shopping guide's capabilities, I'm sure it can do the job of a guide.
	(2)I have to be careful looking at the information on the intelligent shopping guide as what he shows is questionable.
	(3)I can't safely rely on a intelligent shopping guide because its negligence in doing its job may cause me to get the wrong information.
	(4)I think the intelligent shopping guide response is positive
	(5)I think the intelligent shopping guide showed warmth and concern
	(6)I would feel a personal loss if I couldn't see the intelligent shopping guide
Purchase Intention (PI)	(1)I am willing to buy products recommended by intelligent shopping guides when I need them
	(2)The introduction of the intelligent shopping guide was informative to my purchase intentions
	(3)In the future I would also like to buy products recommended by intelligent shopping guides

Table 3.2 Questionnaire Items

3.5 Data Collection

This study used a questionnaire survey to collect and organize data; The survey period was from May to June 2025. Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire distribution platform called SoJump and randomly distributing questionnaire links on WeChat social media platforms. After manually evaluating 313 questionnaires about a month after distribution and eliminating 6 questionnaires with inconsistent sample screening, the effective questionnaire response rate reached 98.08%. This resulted in 307 valid questionnaires.

Category	Count	Percentage
Questionnaires distributed and returned	313	89.43%
Invalid/incomplete questionnaires	6	1.92%
Valid questionnaires	307	98.08%

Table 3.3 Questionnaire Collection and Statistics

3.6 Data Analysis

The responses to the questionnaire were screened, and valid questionnaires were selected for descriptive statistical analysis, reliability and validity analysis, correlation analysis, and hypothesis testing, including mediation effect testing. Using SPSS data for analysis, the hypothesis was tested by examining the ways in which intelligent shopping guide features influence consumer purchase intention through perceived trust.

3.7 Reliability and Validity Analysis of the Scale

3.7.1 Reliability Analysis of the Scale

In order to ensure the reliability of the results of data analysis, it is necessary to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire before conducting hypothesis testing. Reliability reflects the degree of internal consistency between the latent variables and the observed variables.Lee Cronbach invented Cronbach's α in 1951.The value of Cronbach's α is between 0 and 1, the larger the value, the higher the reliability. It is generally accepted that the reliability of a test is good when the alpha coefficient value is above 0.8, and the reliability of a test is high when the coefficient value is above 0.5. 0.7 is acceptable. In this study, the reliability of the four variables of the questionnaire was tested using SPSS reliability analysis. The results are shown in Table 3.4.

Variant	Cronbach's Alpha	
Anthropomorphism	0.754	0. 939
Professionalism	0.786	
Favorability	0.743	
Intelligence level	0.722	
Perceived trust	0.832	
Purchase intention	0.736	

Table 3.4 Reliability Tests

In this study, the alpha coefficient of anthropomorphic nature of intelligent shopping guide features is 0.754, the alpha coefficient of professionalism is 0.786, the alpha coefficient of favorability is 0.743, the alpha coefficient of intelligence level is 0.722, the alpha coefficient of perceived trust is 0.832, the alpha coefficient of consumer purchase intention is 0.736, and the alpha coefficient of the overall questionnaire reaches 0.939, which is above 0.7, which indicates that the The reliability of the questionnaire designed in this study is good.

3.7.2 Validity Analysis of the Scale

As can be seen from Table 3.5, the KMO value of the overall scale is 0.944, which is greater than 0.7. The significance probability of the Bartlett's test of sphericity is 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. These indicators show that the scale has good validity and is suitable for factor analysis.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.944
Bartlett's test of Sphericity	Approx.Chi-Square	3227.514
	df	210
	Sig	.000

Table 3.5 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

After screening the questionnaires and removing 6 invalid ones, the remaining 307 valid questionnaires were subjected to frequency analysis, as shown in Table 4.1.

Characteristic	Subject	Number of people	%
Gender	Male	162	52.77
	Female	145	47.23
Age	Under 18 years of age (Including 18 years of age)	20	6.51
	19-25 years old	66	21.5
	26-30 years old	57	18.57
	31-40 years old	76	24.75
	41-50 years	45	14.66
	51 years and over	43	14.01
Education	High school and below	39	12.70
	Three-year college	82	26.71
	Undergraduate	160	52.12
	Master's degree or above	26	8.47
Career	Government or institutional staff	42	13.68
	Enterprise staff	115	37.46
	Full-time technical staff (e.g. doctors, teachers, engineers)	46	14.98
	Schoolchildren	61	19.87
	Freelancer	31	10.1
	Other	12	3.91
Note: N=307			

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Sample (N=307)

Table 4.1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 307 participants. In terms of gender, 52.77% of the participants were male, and 47.23% were female. The age distribution shows that the majority of participants (64.82%) were aged 19–40, followed by 14.66% aged 41–50, 14.01% aged 51 and above, and 6.51% under 18 years old. In terms of educational background, 78.83% of participants held an associate or bachelor's degree, 12.70% had a high school diploma or lower, 8.47% held a master's degree or higher. In terms of occupation, the majority were company employees and students, accounting for 37.46% and 19.87% respectively, 14.98% are full-time technical personnel (such as doctors, teachers, engineers), 13.68% were government or public institution staff, 10.1% are freelancers, and 3.91% are other occupations.

After gaining a general understanding of the sample structure, SPSS was used to analyse the descriptive statistics for each of the measured variables, specifically the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis, as shown in Table 4.2 below.

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Gender	1.47	0.500	0.111	-2.001
Age	3.62	1.483	0.058	-0.994
Education	2.56	0.820	-0.438	-0.386
Career	2.87	1.366	0.524	-0.665
Anthropomorphism	3.635	0.913	-1.163	0.596
Professionalism	3.761	0.927	-1.321	1.205
Favorability	3.666	0.919	-1.015	0.306
Intelligence level	3.641	0.914	-1.031	0.314
Perceived trust	3.403	0.491	-0.004	-0.259
Purchase intention	3.801	0.848	-0.425	1.597
intelligent shopping guide features	3.676	0.784	-1.075	1.129

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Variables

4.2 Validation Factor Analysis

This study employed AMOS for factor analysis to verify its validity. Its output is shown in Figure 4.1 below.

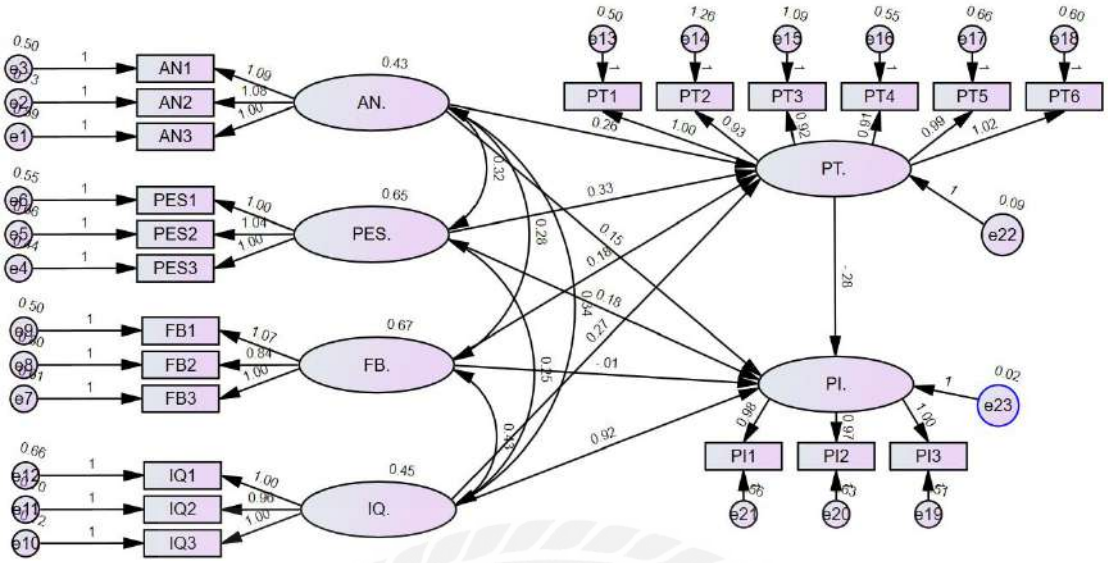

Figure 4.1 Structural Equation Modelling

4.2.1 Structural Validity

According to Table 4.3 below, it can be seen that the absolute fit index of the model, X^2/df, is less than 3; The approximate error index RMSEA is less than 0.08; The relative fit index CFI is greater than 0.9, and IFI is greater than 0.9; The goodness of fit GFI is greater than 0.85. Therefore, all fitting indicators of the model in this study meet the standards and have good structural validity.

Statistical Testing	X^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	TLI	CFI	AGFI	IFI	PGFI
Criteria for suitability	<3	<0.08	>0.85	>0.9	>0.9	>0.85	>0.9	>0.5
Test result data	2.428	0.068	0.893	0.903	0.920	0.858	0.921	0.673

Table 4.3 Overall Fitting Coefficients

4.2.2 Discriminate Validity

Based on the validation of its structural validity, the two-factor and one-factor models were fitted using AMOS and compared with the original fitted model to verify that the discriminant validity of the model in this study was met. The results are shown in Table 4.4 below.

Modelling	X^2	df	X^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Original model	422.439	174	2.428	0.920	0.903	0.068
Two-factor model	465.097	180	2.584	0.908	0.893	0.072
One-factor model	2011.691	190	10.588	0.413	0.351	0.177
Note: ***p<0.001						

Table 4.4 Results of Discriminate Validity

Two-factor model: intelligent shopping guide characteristics (anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability, intelligence level), perceived trust + purchase intention

One-factor model: intelligent shopping guide characteristics (anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability, intelligence level) + perceived trust + purchase intention

From Table 4.4, it can be seen that the two-factor model and the one-factor model were inferior to the original model and passed the chi-square test with a significance level of 0.001, which indicates that the model in this study has good discriminant validity.

4.3 Convergent Validity

The average extracted variance (AVE) and comprehensive reliability (CR) are widely used for evaluation. The extracted Average Variance (AVE) is an indicator of the variance of the observed latent variable relative to the total variance of the item. An AVE value of > 0.5 is required to have good convergence validity for the scale item, while a Comprehensive Reliability (CR) value of > 0.6 is usually considered suitable for evaluating convergence validity. According to the test results (as shown in Table 4.5), the standard loading coefficient (Estimate) for each question item is greater than 0.5, and the minimum AVE value for each latent variable is 0.666, which is greater than the standard value of 0.5; The CR values are all greater than 0.8 and greater than the standard value of 0.6, indicating that the scale has good convergent validity.

Variant	NO.	Estimate	AVE	CR
Anthropomorphism (AN)	AN1	0.759	0.715	0.843
	AN2	0.689		
	AN3	0.697		
Professionalism (PES)	PES1	0.750	0.744	0.866
	PES2	0.726		
	PES3	0.756		
Favorability (FB)	FB1	0.750	0.704	0.834
	FB2	0.623		
	FB3	0.738		
Intelligence level (IQ)	IQ1	0.702	0.686	0.818
	IQ2	0.670		
	IQ3	0.685		
Perceived trust (PT)	PT1	0.748	0.666	0.889
	PT2	0.551		
	PT3	0.574		
	PT4	0.699		
	PT5	0.699		
	PT6	0.726		
Purchase intention (PI)	PI1	0.696	0.703	0.870
	PI2	0.673		
	PI3	0.718		

Table 4.5 CR and AVE Values

4.4 Hypothesis Test

4.4.1 Correlation Analysis

Based on the correlation analysis of the data in this study, all correlation coefficients are marked with ** (** represents P<0.01), and all correlation coefficients are greater than 0, indicating that there is a significant positive relationship between anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability, intelligence level, perceived trust, and purchase intention. The higher the anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability, and intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides, the higher the consumer's trust and willingness to purchase, indicating the validity of H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d, H2, and H3. The analysis result are shown in Table 4.6.

	AN	PES	FB	IQ	PT	PI
AN	1					
PES	.628**	1				
FB	.603**	.662**	1			
IQ	.623**	.622**	.688**	1		
PT	.475**	.506**	.465**	.488**	1	
PI	.638**	.653**	.669**	.713**	.538**	1
Note: ** indicates P<0.01, * indicates P<0.05.						

Table 4.6 Correlation Analysis

4.4.2 Analysis of Mediating Effects

According to the analysis results in Table 4.7, it can be seen that using AMOS to test the mediating effect of perceived value in the model, with 5000 repeated sampling tests and 95% confidence interval validation, the effect of perceived trust on the relationship effect between intelligent guide features and purchase intention accounts for 10% (mediating effect ratio: indirect effect/total effect), and the 95% confidence interval is (0.035, 0.14), excluding 0. This indicates that perceived trust plays a mediating role in the model, and H4 is valid.

Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P	Relative effect value
Total effect	0.847	0.769	0.91	0.001	
Direct effect	0.762	0.669	0.843	0.001	90%
Mediating effect	0.085	0.035	0.14	0.002	10%

Table 4.7 Total Effect, Direct Effect and Mediating Effect

4.4.3 Hypothesis Validation Results

A total of seven research hypotheses were proposed in this study, and it can be clearly seen that all hypotheses were supported by experimental results, as shown in Table 4.8.

NO.	Assumptions	Test Result
H1a	The anthropomorphism of intelligent shopping guides has a significant positive impact on purchase intention	Established
H1b	The professionalism of intelligent shopping	Established

	guides has a significant positive impact on purchase intention	
H1c	The favorability of intelligent shopping guides has a significant positive impact on purchase intention	Established
H1d	The intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides has a significant positive impact on purchase intention	Established
H2	Intelligent shopping guide features have a significant positive impact on perceived trust	Established
H3	Perceived trust has a significant positive impact on purchase intention	Established
H4	Perceived trust plays a mediating role in the relationship between intelligent shopping guide features and purchase intention	Established

Table 4. 8 Hypothesis Validation Results

H1a is established. The anthropomorphism of intelligent shopping guides significantly affects purchase intention, which is consistent with the research results of Zhang et al. (2021) and Liu. (2023). The appeal of anthropomorphism in intelligent shopping guides not only involves external visual presentation, but also encompasses the tone of language expression and the fit between products and consumer needs. The stronger the appeal of a product, the more attention it not only attracts to consumers, but also encourages them to form a more positive attitude. It is this experience that makes consumers more willing to believe in the products brought by anthropomorphism in intelligent shopping guides, further stimulating their intention to purchase.

H1b is established. The professionalism of intelligent shopping guides significantly affects purchase intention, consistent with the findings of Bansal (2000). Research has shown that when consumers are faced with unfamiliar products, they often seek guidance from professionals to assist in their purchasing decisions. In this context, intelligent shopping guides play the role of information transmitters and play a crucial role in the process of promoting products. The rich resources and powerful functions possessed by intelligent shopping guides are important aspects that influence consumers' purchasing intentions. The information source characteristics exhibited, such as the professionalism interaction mode, can stimulate consumers to

feel different levels of closeness. This emotional connection can trigger consumers' internal psychological reactions, which in turn have a direct impact on consumers' emotional attitudes, cognitive understanding, and behavioral choices.

H1c is established. The favorability of intelligent shopping guides significantly affects purchase intention, which is consistent with the research results of Yuan (2025).. When the favorability of intelligent shopping guides can influence consumer participation behavior, timely and relevant feedback can make consumers feel strong favorability and generate purchase intention. When consumers interact with intelligent guides in both directions, they display genuine emotions and even recommend products to others, enhancing their willingness to purchase.

H1d is established. The intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides significantly affects purchase intention, which is consistent with the research results of Ding et al. (2018). If intelligent shopping guides can grasp the products that most consumers want to know through personalized analysis, and then choose to explain the products and provide more personalized guidance, then a deeper emotional bond can be established between consumers and intelligent shopping guides, which requires the intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides. By identifying consumers' unconscious behavior and analyzing their potential needs, passive services can be transformed into active services, enhancing consumers' willingness to purchase.

H2 is established. Correlation studies show that intelligent shopping guide features have a significant positive impact on consumers' perceived trust, which is consistent with the previous research results of Zhong. (2020). It can be seen that the features of intelligent shopping guides leave a deep impression on consumers. The higher the level of anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability, and intelligence in the features of intelligent shopping guides, the more trust consumers have in them when shopping, and the higher their perceived trust.

H3 is established. Perceived trust has a significant positive impact on purchase intention, consistent with Liu’s (2025) research findings. Consumer perceived trust refers to the trust that consumers have in products recommended by intelligent shopping guides due to long-term use and professional abilities of intelligent shopping guides. Due to the fact that it takes some time for the effectiveness of certain products to become apparent when analyzing and recommending products through intelligent shopping guides, consumers cannot directly determine the quality of the product and its compatibility with themselves through trial use. This is detrimental to consumers' perceived trust in the merchant and its products, and may reduce their willingness to purchase. The role of intelligent guides is crucial when businesses and their products

need to establish a trust bond with consumers. The professionalism and intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides are important factors that affect consumer trust. Intelligent shopping guides gradually establish trust relationships through daily interactions with consumers and the positive reputation of products after use. Under the influence of trust factors, intelligent guide recommendations form a trust relationship with consumers and they are willing to purchase products.

H4 is established. Perceived value plays a mediating role in the relationship between intelligent shopping guide features and purchase intention, which is consistent with the research results of Liu (2025). Compared to human guides, intelligent guides are more likely to worry about issues such as insecurity and information exposure. In such cases, consumers' perceived trust becomes particularly important. In the real world, the anthropomorphism and favorability of intelligent shopping guides attract customers without creating a sense of distance. The professionalism of intelligent shopping guides allows consumers to have a more intuitive understanding of product information. The intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides allows consumers to receive feedback and personalized recommendations from buyers who have already made purchases. Due to being a system based intelligent recommendation, smart shopping guides have lower consumer trust. The more detailed the product information displayed by smart shopping guides, the more it can enhance consumers' perceived trust, making them feel that the quality of the information they receive is authentic and reliable. Consumers have a positive impression of the product, increasing their perceived trust and influencing their purchase intention through this trust relationship.

Chapter 5 Conclusions and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

In the context of new retail, brick-and-mortar shopping malls seek a way out, and the demand for intelligent shopping guide products has increased. With the popularity of 5G networks, information delivery is characterised by high capacity and speed, and more content can be presented to customers through intelligent shopping guide products. People are becoming more and more uncomfortable with down-the-line up-close-and-personal sales pitches that create a social distance, which allows intelligent shopping guides to gradually penetrate into people's daily lives. As an emerging shopping method, intelligent shopping guide technology can provide personalised shopping advice and recommendations, intelligent shopping cashiering, navigation and other services based on consumers' historical purchase records, preferences and needs. This study follows international and domestic standards, carefully constructed a questionnaire, and used online platforms for large-scale data collection. After completing the data collation and in-depth analysis, the following core conclusion are drawn:

First of all, there is a significant positive relationship between the features of intelligent shopping guides and consumer purchase intention. The anthropomorphism, professionalism, favorability, and intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides have a significant positive relationship with consumer purchase intention.

Secondly, perceived trust plays an mediating role in the process of the influence of intelligent shopping guide features on consumer purchase intention. When consumers generate social distance, consumers' perceived trust in intelligent shopping guide can effectively alleviate the situation, which in turn affects the purchase intention. When consumers' perceived trust is higher, consumers' purchase intention is stronger.

5.2 Recommendation

5.2.1 Upgrading and Iterating Intelligent Shopping Guides to Improve Services and Advantages

To improve the technology, service, and intelligence level of intelligent shopping guides, first, enterprises should meet consumers' need to maintain social distancing when shopping; Second, enterprises should innovate the traditional sales model. For example, opening up logistics dedicated lines, using intelligent shopping guides to deliver products to consumers' homes, developing personalized recommendations, and targeting consumer needs. In physical stores, it is not limited to providing product

recommendations, but should also include the generation of personalized marketing plans for products and their application in pre-sales consultation scenarios. Enterprises should utilize technologies such as big language models to fully tap into customers' shopping needs, enhance interaction with consumers through personalized marketing copy and real-time in store navigation information.

5.2.2 Addressing the Limitations of Artificial Intelligence Technology

Although AI guided shopping systems have played an important role in consumer shopping decisions, there are also some potential problems and challenges, such as biases and errors in personalized recommendations. Enterprises need to continuously optimize algorithms to reduce errors and improve the accuracy of recommendations.

5.3 Future Study

There are some limitations and shortcomings in this study. Firstly, the respondents were mainly focused on corporate employees and students, mostly between the ages of 19-40. However, as intelligent shopping guides continue to evolve, there is an increasing need to include consumers from other occupations and age groups. Secondly, this study did not differentiate between the categories of products and services used in intelligent shopping guides, but rather conducted a general test. Finally, this study did not explore the reasons in the context of social distance, which leaves room for further research to target certain contextual aspects. In future research, it would be beneficial to increase the sample size, broaden the sample selection to include a wide range of occupations and age groups, and incorporate measurements of more nuanced product and service categories. Furthermore, this study only explored the four main characteristics of intelligent shopping guides, and there are many unaddressed characteristics that need to be included and analysed in subsequent studies to achieve a more comprehensive exploration of the factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions.

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Appendix

Dear Sir/Madam,

Hello, I am conducting a research on "the influence of intelligent shopping guide on consumers' purchase intention". The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect relevant data, which will serve as an important basis for me to write my thesis. I solemnly promise that all the information collected will be strictly used for academic research, and your privacy will be ensured throughout. There is no right or wrong in your answers, and we sincerely expect you to choose the option that best meets your point of view based on your actual experience and feeling of receiving shopping guide services in physical shops. Each of your feedback, whether it is the degree of acceptance of intelligent shopping guides or your views on various factors in the shopping process, will have a key impact on my research. Knowing that your time is precious, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your willingness to spare your valuable time to participate in this questionnaire, and for the great support and help you have given to my academic research! May you enjoy answering the questionnaire and I wish you a happy life!

Part I: Basic information

1. Which of the following intelligent shopping guide have you used in shopping malls ?

(1)Voice and Image Search

(2)intelligent shopping Fitting Room

(3)intelligent shopping Shopping Cart

(4)intelligent shopping Robot

(5)Self-checkout

(6)Voice Assistant

(7)Mobile Payment

(8)Other

(9)None (Please skip to the end of the questionnaire to submit your answer)

2.Do you not want a salesperson to promote products up close after entering a physical store?

(1)Yes

(2)No (Please skip to the end of the questionnaire to submit your answer)

3. Your gender

(1)Male

(2)Female

4.Your age

(1)Under 18 years of age (Including 18 years of age)

(2)19-25 years old

(3)26-30 years old

(4)31-40 years old

(5)41-50 years

(6)51 years and over

5. Your level of education

(1)High School and Below

(2)Junior College

(3)Undergraduate

(4)Master's Degree or Above

6. Your occupation

(1)Government or Institutional Staff

(2)Enterprise Staff

(3)Full-time Technical Staff (e.g. doctors, teachers, engineers)

(4)Schoolchildren

(5)Freelancer

(6)Other

7. Municipality of your residence

(1)First-tier Cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen)

(2)Provincial Capital Cities (e.g. Nanning, Guangxi, Guangzhou, Guangdong)

(3)Prefecture Level City

(4)County and Below

(5)Other

Secondly, make the following judgement on the intelligent shopping guide based on your impressions(please select the item that best matches your actual situation: 1 --> 5 means very little --> very much).

8. The anthropomorphic nature of the intelligent shopping guide					
Item	1	2	3	4	5
(1)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be conscious					
(2)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be alive					
(3)The intelligent shopping guide's movement looks as smooth as a human's					

9. The professionalism of the intelligent shopping guide					
Item	1	2	3	4	5
(1)This intelligent shopping guide appears to be unbiased					
(2)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be concerned about consumer rights					
(3)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be equipped with the professionalism of a guide worker's					

10. The favorability of the intelligent shopping guide					
Item	1	2	3	4	5
(1)The intelligent shopping guide appears to be friendly					
(2)That intelligent shopping guide looks to be good looking					
(3)This intelligent shopping guide looks like it has feelings					

11. The intelligence level of the intelligent shopping guide					
Item	1	2	3	4	5
(1)The intelligent shopping guide looks to be very competent					

(2)The intelligent shopping guide seems to be equipped with a sense of responsibility					
(3)The intelligent shoppingguide appears to be a knowledgeable					

12. Consumer Perceived Trust					
Item	1	2	3	4	5
(1)Based on the intelligent shopping guide's capabilities, I'm sure it can do the job of a guide.					
(2)I have to be careful looking at the information on the intelligent shopping guide as what he shows is questionable.					
(3)I can't safely rely on a intelligent shopping guide because its negligence in doing its job may cause me to get the wrong information.					
(4)I think the intelligent shopping guide response is positive					
(5)I think the intelligent shopping guide showed warmth and concern					
(6)I would feel a personal loss if I couldn't see the intelligent shopping guide					

13.Consumer's purchase intention					
Item	1	2	3	4	5
(1)I am willing to buy products recommended by intelligent shopping guides when I need them					
(2)The introduction of the intelligent shopping guide was informative to my purchase intentions					
(3)In the future I would also like to buy products recommended by intelligent shopping guides					