Social Shopping: The Good The Bad and The Ugly

Gabrielle Peko
University of Auckland
g.peko@auckland.ac.nz

Valeria Sadovykh
PwC and University of Auckland
valeria.a.sadovykh@sg.pwc.com

David Sundaram
University of Auckland
d.sundaram@auckland.ac.nz

With the emergence in online social networks (OSN) like Facebook and Twitter, more studies appear with regard to information search using OSN. Online social media such as blogs, wikis, and social networks are improving speed and reinventing communication. Furthermore, the burgeoning use of OSN is changing our e-commerce society from transaction-based to relationship-based. OSN are increasingly being used to obtain information, opinions, recommendations, and comparisons and to view discussions to make shopping decisions. Often consumers are faced with purchase dilemmas and there are many questions in one's mind that could potentially affect the outcome of the purchase decision.

How shopping decisions are taken with the support of OSN and how these networks influence purchase behavior has not been explored sufficiently in research. Although the usage of OSN is growing rapidly, there is a poor understanding of how OSN can provide support and influence purchase decisions in general.

The objective of this mini-track is to obtain insights and develop theoretical and practical understanding on topics and issues related to the influence of OSN on consumption orientated shopping decisions.

The mini-track welcomed conceptual, theoretical, and empirical papers that enrich our understanding of OSN and its design and how they support, influence and manipulate shopping decisions. All methodological approaches were welcome.

Topics of interest included but were not limited to:

- Shopping Decision Making and Decision Support
- Consumerism, compulsive and addictive shopping
- Co-creation of value on multisided platforms
- Influence, persuasion, and peer pressure
- Advertising, marketing and recommender systems
- e-commerce, mobile commerce, and social commerce
- Gen-X, Y, Z, millennial shopping
- Age, gender, and demographics
- Fraud, deception, governance, risk, compliance, security and privacy
- Shopping gamification and shopping games
- Group shopping sites, communities and marketplaces
- Market manipulation and incentives
- OSN post purchase cognitive dissonance
- Processes, systems, tools and technologies to support social shopping

The mini track continues to attract a variety of interesting papers. This year we had a number of excellent papers. Of these papers, four in particular investigated key issues that exist in the research area. The first paper is an experimental investigation into, *How Does the Power of Crowdvoting*

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Affect Purchase Decisions? Effects of Majority and Minority Influence in Online Rating Systems. Online rating systems gather review scores on products from different customers', creating collective opinions and accumulating the power formed by the crowdvoting. The study draws from signaling theory to examine three effects that of: majority influence, minority influence, and number of reviewers on online shoppers' perceived product quality and perceived social risk and how they further influence purchase intention. A scenario-based experiment was used to test the research model and employed a 2x2x2 full factorial design. The results of the study suggest that majority influence increases perceived product quality and decreases perceived social risk, influencing shoppers' purchase decision.

The second paper also uses lab experiments, combined with focus groups to *Understand User Participation and Interaction in Online Shopping Communities from the Social and Relational Perspectives*. Technological advancements has led to the emergence of online shopping communities (OSCs). The study identifies how informational support and social support affect user participation and relationships, the impact of social structure on interpersonal relationship formation between community members, and the development of desire to be socially connected with others through real-time conversations. Based on the findings, the authors propose design recommendations to facilitate users' emotional exchange and contribution behavior in OSCs, such as enhanced conversational interaction, and collaborative mini-tasks in a social shopping context.

The third paper titled, *The social side of brick and mortar: the impact of brand-related user-generated content on different consumer typologies in food retailing,* examines user-generated content (UGC) as a means of engaging with consumers and shaping their trust perception and loyalty. Social media influences most off-line purchasing decisions, thereby impacting the relationship between retailers and customers. Based on a large sample of food retail customers, cluster analysis is used to identify four segments into which brand-related *UGC* consumers can be categorized: Brand Lovers, True-Blues, Detached Customers, and Confiding Customers. These clusters are distinct in terms of trust toward brand-related UGC, loyalty, brand-related UGC involvement, and demographics. The research findings add to the understanding of digital content marketing consequences by mapping four different brand-related UGC consumer typologies.

The fourth and final paper, *Double Deep Features for Apparel Recommendation System*, describes a recommendation system embedded in the double features extracted by convolutional neural networks (CNNs). Probabilistic matrix factorization (PMF)-based approaches have been utilized for recommendation systems based on a CNN model. Each recommendation algorithm utilizes a single CNN model to extract precise features about documents and pictures. Systems for some items should consider at least two precise features simultaneously, and the extension to embed multiple CNN models is necessary. However, methods that integrate multiple CNN-based features into existing recommendation systems, such as PMF, are not available. Thus, this study proposes a novel probabilistic model that integrates double CNNs into PMF. For apparel goods, two trained CNNs from document and image shape features are combined, and the latent variables of users and items are optimized based on the vectorized features of CNNs and rating. Extensive experiments demonstrate that the model outperforms other recommendation models.