Main factors influencing online consumer behaviour changes

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Abstract

These last decades, Internet has appeared as an indispensable way to develop business activities. While a large number of consumers in France frequently shop on the Internet, research on what factors influence their behaviour changes has been fragmented. This dissertation therefore proposes a framework to increase researchers’ understanding of French young consumers’ attitudes toward online shopping and their intention to shop on the Internet.

The consumer behaviour has been studied a lot, notably because, as soon as they know and understand their target, companies can adapt their offers. Nowadays, this kind of studies applied to online customers has become essential.

The two ways of shopping are relatively different from each other in terms of perceived shopping benefits. Diverse factors are the key to the consumer behaviour changes between both traditional shopping in physical stores and e-shopping on the Internet. In this paper, we are going to emphasis them.

Keywords: e-commerce, consumer behaviour, websites, differences.

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, we would like to thank our supervisor of this project, Klaus Solberg Søilen, for the valuable guidance and advice. He inspired us greatly to work on this project. We also would like to thank him for showing us some examples that were related to the topic of our project.

Besides, we would like to thank the Halmstad University for providing us with a good environment, facilities and great tools such as relevant databases in order to complete this thesis.

Finally, we take this opportunity to thank all the people who took time to answer our survey, including our home school students and our friends from our social networks.
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I. Introduction

This introduction chapter will explain the purpose of our research through our research questions and limitations.

1. Background

The way to do business had to be adapted with the important impact of the internet entrance twenty years ago. The way to communicate with customers, interact and transact around the world has been modified. Internet is nowadays a part of our everyday life and it definitely changed our vision of shopping with the development of e-commerce.

Today, e-commerce is important and is here to stay. Internet marketing has become an integral part of marketing strategy. Marketers must understand how customers use the Internet to make decisions, select brands and transact with Internet providers. This special issue aims at developing new knowledge, models and theories on Internet customer behaviour (Laroche, 2010).

The number of Internet users is always increasing around the world. According to the FEVAD (Fédération du E-commerce et de la Vente À Distance), 45 billion euro have been spent in France on Internet purchases in 2012, it is 19% more than the previous year. A reason why a lot of people like very much internet shopping is because it fulfils several consumer needs more effectively and more efficiently than the conventional shopping (Grewal et al., 2002; Chen and Leteney, 2000; Häubl and Trifts, 2000; Alba et al., 1997). First, with online shopping, consumers can browse the entire product-assortment with minimal effort, inconvenience and time investment. Second, consumers can efficiently obtain critical knowledge about firms, products and brands, and thereby increase their competency in making sound decisions while shopping. Third, consumers can easily compare product features, availability, and prices more efficiently and effectively than with brick-and-mortar shopping. Fourth, Internet shopping provides a level of anonymity when shopping for certain sensitive products (Toñita Perea y Monsuwé, 2004).

Those last authors also state that attitude towards online shopping and intention to shop online are not only affected by ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment, but also by exogenous factors like consumer traits, situational factors, product characteristics, previous online shopping experiences, and trust in online shopping.

2. Problem

Nowadays, there are more and more online consumers ready to buy from an e-commerce website at any moment. Marketers have to take this new distribution channel into account to increase their sales and the awareness of their brand. Therefore, it is
important that companies understand what consumers need and want in order to be able to give them proper offers. Traditional communication tools are adapted to the internet platform to attract customers. Offers might differ from a physical shop to a shopping website if the customer’s behaviour is not the same. We need to know what factors have an influence on customer and how they could change its behaviour.

In consequence, a company needs to adapt its marketing strategy if it wants to be successful on the Internet, so it is very important for an organization to know about the differences between consumer’s behaviour in a shop and on the web. Few theories about consumer behaviour have been developed by the marketing guru Philip Kotler these last decades. It is quite a new phenomenon to analyze, identify and understand the customer attitude relating to the purchasing process but this is one of the most effective ways to attract them.

It is crucial for online retailers to adapt these theories to the Internet users and define which behaviours differ from the traditional shopping and which do not.

3. **Researched questions**

- What are the main factors influencing the online consumer behaviour changes?
- How has buying on internet changed consumer behaviour?
- How can we adapt consumer behaviour theory to consumer behaviour on internet?
- What are the differences between consumer behaviour in a shop and on a website?
- To what extent is Internet a real change in consumer’s habits?
- What kind of products has an influence on consumer behaviour concerning internet sales?

4. **Purpose**

We decided to choose this topic because nowadays consumers have different behaviours depending on where they buy and what they buy. Electronic commerce has been growing rapidly in recent years. Many businesses are turning towards the Internet to market their products. The growth of the online retail industry results in tight competition and increases the consumer behaviour changes. In order to answer to this problematic, we elaborated a survey on French people from 18 to 25 years old.

We are going to identify how this category of people buy by understanding which factors are influencing them the most during their purchasing process. This research will allow us to comprehend how the internet has changed the consumer’s habits and what
are the differences between the Internet shopping and the traditional one. We will focus only on product’s purchases and not on services.

5. Limitation

This study is limited since our questionnaire was opened to everyone but after collecting all the responses, 92% of them came from people from 18 to 25 years old. We decided to exploit only this category of people because it seems more relevant. The reason why we chose this range of people is also because we are situated in this group and a lot of people in our generation is used to buying online. Therefore, we thought it would give accurate data for this research. We focused our research on students at Groupe ESC Troyes, in France as well as the ones on our social network.

The factors which might influence the customer’s behaviour is the socio-professional category as well as the age of customers, in our case this factors will not be taken into account, we will focus more on the origin of the purchase, what kind of product they buy more on internet than in a shop…
II. Methodology

This chapter will emphasise the methodology and theories that we have used to write our thesis. Thereafter, a description of the data collection and analysis is going to be presented.

1. Method research

The research approach consists of the inductive or deductive way of drawing conclusions, and the qualitative or quantitative method of finding information. The different approaches are going to be described and we are going to justify our method choice. In the inductive approach to research that we chose, we began by collecting data that are relevant to our topic of interest, it is called secondary data. Indeed, as our purpose is to find online factors which could change the consumer behaviour, we decided to review 26 scientific articles on consumer behaviour in online environments. The majority of papers were drawn from the Journal of Electronic Commerce Research, the Journal of Consumer Marketing, the Journal of Information Management and the Journal of Internet Research… These papers were published from 1998 to 2012 so they are relatively recent and relevant to be studied. We also had a look on different previous student researches on this subject from the Halmstad University database.

For this research, a quantitative method has also been chosen, we have published a questionnaire on internet that would be filled out by students from our home university as well as by people from our social networks. This can lead us to a better understanding of our research problem. To encourage people to respond, we limited our number of questions. This questionnaire consists of a primary data because through the answers, we can highlight a first observation which then will lead to theory. Data collection is an important aspect of any type of research study, we know that inaccurate data collection can impact the results of our study and ultimately lead to invalid results, that is the reason why we paid a particular attention to do it correctly.

2. Population sampling

The population that we have decided to target is young French consumers from 18 to 25 years old. 278 people from this range have responded in less than 2 days. 98% of them are students. The Internet purchases have extremely increased these last years in France and young people are aware of this new sales platform.
3. Data collection

According to Graham J. Hooley, in his book *Quantitative methods in marketing* (p185), “Secondary data have the advantages of being relatively cheap and quick to obtain, and can also be reliable and accurate. This data will often tell you how many customers buy each competitors offering but will not tell you why. Secondary data vary dramatically in quality, from country to country. Primary data research is undertaken where the secondary sources cannot provide the detail of information required to solve a particular problem or to aid sufficiently the decision making. Primary research involves the collection of new data, often directly from customers or distribution intermediaries.”

In our case, data collection was done through both secondary and primary sources. Primary data sources included the observation from the questionnaire results. Secondary data sources mainly covered the scientific articles, other academic papers and statistic reports about the French internet habits. Secondary data covered different sources and provided an essential preparation for the survey. It allowed us to have a first impression about the subject.

All the survey has been conducted in French and for the purpose of this thesis has been translated into English. We analyzed deeply the responses and this made it possible to gain a good understanding of each respondent’s point of view and habits. To determine how many responses we needed, we used the following equation:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{n} & = \frac{N \times \left( \frac{1}{(N-1)E^2} + x^2 \right)}{x^2} \\
\text{x} & = Z^2(c/100)^2r(100-r) \\
\text{E} & = \sqrt{\frac{N \times n \times x}{n(N-1)}}
\end{align*}
\]

With the sample size \( n \), \( E \) margin of error, \( N \) is the population size, \( r \) is the fraction of responses that you are interested in and \( Z(c/100) \) is the critical value for the confidence level \( c \).

In order to calculate our sample’s size, we needed to answer these questions:

- What margin of error do we accept? 5% (it is a common choice)
- What confidence level do we need? Typical choices are 90%, 95%, or 99%, we decided to take 90%
- What is the population size? In France, there is about 10% of the population aged between 18 and 25 years old and the total French population is about 65 million. Then our population size is 6,500,000
- What is the response distribution? It needs to be set at 50%.
In our case, n=271 so we needed 271 French people from 18 to 25 years old to answer our survey. We collected 300 answers and about 278 answers came from our target group so our sample was large enough to help our study.

Source: http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html
III. Theory

This chapter will present theories about consumer behaviour exploiting scientific authors’ realizations. We will discuss about the traditional consumer traits, the online consumer characteristics and we will define the different factors influencing the difference between both.

1. Introduction

It has been demonstrated that there are differences in the behaviour of consumers depending on “where” they buy, precisely if they purchase in a physical store or on an e-commerce website (Dholakia, Uusitalo, 2002). The recent evolution in retailing has involved a shift towards non-stores especially through electronic means (Mulhern, 1997). Even if the e-commerce websites represent a smaller part of the market than the traditional way of shopping, they are serious competitors that need to be taken into account in their strategy development. Indeed, most of the companies tend to be online nowadays in order to stay competitive. This difference between physical and online stores raises two major questions: what are the variations between the traditional and the online consumer characteristics and what are the factors that lead to these changes?

Many early theories concerning consumer behaviour were based on economic theory, which is the notion that individuals act rationally to maximize their benefits (satisfactions) in the purchase of goods and services. Later research discovered that consumers are just as likely to purchase impulsively and to be influenced not only by family and friends, by advertisers and role models, but also by mood, situation, and emotion (Smith and Rupp, 2003).

Risk perceptions, price, and cost typically had a negative impact on online shopping attitudes, while relative advantage and trust had a positive impact. Consumer orientations, demographics, knowledge and competence, attitudes, and psychological variables are consumer characteristics (Allred, Smith, Swinyard, 2006).

As for personality, consumers using online stores are likely to be characterized by higher level of confidence in their ability to make purchases without physical inspection of the product. Computer shopping offers the benefit of saving time and the convenience of shopping without being restricted by store hours and store location. It may be seen as a continuous innovation (Dholakia et al., 2002).

Theoretically, answers will be proposed through different schemas and literature review in order to initiate our practical analysis of the online shopping.
2. Traditional consumer characteristics

In addition to the factors that can be observed directly, such as marketing mix, product features and demographic variables, the factors that cannot be observed directly, such as psychological, social, and cultural factors (Engel et al., 1995; Lai, 2000), also affect the actual purchase behaviour of consumers (Wen-Bao Lin, 2008). Therefore, consumer purchases are strongly influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological characteristics. The external influences upon consumer behaviour include demographic, economic, social, situational and technological factors. The internal factors, such as belief and attitudes, learning, motives and needs, personality, perception, and values are involved. The lifestyle is between the internal and external influences on consumer behaviour (Shwu-Ing, 2003). These factors, internal and external, are included in the consumer background characteristics and behavioural processes. According to Wells and Prensky (1996), these characteristics are stable aspects of a consumer’s life that cannot be changed. Demographic characteristic such as gender, age or ethnic background, are example of background characteristics whereas behavioural processes are the motivational, perceptive, learning, attitude formation and decision making tools consumers use to complete the activities that satisfy their needs.

Marketers have to be aware of these internal and external factors that can influence the consumer behaviour. They have to make efforts on the characteristics that can be changed, for example attitudes can be more reshaped than the beliefs or values. Few marketing researchers have analysed these factors sorting them into the following schemas about consumer behaviour.

Every consumer is different from each other because of their cultural, social, personal and psychological aspects.

Source: “Factors influencing behaviour” Bliemel, F., Kotler, P. Marketing management
According to Dawson et al (2006), buying behaviour is a set of attitudes that characterizes the patterns of consumers' choices. Apart from internal factors, which are recognized as influential to buying behaviour, few external situational contexts also affect consumer choices. (Lawan A., Ramat Z., 2013)

Lawan et al. (p519) said that “consumer behaviour is a combination of customers' buying consciousness and external incentives which are likely to result in behaviour remodeling. The society’s culture such as norms, convention, customs religion, festivity, class, lifestyle and other subculture influence how individual consumers buy and use products, and help explain how groups of consumers behave.”

a) Cultural factors

Thogersen and Hollander said that the broadest and deepest influence on consumer behaviour is cultural factors. Roles played by culture, sub-culture and social class are of great importance. It influences attitudes, values, personality type, religion and material possessions.

Sub-culture is “a cultural group within a larger culture, often having beliefs or interests at variance with those of the larger culture” (Oxford dictionary). In some ways, the social environment predisposes certain individuals to join a subculture or another such as nationality, religions or geographic regions.

Social-class is “a status hierarchy in which individuals and groups are classified on the basis of esteem and prestige acquired mainly through economic success and accumulation of wealth. Social class may also refer to any particular level in such a hierarchy” (Business Dictionary).

In view of the broad and pervasive nature of culture, it is not easy to define its boundaries (Boachie-Mensah, Boohene, 2012). Culture in this narrow sense is defined by Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) as the sum total of learned beliefs, values, attitude and that serve to guide and direct the consumer behaviour of all members of a society (cited by Lawan et al., 2013).

Therefore, culture consists of traditional ideas and personal values which are interlinked together. Few researchers such as Hawkins et al. (2007) define culture as “the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society” (p41). The scientist writer, Page (1995), defined human culture as “a group of complex belief and value system, and artefacts handed down through generations as determinants and influences upon human buying behaviour within a given society” He claims that our behaviour is essentially determined by our culture, but sometimes it may interact with another culture which could have different beliefs and value systems. It would be interesting to understand the extent to which it influences people.
McCarthy and Perreault (1993) state culture as “the whole set of beliefs, attitudes and ways of doing things of a reasonably homogenous set of people” (cited by Boachie-Mensah et al., 2012, p122). Another accepted concept about culture is that it includes a set of learned beliefs, values, attitudes, habits and forms of behaviour that are shared by a society and are transmitted from generation to generation within that society (Lawan et al., 2013).

During the purchase making process, cultural beliefs and values can be seen as mental images that could affect different specific attitudes, and therefore change the way a person is likely to behave from a situation to another (purchasing a new product; the evaluation, choosing among alternatives). Finally paying for a particular product is largely a function of core cultural beliefs and values (Lawan et al., 2013). However, because the objective is to understand the influence of culture on consumer behaviour, the definition of culture submitted by Schifman and Kanuk (2007) is particularly relevant. They said that “the sum total of learned beliefs, values and customs serves to direct the consumer behaviour of members of a particular society” (p408).

Any particular detail on the product or in the shop such as colour, texture, or form could be seen differently from a customer to another. Indeed, the cultural beliefs and values which build personality and preferences are passed on from parents to children and are reinforced by the major institutions of society, schools, business and government, the mass media, reference groups etc. (Lawan et al., 2013).

To sum up, according to Boachie-Mensah and Boohene, (2012) culture is comprehensive. It includes almost everything that influences an individual’s thought processes, actions and behaviour. Culture as a complex whole, is also a system of interlinked pieces. Values, customs, norms and even of common interests such as entertainment are composing the common habits of customers and their patterns of living in their daily activities.

Moreover, even if beliefs are sorted into the psychological part in the previous schema of Kotler, they are also important parts of culture according to other researchers. Every culture thrives on values that they accept as true and real. Other possible issues such as morals and customs are crucial, indeed, we have to notice as Boachie-Mensah and Boohene, (2012) did that what some countries view as moral may in fact be highly immoral in others. Culture is acquired during a human life and it is transmitted from generation to generation, parents to children. Finally, culture is multiple actions and understandings that enable people to behave in a manner that could differ from other members in the same group.
b) Social factors

Social characteristics are mainly shaped by reference groups, family and roles and status defined.

Reference group can be defined as “people whose attitudes, behaviour, beliefs, opinions, preferences, and values are used by an individual as the basis for his or her judgment. One does not have to be (or even aspire to be) a member of a reference group to be negatively or positively influenced by its characteristics” (Business Dictionary). For the members of reference groups, the opinion of the leader is essential. When the influence is direct, it is called membership group, such as neighbours, worker team or family. This kind of group has an important impact on the person attitude.

It is really important for marketers to understand what decision power a member of a family has, to adapt its advertising plan. However, advertising is aiming at the right target even if this one does not have the buying decision power. For example, the ads for the kids are full of colours but they still need to convince their parents to buy it (Sherman & Fazio, 1983).

Concerning roles and status, in every kind of group, the hierarchy is respected, each member have a position and role. There is a leader as well as the others with less power. It is crucial to understand the level of power of each member. The consumer behaviour is varying from a person to another depending on this (Sherman & Fazio, 1983).

Icek Ajzen (1991) said that it was important for social and personality psychologists to focus on an intermediate level between physiological processes part and social institution one to make the study of human behaviour easier. They focused on the fully functioning individual whose processing of available information mediates the effects of biological and environmental factors on behaviour. Concepts referring to behavioural dispositions, such as social attitude and personality trait, have played an important role in these attempts to predict and explain human behaviour (Ajzen, 1988; Campbell, 1963; Sherman & Fazio, 1983 in Ajzen, 1991).

Ajzen called the social factor as a subjective norm in his famous theory of planned behaviour (TPB); it refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour to buy a product. Venkatesh et al., 2003 think that it refers to the individual's perception that an entity or a person important to him/her thinks he/she should behave particularly to gain status and influence within the work group for example.

Theoretically, personal evaluation of a behaviour (attitude), socially expected mode of conduct (subjective norm), and self-efficacy with respect to the behaviour (perceived behavioural control) are very different concepts each of which has an important place in social and behavioural research (Ajzen, 1991).
It has sometimes been suggested by researchers such as Gorsuch & Ortberg (1983); Pomazal & Jaccard (1976) or Schwartz & Tessler (1972) that, at least in certain contexts, we have to think about not only perceived social pressures but also personal feelings of moral obligation or responsibility to perform, or refuse to perform, a certain behaviour. Such moral obligations would be expected to influence intentions, in parallel with attitudes, subjective (social) norms and perceptions of behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991).

According to Venkatesh et al. 2003, the social influence affects individual behaviour through compliance, internalization, and identification. Moreover, social factors mention “the individual's internalization of the reference group's subjective culture, and specific interpersonal agreements that the individual has made with others, in specific social situations” (cited in M. Faisal Fariduddin Attar Nasution, 2007, p203).

According to Bergeron et al. (1995), social factors are themselves dependent on the social situation and on the individual’s perception of subjective culture variables.

Chattopadhay et al. (1999) said that “The perception of usefulness and identification are conveyed into a system of beliefs, which is developed by an individual’s demographic background” (cited in M. Faisal Fariduddin Attar Nasution, 2007, p203).

Social part of behaviour can also mention self-identity which is the individual's comparison of other's expectation with his own value, beliefs, and previous experience and transformation of these into his own self-expectation. According to Lee et al. (2006) “The effect of self-identity, unlike that of subjective norm, does not diminish with repeated experience of performing the relevant behaviour “(cited in M. Faisal Fariduddin Attar Nasution, 2007, p203).

c) Personal factors

Personal characteristics are mainly shaped by age and life cycle stage, occupation and economic circumstances.

The consumer behaviour is different depending on the age and the life cycle stage corresponds to different period in life that the consumer experiences. Therefore, according to Kotler and Armstrong (2007), marketers need to define their target basing on these different stages.

The occupation corresponds to a way of spending time (job or profession). It tends to have an effect on the conception of products and services so companies should pay attention to develop different types of offers. Indeed, the needs can vary depending on the salary or the working environment (Lee et al., 2006).
The economic circumstances can affect consumer product choices. The level of income, level of saving and level of interest rates can change the price sensitiveness of consumer. Indeed, during the economic crisis, customers will be more likely to take a closer look to what he or she buys and its amount (Lee et al., 2006).

d) Psychological factors

Human behaviour can be grouped into three categories-motivation, cognition and learning. All three together are pertinent to a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour (Bayton, 1958). Therefore, we can explain the psychological characteristics by studying motivation, learning, perception (cognition) but also beliefs and attitudes.

Motivation refers to the drives, urges, wishes, or desires which initiate the sequence of events known as “behaviour“(Bayton, 1958). It is an internal feeling coming from a need and stimulated by the environment. It can lead to a behavioural act as an impulse purchase. The stronger the need to buy, the more urgent it seems to the consumer. Marketing have a great influence on the level of needs because it stimulates them through communication.

Few theories intended to classify these needs to better understand the way to communicate about their products. One of the most known is the Maslow’s Theory. Needs are ranked from physiological needs, to safety needs, to social needs, to esteem needs, to self-actualisation. Abraham Maslow explained that what motivates consumers to act is unfulfilled needs and that they meet certain basic needs before being highly motivated to meet other needs. Indeed, it is obvious that people need to satisfy their fundamentals needs of survival before satisfy their self-development and their self-esteem (Davis, Wang and Lindridge, 2008).

Cognition is the area in which all of the mental phenomena (perception, memory, judging, thinking, etc.) are grouped. Perception can be defined as the process by which someone becomes aware, understands and interprets something. Since consumers see a lot of advertising every day, information processing goes through some perceptual defences, which are the elective attention, selective perception and selective retention. It allows them to “sort” the information received depending on their own beliefs, values and attitudes. If the advertising hold the interest of the consumer, he/she will most likely think about the product, keep it in memory and that can result on a purchase. Then, marketers must work on what the target customer will perceive from the ad in order to adapt it and make sure that it will capture its attention (Russell and Pratt, 1980).

Learning refers to those changes in behaviour which occur through time relative to external stimulus conditions (Bayton, 1958). Then, it is the experience and knowledge of a consumer and it can change its behaviour. A misinformed consumer will act differently for an informed one. Marketers have to be aware of the knowledge of their
consumer because advertisement can be wrongly interpreted. Product awareness involves an array of information for the consumer. A consumer who have tried a product once and who have been satisfied by it, have more chances to buy it again, that is why the experience is a important factor of the decision making process as well as the behaviour of the consumer. According to Capon and Burke (1980) the more you are educated, the more you collect information and use it prior to decision making.

Beliefs and attitudes are usually acquired through learning and experiences in life. Attitude is “a settled way of thinking or felling about something” (Oxford dictionary). There are three types of attitudes: cognitive (beliefs about specific attributes or global object), affective (emotions or feelings about specific attributes or global object) and behavioural (behavioural intentions concerning specific attributes or global object). Kotler and Armstrong (2007) defined belief as a descriptive thought about something and which is based on real knowledge, opinions or faith. The beliefs and attitudes can determine the likes and dislikes of a person and influence its buying behaviour (Smith et al., 2003).

e) Basic Model of a shopper – Consumer Buying Process

During our everyday life, we make decisions concerning every aspect of our lives; we never stop to think about how to make the best decision and what is involved in the particular decision-making process itself. Behind the visible act of making a purchase is a decision process. Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) divide this decision process into three major components: input, process and output. Traditional consumer decision-making models, like other forms of economic decision-making, are grounded in the theory of rational choices made by rational actors (Ramanathan & Shiv, 2001).

According to Schiffman and Kanuk, (1997), the input component is composed by the external stimuli that is used for sourcing information about a particular product and influence a consumer’s product-related values, attitudes, and behaviour. This external stimulus could be the marketing four Ps or the different socio cultural influences. When those are internalized, they affect the consumer’s purchase decision (Delafrooz et al. 2009).

At the heart of these socio-cultural inputs we can find the culture factor that we speak about previously. The influence of culture although less tangible is important input factor that internalized and affect how consumers evaluate and ultimately adopt (or reject) products. (Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) cited and confirmed by Delafrooz et al. 2009)

The process component, which is concerned with how consumers make decisions considering the psychological field, is subdivided into five stages; need recognition, pre purchase (information search), evaluation, purchase and post purchase behaviour
(Delafrooz et al. 2009). The process component can also refer to the traditional consumer decision making model of Boone and Kurtz (2010).

Boone and Kurtz (2010) describe consumer as engaging in the following sequential steps when making a purchase decision:

1. They recognize a problem or opportunity.
2. Consumers search for the available alternatives.
3. An evaluation of the alternatives occurs.
4. A purchase decision is made.
5. The purchase act occurs.
6. A post-purchase evaluation is made producing feedback used in the next consumer decision.

The traditional model is primarily cognitive in nature, while Boone and Kurtz (2010) recognize some interpersonal and personal influences on decision-makers. Since the early 1990’s, marketing mainly focuses on relationship with customers and one-to-one. The new essential point for marketers to take care about is human emotions and their role in consumer behaviour and their decision-making (Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2010; Peter & Olson, 2010 cited by Holly A. Bell, 2011).

According to these authors and confirmed by the International Journal of Business and Social Science, marketing has moved beyond the era of “messaging” to touching customers emotions and impact on their behaviour. Donald Calne said “The essential difference between emotion and reason is that emotion leads to actions while reason leads to conclusions”. The psychologist and scientist writer Peter Noel Murrey confirmed the statement of Kotler which was “decision to buy and be loyal to a brand is greatly influenced by emotions” (cited in Holly A. Bell, 2011, p 12)

However, the need of recognition is appearing frequently when a consumer is faced with a problem. It can be as either simple or complex. The simple problem refers to the first need, it is easy to deal with but this is the most important. For example, someone who is thirsty can buy a bottle of water to satisfy his need. Concerning the complex problem recognition, it is characterized as a state in which a problem develops overtime as the actual state and desired state gradually move apart (Delafrooz et al. 2009).

According to those researchers, “Pre-purchase search come to play when a consumer perceive a need that might be satisfied by the purchase and consumption of a product. The consumer’s past experience might provide adequate information on which to base the choice. Where the consumer has had no prior experience a more extensive search has to be made, which would extend to the consumers psychological field and external sources where cultural beliefs and values play key role.” (Lawan et al., 2013, p521).
Moreover, it has been proved that negative emotions could affect considerably the consumer decision-making into different ways. The traditional model of Boone and Kurtz (2010) have considered them undesirable and Khan (2010) even stated that these negative emotions “adversely affect decision-making and can have both short and long-term consequences” (Holly A. Bell, 2011, p13). Consequently, if the decision making process has been touched, the consumer behaviour have also been changed by these personal emotions.

The author Holly A. Bell has cited some examples of undesirable attributes of negative emotions in her article. “They could delay a consumer decision to buy medical tests when the tests might indicate a serious illness (Kidwell, Hardesty, & Childers, 2008), or avoid the decision to purchase technology when the product is rapidly evolving due to the negative emotional factors of anticipated regret, confidence, and stress (Morris & Luce, 1997)” (Holly A. Bell, 2011,p 13).

Holly A. Bell (2011) stated of Khan (2010) and said that negative emotions in the consumer behaviour lead to “impulsiveness and shallow-processing of information, poor product evaluation and negative brand attitude” (p13).

Otherwise, Nelson, Malkoc, and Shiv (2009) claimed that “unlike past literature which has mainly focused on negative impact of regret, regret can play a functional role in learning from past mistakes. They show that manipulation of only the emotional component of experienced regret leads to better performance on decisions within the domain where regret is experienced, but not in dissimilar domains” (p2).

3. **Online consumer characteristics**

a) **Online shopping orientations**

Wolfinbarger and Gilly (2001) stated that each consumer has different personalities which may influence their perception of the online product and their online shopping behaviours. Khan (2010) claimed that consumer’ personalities that lead to different shopping behaviours can be classified in two main orientations which are utilitarian and hedonic.

Some researchers have used the terms necessity and luxury more largely, in a less technical sense, to imply that luxuries are consumed primarily for hedonic pleasure while necessities are required to meet more utilitarian goals (Dubois, Laurent, and Czellar 2004; Kivetz and Simonson 2002; Strahilevitz and Myers 1998 cited by Khan 2010). Hedonic goods are multisensory and provide for experiential consumption, fun, pleasure, and excitement. Flowers, designer clothes, music, sports cars, luxury watches,
and chocolate fall in this category. Utilitarian goods, on the other hand, are primarily instrumental and their purchase is motivated by functional product aspects. Examples are microwaves, detergents, minivans, home security systems, or personal computers (Dhar and Wertenbroch 2000; Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Strahilevitz and Myers 1998 cited by Khan, 2010).

It is important to notice that both utilitarian and hedonic consumption are discretionary and the difference between the two is a matter of degree or perception. According to previous studies of Shwu-Ing, (2003) and Wolfinbarger and Gilly, (2001), consumers’ characteristics and goals have been found to influence their behaviours such as purchasing, revisiting intentions and attitudes toward a website (Delafrooz et al. 2009).

b) Utilitarian shopping orientations

As we said before, consumers who are utilitarian have goal-oriented shopping behaviours. Kim and Shim (2002) define utilitarian shoppers as online shoppers based on rational necessity which is related to a specific goal. “They look for task-oriented, efficient, rational, deliberate online shopping rather than an entertaining experience” (Wolfinbarger and Gilly, 2001). According to Monsuwe et al., (2004), make a purchase in an efficient and timely way is the most important thing for them. Indeed, they can achieve their goals with “least amount of irritation” (Delafrooz et al. 2009, p201).

For a convenience orientation, the utilitarian value of shopping is seen as a task-related, rational, deliberate and efficient activity (Babin et al., 1994, cited by Delafrooz et al. 2009). Therefore, utilitarian shoppers with convenience orientations tend as much as possible to reduce their cost of search in order to save time or energy for other activities (Monsuwe et al., 2004). These same consumers, in accordance with Shim et al. (2001) will more likely use the Internet for an information source.

In addition, the author Moe (2003) posits that consumers’ main objectives of visiting a web site can influence their attitude of purchase on the web site.

c) Hedonic shopping orientations

Monsuwe et al., (2004) considers that hedonist consumers have experiential shopping behaviour. Hedonists not only gather information to shop online but want more and look for fun, excitement, joy, particular experience. These experiential shoppers want to be immersed in the experience rather than to achieve their goals by shopping online (Wolfinbarger and Gilly, 2001 cited by Delafrooz et al. 2009).

Delafrooz et al. 2009 cited Wolfinbarger and Gilly, 2001 by saying that “hedonic shoppers were found to exist in the online environment for information gathering purposes such as ongoing hobby-type searches, involvement with a product category,
positive sociality and surprise and bargain hunting” (p201/202). It means that hedonic consumers pay more attention to well-designed online shopping sites where it is easy-to-navigate and visually appealing. Such Web sites offer great relationship building tools to establish a sense of community for consumers, we will speak more precisely about the atmospheric factor of a website later.

d) Online shopping perceived benefit

The benefits can be physiological, psychological, sociological or material in nature as stated by Gutman, (1982). Concerning the online shopping context, the benefits are the sum of online shopping advantages or satisfactions that meet their needs or wants (Shwu-Ing, 2003; Delafrooz et al. 2009)

There are many differences between a physical store and its electronic counterpart (Lohse et al., 1999). Previous study made by Jarvenpaa and Todd (1997) and Vijayasarathy and Jones, (2000) found that internet shopping benefits was significantly close to attitude toward online shopping and intentions to shop online.

In addition, Koivumaki (2001) posits that the online shopping benefits and the frequency of purchases made are interlinked together and create a positive relationship. This theory is confirmed by the findings of Forsythe et al. (2002) which show that there is a positive and highly significant relationship between perceived benefits of Internet shopping and both frequency of shopping and amount spent online. The scientist writers Liu and Arnett (2000) as well as Muylle et al. (2004) have established two categories of benefits thanks to their study which are: intrinsic and extrinsic. According to Shih (2004), both categories are important in customers’ selections to support the online stores.

In accordance with the same authors, extrinsic benefits include wide selection of products, competitive pricing, easy access to information and low search costs whereas intrinsic benefits is belonging to a thing by its very nature, it could includes design and colour (Shang et al., 2005). Consequently the virtual environment has an important impact on the consumers’ shopping benefits as well as their shopping behaviours. Moreover, Shwu-Ing (2003) found that consumers’ benefits perception comprised different factors such as convenience, selections freedom, information abundance, homepage design and company name familiarity has a considerable relationship with attitude toward online shopping. (Delafrooz et al. 2009)

e) Attitude towards online shopping

Grandom and Mykytyn (2004) define attitude towards behaviour as “the degree to which a person has favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour of the question” (p188).
It means that attitudes toward online shopping are consumer’s positive or negative feelings related to the online purchase process (Chiu et al., 2005; Schlosser, 2003).

These attitudes differ from a consumer to another because of its culture, its own characteristics that we discussed previously. According to Forsythe et al. (2002), during an online purchase process, if the consumer is attracted by the product characteristics and its electronic appeal, if he/ she is seems familiar with this channel and feel confident in buying, e-shopping potential may still suffer from other setbacks. These inconveniences could come from the consumers’ preference to use traditional way to do shopping (Delafrooz et al. 2009). For that reason, it is obvious that evaluating attitudes of target consumers towards online shopping is critical.

f) Conceptual foundation and framework

When researchers heard about online consumer behaviour, two main theory models came to their mind. The first one is the classic theory of reasoned action (TRA) elaborated by Ajzen and Fishbein in 1980, and the second one is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1985) which have been extensively adopted for explaining and predicting user behaviour in an online shopping environment according to Pavlou, (2003). The Technology Acceptance Model, in accordance with Davis (1986) states that “actual system use is determined by users’ behavioral intention to use, which is in turn influenced by their attitude toward usage. Attitude is directly affected by users’ belief about a system, which consist of perceived usefulness and ease of use” (Davis, 1986, Delafrooz et al. 2009, p203).

Technology Acceptance Model states that the success of a system can be determined by user acceptance of the system, measured by three factors: perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU), and attitudes towards usage (ATU) of the system (Davis, 1989). If a system is not easy to use then it will probably not be perceived as useful. According to the model, a user’s perceptions about the system’s usefulness and ease of use result in a behavioural intention to use (or not to use) the system (Davis, et al., 1989; Nov & Ye, 2008; Shroff, et al. 2011). This model has evolved from 1985 to 2000 and has been adapted and extended through time because of the changing environment.

The researchers applied the factors that we speak about previously: the motivation, perception and personality in the context of attitude behaviour models such as the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis et al, 1989).

Past research developed by Monsuwe et al., (2004) shows that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use is an important factor for utilitarian consumer that we talk about whereas hedonic consumers during online shopping are looking for perceived enjoyment (Delafrooz et al. 2009).
Consequently, in TAM, we can say that both utilitarian and hedonic aspects can be considered in accordance with Childers et al. (2001). Indeed, online shopping offers both hedonic and utilitarian aspects.

Concerning the TRA, it asserts that beliefs such as perceived benefits are completely mediated by attitude. The Technology Acceptance Model confirmed this statement.

**Graphic 2 Enhanced model of consumer behaviour for online shopping**


The authors Dennis et al. (2009) developed the basic model, which explains the traditional consumer behaviour, into an enhanced model that explains the online shopping behaviour. They made propositions about relations between the different factors: image (product selection, fulfilment, and customer service), learning, past experience, trust, social factors, consumer traits (gender, education, age, and income), emotional states, web atmospherics, navigation, e-interactivity and situational factors (convenience, variety, frequency). These factors are possibly influencing the attitude, the intention to purchase and/or the actual purchase. They formulated the following correlations:

- **P1.** E-consumer attitude towards an e-retailer will be positively influenced by customer perceptions of e-retailer image.
- **P2.** E-consumer intentions to purchase from an e-retailer will be positively influenced by positive attitudes towards the e-retailer.
- **P3.** Actual purchases from an e-retailer will be positively influenced by intentions to purchase from an e-retailer.
P4. Intention to shop with a particular e-retailer will be positively influenced by past experience.
P5. Actual purchases from an e-retailer will positively influence experience.
P6. E-consumer trust in an e-retailer will positively influence intention to e-shop.
P7. Past experience and cues that reassure the consumer will positively influence trust in an e-retailer.
P8. E-Consumers’ learning about an e-retailer web site will positively influence their intention to purchase.
P9. E-consumer attitude towards an e-retailer will be positively influenced by social factors.
P10. E-consumer attitudes towards an e-retailer will be positively influenced by e-interactivity.
P11. Trust in an e-retailer will be positively influenced by e-interactivity.
P12. E-consumers’ perceptions of e-interactivity will be positively influenced by ease of navigation.
P13. E-consumer perceptions of e-interactivity will be positively influenced by web atmospherics.
P14. E-consumer emotional states will be positively influenced by web atmospherics.
P15. E-consumer attitude towards an e-retailer will be positively influenced by emotional states.
P16. Consumer attitude towards an e-retailer will be influenced by situational factors such as convenience, variety, frequency of purchase and specific individual circumstances.
P17M1. The relationship between social factors and attitude towards an e-retailer will be moderated by consumer traits.
P17M2. The relationship between emotion and attitude toward e-retailer will be moderated by consumer traits.
P17M3. The relationship between e-interactivity and attitude toward e-retailer will be moderated by consumer traits.

This consumer behaviour model is quite complete and regroups the most important factors influencing the purchase. However, we find that the factor price is missing and we consider it as very important.

Using the web for consumption purposes is increasingly becoming on the primary reasons why people are using the internet. Not only is online shopping on the increase, as reported earlier, but consumers are also reporting spending more time online searching for information on product and services (Joines, Scherer and Scheufele, 2003). One argument that is also made about why people use the web to get information about product and services is that they are searching for bargain prices available only online. Online shops have been more and more present in the daily life and innovations
in non-stop formats have increase competitive pressures on store retailing (Alba et. al. 1997; Burke, 1997; May and Greyser, 1989).

Shopping online: the ability to view product and then buy them immediately not only distinguishes the web from other advertising mediums, but also seems to be a reason why many users are logging on. With the development of secure transaction systems, online shopping continues to increase with 44% of internet users reporting that they regularly or at least occasionally make purchases online (cyberaltlas, 2000b).

Privacy concerns and fear of insecure transactions have been argued to be the biggest inhibitors to shopping online. (Wang et. al. 1998, Joines, Scherer and Scheufele, 2003)

Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999) explored motivations and concerns related to web use and identify seven motivations and concerns regarding web use: social escapism motivation, transaction-based security and privacy concerns, information motivation, interactive control motivation, socialisation motivation, non transactional privacy concerns and economic motivation (Joines, Scherer and Scheufele, 2003). It has been argued that companies need to promise security from online hackers or disgruntled employees if they want to really see the ecommerce business structure take off. (Kiely, 1997)

According to Quinn (1996), one characteristic of the internet that makes the web a superior advertising medium is that users can view advertisements and then, immediately purchase the items they desire. Interactive control gives shoppers the ability to shop for items conveniently. Moreover, shopping sites like eBay and Priceline, give consumer bargaining power (Joines, et. al., 2003). Statements listed on the scale for economic motivation describe online shopping as convenient and away to save time and money. Another motivation is a social one: people who enjoy shopping are also those who enjoy the sense of community.

Web shopping sites should follow an interactive and reactive interface with individualised recommendations for customers based on their previous purchases or the opportunity for consumer to review products and make recommendation to other customers visiting the sites. (Joines, et. al., 2003)

The consumer purchase process is a series of interlinked multiple stages including information collection, evaluation of alternative, the purchase itself and post purchase evaluation (Engel et. al., 1993, Dennis, Merrilees, Jayawardhana, Wright, 2009) According to Rohm and Swamithan (2004), social interaction is a significant motivator for e-shopping (along with variety seeking and convenience) and Parsons (2002) stated that social motives such as social experiences outside home communication with others with similar interest, membership of peer groups and status and authority were valid for e-shopping. Social benefits of e-shopping such as communication with like-minded people can be important motivators that influence intention. Usefulness refers to consumer’s perceptions that using the internet will enhance the outcome of their
shopping and information seeking. Ease of use concerns the degree to which e-shopping is perceived as involving a minimum of effort, for example in navigability and clarity. (Chen et al., 2002, Dennis et al., 2009)

In the e-shopping context, experience and enjoyment derive from e-consumers’ interactions with an e-retail site, which we refer to as “e-interactivity”. E-interactivity encompasses the equivalent of salesperson-customer interaction as well as visual merchandising and indeed the impact of all senses on consumer behaviour (Dennis et al., 2009).

Dailey and Eroglu et al. (2003) demonstrated that the same type of “web atmospherics” model can be applied to e-consumer behaviour. Graphics, visuals, audio, colours, product presentation at different levels of resolution, video and 3D displays are among the most common stimuli.

Convenience in e-shopping increases search efficiency by eliminating travel costs and associated frustrations (psychological cost). Psychology research over many years has identified numerous gender differences that are potentially relevant to e-commerce behaviour, for example, in spatial navigation, perception and styles of communication. (Dennis et al., 2009).

Hansen and Jensen (2009) found that men tend to be quick shoppers whereas women are more “shopping for fun”. According to Capon and Burke (1980) the more you are educated, the more you collect information and use it prior to decision making.

Donthu and Garcia (1999) found that internet shoppers to be less brand and price conscious, having a more positive attitude towards advertising and direct marketing. Therefore, his hypothesis is that the price is not an important criterion for online consumers whereas advertising and direct marketing are. We will see in the analysis part that, based on our survey, this hypothesis is wrong (at least concerning young French people) because the answers we got show that the price, the reductions, the promotions… are very important in the online purchase.

Traditional consumer behaviour model is close to the online consumer model, in addition to the factors that can be observed directly, such as marketing mix, product features and demographic variables, the factors that cannot be observed directly, such as psychological, social, and cultural factors (Engel et al., 1995; Lai, 2000) also affect the online purchase behaviour of consumer (Wen-Bao Lin, 2008).

g) Cultural factor online

Depending on which area you live around the globe, it is obvious that the internet accessibility will be different. Moreover, social class has also an influence on the online purchase consumer behaviour because higher social class have higher intention to purchase thanks to an easier access to internet (Smith et al., 2003).
Thanks to new marketing tools development, it is possible to target certain categories of people via internet. Small subculture groups are also existent on the web such as nationalities or religion groups (Davis et al., 2008).

The essential behaviour behind our value-based economy and essentially our entire culture can be traced to innovation associated with the societal changes (Smith et al., 2003).

According to Davis et al. (2008), a well-designed customer Internet interface does not depend on the use of high technology but is merely one that supports the customer's culture and their decision-making process so that’s why even online shops need to adapt to culture differences. Culture affects how customers construe events and contexts, producing a range of emotional responses to a stimulus (Russell and Pratt, 1980). Keesing (1974) quoted by Davis et al. (2008) developed a theme of symbols and attached values by defining culture as three ideational themes: Cognitive (language), Structuralist (institutions) and Symbolic culture.

h) Social factor online

These last few years, social networks appeared exponentially. The reference groups of the traditional model are adapted on the online way through these virtual communities.

All family members can use online Web sites. Children frequent them because they tend to have more time. Almost all Web sites are free for anyone to browse. Online Web sites promote to families by having Web sites aimed directly toward family. Websites may include coupons on family movies bought in stores (Smith et al., 2003).

The opinions of family members are essential online when making the decision to take actions (that is to say purchase). The power of decisions in the household has to be taken into account by marketers because, since online decisions are less urgent (you can decide later in the day or the next day without having constraints), it is easier to ask for the family or friends’ opinion before purchasing something (Davis et al., 2008).

i) Personal factor online

Consumers of a certain age group may tend to use the Internet more often. Older consumers who do not know how to use a computer are not going to get information concerning promotions (Smith et al., 2003).

The type of economy we are in also greatly affects willingness and ability to buy. If the economy is not in good standing, fewer promotions and coupons will be sent to online consumers (Smith et al., 2003). However, when there is an economic crisis, consumers tend to search more for promotions online in order to get “good deals” and make some economies.
Occupation is directly linked to salary, then online consumers with high wages are more likely to purchase more often and bigger amounts than people having no occupation at all or one that is not well remunerated (Shwu Ing, 2003)

j) Psychological factor online

Psychological factors are those playing a crucial role in helping online customers unfamiliar with the vendor or unfamiliar with online transactions to overcome fears of fraud and doubts as to the trustworthiness of the Web site and vendor (Efthymios Constantinides, 2004).

The psychological factors inherent in each individual (motivation, perception, personality, attitudes and emotions) affect how the external inputs from the input stage influence the consumer’s recognition of a need, pre-purchase search for information, and evaluations of alternatives. The experience gained through evaluation of alternatives in turn, affects the consumer’s existing psychological attributes. Consumers dealing with the psychological factor of motivation typically ask questions such as: “How much do I really need this?”, “Should I look around for a better price?”, and “If shopping online saves me time should I shop online more often?”

One of the leading reasons to shop online is the overwhelming convenience factor. It is easy to sit down in front of a computer with your credit card and make a few clicks with the mouse, but it is also impersonal. Purchasers can find out immediately whether the product they want is available and after the actual financial transaction can virtually track the manufacture and delivery of the product. Their purchase is likely to be in their hands much more quickly than by any other purchasing method, especially if it is a customised good/service (Smith et al., 2003).

We receive a lot of advertisements online (maybe even more than through traditional channels such as TV, press…) so stimulation of the motivation for fulfilling the needs is higher on internet (Efthymios Constantinides, 2004).

On internet, users are more willing to find information because it is easier to access it and the amount is a lot bigger. Indeed, you can find a lot of sources if you search for anything (comparative websites, feedback of previous consumers, websites with quality/prices deals ranking). Someone who has higher computer knowledge and has experience will have a purchase decision process longer than a non-experienced person since he/she will try to get a maximum of data and try to organize it to make the right choice (Wen-Bao Lin, 2008).

Customers’ beliefs and perceptions are extremely powerful change agents that must be addressed in a user-friendly manner by advertisers on the Web (Smith et al., 2003). The website environment’s elements play an important role in the customer’s perception, such as the colours, audio, video… (Engel et al., 1995).
Online customers don’t have a complete experience with the product they buy (no possibility to touch, smell…) then they have more affective attitudes and beliefs towards their purchase, they will decide according to how they feel about the visual, what it looks like… (Lai, 2000).

Trying to influence non-online shoppers to buy online involves a combination of both trust and low cost incentives – it must be worth their risks and efforts for them to venture into unknown territory (Smith et al., 2003).

![Graphic 3 Questions consumers ask themselves when buying online](source)

**Graphic 3 Questions consumers ask themselves when buying online**

*Source: Alan D. Smith, William T. Rupp, (2003), "Strategic online customer decision making: leveraging the transformational power of the Internet", Online Information Review, Vol. 27 Iss: 6 pp. 418 – 432*

The table above shows us some of the questions that consumers ask themselves when buying online and we can notice that the motivation, perception personality, attitude and emotions are individual factors, no one has exactly the same answers to those questions. Therefore it would be impossible to try to analyse these factors in the online purchase
process, so we will focus on the more generalist factors: trust, convenience, price and web atmospherics/environment.

4. Factors influencing the difference

The previous part shows us the different characteristics of online consumers and traditional customers. We have noticed that these factors are quite the same but some of them are varying from the traditional shopping to the online shopping but first of all internet shopping may require capability to access the internet and other relevant resources (i.e. high speed internet, modem) Jihyun Kim and Jihye Park (2005).

The results of Chung-Hoon and Yong-Gul, 2003, imply that information of an online store is an important factor that affects each consumer’s site loyalty and purchase behaviour. The key affecting factors of user interface quality, product and service information quality, security perception and site awareness were found to have significant effect on consumer site commitment.

An on-line store is categorized as having low and high relevant elements influencing the buying decision process. Providing the necessary information to make purchases, such as delivery, pictures of merchandise, price, return policies and terms of sale is a high relevant element which leads easily to the purchase. Otherwise, the fact of establishing the store image or providing a context for the shopping experience, i.e. animation, background colour, patterns and web borders is a less essential element for the purchase action but have still a strong influence during the process (Eroglu et al., 2001). Indeed it affects the level of pleasure that customers experience at the on-line store. It has been proven that pictures of the product and samples of the music included in a site since are highly relevant to completing the shopping task and are considered a necessary part of completing a purchase (Davis, Wang and Lindridge, 2008).

It is possible to sort these factors into three different groups as Michèle Ambaye did: Information search; pre-purchase (evaluation of alternative); purchase.

Information Search

Online consumers have better buying decisions and higher levels of satisfaction when there is more extensive and higher quality information available on internet. The characteristics of information presentation, navigation, order fulfilment in an interactive shopping medium is considered a more important factor in building electronic commerce trust than in the traditional retailing (Alba et al., 1997; Reynolds, 2000; Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003).

Online shopping stores can offer hyperlinks to more extensive product information such as price comparison, product testimonial and product demonstration. Since online
shoppers cannot physically touch or feel the product, they make decisions mainly with information provided electronically by the online stores. The availability of information considers not only product of service information but also convenience and personalisation for retailing consumers (Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003).

**Customer Service**

Merchandising includes product-related characteristics such as assortment, variety, and product information (Jarvenpaa and Todd, 1997; Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003). Customer service includes sales clerk service for merchandise selection, answer to frequently asked questions and credit return and payment policies. Customers want help with product selection, gift services, contact information for sales representatives, the FAQ section for speedy answers, and information about shipping and handling costs (Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003).

Product information includes product attribute information, consumer recommendations, evaluation reports, etc. Service information that most online stores provide includes membership information, FAQs, ordering and delivering information and promotion.

**Atmospheric**

According to Phillip Kotler, in his article “Atmospherics as a marketing tool”, store atmospherics is another essential point to on-line store’s ability to garner attention of consumer and retain them globally. Indeed, it takes seconds for consumers to switch from one site to another. Therefore, designing the web site in a way that attracts consumers and involves them in the site is a huge competitive advantage for companies (Mazaheri, Richard and Laroche, 2012).

It may be divided into two broad categories (Mazaheri et al., 2011). The first category includes site interface features such as text color, size, background colour, pattern, hyperlinks, icons, overall colour scheme, music, typeface and web borders (Eroglu et al., 2001; Davis, Wang and Lindridge, 2008) which could be considered as “visual” and “aural” dimensions of the atmosphere. This category tends to impact consumer’s emotions at the initial exposure to the web site, not even necessarily at the conscious level (Mazaheri et al., 2012). This is every design elements used to attract attention and create a positive and agreeable buying environment and therefore lead to enhancing the purchasing probability. It is a way of improving the consumers’ online shopping experience (Eroglu et al., 2001; Szymanski and Hise, 2000 quoted by Davis, Wang and Lindridge, 2008).

The homepage of a website is part of the first category because of its impact on consumer’s emotions through design, colours, icons…
Lohse and Spiller (1999) did not find an effect of “store presentation” variables, such as image sizes, background patterns or the number of buttons on the storefront. According to them, consumers want to find products quickly and effortlessly. “It appears that no amount of “sparkle” in the presentation of products can overcome a site design with poor navigation features” (p7/8).

However, they said earlier in 1998 “A help button on the home page of the Web shopping site replaces the sales clerk’s friendly advice and service. The familiar layout of the physical store becomes a maze of pull-down menus, product indices and search features.” (p81). Nowadays, the success of e-commerce websites depends upon how well consumers interact with the interface of the online store. Obviously, the user interface is an essential link between the customer and the retail store in online shopping. The authors thought that the growth of Internet retail sales will depend, at least partially, on these interface design issues.

Rosen, Purinton (2004) stated that, according to them, adopting a minimalistic approach to the design of the home page with eye-catching but appropriate graphics and categories that draw the web surfer further into the site appears to be more effective. Web design should not result in information overload. The goal, rather, should be to give access to the information web surfers’ desire in the most expedient way possible. Hence, the design goal should be access not abundance.

These authors thought that “simplicity of design should be a major consideration as it not only makes the site more appealing, it also makes it far faster to load. Web surfers are not a patient group. Some web design experts have estimated that they have exactly 10 seconds to lure people into a site. It is not, therefore, surprising that slow loading sites are a major frustration and turnoff for web surfers. Another prerequisite is to make the website distinctive. A website with a distinct identity will appeal to web-weary surfers, differentiate the company and make the site more memorable.” (Rosen, Purinton, 2004)

Indeed, according to Weinberg (2000), one of the primary e-commerce issue is the user’s waiting time of loading homepages. If the loading time is too long for an online user, it might dissatisfy the user and he/she could switch to a competitor. Since the homepage of a website is quite important, it is necessary that the companies focus not only on appearance and functionality but also on loading time.

The second category includes the cues such as web site informativeness, effectiveness, structure, and entertainment. These are characteristics that require one’s evaluations and do not automatically impact consumer’s emotions at the initial exposure to the site. (Mazaheri et al., 2012)

Delafrooz et al. (2009) said in their study that the degree of interactivity that a Web site offers is a strong factor in support of establishing relationship between consumer and
website, because experiential shoppers usually find more enjoyment in interactive environments than in pure text environments (Childers et al., 2001). Hedonic shoppers can be more influenced by retailer and change their choices because of the information provided. Indeed, they do not have a specific goal in mind when visiting an online shopping site. Usually, depending on the hedonists satisfaction, the possibility of impulse purchases and frequency of visiting the website could vary (Wolfinbarger and Gilly, 2001). Therefore, marketers have to pay a particular attention to the design of a website in order to attract experiential shoppers, so that they will insure the conversion of shoppers’ product navigation into purchases. Childers et al. (2001) have confirmed that and said that “hedonic orientations for online shopping are important predictors of attitudes toward online shopping” (Delafrooz et al., 2009).

Moreover, culture, emotions and the interpretation of the store atmospheric are tightly linked. As we said previously we can divide culture by three dimensions: Cognitive, Structuralism and Symbolic culture. Symbolic culture has important implications for understanding culture's influence on customers' responses and interpretations. Store atmospheres are mostly composed of signs and symbols, differences in symbolism or the symbolic system of a culture would affect how customers respond to an on-line store's design (Davis, Wang and Lindridge, 2008). Moreover, some studies in environmental psychology suggested that consumers respond to dimensions of the physical surroundings emotionally and cognitively; those responses impact consumer behaviour within the environment (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Mazaheri et al., 2012). The fact is that online consumers’ emotions impact their perceptions of site information, site effectiveness, and site entertainment.

In this atmospheric section, not only the design elements are included, we also can add the interaction with the sales person. In online services marketing, the interpersonal interactions have been replaced by technology and limited to electronic interaction according to Holloway and Beatty (2008) quoted by Mazaheri, Richard and Laroche (2012).

**Trust**

Consumers tend to engage in relational behaviours to achieve greater efficiency in their decision making, to reduce information processing, to achieve more cognitive consistency in their decisions and to reduce the perceived risks associated with future choices (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995).

After a few successful transactions, a consumer starts to feel safe with the service provider or supplier (Ravald and Grönroos, 1996). When consumers trust a company, they know that this company is able to fulfil their needs and wants and eventually they become committed to the company (Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003), they are more willing to purchase again from a particular website.
Enjoyment, entertainment, and humour are important dimensions of forming one’s attitude and behavioural intention toward the site (Agarwan and Karahanna, 2000; Moon and Kim, 2001). Site awareness is the perception by consumers that they have about an online shopping store and that is based on external information events like advertising and word of mouth communication. It is the “ability of a buyer to recognise or recall that a site is a member of a certain service category” (Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003).

All the factors which motivate the customer to buy can also be divided into different sections, the consumer needs to trust the website to buy a product and feel safe. This fact comes during the pre-purchase moment; the consumer evaluates all the possibilities to find the best website. Indeed, the consumer is looking for safe transactions, good delivery and security. As increased transaction complexity makes conditions more uncertain, as is the case in computer-mediated commerce, the need for trust grows (Mishra, A.K.1996 as cited by D. Harrison McKnight and Norman L. Chervany). The fact is that the purchase on Internet can be very risky. Most of the time, in traditional shops, the salesperson is the person who people listen, who people trust. On the online way, people are alone and make much more efforts to find the right information and select the website and products that they can trust in. According to Monsuwé et Al., 2004, the higher the level of security and privacy, the better the consumer will trust the website.

Security/Privacy


Consumers are concerned about disclosing their private and financial information. While most online shopping sites provide personal information privacy protection policy and guarantee for transaction security, they do not offer detailed information on how transaction and personal data are secured (Elliot and Fowell 2000, Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003)

Hoffman, Novak and Peralta (1999) found differences for the perception of security and privacy concerns between traditional and online shopping. Indeed, they said that in the physical world, a consumer may be concerned about giving out credit card information over the telephone to an unknown voice within a mail-order company. On the Web, consumers may fear typing in credit card information to any commercial Web provider.

The following schema from Hoffman et al. shows that Web consumers’ top online shopping concerns are related to control over information privacy and to trust, as opposed to the operating risks of remote shopping, and that these concerns influence
their stated likelihood of buying something. In light of increasing security concerns, the likelihood of buying online decreases.

![Graphic 4 How consumer attitudes influence intent to buy on the Web](image)

Moreover, these authors demonstrated that the more experience someone acquires online, the less important are the functional barriers to online shopping and the more important are concerns of control over personal information. On Internet, consumers are clear about their intense need for control and protection. Indeed they found that 87% of online users think they should have complete control over the demographic information that the websites get, and over 71% feel there should be new laws to protect their privacy online.

Belanger, Hiller, Smith’s study (2002) also demonstrated the effects of online security and privacy on consumers. One of their primary goals was to examine the relative importance of site attributes reflecting security and privacy. The results indicated that the presence of security features was most important to the consumer. Another of their hypothesis that was confirmed is: “controlling for trustworthiness perceptions, there is a positive relationship between consumers’ purchase intentions and their willingness to give private information to a land an electronic merchant” (p253). However, even if security features were ranked as most important by the sample of their research, with privacy and security seals and privacy and security statements all highly correlated, respondents indicated that requirements for one of these features on a Web site lead to a desire for the others as well.
Convenience

Concerning convenience, for this category, store layout, organisation features, and ease of use are related to the user interface of an online store. Online shopping is thought to be pleasurable and satisfying to customers when the retailer sites are fast, uncluttered and easy-to-navigate. (Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003)

According to Wolfinbarger and Gilly (2001) cited by Monsuwé et al., convenience and accessibility are the most important attributes of online shopping. Oxford dictionary defines convenience as the state of being able to proceed with something without difficulty: -a thing that contributes to an easy and effortless way of life. The possibility of shopping at any time of the day or night as well as the fact that online shopping can occur in the consumer home environment is particularly convenient, it saves time and effort.

Price

Nowadays, Internet is a global marketplace where consumers can compare prices, values and quality of the product. The pricing information is easier to find on internet than for the conventional way. The site’s purpose of always offering that lowest prices reinforces the fact that people think that the price is one of the primary purchasing determinants for online shoppers (Mazaheri et al. 2012)

There are so many online businesses which try to find the best value for the consumer. Indeed according to Kung, Monroe and Cox (2002) the Internet leads to perfect competition and online companies are ready to set prices below consumers’ value-based prices to obtain loyal consumers. When a consumer meets difficulties to find the perfect information or assess quality of the product, they cannot determine their potential degree of satisfaction. So that, the consumer will make its purchase decision comparing prices to obtain the degree of satisfaction that he or she expects.

Nevertheless, convenience and price factors are linked during the purchase process because searching for the lowest price in traditional shopping can be time consuming and effortful whereas searching online for the lowest prices can be convenient, quick and comparatively costless. Comparative price websites make it easily (Hansen and Jensen, 2009).

Loyalty

Internet offers a new set of tools that help strengthen loyalty through enhanced customer understanding and improved service offerings. If you can target the right sets of potential customers online, win their trust and use the technology both to serve and understand them better, then you can build the foundation of a business that will continue to generate profits in the years ahead (Reichheld, Markey, Hopton, 2000).
Murphy (2007) said that “loyalty online is not earned the same way than in stores. According to her, shoppers don’t want to present traditional loyalty cards at the point of purchase. Instead, they are demanding immediate, specific and individualized attention that fits their needs and behaviours.”

Reichheld, Markey and Hopton (2000) posit that the basic rules of business apply in online as they do in traditional businesses. However, companies have to innovate quicker online than in the physical world in order to surpass competitors in serving their customers. The constraints of geography or access to information do not tie customer choice anymore. Online shoppers can have access to all the possible suppliers thanks to rich information from companies, competitors, commentators and peers. “Their tolerance for poorly functioning websites, shoddy service, lax communications or poor products is rapidly diminishing” (Reichheld, Markey and Hopton., 2000, p178).

Those authors also demonstrated that nowadays with internet, customer loyalty has become essential to survival whereas offline, in the past, it was just a weapon to use against the competitors. Therefore, the companies need to keep absolute focus on what they can offer to its customers in order to make them come back and buy again; otherwise they will lose them quickly.

Anderson and Srinivasan’s research (2003) revealed that the impact of e-satisfaction on e-loyalty can be significantly moderated by individual level variables (inertia, convenience motivation, and purchase size) and company level variables (trust and perceived value). Companies can’t control entirely the individual variables but can work on their variables. If customers trust them and think that they have an advantage buying from them, loyalty might be created. “Demonstrating to customers that they care about them and want to assist them irrespective of the short-run profit consequences help to create and/or strengthen the kind of trusting relationship that garners customer loyalty” (Anderson and Srinivasan, 2003).

Reichheld and Schefter (2000) showed that in order to gain the loyalty of customers, companies must first gain their trust. According to them, even in traditional shopping it was true but on internet where business is performed at distance and risks and uncertainties are higher, it is even truer. Online shoppers cannot see or touch the products, there is no store space where they can move and observe the environment so they have to count on images and promises of the website. If they don’t trust it, they will shop on another e-commerce store. “When customers do trust an on-line vendor, they are much more likely to share personal information. That information enables the company to form a more intimate relationship with customers, offering products and services tailored to their individual preferences, which in turn increases trust and strengthens loyalty.” (p107).

Shankar, Smith and Rangaswamy (2003) also arrived at the same conclusion but they go even further. According to them, customer trust is particularly important in the online
context because customers increasingly rely on the Internet for information and purchases and therefore can be more loyal online.

On the contrary, Ribbink, Allard, Liljander and Streukens’ research (2004) showed that online satisfaction (related to the quality of online service) positively and directly influences loyalty on internet. Electronic trust is also directly affecting loyalty, but much less that satisfaction, which may imply that trust is not the anticipated major contributor to loyalty in an online environment.

“In the end, loyalty is not won with technology. It is won through the delivery of a consistently superior customer experience.” Building relationships and strengthen them is one of the most effective attribute of internet. However, the way of building loyalty stayed the same between the both online and traditional way. If companies can persuade their most loyal and profitable customers, it will set off a spiral of economic advantages. Thus, they would be able to give higher salaries to their employees, to give investors higher cash flows and then reinvest to further improve the value delivered to their customers (Reichheld, Schefter, 2000, p113).

**Advertising**

Li et al. (2002) reported that online consumers are goal-oriented and judge online advertisements even more harshly than those in other media. Further, they found that the negative attitudes online consumers develop ultimately contribute to decisions not return to the site.

Promotion involves advertising and sales events that attract customers such as frequent buyer schemes, the lottery games, and product-related tips. (Chung-Hoon, Yong-Gul, 2003)

McCoy, Everard, Polak and Galletta’s study (2009) showed that users will adopt more negative intentions when a website displays advertisements than when the site does not. They also demonstrated clearly that that advertisements interfere with retention of site content and that features of advertisements also have important effects on retaining both site and ad content. Another point is that in-line ads allow both website and ad content to be remembered more clearly than pop-ups and pop-unders, this suggests that the action of closing the advertisement window distracts users from the site, and in addition, it is visible for a shorter time. Indeed, they proved that pop-ups and pop-unders are considered to be more intrusive than in-line ads. Users seem to prefer not to have to divert their attention from their searching task or take additional steps to close the pop-up or pop-under windows.

McCoy et al. (2009) claimed that “Online advertising techniques such as banners, pop-ups, and pop-unders are quite salient to Internet users. Some studies have reported that consumers despise these annoyances and even feel violated and molested by their presence.” (p84).
Yoo et al. (2004) demonstrated that too much animation may reduce the advertising effectiveness due to the consumer’s limited cognitive capacities or negative affective responses toward the advert (e.g., annoyance, irritation).

Brajnik and Gabrielli (2010) also found that it was difficult to reach targets through online ads and said that even if matching adverts content/topic with the anticipated audience preferences and motivational needs might be a good strategy to reach persuasion goals, it should be noted that website users are often very diversified in terms of personal attributes and preferences (e.g., age, gender, abilities, cultural backgrounds), which makes it more difficult for an advertising message to affect them all in the same way.

Chang-Hoan and Cheon’s research (2004) suggests that people avoid advertising messages on the internet because of perceived ad clutter. Although some consumers may continue to click on the internet ads that they find useful, many consumers choose not to because of an aversion to the amount of ads online. Their result also showed that some past negative experience (indicated by overall dissatisfaction and perceived lack of utility and incentive) causes people to avoid the source of the negative experience, that is, internet ad avoidance. These authors also said that in order to develop consumer continuance intention for clicking internet ads, it is essential to create consumer satisfaction towards ad services and increase perceived incentive and utility for clicking on banner ads. More specifically, internet marketers might try to build customer loyalty to online advertisers by meeting consumer expectations and building trust.

According to Chang-Hoan and Cheon (2004), another significant precursor for ad avoidance on internet is perceived goal obstruction: people avoid internet ads because they see them as an obstacle to their aims. “The unexpected appearance of advertising messages on internet disrupts user tasks or goals and causes consumers to extensively avoid the noise. This may be especially true for more intrusive and unexpected advertising formats such as interstitials or pop-up ads.” (Chang-Hoan; Cheon, 2004, p94) Their findings are consistent with the assumption that internet is a more goal-oriented medium and therefore goal barriers caused by online ads are significant concern among internet users.

After evocating all these factors, we have to remember that there are other relevant exogenous factors are “consumer traits”, “situational factors”, “product characteristics” and “previous online shopping experience”. Consumer traits, an important point to understand, include demographic factors and personality characteristics that we have described in the previous part. The influence of age (demographic factor) is noticeable because younger adults (under 25 years old) are more interested in using new technologies compared to older consumers (Wood, 2002 as cited in Perea, Monsuwé, Dellaert, de Ruyter, 2004). We will focus on this range of age in the analysis part.
Burke (2002) found that men express a greater interest in using various types of technology in the shopping process. The female consumers that do prefer shop on the internet shop more frequently online (Perea, Monsuwé, Dellaert, de Ruyter, 2004). Concerning incomes, the higher household salaries, the more people shop online.

5. Conclusion

By explaining the theories about consumer behaviour which have been stated by scientists through different articles, we have identified every consumer traits that could influence the decision of making a purchase. Moreover, by understanding the online consumer and comparing it to the traditional one, we have emphasis the different factors that have an impact on these changes such as the trust, the convenience, the price or the atmospheric aspects.

Companies have to be aware of these aspects when they are targeting people: by gaining understanding of these factors, they ensure the right offer to the right segment. Taking into account the importance of trust for an online consumer allows companies to aim at the right strategy and improve their website in this way. They have to show an interest in making better their consumer’s safety during a purchase for example.

Besides, the purchase decision making process is divided into three different steps, the information search, the pre-purchase and the purchase. In every stage, we can find the relevant factors influencing the difference between the online consumer behaviour and the traditional one.

Indeed, during the information search step, the convenience aspect is the most important one because it is easy to find information on internet. The ease of navigation from a website to another to compare products that we are interesting in is significant in order to be satisfied.

During the pre-purchase step, this is the price factor as well as the atmospheric one that come up in the decision making. In fact, when the consumer have done all the research conveniently about the product he wants, he has to find the best value and to have a good feeling about the website and to evaluate all the alternative to make his decision.

The trust factor is essential during the purchase step because consumer wants to feel safe and if he does not trust the website, he will never buy though it.

The loyalty factor seems to be important for companies online if they want to keep its customers since they use to switch very easily. Indeed, it is easier on internet to compare the suppliers and therefore it is harder to build strong relationship and loyalty is earned with more difficulty than in traditional shopping.

Advertising has not as much effect as we could think because it seems that for a majority of web users it is considered as annoying. Therefore, organizations should be careful with their sponsors, pop-ups on their website…
Security and information privacy is one of the most important factors for online consumers and in most of the cases, they will not buy on websites they don’t trust and don’t feel safe about. Online shoppers are usually willing to give personal information provided that the website assures them of its safety and seriousness.

IV. Questionnaire- Collected Data

The survey’s main aim was to get enough answers in order to help us understand the consumer behaviour on internet. We will try to figure out a certain amount of differences between this kind of purchase and the one in physical stores. The survey consisted in 18 questions (see in Annexe 1) that people of all ages could answer. Since we had 93% of responses coming from youths between 18 and 25 years old, we decided to focus on that category. We collected the data by asking to the students from our home school and to people on our social networks to answer the survey. The fact that all the answers were collected in only two days proves that young people spend most of their time on the web and that they are very reactive as soon as they are facing up to a web activity.

All the data following is the one collected through our survey:

### Table 1 General Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Nb of people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy on internet</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't buy in internet</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a year</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a month</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy in a shop</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy on internet</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This table summarizes all the results that we got from the survey that we published. We had 278 respondents corresponding to the category that we decided to focus on and who gave us essential answers that we will use and analyse in the next part.

**Table 2 Data exploited with only people preferring to buy in physical stores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 Data exploited with only people preferring to buy in physical stores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy in stores 230 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty of exchange 26 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of dissatisfaction 58 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No possibility to try the product before reception 84 37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad internet connection 32 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defaulting order tracking 12 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No or bad customer service 18 8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this table, we focused on the 230 people that said preferring to buy in physical stores and we compared their answers in order to know why they did not prefer to buy online.
According to their responses, we saw that the major criterion that makes them have a preference for physical shops is that they can’t try the product before receiving it when shopping online. To sum up, they like better having the possibility to try the product they want before to pay for it and bring it home.

*Table 3 Data exploited with only people preferring to buy on internet*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefer to buy on Internet</th>
<th>48</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buy once a month or more</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy once a year or more</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comfort</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ease of payment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interesting price</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wide range of products</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>customer service</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no set opening hours</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this table, we focused on the 48 people of our sample that prefer to buy on internet and we also compared their answers in order to know what is the criterion that makes them prefer internet shopping. We discovered that this is the fact that online prices are usually more interesting and appealing for consumers that was the most important factor for online shoppers.
Table 4 The most discouraging criteria for buying on internet data

The table 4 shows what are the most discouraging criteria for buying online for all of our respondents.

Table 5 The most encouraging criteria for buying on internet data

The table 5 shows what are the most encouraging criteria for buying online for all of our respondents.
The table 5 illustrates the most encouraging criteria for shopping on internet for all of our respondents.

Table 6 *Most frequently items bought on internet data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items bought on Internet</th>
<th>Nb of people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothes/Shoes</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD/CD, Books</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer hardware</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephony</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home/Decoration</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video games</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys/Games</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV/MP3 HIFI</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo/Camcorder</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household electrical goods</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden/DIY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine/Food</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto/Moto/GPS</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the table 6, we can see the answers of our respondents concerning the items that they buy most when shopping on internet. We will examine the differences for the top responses for men and for women in the next part.
Table 7 Data exploited with only men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nb of people</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy on Internet</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a year</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a month</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy on Internet</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy in store</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy DVD/CD Books on Internet</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sensitive to ads on social networks or websites</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sensitive to ads in emails, texts or newsletter</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More loyal to a store than a website</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sensitive to sponsoring</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table 7 represents the data focused on men in order to examine the differences between men/women behaviours.

Table 8 Data exploited with only women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nb of people</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy on internet</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a year</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table 8 represents the data focused on women in order to examine the differences between men/women behaviours.

### 1. Explanation of the collected data

We needed some questions to establish the consumer’s demographic: gender, age and socio-professional category. Since we focused on 18-25 years old people, 93% were students (the other 7% answered to be employees or senior executives).

**Table 9 Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another reason why we focused on 18-25 people is because they represent a big part of the population that use internet everyday as well as that shop online (food, clothes, shoes, IT hardware…). For that matter, among the 278 respondents of this age, 94% answered that they buy on internet. These figures really prove that the young generation has already taken the habit of shopping online and it is quite safe to assume that the next
ones will probably adopt again more this new way of purchasing (more diversified items, bigger amounts…).

**Table 10 Online Buyers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buy on Internet</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t buy on internet</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>278</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While a big majority of the respondents buy on the web, 83% would still rather buy in a shop than on an e-commerce website and 82% claim to be more loyal to a shop than to a website. The traditional way of shopping is still too important for people, and they are not ready to buy everything on the web (due to advices in shops, to the possibility of trying the product…). As for the loyalty, the competition is extremely high since there are so many websites and they are always trying to make better offers than the others. Therefore, people looking for the best (quality, price…) will probably switch to the current best e-commerce site.

However, people who prefer to buy on internet do it very often. Indeed, almost 2/3 of them are used to making a purchase online at least once a month or more. The converts to online shopping make repeated purchases quite often and most of the time, they see only advantages in it. We will see below what are the important criteria for them.
Table 11 Preferences/Loyalty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy in a shop</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to buy on internet</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More loyal to a shop</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More loyal to a website</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 Frequency of online purchases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buy once a month or more online</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy once a year or more online</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We also looked at what is the most encouraging criterion to buy online for the people who prefer to purchase on websites and what is the most discouraging one for the people who prefer to purchase in physical stores.
We found that 93% of the people answering the survey buy on internet which is not really surprising since most of young people are used to computers, internet and have the knowledge, ability and even the ease to buy online. 54% of them make a purchase online more than once a year and 22% once a month. Among those who prefer buying on internet, 63% make a purchase once a month or more.

The respondents also said that buying online allowed avoiding prying eyes, that there are more choices (also possibility to buy from abroad if you don’t find what you are looking for in your own country) and that you can compare the offers, you don’t have to go to town (gas economy and home comfort) so it is more practical. Other advantages are other clients’ opinions to help you to decide, extended reflection time or no waiting time at the cash desk.

Therefore, according to the survey, what persuades most people to buy on internet are the interesting prices (cheaper than in stores, better reductions…) and what discourages most from purchasing online is the impossibility to try the product before reception. The criteria that encourage most people to buy online are (in decreasing order): interesting price (29%), comfort (21%), wide range of products (19%), customer service/ not set opening hours (12.5%) and ease of payment (6%).

*Table 13 Most encouraging criteria for buying online*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most encouraging criteria</th>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interesting price</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comfort</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wide range of products</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>customer service</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no set opening hours</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ease of payment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, even if buying online became a rather ordinary act nowadays, 83% still prefer to buy in an actual shop rather than on a website and 82% claim to be more loyal to a physical store than to an online one. We searched what are the criteria that discourage them from buying on a website and we found that it was (in decreasing order) the impossibility to try the product before reception (37%), the fear of dissatisfaction (25%), a wrong internet connection (14%), the difficulty to exchange the product if something is wrong (11%), a bad or non-existent customer service (8%) and a defaulting order tracking (5%).

Table 14 Most discouraging criteria for buying online

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most discouraging criteria</th>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No possibility to try the product before reception</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of dissatisfaction</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad internet connection</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty of exchange</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No or bad customer service</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defaulting order tracking</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>230</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the respondents, what they prefer in physical stores is that they are able to see, touch, smell, taste or try the products before paying for them. It allows to be sure about the quality and then it is safer than online, you cannot have bad surprising when using the product for the first time. For some people, another important point is the relational aspect of stores, you can get advices from the vendors. According to them, it is also faster (product available and usable right away), there is not high shipping costs, the transaction is safer (fear of frauds, credit card hacking…) and the customer’s after-sale service is better than online ones.
We also discovered that online customers are usually not sensitive to sponsoring (78% of them) nor to ads on social networks or other websites (83%) nor to ads in emails, mobile phone texts or newsletters (79%); consequently, it doesn’t further more purchases. Even if they don’t seem sensitive to sponsoring or ads, we can identify some differences between men and women sensitivity. Indeed, 14% of men are sensitive to ads on social networks or websites but 18% of women are. 25% of women are sensitive to ads in emails, texts or newsletter whereas only 13% of men are and 24% of women are sensitive to sponsoring while only 17% of men are. We can see that, in general, women pay more attention to the ads that they receive and that this make them buy more even if they didn’t intend to, they rather spend time to check products or promotions just to do some “online window-shopping”. However, men get straight to the point, they search a specific product that they know they will buy and, even if they also compare offers, they try to get it over with as fast as possible. It is the same trend that we know for the traditional shopping actually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What kind of products do you prefer to buy on Internet?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auto/Moto/GPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden/DoItYourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo/Camcorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys/Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes/Shoes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Graphic 8 What kind of products do you prefer to buy on internet?*

When trying to see if there are some differences between men and women behaviours, it is usually similar (on the frequency of habits, on the physical shops preference and loyalty, on the non-sensitivity to ads on websites, social networks, in emails, texts or newsletters or to sponsoring), the main difference lies in the type of products they buy (61% of the asked women purchase clothes or shoes online whereas men buy DVD, CD or books (49%)). That is why a lot of shops selling clothes/shoes and DVD/CD/books are nowadays online.
The main difference between men and women in online shopping context is that, in majority, men are utilitarian shoppers whereas women are hedonic shoppers. That means that men shop online with a clear idea of what they want, they are more goal-oriented than women. Indeed, women, just like in traditional shopping, usually shop online “for fun” and look at everything, not always looking for a particular item.

The aim of the survey is to show what is different between the online consumer behaviour and the traditional one. Based on the answers, we will try to answer to this interrogation and analyse the factors influencing these differences.

2. Analysis

The main factors of consumer’s behaviour differences between online and traditional shopping that we decided to focus on are price, trust, comfort/convenience and environment/ ambiance/ atmosphere. We will try to highlight these dissimilarities basing on the results of our survey.

![Diagram of Consumer Behaviour Factors](image)

**Graphic 9 Consumer behaviour factors**

a) Price

In our results, the price is the prime factor for young people (18-25 years old) to choose to buy online. This probably can be explained by the fact that at this age we are just starting to accumulate money so we are looking for every way to save some. E-shopping seems like a good solution since we always receive emails or see ads on websites concerning reductions on products that interest us. This encourages more the impulse purchase than in physical stores.
Since companies have understood that it is the biggest motivation for people to buy, internet is now crawling with little and unknown-branded websites proposing only low-cost products that are expensive on famous brand websites.

Nowadays, with the price inflation, most of people are always looking for the best deal possible and internet now make it possible to compare the prices and in one click buy the cheapest product that you could find. Moreover, since you have a wider range of choice on internet, you have a wider range of price than in physical stores and that attracts consumers.

Therefore, the sensibility to the price is completely different online than in stores because people moving, making the effort to go in stores, are more careful to what they buy and at what price. However, purchases on the web are more guided by the impulse of the moment and the reductions and discounts that they think they would never get in shops.

b) Trust

Chouk (2005) defines the trust as “a set of positive expectations about the competence and expertise of the merchant (credibility dimension), about compliance with its commitments (integrity dimension), about the motivation to help the consumer in case of problems (orientation dimension to solve problems) and about the attention paid to its interests (benevolence dimension)”.

People usually have more trust in stores for two main reasons: the transaction for payment looks safer and there are fewer risks about the product (possibility to see, touch and try the product).

There are still nowadays a lot of frauds on the web and this can be a negative factor for consumer trusting more physical shops. Indeed, they prefer having someone in front of them and think that it would prevent them from frauds. We have to keep in mind that it is also possible to be hacked in shops.

Even if people tend to be more and more confident in online transactions, the fear of being hacked into credit card or personal information remains and can sometimes prevent consumers to make a purchase.

According to Chouk (2005), several characteristics make the electronic trust more critical than in other contexts: the risk linked to the environment, the absence of human relationships, the fact that the product is virtual and a greater vulnerability of the consumer as to the use of the disclosed information. The author also explains that Pavlou (2003) distinguished two types of risks for internet shopping: the risk due to the possibility of an opportunistic behaviour from the vendor and the risk not directly linked
to the merchant but to the internet used as a shopping mode: hacking and illegal intrusion in customer’s databases.

Therefore, there are several ways to reassure the consumers and encourage them to buy on one’s website and establish trust: the possibility to contact the company or send a message about a problem (technical for example), legal notice (mandatory in France), explanation of payment and return method, but also previous customer reviews for instance.

c) Convenience

Convenience is another important factor for “buying online adepts”. People can stay home, comfortable in their living room and still be making purchases, avoiding the stress of stores that can be caused, for example during the discount sales.

It is also much more convenient to buy on internet because of the set opening hours of physical shops: if you want to buy something at midnight or 6am you totally can whereas you have to conform to the shop’s hours if you want to buy there. Another convenient point would be to be able to buy something that is half the world away, some products that you can’t find in your own country.

It is possible to buy from anywhere nowadays thanks to netbooks, smartphones, touchpads… Since it is very easy to carry them around, with an internet access, the purchase can be made in the street, at work, in a restaurant, etc…

A new trend that is increasing very quickly is the “food online shopping”. The supermarkets have developed their offers on the web and propose delivery so that people can do their grocery shopping without moving from their house. The comfort is the second most important advantage for online shoppers, therefore this new kind of electronic shopping become more and more popular.

Then, one of the main advantages for buying online is to buy anytime and from anywhere, which is very convenient for people having special schedules for work for example.

d) Environment/ Ambiance/ Atmosphere of the website

The environment is quite important for a customer, if he/she likes it, it can contribute to the purchase. Depending on how the consumer considers a nice environment, he/she could prefer being at home to make a purchase or being in a store, surrounded by vendors able to give him/her advices.
While analysing the answers of our survey, one thing came back lots of time: the social contact with vendors, with other customers or simply seeing other people in the street is very important for a lot of people. This could be one of the main reasons why people still prefer making a purchase in a store than on a website.

Therefore, the ambiance is very subjective, from one person to another the perception of a nice atmosphere will be different but it remains that shop’s ambiance are usually preferred.

Chao & Fu-Ling (2012) made a research about the website’s characteristics that could influence consumer behaviour and the results showed that website design, website reliability, website security, and website customer service are the four dominant characteristic factors that influence consumer perceptions of online purchasing. Moreover, the four types of online buyers (trial, occasional, frequent and regular online buyers) have different perceptions of these website characteristics.

The findings are the following: “Online buyers rate website design factor at the highest mean score. This implies they think highly of the feature. But website security factor is rated at the lowest mean score, which implies that the security issue is the essential concern for most online shoppers. Besides, regular web buyers were much more satisfied with all website variables than trial web buyers, who had the poorest viewpoint of website characteristics. Frequent online buyers were not as satisfied with their online shopping as regular web buyers, but had a better viewpoint than the occasional online buyers. Because customers’ characteristics will influence their attitude and intention toward online shopping, so differential marketing strategy targeted at the appropriate market segmentation should be planned and implemented to increase different customers’ satisfaction and loyalty.” (p286).

The authors defined the four characteristic factors influencing online consumer perceptions according to them:

- Reliability occurs when the consumer is aware that there is a high likelihood that the e-retailer will deliver exactly what is being promised.

- E-retailers’ service influences customers’ purchase decisions in the way that e-retailers reply quickly and effectively to consumers’ requests

- The design factor is composed of several elements:
  - Ease of use: may be described in terms of the time needed to find and buy the products, the convenience of using the shopping engine as part of the purchasing process (Bhatnagar, Misra, & Rao, 2000).
  - Minimal effort and more convenience
  - Product variety: essential to shoppers because it offers them with the chance to contrast product characteristics.
Easy comparison and acquisition of competitive prices: Shankar et al. (2003) stated that more abundant and higher quality information available online results in better purchasing decisions and higher satisfaction.

- Security and privacy have a powerful effect on customer trust in online shopping (Lee and Turban, 2001).

e) Loyalty

Nowadays, there are so many choices for everything we can buy: food, clothes, high-tech products... and we have the alternative between physical stores and online ones. That is why when a consumer has found the right place to buy, with the quality and price corresponding to its requirements, he/she develops loyalty.

The retailers -online or physical- also help developing that loyalty through different means: loyalty cards, private promotions, newsletters...

The majority of our respondents (82%) said to be more loyal to a physical shop than to a website.

In fact, this is quite related to trust. Since a lot of people are afraid of paying for goods on internet, because of the frauds and hacking, they buy more in shops and tend to repeat purchases in the same stores. If people are afraid of these “dangers”, they will not come back a lot on the website and grant it their trust and loyalty. However, if they feel good in a shop, that the vendors are nice and good advisers, it is much easier to give its trustworthiness.

Another point is that there are so many offers online and it is quick to switch from one retailer to another (just a few mouse clicks), thus the loyalty is really hard to institute.

f) Advertisement/ Sponsoring

Few of our respondents have said being sensitive to sponsoring (22%) or to ads on social network or on other websites (17%) or to ads in emails, texts or newsletters (21%). Ads that we can receive or see on internet are not always targeted, that can partly explain the results. Another reason why it does not affect consumers is that online purchases are often already planned. An online consumer will be looking for a precise item in most of the cases and unless the ad or the sponsoring is related to the item he/she is currently looking for, he will not care about it.

Another important point concerning online advertising is that it is perceived as annoying most of the time by consumers. It often happens when online users are looking for
something and being interrupted by an ad that does not have anything to do with this research give a negative perception of online ads over time.

Sponsoring is still something rather rare nowadays and it is usually planned: people interested in a certain sponsorship will ask someone they know who can sponsor them. It also can be constraining: websites ask their customers to sponsor friends in order to have something in return (gifts, next step of a game…).

g) Security/Privacy

Security and privacy is a factor that did not appear in the questions of our survey however a lot of respondents talked about it in the “free space” that we let for people to add comments.

What came back most was the fear of being hacked and stolen either credit card or personal information. This is still a current issue even though people that never had problems with that tend to be more and more confident.

Internet seems to be such an infinite space that security and privacy appears very important for online users. Indeed, it is a lot rarer to be hacked in the physical world than on the web so people are probably more careful when they buy online than in stores. Moreover, if a website does not seem professional, a little bit done hastily, they won’t trust it and won’t give their personal information.

The security and privacy matters also concern company because they know that they need to be irreproachable in order to keep its current customers and attract new ones.

3. Comparison theory/ analysis

The theory we developed was demonstrating that the price, the trust, the atmospheric and the convenience have an impact on the online consumer purchase and that they influence the behaviour differences with the traditional one. Therefore, our survey has confirmed it globally. However, Donthu and Garcia (1999) stated that internet shoppers were less brand and price conscious, having a more positive attitude towards advertising and direct marketing. Thanks to the answer we got from the survey, we can disconfirm this hypothesis in our case: the price is very important for our young French target.

We also saw that the cultural, social, personal and psychological characteristics of a person have an influence on his/her purchase. Indeed, these traits will probably define what kind of product you buy most (different consumption habits according to the countries for example), what price you are willing to pay for it. We noticed that one of the most influencing characteristics is the personal one: the age and occupation seems to influence a lot the product choice (quality/price). Since our range of people was young,
the price was very important but for older people that earn a living, quality matters more since they usually can afford it. Also, the age has influence on trust because young people tend to trust more websites than older people (because they are more used to it and spend more time on internet). The comfort is quite important for older adults whereas the convenience of being able to buy from anywhere thanks to new technologies matters a lot for young adults. Finally, the atmospheric of a website, its general appearance is significant for almost everyone at all age.

Chao Chuang and Dr. Fu-Ling Hu (2012) found that website security (which implies trust to the website), website design (atmospheric), website reliability and website customer service are the four main factors which affect consumer perceptions of their online purchasing experiences. Therefore, three of their conclusions are confirmed in our survey since trust, atmospherics and customer service are considered as important for someone’s purchases.

Hossein Moshref Javadi, Hossein Rezaei Dolatabadi, Mojtaba Nourbakhsh, Amir Poursaeedi & Ahmad Reza Asadollahi (2012) demonstrated that financial risk and non-delivery risk has negative effect on attitude towards online shopping behaviour and our respondents mentioned those risks as potential discouraging factors for buying online.

Constantinides (2004) identified the main constituents of the online experience: the functionality of the website that includes the elements dealing with the site’s usability and interactivity; the psychological elements intended for lowering the customer’s uncertainty by communicating trust and credibility of the online vendor and website; and the content elements including the aesthetic aspects of the online presentation. The ease of use, the trust and the design are factors influencing our respondents when making an online purchase as we saw in the results.

Perea y Monsuwé, Dellaert, de Ruyter (2004) showed that attitude toward online shopping and intention to shop online are not only affected by ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment, but also by exogenous factors like consumer traits, situational factors, product characteristics, previous online shopping experiences, and trust in online shopping. Eroglu, Machleit, Davis (2003) concluded that online store atmosphere make a difference for the online shopper. It was demonstrated that increasing the atmospheric qualities of an online store increases the level of pleasure felt by the shopper. If the answers to our questions do not confirm all the affirmations here, the “free-writing space” was extensively used by our respondents and that matches to the author’s theories.

Joines, Scherer, Scheufele (2003) have showed that economic motivation are strongly and positively related to shopping and concluded that people shop online to save money.
They also demonstrated that young people were significantly more likely to shop online. Our survey completely confirms their conclusions.

Reichheld and Schefter (2000) said that loyalty is not won with technology but with a constantly superior customer experience. If we agree to this theory and if we follow our respondents’ opinion which is that they are more loyal to stores than to websites (82%), then we arrive to the conclusion that physical stores offer a better shopping experience than online stores.

Chang-Hoan and Cheon’s research (2004) suggests that people avoid advertising messages on the internet because of perceived ad clutter and their findings are consistent with the assumption that internet is a more goal-oriented medium and therefore goal barriers caused by online ads are significant concern among internet users. Our survey showed that our sample is, in majority, not sensitive to online advertising (83%). Therefore the theory of these authors is confirmed: online ads are like an obstacle to consumer’s aims when shopping on internet and therefore they are not responsive to them.

Hoffman, Novak and Peralta (1999) showed that Web consumers’ top online shopping concerns are related to control over information privacy and to trust and that these concerns influence their stated likelihood of buying something. Since security was pointed out by a big majority of our respondents in their comments, we can confirm this theory according to which a lack of security and privacy on a website decreases shopping probabilities.

To conclude, these factors are directly linked to the consumer behaviour and change whether we are speaking of traditional shopping or online shopping. The price is the most important because people tend to think that it is lower online and then that it represents greater savings if they buy on an e-commerce website. Allred, Smith and Swinyard (2006) showed in their research that online shoppers differ substantially from online non-shoppers, we confirmed it in our survey.
Conclusion

These last decades, the entrance of internet has changed our way of life for so many things. Today, the convenience of internet allows us to stay home to do shopping, while saving money with best value and prices. Indeed, in 2012, the French e-commerce association (FEVAD) stated that 117 000 e-commerce websites were active whereas 6 years before, they were about 23 900. This proves that this kind of activities is highly and quickly increasing. In France, a new e-commerce website is created every 30 minutes.

- How can we adapt consumer behaviour theory to consumer behaviour on internet?

There are some similarities between both consumer behaviours so the base of the traditional theory is the same. However, the adaptation of the online model differs because of the web characteristics such as atmospherics, navigation, ease of use, less safe environment…

- What are the differences between consumer behaviour in a shop and on a website?

A consumer in a shop usually tends to buy after trying the product and thinking through the purchase. Nevertheless, an online customer is usually more tempted by ads and makes impulse purchases rather than well-thought ones.

- To what extent is Internet a real change in consumer’s habits?

Internet changes consumer’s habits because of the universality and the timelessness of the web. Indeed, people don’t have to go on shopping only when stores are opened (in France, they are closed on Sundays and generally between 9am and 6pm), and for those who work during the same hours, it is not always simple. When you become an online shopping adept, you get used to the fact that you can go home after work or university, rest a little, eat something and only then at 10 pm for example, you go shopping online.

- What kind of products has an influence on consumer behaviour concerning internet sales?

Clothes and shoes are the women’s top sale on internet, even if they admit that not being able to try them is a disadvantage of the web. Men prefer to buy DVD/CD/Books online. This could one day result in the decrease of little shops specialized in those items that would not have enough profits to keep existing. We also have to notice that products not available in one’s country but in another one in the world are also influencing internet sales.
• What are the main factors influencing the online consumer behaviour changes? How has buying on internet changed consumer behaviour?

The main factors influencing the online consumer behaviour changes are the price, the trust, the convenience, the atmospherics, the advertisement, the loyalty, the security/privacy. They have real consequences on someone’s behaviour.

Indeed, our survey target was the French young people from 18 to 25 years old and obviously the price came as the first criteria that they care about. We think that this generation is already comfortable with this new way of shopping and that is why the convenience does not come first, it is probably too obvious for them. In the scientific articles that we have studied, the convenience was the most important factor because the average age was higher (30-50), and the price is not so important because the majority earn money.

Concerning the trust factor, we have noticed that this is significant for young people but they are not as aware as their parents. Since young people are looking for the best price, they tend to trust almost every website that seems fine whereas older people will pay more attention to the safety of one website that they trust in particular.

For our category of people, the website atmosphere has been noticed by respondents as something that matters during their purchase making process. Indeed, it did not appear in our questionnaire but a lot of them mentioned it in the “free-answer space”. They take care about the ambiance, colours, and ease of navigation whereas older people in the scientific articles seem to be less concerned.

All this factors are interlinked together because we need a set of favourable criteria to make a purchase. It is hard to rank them because it depends on the person (age, social category, beliefs…) In the future, it would be interested to come back on this study and see if tend have changed.

We can draw some implications for companies having an e-commerce website. Indeed, managers should take into account our findings and improve their internet marketing tools.

When setting prices, they should always keep in mind their target because, for instance if they are targeting young people, they should keep low prices. However, if their target is older and more sophisticated, they should set higher prices and ensure quality. As soon as they are online, they provide some convenience to their customers because it enables them to keep in touch with the website anytime and anywhere.

Organizations have to pay attention to their Search Engine Optimization (SEO) because we know that the first websites which come up in the search engine will be more likely
checked before the other next pages. Hyperlinks have to be fast-loading for a greater information search and product information as well as customer feedbacks easily accessible.

It is no surprise that customer service is as crucial online as in traditional shopping. Delivery, FAQ, relationship with clients and after-sale service has to be linked with customer’s expectation, as well as payment policies and information about shipping and handling costs.

Since online loyalty is quite hard to get and keep, it is important that e-commerce organization improve their tools to make its customers loyal. The most common way to do that is to offer private promotion, regularly enough so that customers do not switch to competitors.

Advertising is often considered as annoying, a good idea would be to target the ads depending on the customer and not use too much ads. A good illustration in this area is Amazon.com. Indeed, its internal software enables to offer the right recommendations depending on the customer (based on previous purchases) and depending on the product (suggestions about what similar products other customers have chosen).

Trust, security and privacy are the most important matters online that companies cannot miss. Therefore, they must ensure good payment security, extreme personal information privacy and keep its promises (for instance, date of delivery, quality of product…) in order to gain trust from their customers.

Customers, more precisely hedonist ones, attach a particular attention to the design and atmospheric of the website. That is the reason why organizations have to put resources in this website’s aspect, in order to attract new customers that would find it pleasant.

Future research could involve a bigger sample, less specific (other age range, other country…) in order to generalise the theories. Obviously, the factors we discussed are not the only ones, and it would be interesting to study other ones more deeply.

Further investigation could study the marketing tools and implications in these behaviour changes. What could the companies do to attract online consumers based on these criteria? (Attach more attention to the website in general, the safety, design etc.)

Since new technologies evolve very quickly, it is possible that our study became obsolete in a few years, since consumer behaviour would change too. Future studies could improve ours, adapting to new ways of shopping.
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**Thesis**


**Websites**

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Business Dictionary


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Annexes

Annexe 1 : Survey questions (in French)

Questionnaire pour les acheteurs sur Internet

Dans le cadre de notre thèse de Bachelor, nous avons élaboré ce questionnaire afin de réaliser une étude sur votre comportement en tant qu'acheteur sur Internet. Nous vous serions extrêmement reconnaissantes si vous pouviez nous accorder 3-4 minutes de votre temps pour nous permettre de valider notre diplôme. Par avance, Merci ! :) *Obligatoire

Vous êtes... *

- Un homme
- Une femme

Quel âge avez-vous ? *

- Moins de 18 ans
- 18-25 ans
- 26-35 ans
- 36-45 ans
- Plus de 45 ans

A quelle catégorie socioprofessionnelle appartenez-vous ? *

- Agriculteurs, exploitants
- Ouvriers
- Employés
- Artisans, commerçants, chef d'entreprises
- Cadres supérieurs
- Professions intermédiaires
- Sans emploi (Chômage, étudiants...)
Retraités

Achetez-vous sur Internet ? *

- [ ] Oui
- [ ] Non

Si oui, à quelle fréquence ? *

- [ ] Une fois par an
- [ ] Plus d’un fois par an
- [ ] Une fois par mois
- [ ] Plus d’un fois par mois

Préférez-vous acheter... *

- [ ] En magasin
- [ ] Sur Internet

Pourquoi ? *

Quels types de produit préférez-vous acheter sur Internet ? *
Pas plus de 3 réponses

- [ ] Jeux/Jouets
- [ ] Jeux vidéo
- [ ] DVD/CD Livres
- [ ] Informatique
- [ ] TV/MP3 HIFI
- [ ] Téléphonie
- [ ] Photo/caméscope
- [ ] Auto/Moto/GPS
- [ ] Electroménager
- [ ] Maison/Déco
- [ ] Jardin/Brico
- [ ] Vêtements/chaussures
- [ ] Bijouterie
- □ Sport
- □ Vin/alimentaire

Qu'est ce qui vous incite le plus à acheter sur Internet ? *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Très important</th>
<th>Assez important</th>
<th>Neutre</th>
<th>Pas vraiment important</th>
<th>Pas du tout important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confort</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilité de paiement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prix avantageux</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Large choix de produit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service client</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pas d'horaire d'ouverture fixe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pensez-vous à d'autres critères qui ne sont pas présents dans la liste ci-dessus ?

Qu'est ce qui vous décourage le plus à effectuer un achat sur Internet ? *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Très décourageant</th>
<th>Assez décourageant</th>
<th>Neutre</th>
<th>Pas vraiment décourageant</th>
<th>Pas du tout décourageant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulté d'échanger</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peur d'insatisfaction</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Impossibilité d'essayer avant reception</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mauvaise connexion Internet</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Suivi de commande défaillant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence/mauvais service client</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pensez-vous à d'autres critères qui ne sont pas présents dans la liste ci-dessus ?

Etes-vous sensibles aux publicités présentes sur les réseaux sociaux et autres sites ? *

- [ ] Oui
- [ ] Non

Etes-vous sensibles aux publicités reçues par sms, email, newsletter ? *

- [ ] Oui
- [ ] Non

Pensez-vous être plus fidèle à...

- [ ] Un magasin
- [ ] Un site Internet

Etes-vous sensible au parrainage sur certains sites ? *

- [ ] Oui
- [ ] Non

Cela vous incite-t-il à acheter d'avantage ? *

- [ ] Oui
- [ ] Non

Avez-vous des commentaires ?
Space for presentation of the author.
Photo of the author to be placed above.