

Adoption of E-Commerce and M-Commerce Marketing Practices: Roles in Customer Delight

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ABSTRACT

E-commerce has become an important marketing channel with the increasing usage of internet by customers. Companies use both physical intermediaries and online distribution channels for selling their products and services. The study discusses about pure-click companies which sell products online and about brick-and-click companies which sell products both online and through intermediaries. The study focuses on m-commerce which is becoming an important distribution channel and preferred mode of transaction with the increasing usage of smart phones. Companies practicing e-commerce and m-commerce adopt a number of strategies to delight their customers and these strategies are discussed. Both e-commerce and m-commerce have a number of privacy and security issues. Companies should be aware of these issues and formulate measures to ensure privacy and security of information shared by customers. All these will help companies in adopting e-commerce and m-commerce, delighting their customers, building long-term relationships, and in achieving business excellence.

KEYWORDS

Brick-and-Click Companies, Company Initiatives, Ethics, M-Commerce, Mobile Marketing, Privacy, Pure-Click Companies, Security

1. INTRODUCTION

E-commerce is an important marketing channel for companies to facilitate the sale of products and services. E-commerce is gaining in importance because of the present situation where it has become imperative for customers to do a majority of their transactions online. Companies are embracing and adopting e-commerce to conduct businesses. E-commerce uses a website to facilitate the process of transaction online. Online retail sales have become a preferred mode of transaction over the last few years because of several reasons (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). Online retailers are able to provide timely, convenient, and informative experiences for their customers (Jusop, Ismail, & Ismail, 2020). Online

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retailing also encompasses a vast range of businesses. E-commerce helps in saving the cost which might have been incurred otherwise for retail floor space, staff, and inventory (Martin & Murphy, 2017). Customers can get information about products practically with the single click of a mouse. For all these reasons, online retailers can sell their offerings at lower prices than traditional marketing channels to both mass markets and niche markets (Genchev, 2020). However, online retailers compete amongst themselves in three major aspects of transaction. Each online retailer should ensure that the customer interaction with the website is satisfactory, the delivery is on time, and the problems are addressed satisfactorily when they occur (Dhingra, Gupta, & Bhatt, 2020). Some companies are pure-click companies. These companies exist only in the virtual space and there is no physical presence. Customers prefer online transactions because of convenience and saving in time. Some companies are brick-and-click companies which have presence both in physical space and in virtual space. Both types of companies develop strategies to delight their customers (Glanz, Larson, & Lehren, 2014). They ensure that customers have pleasurable experiences during online transactions on their websites.

The discussions underline the importance of e-commerce and m-commerce for achieving success in business. This indicates that the various aspects of e-commerce and m-commerce and the necessity of adopting e-commerce and m-commerce should be studied in-depth. Also, consumer privacy and security are major issues related to e-commerce and m-commerce activities. Studies focusing on conducting an in-depth study about e-commerce and m-commerce and their adoption are missing. Studies also do not seem to focus on an in-depth discussion about consumer privacy and security in e-commerce and m-commerce. The present study aims to address this research gap.

The study focuses on the various aspects of e-commerce and m-commerce and their roles in generating customer delight. It aims to conduct a qualitative and conceptual analysis of the literature on e-commerce and m-commerce and to understand the different and critical success factors for e-commerce and m-commerce.

The methodology adopted is a qualitative and a conceptual analysis of the literature on e-commerce and m-commerce. The study analyses the various aspects of e-commerce and m-commerce. However, primary data was not collected and empirical analysis was not done.

The novelty and the contributions of the study lie in the fact that an in-depth discussion of pure-click companies, brick-and-click companies, and the various strategies followed by companies conducting e-commerce and m-commerce are discussed. Critical success factors for various types of e-commerce companies are discussed. The advantages and disadvantages of the strategies adopted by e-commerce and m-commerce companies are discussed. Customers are worried about the privacy and the security of the information shared by them with companies. The discussions will sensitize academicians and managers about the importance of consumer privacy, security, and safety. Based on the discussions, companies will be encouraged to adopt strategies, initiatives, and measures which will protect consumer privacy, security, and safety. Such measures will assure customers that companies really care and will help in building long-term customer relationships.

The study is structured as follows.

Section 2 discusses about pure-click companies with sub-sections 2.1 and 2.2 focusing on the e-commerce success factors for pure-click companies and the strategies adopted by pure-click companies respectively. Section 3 discusses about brick-and-click companies with sub-sections 3.1 and 3.2 focusing on the critical success factors for brick-and-click companies and strategies adopted by brick-and-click companies respectively. Section 4 discusses about the critical success factors for B2B e-commerce. Section 5 discusses about the various initiatives taken by e-commerce companies. Section 6 discusses about m-commerce marketing practices. There are various privacy issues associated with e-commerce and m-commerce and these issues are discussed in section 7 with sub-section 7.1 focusing on the responsibilities of marketing researchers and companies towards protecting privacy of customers. Section 8 does an overall discussion of the salient aspects of the study with sub-sections 8.1 and 8.2 focusing on theoretical implications and managerial implications of the study respectively.

Section 9 concludes the discussions with sub-sections 9.1 and 9.2 focusing on the limitations of the study and the avenues of future research respectively.

2. PURE-CLICK COMPANIES

There are companies from diverse businesses selling their offerings solely through online channels. They include search engines, internet service providers (ISPs), commerce sites, transaction sites, content sites, and enabler sites (Martin & Murphy, 2017). Pure-click companies sell all types of products and services online. These include books, music, toys, insurance, stocks, clothes, and financial services (Mohanty, Ramesh, & Kamat, 2020). AutoNation is a leading metamediary of car buying and related services. Hotels.com provides information about hotel reservation to interested customers. Buy.com allows customers to search for the lowest price of a product. Wine spectator is a single-category specialist (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). These companies adopt a number of strategies for selling their offerings and to compete with each other on the virtual space.

2.1. E-Commerce Success Factors for Pure-Click Companies

Pure-click companies should consider a lot of factors related to customer delight while setting up their e-commerce websites. The operations of e-commerce websites depend heavily on the initial set-up and the organization of the websites. One of the major success factors is the quality of customer service offered (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). Customer satisfaction depends a lot on whether a customer is able to complete a transaction on a website successfully or not. Online shoppers may select an item for purchase but fail to complete the transaction. One estimate says that only 35 percent of customers resort to e-commerce for buying products (Abed & Ezzi, 2020). Only 2 percent to 3 percent of visits to online retailers lead to sales. These figures are quite lower when compared to the conversion rate of 5 percent of visits to departmental stores leading to actual sales (Gunawardana, 2020). This indicates that companies should develop strategies for improving the conversion rates. This is more important than ever at present because of the current situation when shopping online has become imperative. Companies should make their websites fast, simple, and easy to use. Customers visiting e-commerce websites with the intention of purchase need to have complete and uncomplicated information about products. For example, enlarged product images on-screen can increase perusal time and the amount customers buy (Glanz et al., 2014).

Research suggests that there are barriers which prevent a customer from doing shopping online. Some of the major inhibitors to online shopping are the absence of pleasurable experiences, social interactions, and personal consultations with a company representative (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). Companies should be aware of the reasons because of which customers do not purchase online and provide solutions for them (Martin & Murphy, 2017). The present situation provides opportunities for companies and companies are responding to solve these issues. Many companies offer live online chat which provides guidance or any assistance required by customers (Kusuma & Syarifudin, 2019). Online chat provides existing and potential customers with immediate advice about products. It provides instant and effective solutions to any issues faced by customers. It may also suggest purchasing additional items. Research shows that when an online representative guides a customer, the average amount per order is typically higher (Martin & Murphy, 2017). Companies also need to put a human face on their e-commerce presence. They take advantage of the latest advances in technology like virtual environments, blogs, online videos, avatars, and click-to-chat (Moriuchi, Landers, Colton, & Hair, 2020).

2.2. Strategies by Pure-Click Companies

Companies employ avatars to make customer interactions during online shopping better (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). Avatars are graphical representations of virtual, animated characters which behave like human beings to act as company representatives, personal shopping assistants, website guides, or

conversation partners. Avatars increase customer satisfaction and the entertainment and information value of web-based shopping experiences. Avatars help a web-based sales channel improve its effectiveness, especially if they are seen as experts or attractive (Bug & Helwig, 2020).

E-commerce companies require ensuring security and privacy of customers who are shopping online (Hamidi and Moradi 2017). Online retailers focus on the latest technologies such as blogs, social networks, and mobile marketing to attract new shoppers (Sarah, Goi, Chieng, & Taufique, 2020). Customers always worry about the privacy, safety, and security of the information shared online (Martin & Murphy, 2017). Customers must perceive the e-commerce website trustworthy and safe enough to perform online transactions. Customers should be assured that the information shared online will not be misused. So, companies need to invest heavily and design their websites properly which will help reassure customers who are sensitive to online risk (Vagena & Ntellis, 2020).

E-commerce websites help companies to build customer communities. For example, Etsy, an online marketplace for buying and selling all things handmade, sponsors actual and virtual meetings organized by location (from Syracuse to Saskatchewan and Singapore), medium (paper-mâché, mosaic), and interest area (Chaimaillers, Guild, Lizards, and Lollipops). Etsy does all these with the basic objective of helping people make a living by doing what they love and making things (Mkrttchian & Vertakova, 2020).

3. BRICK-AND-CLICK COMPANIES

Brick-and-click companies are those companies which use both traditional marketing channels and online marketing channels for selling their products. Store-based retailers and companies face competition from catalog houses; directmail firms; newspaper, magazine, and TV direct-to-customer ads; home shopping TV; and e-commerce. Brick-and-mortar companies which use only traditional marketing channels for selling their products are cautious while adding online marketing channels. They fear that the introduction of online e-commerce channels will create channel conflict with their offline retailers, agents, or their own stores. However, the companies understood the power of e-commerce and eventually added the internet as a distribution channel after seeing the volume of business which was generated online (Cordeiro & Byron, 2010). Proctor & Gamble is a company which used traditional distribution channels exclusively for many years for selling its products. However, after realizing the impact of e-commerce, Proctor & Gamble now sells big brands such as Tide, Pampers, and Olay online (Nandamuri, Rao, & Mishra, 2020). This enables the company to reach its customers better. Also, it allows Proctor & Gamble to examine and analyze the online shopping habits of consumers (Chugh & Joshi, 2020). Proctor & Gamble focuses on increasing its presence in developing markets by concentrating on affordability, brand awareness, and distribution through e-commerce and high frequency stores. Companies realize that they need to manage both online and offline marketing channels.

3.1. Critical Success Factors for Brick-and-Click Companies

Companies may face strong resistance from physical retailers, brokers, agents, and other intermediaries on adding an e-commerce channel (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). Companies need to develop strategies so that they are able to sell their products both through intermediaries and online. Companies may follow several strategies so as not to offend the intermediaries and to gain acceptance from them (Glanz et al., 2014). Companies can continue selling their products through intermediaries and may offer different brands or products online which are not available with the intermediaries. This will ensure that the businesses of the intermediaries are not affected. Companies may offer intermediaries higher commissions if the presence of e-commerce channels creates negative impact on the sales for the intermediaries. Companies may also involve both intermediaries and e-commerce channels for the sale of a product. Companies can take orders for products on the internet. Retailers may then

be involved in delivering the products and collecting payments from customers (Martin & Murphy, 2017). This will create a win-win situation for both retailers and for e-commerce.

3.2. Strategies by Brick-and-Click Companies

Brick-and-click companies develop strategies carefully and consider many factors before going online. Harley-Davidson sells more than \$860 million worth of parts and accessories to its loyal customers (Yu & Shan, 2020). To make sales easier and convenient for its customers, the company decided to sell its parts and accessories online. Harley-Davidson needed to be careful and cautious before going online because it already had 850 dealers who benefited from the high margins on the sales. The company needed to make sure that the launch of e-commerce distribution channels did not offend the existing dealers. A customer willing to buy accessories online from the company's website was prompted to select a participating Harley-Davidson dealer. An order placed online by a customer was transmitted to the selected dealer for fulfillment. This ensured that although the order was placed online, the dealer still remained the focal point of the customer experience because the product was finally delivered to the customer by the dealer. During the entire process, dealers are required to agree to a number of standards which ensure that the customer experience and the satisfaction are the highest. Dealers require checking for orders from customers at least twice a day. Dealers also need to ensure that the shipping of orders to the customers is done promptly. Because of all these initiatives, the e-commerce website of Harley-Davidson receives more than 1 million visitors per month (Campbell, Sands, Ferraro, Tsao, & Mavrommatis, 2020).

E-commerce websites are driven by active participation from online shoppers. So, companies need to provide more control to customers so that the buying experience is superior. Companies also try to bring and incorporate the latest web technologies into the physical store (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). All such initiatives allow customers to shop conveniently. Retailers like Food Lion have personal scanners installed in their stores where customers can keep track of their own supermarket purchases (Mashchak & Dovhun, 2020). Barnes & Noble has kiosks that allow customers to search inventory, locate merchandise, and order out-of-stock items (Cao, 2019).

4. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR B2B E-COMMERCE

E-commerce has flourished because of business-to-customer (B2C) websites. However, e-commerce is also playing an integral role in business-to-business (B2B) interactions. B2B websites change the supplier-customer relationship in profound ways (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017).

Companies exert a lot of effort in collecting information about suppliers. E-commerce websites make supplier search easier for companies. B2B websites make markets more efficient because buyers are able to collect information about suppliers instantly (Wohl, 2013). They gather information about suppliers from websites maintained by suppliers. Buyers can collect information about infomediaries which are third parties that add value by aggregating information about alternatives. Companies gather information from market makers who are third parties that link buyers and sellers. Buyers can collect information from customer communities where buyers can swap stories about products and services of suppliers. Firms can search to obtain better prices using B2B auction websites, spot exchanges, online product catalogues, barter websites, and other online resources (Wohl, 2013). One of the largest firms which utilize B2B e-commerce effectively is Alibaba.

Alibaba is a Chinese company which was founded by Jack Ma in 1999. It prospered over the next decade to become the largest online platform for B2B e-commerce. It is also the most popular auction website of Asia (Kwak, Zhang, & Yu, 2019). Alibaba is a \$9 billion company and has 43 million registered users (35 million in China and 10.5 million in countries other than China). It hosts more than 5.5 million shop fronts and more than 4 billion businesses trade on its website (Barker, 2009). Alibaba has two versions of its website – one in Chinese and the other in English. It maintains alibaba.com which is a marketplace for companies around the globe to buy and sell in English. It

also maintains china.alibaba.com which is a website where domestic Chinese firms can buy and sell in Chinese (Zhang, 2020). The initiative enables Alibaba to build market for China's vast number of small and medium-sized businesses. The initiative also allows firms to interact and trade with each other and to link with the global supply chains (Einhorn, Deprez, Srivastava, & Baigorri, 2009). Alibaba focuses on building customer trust. Alibaba set up TrustPass in which firms pay a fee to Alibaba for hiring a third party that verifies them (Barker, 2009). In this initiative, firms need to have a minimum of five people vouch for them and provide a list of all their certificates and business licenses (Vascellaro, 2009). Users of alibaba.com are encouraged to comment and provide feedback about firms with whom the users might have worked with. Similarly, buyers can comment on sellers in Amazon.com or eBay. TrustPass has earned credibility to such an extent that businesses print "TrustPass" on their business cards. This in turn enhances the credibility of Alibaba in the field of B2B e-commerce. Alibaba understands that businesses are becoming truly global and it needs to compete for its global growth. To meet these requirements, Alibaba launched websites in Spanish, German, Italian, French, Portuguese, and Russian in 2008 (Vascellaro, 2009). After its IPO of \$1.7 billion in 2007 which is second only to Google's among internet firms, Alibaba, says Jack Ma will "create the e-commerce platform for 10 million small enterprises creating 100 million jobs around the world and providing an online retail platform to supply the everyday needs of 1 billion people" (Einhorn et al., 2009). Because of all these initiatives, Alibaba has become a highly successful online marketplace not only in China but also in the global market.

Another important success factor for e-commerce is the pricing of products. Pricing of offerings becomes more transparent because of e-commerce (Chen, Wu, & Hsu, 2019). Pricing information is readily available on the e-commerce websites. Buyers have the knowledge of prices of products and they can compare products based on prices. Pricing information is more important for undifferentiated products. These types of products compete mainly on price and price pressure will increase. Buyers get a clear picture of the value offered by highly differentiated products. Prices for such types of products can be fixed based on the value buyers perceive to receive. Based on e-commerce, suppliers of superior products will be able to offset price transparency with value transparency. Suppliers of undifferentiated products need to reduce their costs in order to compete on price (Zenny, 2020).

5. INITIATIVES BY E-COMMERCE COMPANIES

E-commerce companies adopt a number of initiatives to attract and retain their customers. Companies realize that personalization goes beyond creating only personalized information (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). For example, companies allow visitors on their e-commerce websites to interact with customer service representatives. The Lands' End Live website offers visitors the opportunity to talk with a customer service representative (Bug & Helwig, 2020). Nordstrom makes it sure that customers who are buying products online are as satisfied with the company's customer service as are in-store visitors (Kircher, 2013). Domino's allows its customers to take charge of ordering a pizza delivery at every step of the process (O'Leary, 2019). The company introduced a new "build-your-own-pizza" on its e-commerce website which allows customers to watch a simulated photographic version of their pizzas as they select a size, choose a sauce, and add toppings. The website shows the price of a pizza based on the customization desired by the buyer. It allows a customer to track orders from the point a pizza enters the oven to the point it leaves the store. Domino's also introduced a new point-of-sale system that streamlined the logistics of online and phone orders. The whole process helped Domino's to improve accuracy, increase repeat visits on its e-commerce website, and to boost revenues and processes (Vannoy & Medlin, 2019).

Large wholesalers apply technology to carry out accounting, billing, inventory control, and forecasting. Wholesalers adapt their services to the needs of target customers. They are finding cost-reduction techniques of doing business. They reduce costs by transacting more businesses online (Wasilewski, 2019). Grainger uses e-commerce for its sales. E-commerce is the fastest growing sales

channel for the company. Online purchasing now accounts for 24 percent of the wholesaler's U.S. sales (Jimenez, Valdes, & Salinas, 2019).

Companies realize that there are many affluent customers who work long hours and have little time to shop by paying visits to stores. High-end fashion brands like Dior, Louis Vuitton, and Fendi unveiled e-commerce websites where customers can research items before actually visiting a store to buy the product (Batat, 2019). Companies also take initiatives to combat fake brands sold on the internet. Many companies offer a superior experience for customers in their stores. Doormen greet the customers. There are glasses of champagne and extravagant surroundings to pamper customers. Companies realize that they have had to work hard to provide a high-quality experience online (Case, 2019).

The growth of e-commerce changes the manner in which traditional brick-and-mortar retailers conduct their businesses. Companies understand that e-commerce results in tough competition for brick-and-mortar companies (Glanz et al., 2014). Many brick-and-mortar retailers offer extra facilities to customers who are visiting their stores. In addition to their natural advantages, such as products that shoppers can actually see, touch, and test, real-life customer service and no delivery lag time for most purchases; stores also provide a shopping experience as a strong differentiator.

6. M-COMMERCE MARKETING PRACTICES

Customers are slowly and gradually moving from e-commerce to m-commerce now-a-days. Both companies and customers are adopting m-commerce. The change is happening because of the widespread penetration of cell phones and smart phones. At present a large proportion of the population gets connected to the internet from their mobile phones. Usage of mobile phones as a means of communication with people has become so popular that there are currently more mobile phones than personal computers in the world (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). People can access the internet and place orders practically from anywhere on their mobile phones. Internet connectivity on mobile phones allows people to connect to the internet and place orders for products even when they are on the move. Due to this seamless connectivity and due to the present situation, experts predict a bright future for m-commerce (m for mobile) (AlSondos & Salameh, 2020). The existence of mobile channels and media keep consumers connected and interacting with a brand throughout their day-to-day lives. Smart phones are equipped with Global Positioning Systems (GPS) which enable retailers and consumers to know their mutual locations and proximity. This feature helps to identify shopping or purchase opportunities for consumers for their favorite brands (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017).

The proportion of smart phone users is increasing on a daily basis. Previously only one in five phones in the United States was a smart phone such as iPhone or BlackBerry (Cho, Aung, Htay, & Ko, 2019). However, at present, the sales of smart phones far exceed those of regular phones. The network provided has developed from 3G to 4G to 5G. Experts believe that as the penetration and the adoption of 4G and 5G increase, and as easy payment options and various apps for mobile phones are developed, m-commerce will have a major impact on how almost all types of businesses operate (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). This is also because more and more people are expected to access the internet with mobile phones than with personal computers.

M-commerce has started becoming popular in almost all countries. It is especially popular among the younger generation. Millions of Japanese teenagers carry DOCOMO phones available from NTT (Nippon Telephone and Telegraph). The teenagers can access the internet from their smart phones and use specific apps or websites to order goods. Each month, the subscriber receives a bill from NTT listing the monthly subscriber fee, the usage fee, and the cost of all the transactions. Provisions are also there to pay the bills online (Tomer, 2019).

Mobile marketing is also becoming popular in the United States. Mobile marketing is the preferred mode of doing transactions and taking all forms (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). Retailers such as Amazon.com, CVS, and Sears launched m-commerce websites and apps that allow consumers to buy

books, medicine, and even lawn mowers from their smart phones (Kang, 2013). The travel industry makes the maximum usage of m-commerce. Customers can book all types of tickets and hotels from various websites and apps. Customers can make instant reservation of cabs through apps installed in their smart phones (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017).

Companies do extensive marketing communications through m-commerce. Companies can increase sales of their products by sending promotional messages. One Nordstrom salesperson was able to increase the amount of merchandise he sold by 37 percent because of m-commerce. He sent text messages and e-mails of news and promotions of new and attractive offers to the cell phones of his customers (Byrnes, 2007). M-commerce can have a major impact on the sales of a product when customers are shopping inside physical stores. Customers can inform their friends and relatives about a product while shopping, through WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017).

Companies develop and implement m-commerce strategies to complement their broader marketing efforts. One of the companies which has done this effectively is Dunkin' Donuts. Dunkin' Donuts targets busy people who spend very little time at home. M-commerce becomes the most suitable medium to target such people. The company serves 2.7 million customers daily at approximately 8800 stores in 31 countries including roughly 6400 US locations (Chagnon, LaMarche, & Djamasi, 2019). The value proposition of Dunkin' Donuts is guided by portability. It is also evidenced in the campaign theme "America Runs on Dunkin'". The company is aware that customers visit its website mainly in the afternoon. Dunkin' Donuts introduced new interactive web tools and an iPhone application for that specific time period to create a social group ordering experience. The company tried to connect its customers by running a mobile campaign called "Dunkin' Run". It featured interactive alerts sent to a customer's list of friends or coworkers. The campaign informed the customers when a trip to Dunkin' Donuts was planned, along with a message to place an order online. Customers could order from the menu or they could create a personalized list of favorites from which they could order. All the orders could be integrated onto a single screen which could then be displayed on a mobile phone. Customers could get the order delivered from the store of Dunkin' Donuts. Before launching the mobile marketing campaign, Dunkin' Run, the company also launched a two-month SMS promotional campaign in Italy and increased the sales almost by 10 percent (Butcher, 2009).

7. PRIVACY ISSUES IN E-COMMERCE AND M-COMMERCE

Many customers believe that information gathered from them is used beneficially by companies (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). They believe that the information gathered from them is utilized for generating better customer insights (Mandal, 2020). Such customers feel positive about e-commerce and m-commerce and believe that a useful purpose is served. However, a majority of customers is skeptical about the collection of personal information. They feel that information collected from them is utilized unethically by companies (Kang, 2013). They strongly resent or even mistrust e-commerce and m-commerce (Uwamariya & Loebbecke, 2020). They do not like intrusions on their privacy by companies. People worry that companies collect personal information about customers to build their own databases. Companies may then extract data from such databases to analyze sensitive information to understand their deepest feelings. Customers also feel that companies may try to influence their tastes, preferences, and buying behavior based on the analysis of information collected by the companies. Customers feel that companies may indirectly compel them to opt for specific products and services (Glanz et al., 2014).

Customers worry a lot about privacy issues and identity thefts (Wang & Herrando, 2019). Customers are cautious about sharing personal information with companies and they do so only for customized products from marketers they trust. Consumers worry that they will be robbed or cheated. They worry that companies will misuse their personal information. Customers may be flooded with unsolicited communications from companies. Customers also fear that their children might be targeted to collect information. It is easy to target and influence children. Now-a-days, many purchasing

decisions in a family are influenced by children. Companies may collect information unethically from children and analyze the information for generating more customer insights (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). Wise companies are aware about the apprehensions of customers and establish consumer affairs departments to formulate and resolve complaints.

It is extremely difficult to determine the boundaries of consumer privacy when it comes to e-commerce and m-commerce (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). Companies track the movements of consumers on the internet based on web clicks and their navigations between different websites. This may be without the consent of customers which makes the collection of information unethical (Diaz et al., 2019). Subsequently, companies analyze the behavior of customers on the web and target advertisements to them based on their browsing and social networking behavior. It is very difficult to comment whether tracking and analyzing consumers like this is a good thing or a bad thing. Several social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube follow consumer discussions and interactions on their webpages without the knowledge and the consent of customers (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). This helps these social networking sites to be more aware about the likes and preferences of customers (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). Awareness about customer preferences helps companies in becoming more responsive to customer requirements. For example, Dell routinely tracks social media conversations and responds quickly based on those conversations (Aydin, 2019). An individual may be surprised when she is contacted by Dell serviceperson just hours after she has expressed her frustration about Dell on a social networking site. This clearly indicates that Dell is keeping a track on the movements of its customers on social networking sites much without their knowledge and approval. Dell may view such monitoring as a means to delight its customers by prompt and unexpected service. However, some customers may resent knowing that Dell has tried to track their behavior on the web without taking their consent. Consequently, customers may view this as an intrusion on their privacy (Aydin, 2019).

Rising customer resentment results in a challenge for companies of unearthing valuable but potentially sensitive customer data while also maintaining customer trust. Consumers also are in a constant dilemma regarding the trade-offs between personalization and privacy. There are many customers who willingly share information for free services, offers, discounts, product upgrades, and rewards. However, those customers also worry about the unauthorized usage of their personal information (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017).

A study on online privacy was conducted by TRUSTe which is an organization that monitors the privacy practices of e-commerce websites. Responses from individuals revealed that people in general are highly concerned about online privacy. More than 90 percent of respondents felt that online privacy is a highly important issue (Ikonen, Luoma-aho, & Bowen, 2017). A majority of the respondents (75 percent) was of the view that online privacy is highly important, any communication on the internet is not secured, and naive users can easily be taken advantage of. For the same reason, a majority of Americans (66 percent) do not approve of e-commerce companies tracking their online behavior and tailoring advertisements to their interests. Consequently, companies find it difficult to collect personal information from e-commerce and m-commerce websites (Ikonen et al., 2017).

Critics accuse companies about invasion of customer privacy (Macha, Li, Foutz, & Ghose, 2020). Each time a customer buys a new product, information about the customer is stored by companies in customer databases. Such information may include their names, addresses, and purchasing behavior. Critics worry that marketers may know too much about the lives of customers, and that they may use this knowledge to take unfair advantage (Martin & Murphy, 2017).

Problems caused due to e-commerce may result in ethical issues, increasingly negative consumer attitudes. Such problems call for greater state and federal regulations. Mutual understanding is required between companies and customers to develop honest and well-designed marketing offers. Marketers should refrain from targeting customers who disapprove companies invading their privacy (Martin & Murphy, 2017). Marketers should target only those who appreciate hearing about them.

7.1. Responsibilities of Market Researchers and Companies

The collection of information through e-commerce websites needs to be legal and ethical (Lagioia & Sartor, 2020). Market researchers and companies are aware of the concerns about online privacy. They are experimenting with several options for responding to this problem. Marketing Research Association adopted broad standards set by International Chamber of Commerce's International Code of Marketing and Social Research Practice (ICC/ESOMAR, 2010). These standards set out the responsibilities for companies towards respondents and general public. Companies should assure customers that the collected information will be used only for research purposes and will not be revealed to anyone without the consent of participants (Mandal, 2016). It also prohibits companies from representing activities such as database compilation or sales and promotional pitches as research.

Research shows that customers will gladly provide information to a company if the company assures them of maintaining privacy and of providing value in exchange for information (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). For example, customers of Amazon.com will not mind if the company provides them with suitable product recommendations in future based on the analysis of information collected from the customers (Ives, Cossick, & Adams, 2019). This is a win-win situation for both the company and its customers. The company gets suitable information to understand what is of value to customers and provides offers accordingly. Customers also save time and energy because they do not need to search for options and can buy based on the recommendations provided. However, the collection of information requires to be done with the consent of customers (Martin & Murphy, 2017). Similarly, Bizrate users gladly complete surveys which include rating online seller sites. In return, they can view the overall ratings of others when making purchase decisions (Almeida, Almeida, & Mota, 2019). The best approach for e-commerce companies is to collect only that much information from customers which is required to provide them value. Also, companies should not share information with others without the customer's consent. This violates the basic understanding between companies and customers. This will also have an adverse effect in the relationship between companies and customers (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017).

People from the younger generation are the ones who are most active online. Critics worry about children who are under the age of 13 and are online. These children become easy targets of companies because of accessibility. Marketers offer freebies in exchange of personal information. Many marketers have come under the scanner for not differentiating advertisements from games or entertainment (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017). It is very difficult to establish ethical boundaries in collecting information from children online. For all these reasons, critics oppose the commercialism they believe such marketing research engenders (Moraes & Michaelidou, 2017).

Companies launching m-commerce should ensure the privacy and the security of customers. Companies should ensure that the information shared by customers is not misused (Xiao, Lu, & Guo, 2020). For example, GPS technology can potentially pinpoint the exact location of a customer. It raises privacy and security issues. Also, information shared by customers may be sensitive. Critics fear that companies may invade too much into the personal lives of customers (Hamidi & Moradi, 2017). Many customers resent the fact that companies become aware of information about customers which customers themselves may not be willing to share. M-commerce helps in bringing information at the fingertips of customers. At the same time, m-commerce activities also increase privacy and security issues. Companies should respect the privacy of customers. Otherwise, it may warrant public security and regulation.

8. DISCUSSIONS

E-commerce has become an important marketing channel for companies to facilitate the sale of products and services. The growth and the adoption of e-commerce are enabled by the rapid penetration of the internet and the acceptability of the internet as the preferred medium of communication by

the majority of people and especially, the younger generation. Selling products and services online makes the entire process faster, convenient, and more transparent. E-commerce establishes direct contact between companies and their customers eliminating the different levels of intermediaries.

The aim of the study was to discuss the various aspects of e-commerce, m-commerce, associated strategies, and the concerns about consumer privacy and security. The study aimed to address all these aspects. The study discussed about the various aspects of e-commerce. Pure-click companies sell their offerings only through e-commerce. The study discussed about the critical success factors which pure-click companies need to focus on to delight their customers. Some of those factors include proper maintenance of e-commerce websites, quality of customer service offered on those websites, ease of use, and availability of latest information about products and services. The study discussed about the advantages of each of those factors. The study also discussed about the factors which may prevent a customer from shopping online. The study focused on the critical success factors for brick-and-click companies. Brick-and-click companies require combining and making maximum utilization of intermediaries and e-commerce channels. They need to ensure that the business of intermediaries does not get affected because of the presence of e-commerce websites and vice-versa. The study discussed the strategies which brick-and-click companies follow to make product sales easier and convenient for its customers. Success of business in B2B environment depends a lot on e-commerce. M-commerce has become an important marketing practice with the rapid penetration and the extensive usage of smart phones as a means of communication. Customers lead busy lives with little time to spare and prefer to make purchases while they are on the go. The study discussed the various aspects of m-commerce and the reasons for which m-commerce is becoming the most popular medium of transaction.

One of the major issues concerning customers during transaction through e-commerce and m-commerce is maintaining the privacy and the security of information. The study discussed in details the privacy, safety, and security issues customers worry about. Companies need to be responsible for protecting the privacy of information shared by customers. Companies undertake several measures to assure customers that the information shared is secure.

E-commerce has grown in importance over the recent past as companies are adopting “brick-and-click” channel systems. E-commerce needs to be integrated with the traditional distribution channels recognizing the distinctive strengths of online and offline selling and maximize their joint contributions. Along with e-commerce, companies also need to realize the increasing importance of m-commerce because of the increasing usage of smart phones and latest web technologies by majority of the population.

8.1. Theoretical Implications

Academicians will be sensitized about the various issues related to e-commerce and m-commerce and their adoption. They will be able to appreciate the various critical factors which ensure the success of e-commerce and m-commerce. They will also be able to realize the importance of maintaining consumer privacy, security, and safety while conducting e-commerce. They may study the existing measures related to privacy, security, and safety of consumers and suggest measures which are more effective.

8.2. Managerial Implications

The discussions will sensitize managers about the importance of e-commerce and m-commerce and the necessity of adopting such technologies in the present-day competitive business scenario. Efforts were made to include the relevant and the latest literature related to e-commerce and m-commerce and its connection in delighting customers. However, conducting businesses through e-commerce and more specifically m-commerce are evolving fields with developments happening regularly. Practicing managers require keeping themselves updated about the latest trends and developments taking place to understand the roles of e-commerce and m-commerce in delighting their customers

and implement better strategies for building relationships with customers. Managers should be aware about the evolving trends in e-commerce and m-commerce. They should be particularly concerned about ensuring the security and the privacy of customers. Such initiatives will help companies to assure their customers and to build long-term relationships.

9. CONCLUSION

The study discussed about the present scenario of e-commerce and m-commerce and the necessity of adopting latest technologies for e-commerce and m-commerce. The study discussed in details about pure-click companies and the critical factors for pure-click companies to succeed in e-commerce. The study further discussed about brick-and-click companies and the critical factors for brick-and-click companies to succeed in e-commerce. The study discussed about the strategies which companies follow for e-commerce. E-commerce companies also undertake various initiatives to delight their customers. Finally, the study discussed about the m-commerce marketing practices and the different privacy and security issues related to the information shared by customers with companies involved in e-commerce and m-commerce.

E-commerce and m-commerce are gaining in importance and acceptability among customers. Customers prefer doing transactions through e-commerce and m-commerce because of convenience and saving in time. The growing trend of the acceptability of doing business via e-commerce and m-commerce indicates that these two forms of transactions will define the manner in which business will be done in future. At the same time, companies require ensuring the privacy and the security of the information shared by customers.

9.1. Limitations

The study did not collect primary data and did not conduct empirical analysis on various aspects related to e-commerce and m-commerce. Empirical analysis might generate insights which are actionable and which might result in effective strategies and initiatives. The analysis might also provide deeper insights about consumer privacy and security and suggest actionable strategies and initiatives.

9.2. Avenues of Future Research

Researchers may collect primary data, conduct empirical analysis, and come up with initiatives which are actionable. Researchers may study the various strategies mentioned in this study. They may understand the manner in which companies practicing e-commerce and m-commerce do business and suggest better strategies to be followed in future for better adoption and for delighting their customers. Privacy of customers and security of information provided by customers are two major issues. Researchers in future may conduct studies related to privacy and security issues in e-commerce and m-commerce and suggest strategies so that privacy and security of information shared by customers are maintained. This will build a sense of belief and trust in the minds of consumers. This will also help in developing and building relationships with customers.

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