Engagement with shopping Web sites and the influence of online shopping behaviour

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ABSTRACT

Drawing from both the consumer and technology viewpoints, we propose a two part engagement model developed for Web shopping. The first part proposes a Web shopping engagement measurement and the second part takes into account the influence of consumer online shopping behaviour on Web shopping engagement (O'Brien, 2008; Senecal et al., 2005).

Technology is one of the most important macroenvironmental factors that condition peoples lives (Kotler, 2000). Consumers are surrounded by an array of electronic technologies and innovations to which they ongoingly have to adapt to. It is a challenge to succeed in this marketplace where there is an increasing number of failing innovations (De Marez et al., 2004; Page and Uncles, 2004; Venkatesh, 2006). In particular, whilst Web sites can be designed and launched online with relative ease, once a site manages to catch the attention of a customer, it is not anymore sufficient if it is just usable (Hausman and Siekpe, 2009) or fit for purpose (Hong et al., 2005). It has to be engaging (Bakker and Sadaba, 2008; O'Brien, 2008). Unfortunately, for the development of Web sites, most companies simply rely on information presentation models developed by engineers and ignore the needs of their target consumers (Pace, 2004; Stibel, 2008)

Engagement has been previously researched in different technology related contexts such as educational multimedia systems (Jacques et al.,1995) and multimedia presentations (Webster and Ho, 1997). Grounded on flow theory, one of the most promising areas of research of internet marketing (Schibrowsky, 2007), and building on a previously developed scale of engagement with technology (O'Brien, 2008), we propose a model of engagement specifically developed for shopping Web sites. One of the advantages of shopping on the internet is that consumers can remotely undertake comparison of products and services (Li et al., 2007), aspect that is central to consumer decision making (Dhar and Nowlis, 2004). We therefore extend our

model taking into account the influence of online shopping consumer behaviour (Senecal et al., 2005) on engagement.

We tested our model with a sample of 335 respondents that completed a two-part questionnaire and a Web based eye tracking experiment especially developed for this research, capable of remotely acquiring and recording highly precise online consumer navigation behaviour. For the extended model, we utilised research concerning how users extract data from computer screens (Kennedy and Te'eni, 1999), and how to trace their behaviour both within one unique Web page, using elementary information processes (Lohse and Johnson, 1996; Johnson, Payne & Bettman, 1988), and between Web pages, using clickstream data available from server logs (Senecal et al., 2005; Bucklin and Sismeiro, 2003). Finally, we test the influence of engagement on key issues valued by managers: purchase intention, intention to return to the Web site, non-switching intention, brand recall and URL recall.

We believe that internet marketing represents a promising multidisciplinary field and therefore we make a contribution to research taking into account both consumer and technology perspectives (Dennis, 2009).

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