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The critical factors impact on online customer satisfaction

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Abstract

In the last decade, the concepts of customer satisfaction and customer retention have gained increasing importance in both online and off-line businesses. The primary objective of the present study is intended to ascertain the factors that affect online consumers' satisfaction in Taiwan. In it, information quality, system quality, service quality, product quality, delivery quality and perceived price have been identified and taken as the antecedents of user satisfaction. The present study, too, holds the key to unravelling how these factors may influence online consumers' satisfaction.

A survey was conducted with 390 Taiwan's university undergraduates who had online purchase experience. Multiple regression techniques were used to verify the overall model fit and to illustrate online customers' satisfaction. The results showed that online consumers' satisfaction was positive and significant affected by information quality, system quality, service quality, product quality, delivery quality and perceived price at significant $P < 0.01$ level. Moreover, delivery quality was the most important factor and followed by product quality. The evidence generated in the present study suggests that e-commerce operators should pay more attention on the product sourcing, and cooperate with the delivery supplier to provide a higher delivery quality such as correct order, on time, and safety package. The implications of this finding, among others, are thoroughly discussed in the concluding section.

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Keywords: user satisfaction, information quality, system quality, service quality, product quality, delivery quality, perceived price.

1. Introduction

Online customer retention has attracted considerable attention in recent years, partly because it serves as a means of gaining competitive advantage [28]. When a customer is satisfied with a particular internet store, he or she is more likely to shop there again [15]. Therefore, concepts of both customer satisfaction and customer retention have become increasingly important to online and off-line businesses. It is important to understand the factors that drive consumers' satisfaction and their choice of the online channels [8].

Kolter [17] pointed out that the buying process includes problem/need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Satisfaction is the consequence of the customer's experience during various purchasing stages. Online customer shopping experience is based solely on online stores' information because of a lack of physical contact [23]. Therefore, information as well as system and service quality may influence customers' satisfaction during the information-search stage and shoppers' purchase decisions.

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The present study focused on identifying and measuring the constructs that may serve as the antecedents of online user satisfaction. This study further intended to verify empirically the relationship between these constructs and online user satisfaction. In doing so, this study synthesized the information-system research and the marketing perspectives while identifying instruments for measuring online user satisfaction and its antecedents. The survey targeted Taiwan's university undergraduates who had online shopping experience.

2. Specification of Online User Satisfaction

Satisfaction is believed to influence attitude change and purchase intention [25]. A satisfactory purchase experience would appear to be one requirement for the type of continued interest in a product that might lead to repeat purchasing [7]. Many scholars found that satisfaction is one of critical factors influencing the continued purchase intentions [5, 8, 11, 12, 15, 24, 28, 30, 32]. In e-commerce context, DeLone and McLone [7] identified "User Satisfaction" as an important means of measuring our customers' opinions of an e-commerce system.

3. Theoretical Framework

Since the e-commerce should consider not only the information systems but also marketing strategies, this study reviewed the literature on both. Regarding the information systems field, this paper employed information quality, system quality, and service quality dimensions to investigate the consumers' satisfaction with e-commerce based on the updated DeLone and McLean [7] information systems (D&M IS) success model. Regarding the marketing field, we introduced the product quality, delivery quality, and perceived price into our research model.

3.1. E-Commerce system quality

Regarding the updated D & M IS success model, many researches employed information quality, system quality, or service quality dimension to investigate the consumers' e-commerce behavior [3, 18, 19, 21, 22]. Lin [22] identified Web site quality dimension, including information quality, system quality, and service quality and emphasized that system quality, information quality, and service quality are important factors influencing customer satisfaction.

In sum, according to the previous literature, information quality, system quality, and service quality are important independent variables of information system usage and user satisfaction. These three factors have been applied in many contexts. Therefore, this study proposes:

- H1. Information quality has a positive influence on online user satisfaction.
- H2. System quality has a positive influence on online user satisfaction.
- H3. Service quality has a positive influence on online user satisfaction.

3.2. Product Quality and Delivery Quality

Perceived product quality is defined as the consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority [6]. Keeney [14] indicated that minimizing product cost and maximizing product quality are major factors in e-commerce success. Patterson [27] pointed out that perceived product performance is the most powerful determinant on satisfaction.

On the other hand, the delivery of a product can affect all fundamental objectives of the value proposition [14]. Ahn, Ryu, and Han [2] indicated that the timely and reliable delivery increase user satisfaction so that they will shop again. Thus, other hypotheses are:

- H4. Product quality has a positive influence on online user satisfaction.
- H5. Delivery quality has a positive influence on online user satisfaction.

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