

Web site engagement: the influence of online choice behaviour

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ABSTRACT

We introduce a two-part Web site engagement model. The first part proposes a Web site engagement measure and the second part takes into account the influence of online choice behaviour on Web site engagement.

Whilst Web sites may be designed and launched online with relative ease, once a site manages to catch the attention of a consumer, it is not anymore sufficient if it is just usable (Hausman and Siekpe, 2009) or fit for purpose (Hong et al., 2005). Successful Web sites should be engaging (Bakker and Sadaba, 2008; O'Brien, 2008). However most companies develop their sites based on models developed by engineers and ignore the needs of their target users (Pace, 2004; Stibel, 2005).

Computer-related engagement has been previously studied in contexts such as educational multimedia systems (Jacques et al., 1995) and multimedia presentations (Webster and Ho,

1997). Grounded on flow theory, we elaborate upon a previous scale of engagement with technology (O'Brien, 2008). As Internet shopping allows consumers to remotely undertake comparisons of products and services (Ruiz and Sanz, 2009), aspect that is central to consumer decision making (Dhar and Nowlis, 2004), we extend our model taking into account the influence of online comparative choice behaviour, studying the effects of within-Web page (Lohse and Johnson, 1996) and within-Web site navigation (Bucklin and Sismeiro, 2003; Senecal et al., 2005) on Web site engagement. Finally, the model tests the influence of Web site engagement on managerially valued consequences.

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