



Introduction

Marketing is among the most important matters in a business. The marketing teams require identifying the factors that influence individuals to make a decision on what to buy. The world has changed to the extent that new technology and the internet is taking over. It has resulted to new methods of shopping known as online shopping. However, it has not changed the fact that buying decisions are influenced by both internal and external factors. Business organizations should be keen when selecting the strategy to use to promote their sales.

Advantages of Online Shopping against Traditional Shopping

Today, most of the people have taken online shopping as a way of life to replace traditional shopping methods. It is a matter that has numerous advantages as compared to traditional shopping. For instance, online shopping saves time. While shopping online, one takes a short period to select the specific items that he or she is interested in and then shift to other important issues. The second advantage is that it saves fuel. While shopping online, one does not require using his car to travel from his house or office to the shopping mall. For this, it reduces the cost that an individual takes while shopping as compared to traditional shopping methods. Since the cost of

fuel is not included in the shopping list, online shopping is cheap. Another advantage is that one is able to compare prices from different sellers. It takes a short time to run down different sites and gauge the prices of an item hence taking the most appropriate price for the commodity. At times, individuals fail to buy an item due to commitment. It counts another advantage of online shopping since online shops are available 24/7. It makes convenient for buyers who are extremely committed during day time and working days.

Disadvantages of Online Shopping against Traditional Shopping

It is unfortunate that, despite the advantages, online shopping also have some disadvantages. The first disadvantage is that one does not have the opportunity to check an item in terms of physical appearance and texture. At times, displayed images may mislead an individual. The second disadvantage is that online shopping diminishes instant satisfaction. It is because one is not able to receive the desired good instantly, but instead have to wait for a few days. Another disadvantage is that the buyer is required to pay a shipping fee that makes a product more expensive.

External Environmental Factors that Affect Customer Shopping Behavior

The decisions that consumers make are always facilitated by a number of

factors that they cannot control. They are called external environmental factors since they either have a direct or indirect impact to the lives of consumers. One of the external marketing environmental factors is political and regulatory factors. It concerns the rules and restrictions put in place by the government to regulate how a business is conducted. They intend to protect both businesses and consumers. At times, policies may disfavor consumers of a given product leading to a reduction in its sales. The second factor is the economic environment. The economy refers to the state of a country in terms of GDP per capital. When the economy of a country is stable, the citizens have the ability to buy different goods since they have money in their accounts. Contrary, during poor economic status, most of the people are unable to purchase different goods and only concentrate on the necessities. Competition is another external environmental factor that can change consumer shopping behaviors. While two businesses are selling the same or alike products, they end up competing with one another. It is an issue that affects consumer behavior since consumers prefer the businesses that treat them better through offering better prices or other attached advantages.

Internal and External Factors that could Drive Customers to Shop Online

There are a number of internal and external factors that could drive customers to shop online. The first factor is involvement. It is an internal factor that defines how an individual can be available or committed towards performing a given task. When a consumer is committed during the day, he or she opts to turn to online shopping that requires less time. Personality is

also a factor that can make people turn to online shopping. Some people have a problem in bargaining or presenting themselves in a shopping mall. Therefore, they prefer online shopping while no discussion is required. The competitive environment is an external factor that can lead people to shop online. It is an external factor that occurs especially when a given commodity is not available locally. The economic-environmental factor can also force individuals to turn to online shopping. It occurs while individuals are searching for products that are available at an affordable fee.

Major Online Promotion Methods and their Pros and Cons

Online shopping entails different strategies of business promotion. Among the major methods is advertising. It is whereby online shops are advertised in the social media, as well as different search engines all over the world. Some of the online shops also use emails and the mass media to advertise their businesses to the public. The advantages of advertising are that it enables many people to come to know the existence of a business and the services that it offers. Its disadvantage is that it is expensive an issue that can make products expensive. Online businesses also use sales promotion. These are short-time activities or gifts that attract consumers to buy from their shop. Its advantages are that it helps in increasing sales and promoting customer loyalty. Its disadvantage is that some consumers are only interested in the advantage and cease to be customers of the online shop after the promotion is off.

Conclusion

In conclusion, online shopping is a new method of shopping that is taking over the world. It is also affected by environmental factors that change consumer's shopping behavior. Some of the factors favor it while others do not. Online businesses have been initiating different strategies to promote their business similar to the traditional shopping. It is important for every business to evaluate all the influential factors that affect its customers.