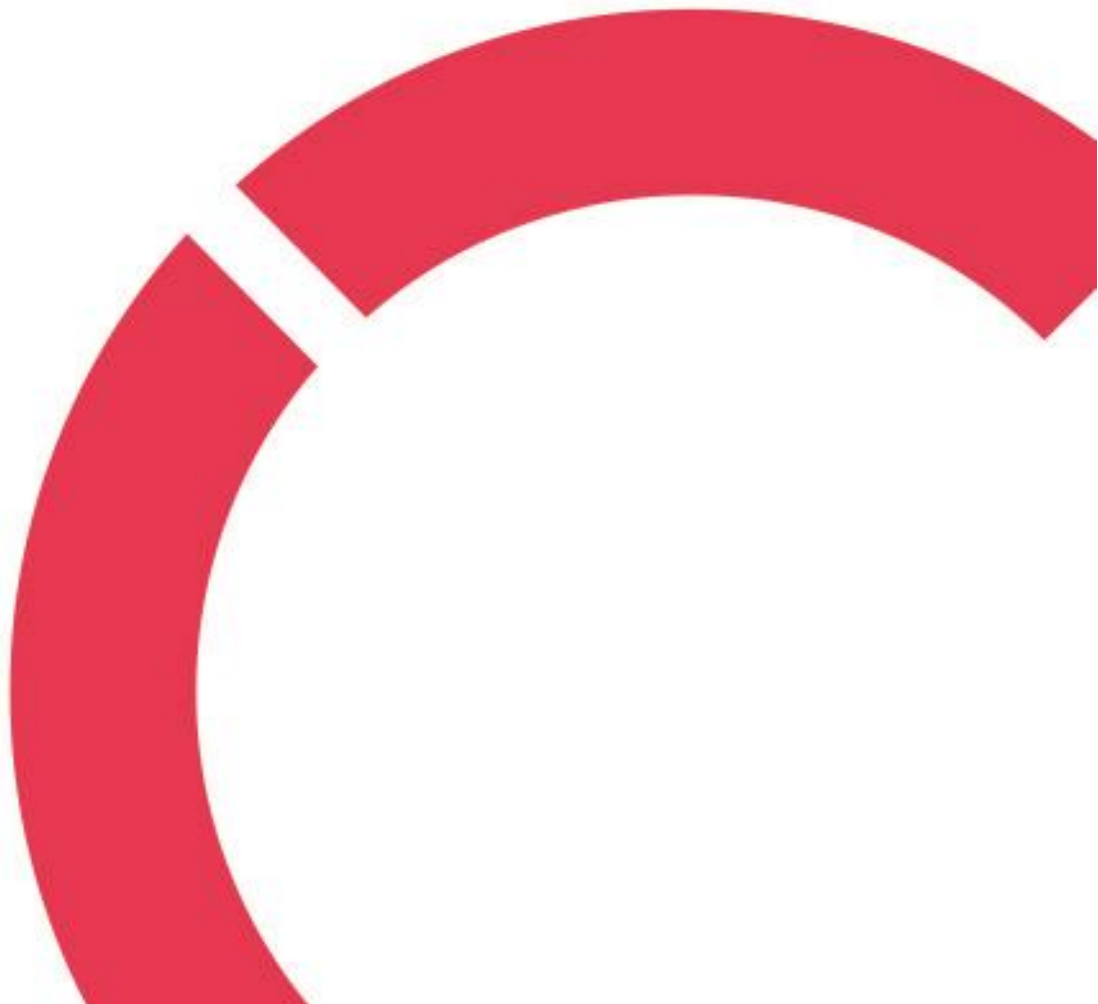Trang Mai
Thi Nguyen

THE IMPACT OF CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR ON MARKETING AUTOMATION IN E-COMMERCE INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

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In today's industrial and digital age, focusing on studying customer behavior is extremely important for every business. Customers now have a wider range of options when making purchases, particularly in the current online retail industry, consumer habits and purchases are changing more and more. The process of comprehending and attending to consumers' thoughts, desires, and demands will greatly affect the company's development strategy as well as its appropriate marketing automation solution offerings for customers.

Compared to traditional marketing, marketing has undergone many distinct changes due to the development of technology, engineering, and digitalization. Marketing today concentrates on individualized and tailored content for customers with the aim of attracting more customers based on research findings and knowledge about customer behavior towards products and services. Automated marketing strategies are seen to be effective instruments for luring clients. This study's primary focus is on the factors that affect consumer behavior as well as the pros and downsides of marketing automation as seen through the eyes of the consumer.

This thesis is a research project, and it was completed using a quantitative approach that involved surveying 100 randomly selected customers who had used online purchasing services in order to understand more about their online shopping behaviors. The findings of the investigation will highlight a variety of objective characteristics of customers' online shopping behavior as significant influences on customers' purchasing behavior as well as the advantages and disadvantages of marketing automation in the context of the customer experience.

ABSTRACT

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1 INTRODUCTION

E-commerce is no longer a new concept, it has become more popular than ever. The definition of the e-commerce industry is an online setting where products and services are purchased and sold via the Internet. It also involves the exchange of information or money between numerous parties. On smart devices like computers, phones, laptops, etc., buying and selling occurs. With the rapid expansion of the internet, this industry has much more potential for growth than traditional retailers do now, and its scope is growing. Due to the benefits, convenience, and great development potential of this market, which makes it even more competitive, almost everything is done through e-commerce. The business-to-business, business-to-consumer, consumer-to-consumer, and consumer-to-business market sectors are just a few in which e-commerce can operate. (Bloomenthal 2023.)

Customer behavior has a significant impact on online marketing since it informs advertisers and marketers about the requirements and wants of consumers, enabling them to develop efficient marketing strategies and plans. The way individuals shop and use goods and services has changed as a result of e-commerce. As things can be conveniently delivered to homes, more and more individuals are using computers and smart devices to place purchases. Making the best selections and maximizing online advertising strategies to draw in potential customers requires an understanding of consumer behavior on the part of advertisers and marketers. Advertisers can better understand client demands and tailor offers and promotions to them by using data on website usage, purchase habits, and decisions to use products and services. Additionally, observing consumer behavior enables advertisers and marketers to respond quickly to changes in consumer behavior and modify their marketing plans.

One of the most cutting-edge marketing techniques available today is automated marketing, which is quickly taking over the e-commerce sector. This is a clever and successful marketing trend that will increase customer reach, optimize advertising expenses, and boost sales productivity. Automation systems have been widely used in online marketing, particularly in the e-commerce sector, as a result of technological advancements. Using marketing automation, firms may rapidly and efficiently complete advertising and sales tasks including automated customer service, social network, and website advertising, email campaign creation, and SMS marketing. Therefore, companies may enhance the customer purchasing experience and increase confidence. Additionally, it optimizes advertising expenses, saves time and human resources, and supports businesses in efficiently boosting sales and profits. (Monk 2022.)

The main focus of this thesis is on the impact of customer behavior on marketing automation in the e-commerce industry. The goal to be achieved in this thesis is to have a deep understanding of the concepts related to customer behavior and marketing automation. In addition, answering research questions related to factors affecting purchasing behavior as well as the benefits or disadvantages of marketing automation for customers in the e-commerce industry is also the aim of this thesis. The result of this thesis is to indicate the factors influencing consumers' online purchasing decisions. In addition, how customer behavior affects marketing automation in the e-commerce industry is also discussed in the research paper.

The aims of the thesis are:

- Explain the theoretical basis of customer behavior and marketing automation
- Survey people's knowledge of customers' online buying behavior and marketing automation aspects of their buying experience.
- Describe and evaluate the factors that influence customer buying behavior and outline the benefits and disadvantages of marketing automation that influence the buying process and customer experience.

The research questions:

1. What factors influence customers' online shopping behavior?
2. What are the potential risks and benefits of marketing automation from customer perception?

The quantitative approach is the primary research methodology employed in the thesis. The quantitative method will be based on a study that aims at collecting data on consumer behavior and opinions on online purchases. The data collection is done through the survey, and the participants for the survey are consumers who have used the service of buying goods over the Internet. The results of the survey will be an important source of data contributing to the answer to the main research question. The study additionally examined the survey results using qualitative analysis.

There are seven main sections to the thesis. The context, objective of the research, research questions, and aims are all included in this introduction of the thesis, which also introduces the topic. The general idea of consumer behavior and marketing automation are both covered in the theoretical framework. The thesis' primary research methodology is discussed in section 4. It contains details regarding the

problem's investigation, the research procedure, the analysis of the data gathered, and the informants who took part in the study. Section 5 will explain and analyze the research findings. The study's sixth section examines difficulties relating to the research questions' conclusions and considers the success of the study's goals. Section 7 is the last chapter, which summarizes and concludes the research topic.

2 THE THEORETICAL BASIS ON CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR

Customer behavior factor is one of the factors that always plays an important role and is almost a top priority in the field of marketing. Understanding customer needs and carefully analyzing their buying behavior will give marketers and managers an advantage in understanding what consumers expect from their products. Therefore, they can adjust products and appropriate marketing solutions to be profitable as well as connect with customers, contributing to building customer loyalty as well as customer satisfaction. (Tan 2022.)

In the era of digitalization and the 4.0 technology revolution, the competition taking place in the marketing industry is increasingly fierce. Along with the development of the internet, the needs and consumption behavior of consumers have changed. One of the changes is the use of the Internet in finding products and services more conveniently and diversely. Therefore, understanding the buying behavior of Internet customers has become extremely important for companies of the 21st century. A thorough understanding of these aspects will assist them in providing appropriate marketing solutions and contribute to improving the customer experience. (Mircea et al. 2015, 63-64.)

2.1 Concepts related to customer behavior

Purwanto (2022) defines customer behavior as the set of activities that consumers engage in when searching for, selecting, evaluating, and purchasing products and services to fulfill their needs and desires. These activities involve the use of various services to satisfy consumers. In simple terms, customer behavior refers to individuals' or organizations' actions to select, buy, and use goods and services to meet their wishes. The buying behavior of customers is the process in which consumers-individuals and households- purchase products and services for themselves to use (Kotler et al. 2005, 255). In addition, according to Kumar (2016), the idea of customer buying behavior relates to the procedure by conducting which customers determine their needs, collect information, consider their options, and make judgments about what to buy. When a customer has the intention of purchasing, a series of decisions are taken by the customer before a purchase is made. The definitions of customer behavior typically place an emphasis on articles on the buyer's decision-making process, such as awareness, information search, comparison, purchase, and post-purchase review. Furthermore, the

reciprocal interaction during the purchase process with external objective factors creates a complete concept of customer behavior.

2.2 Customer decision-making process

The consumer decision-making process is complex, and it is greatly influenced by objective factors as well as subjective factors coming from themselves to be able to meet their own needs. Therefore, it is becoming an article procedure for many businesses and individuals to have a knowledge of the key problem with consumer decision-making and to put theory into real life. Based on this, Kotler and Keller (2012, 166- 173) proposed the theory of the customer decision-making process, which includes the following five core steps: problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior.

| Problem recognition | → | Information search | → | Alternative evaluation | → | Purchase decision | → | Postpurchase behavior |
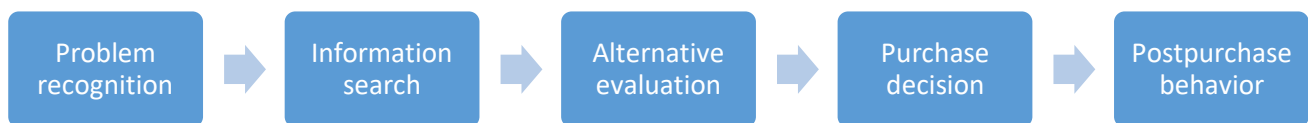
FIGURE 1. The five-stage model of the Consumer buying process (Kotler and Keller 2012, 166)

Problem recognition is the first stage in the consumer purchase decision-making process. This step is carried out when the customer has a need that must be satisfied. Both the consumer's subjective elements and the external, objective aspects affecting the consumer have an impact on the customer's demands. Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which includes physiological requirements, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs, effectively illustrates the degree of customer fulfillment. Customer satisfaction will begin at the lowest level and gradually rise to level five, which is the greatest level, as demands are met in order from lowest to highest.
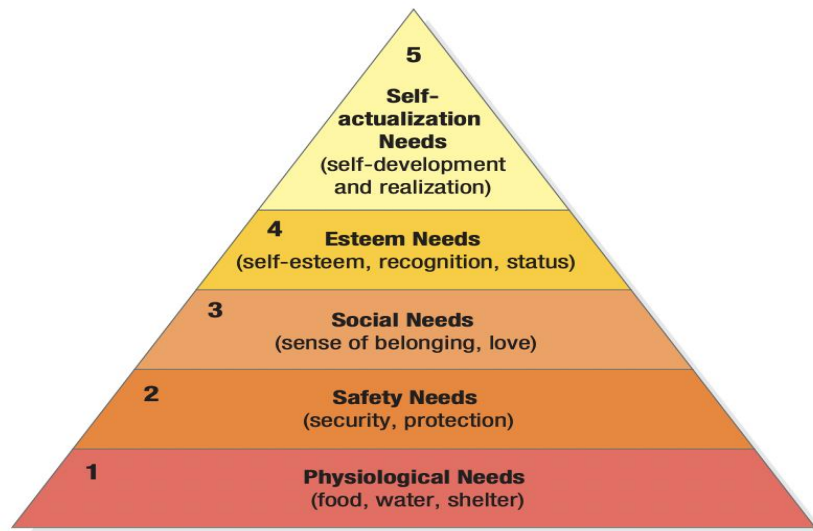
FIGURE 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Kotler and Keller 2012, 161)

The information search stage will be the next to arise in the process after the need has been identified. Depending on their capabilities and circumstances, they can search and consult a variety of information sources. These information sources can be categorized into four distinct groups: personal, commercial, public, and experiential. The personal group includes individuals such as family members, friends, and neighbors who provide insights and opinions based on their personal experiences. The commercial group consists of advertising, websites, salespeople, dealers, packaging, and product displays, which aim to influence consumers through promotional materials and persuasive techniques. The public group involves the dissemination of information through mass media channels and consumer-rating agencies, such as articles published in newspapers, magazines, and online platforms. Lastly, the experiential group encompasses the knowledge gained from direct consumer usage of the product, which varies depending on the buyer's personal experiences and the specific features of the product.

The third stage of the consumer buying process is alternative evaluation. Customers will start to think about selecting the products that bring them the most benefits after they have adequate information about the product. The ultimate alternative they select will completely meet all their needs and wants concerning satisfaction.

The next stage of the consumer buying process is the purchase decision. The customer is now interested in the staff's recommendations, the method of payment, and the convenience of the purchase

after choosing the final product. To make the customer's purchasing experience as convenient as possible, the adviser and the buyer thoroughly evaluate and discuss all of the criteria mentioned above.

The final stage in the customer decision-making process is post-purchase behavior. After getting the goods, customers will start using and evaluating them, and they will give the company feedback on their experiences. Any comments made about the product, whether positive or negative, will be crucial information in order to evaluate customer happiness, improve customer service, and increase customer loyalty.

2.3 Basic factors influencing consumer behavior

According to Philip Kotler et al. (2005, 256), cultural, social, personal, and psychological characteristics were identified as fundamental aspects that shape consumer behavior. These aspects contribute to providing information, aspects, and motivations for consumer choice in the market. By understanding how these factors interact, managers can effectively tailor their strategies to meet the ever-evolving needs and preferences of their customers. Therefore, exploring the profound influence of cultural, social, personal, and psychological characteristics becomes necessary to understand the complex context of consumer behavior.
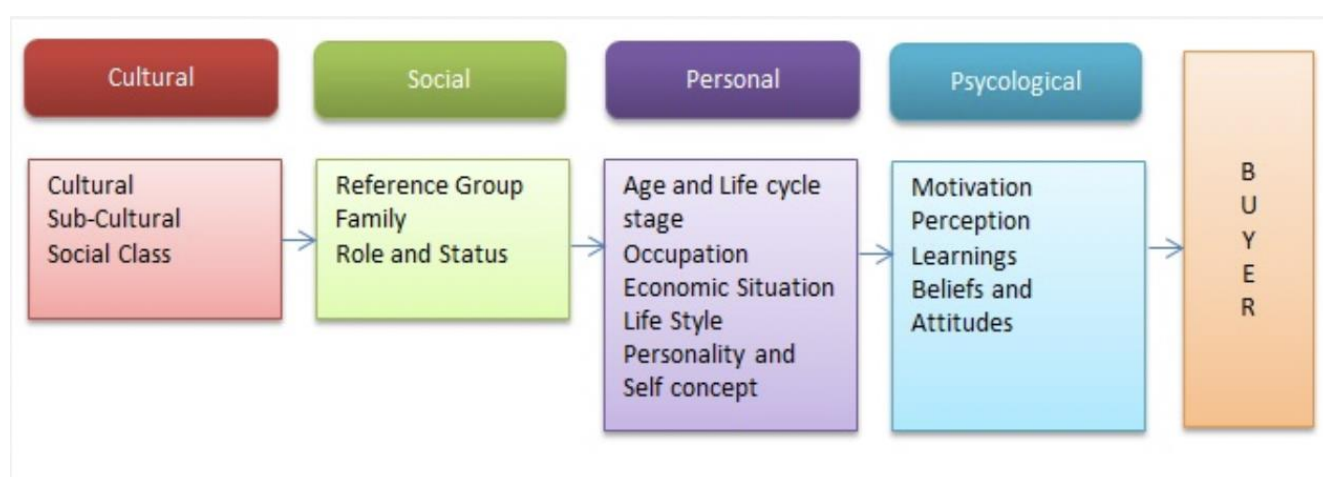
FIGURE 3. Factors influencing behavior (Kotler et al. 2005, 256)

2.3.1 Cultural factors

According to Kotler et al. (2005, 256), the buyer's culture, subculture, and socioeconomic class play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior. Culture is a set of shared beliefs, standards, and values that develop within a particular society, government, religion, or ethnic group and are passed down through the generations. The most fundamental foundation of someone's desires and actions is their culture. The fundamental elements of value, perception, preferences, style, and shopping behavior all contain unique cultural identities.

Besides, each culture is divided into smaller subcultures or groups of individuals who share similar experiences and circumstances in life as well as similar value systems. Other cultural developments may have an impact on cultural identity. This transition process may result in new customer seeks and habits. Positive and negative effects on moral and societal concerns are possible as a result of this transition. (Kotler et al. 2005, 256).

Moreover, every civilization has its subcultures that provide its members with unique features and unity in society. A person's purchasing behavior will be influenced by the traits of the subcultures that make up major market segments. Diverse cultural branches of people have diverse requirements, goals, and preferences. (Kotler et al. 2005, 256).

2.3.2 Social factors

Social elements, including a consumer's small groups, family, and social positions and status, can also have an impact on their behavior. These social elements have a significant impact on how customers act. Social factors including groups can both directly and indirectly affect consumer behavior because they are impacted by society. Reference groups are essentially associations between individuals. Clubs, schools, professional associations, as well as family, friends, and other acquaintances are some of these groupings. People in a reference group frequently share a common purchasing pattern and are influenced by an opinion influencer. (Rangaiah 2021.)

One of the most significant influences on customers' shopping decisions is their families. Personality and culture are formed in the family. As a result, everyone in the family is influenced by other family members, especially kids who are influenced by their parents. Family members' purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by one another. Children also have a tendency to choose things that their

families use frequently, and this tendency carries over into their adult lives. For instance, individuals unconsciously pick KFC over Subway or McDonald's if family members prefer it. (Rangaiah 2021.)

The position that people take in society has an impact on everyone. The more important individuals are in our positions, the more our standing influences what and how much they purchase. For instance, the purchasing habits of the CEO of a corporation and the typical employee will differ greatly. (Rangaiah 2021.)

2.3.3 Personal factors

Personal elements have a significant influence on people's decisions in addition to social, psychological, and cultural aspects. The impact of this attribute on mind and actions differs from person to person. In addition, this element deals with the following smaller aspects such as age, occupation, income, and lifestyle. One of the key elements affecting purchasing behavior is age. Everyone in the age group will frequently have various purchasing possibilities and tastes. Young people, for instance, typically choose clothing with youthful styles that they can modify yearly to keep up with trends. The elderly, on the other hand, are more likely to select goods that invest in materials and are long-lasting. Additionally, when there is a variation in the income sources of different ages, age also substantially impacts consumer buying behavior. (Rangaiah 2021.)

One of the characteristics that affect customer behavior is occupation. Each job has a unique consumption style, and the products they select are appropriate for that profession. For instance, a farmer will typically purchase agricultural equipment and safety clothing due to the nature of their employment, but a teacher will typically purchase books and teaching materials. (Rangaiah 2021.)

Income is one more factor that unquestionably influences consumers' purchasing decisions. The purchasing power increases with income and vice versa. People with high earnings typically purchase expensive items, whereas those with low incomes typically choose cheaper options. The income aspect will not significantly affect consumer demand for necessities. (Rangaiah 2021.)

One of the most potent influences on customer choices is lifestyle. A person's lifestyle reflects their unique perspective on the world and their immediate environment, which is why it also has an impact on their purchasing decisions. For a vegetarian, for instance, veggies are always a top concern. (Rangaiah 2021.)

Customer purchasing behavior is influenced by distinct personalities. Characteristics like assertiveness, dominance, sociability, self-control, defense, adaptability, and hostility are frequently used to describe personality. Analyzing consumer behavior toward particular products or brand preferences can be done with the help of personality. For instance, coffee makers have discovered that frequent coffee consumers have a strong social sense. So, the Nescafé advertisement features a group of individuals sharing a cup of coffee. (Kotler et al. 2005, 268.)

2.3.4 Psychological factors

Psychological factors are the final component influencing consumer behavior. Smaller factors that influence customers' purchasing decisions will be considered for this component. The first sub-factor discussed in the psychological factors is motivation. Motivating others to take action is possible. This is the primary element influencing human behavior, especially purchasing decisions. Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs (Figure 2.), which comprises five levels of human requirements and bases it on psychological needs before moving on to safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and finally self-actualization needs, is a well-known theory of motivation. Basic needs and security needs are frequently prioritized above all other needs among these requirements. (Rangaiah 2021.)

The second sub-factor discussed in the psychological factors is perception. Customer perception is the process of acquiring data about a product and analyzing that data to develop a consistent perception of a certain product. Customers may quickly access information in the Internet age via TV, phone, or computer. The customer's opinion of the product has a significant impact on the choice for purchase. (Rangaiah 2021.)

The next sub-factor discussed in the psychological factors is learnings. This element occurs as a result of learning about and using the product, and it is based on the experience, knowledge, and skills of each individual. Customers will use such information to determine whether the quality of the product is appropriate for them before making a purchase. Customers may readily search for product reviews on websites like Amazon and Alibaba, for instance, to determine whether or not to purchase a product. (Rangaiah 2021.)

The last sub-factor discussed in the psychological factors is attitudes and beliefs. Each customer, whether consciously or unconsciously, has certain attitudes or ideas that influence their purchasing decisions. Beliefs are the precise interpretations that customers have of a problem based on their knowledge, judgments, and experiences. A product's attitudes, which represent positive or negative evaluations based on experiences and feelings, determine whether those attitudes are favorable or unfavorable. The perception that consumers have of a product is significantly influenced by their attitudes and beliefs. In order to create effective marketing initiatives, marketers find it important to understand consumer attitudes and beliefs. (Rangaiah 2021.)

2.4 Online shopping behavior

Particularly after the Covid-19 epidemic, modern online customer behavior has changed and expanded quickly in e-commerce. Online shopping has replaced traditional retail as the primary means of making purchases, and it is growing in popularity. After the pandemic, there have been new trends in online consumer shopping behavior that online retailers need to be aware of to keep up with the trend and improve the customer experience. (Wenzl 2021.)

Online buying from the consumer's point of view is what is meant by "online consumer behavior." It may be defined as the analysis of trends, such as the popularity of comparison shopping, the impact of online advertising, and consumer inclination to click on links. To adapt to and develop along with the growing amount of online consumer behavior, numerous businesses have invested in creating shopping websites to cater to this online customer (Mitchell 2023). Additionally, Wenzl (2021) defines online consumer behavior as the method customers use to choose their products in e-commerce.

According to Wenzl (2021), five major trends that influence consumer behavior online have evolved in the e-commerce sector since the COVID-19 epidemic. Convenience is what most of these trends part, and it helps develop efficient marketing automation solutions. Convenience is the first trend to be identified as being extremely important. The ease of shopping online, getting advice, and making a rapid payment would easily increase client happiness and possibly attract them to return to the company's website. Easy accessibility to any device is the second trend. Nowadays, customers can easily synchronize product information on a variety of devices during the customer's purchase process at all stages such as information search, information sharing, decision making, and payment. The

multichannel purchasing method is the third trend. Today's consumers can access a wide range of digital platforms and channels. As a result, by diversifying their product offerings across all social media channels, companies will make their products more recognizable to customers and make it easier for them to search for them. Simple payments are the upcoming trend. The trend of broadening payment options to improve customer experience reflects the convenience of consumers. Cash, credit cards, electronic wallets, and promotional codes will all be accepted in an adaptable way for product payment. Delivery that is quick and dependable is the last trend. The convenience of this trend is the range of delivery options available based on client requirements, especially with the trend of online shopping becoming more and more popular.

According to Maheshwari (2022), the effect of the digital era is leading to an increase in consumers' everyday online buying activity. Consumers that shop online have both advantages and drawbacks. The overview of this issue is presented in figure 4 below.

Pros of Online Shopping	Cons of Online Shopping
Easy to compare prices with blockbuster deals.	Shoppers are not able to feel the product.
Huge variety and plethora of options.	Shipping issues and delays.
No need to go in crowded places.	Online payment fraud risks.
Privacy in terms of discreet shopping.	No help of specialized staff or sales assistance.
Send online gifts.	Complicated process of returns and exchanges.
Better and affordable price range.	Bad shopping experience if the website is not user-friendly.

FIGURE 4. Advantages and disadvantages of buying online (Maheshwari 2022)

3 THEORETICAL BASIS ON MARKETING AUTOMATION

The explosion of the digital revolution in the current digital age leads to a strong transformation trend. Under the pressure of the times, competition has also increased, and digital transformation can be said to be an important issue in the survival and development of businesses. In particular, marketing automation is considered an indispensable element of businesses in connecting with customers and managing large-scale marketing programs. This chapter will introduce the theory and typical features of marketing automation, and explain what they are mean.

Marketing is crucial in luring these potential clients, teaching them through targeted nurturing, enlisting them, and preparing them to make a purchase. Marketers are increasingly using marketing automation as a philosophy to automate traditional manual activities, manage and deliver personalized marketing messages, and increase rates conversion rates to customers' purchasing decisions through positive effects (Rae 2016).

3.1 Definition of marketing automation

The term marketing automation is not an old term in recent years but, it has not been around for too long so the amount of academic research on it is still limited. Marketing automation emerged to support the marketing process (Rae 2016). The marketing automation overview definition will have many different answers that we can easily find in any search result.

Marketing automation is when we combine technology software and data into daily marketing strategies with the aim to maximize the productivity and effectiveness of campaigns. This is an automated process that converts and takes care of leads until they become a buyer. In simpler terms, marketing automation is the technology that manages the overall marketing process across many different channels and campaigns in the direction of total automation. It will always be associated with a platform of a certain complexity to analyze, tag, group, and the statistics behind it so that accurate, detailed information can be gathered and errors can be reduced. In a broader sense, this approach is the combination of several marketing and business development tasks together to optimize the marketing process to ensure results. Currently, marketing automation using software is being used by many

businesses to automate difficult marketing processes such as customer segmentation, customer data integration, and campaign management. Therefore, every stage in the marketing chain will always be unified and linked together to create a tight whole.

Increasing the efficiency of the operations of many repetitive tasks is said to be the idea of using marketing automation. Repetitive tasks, if not automated, will hinder your marketing efforts. In addition, marketing automation is also more effective when marketing on many different channels that can be mentioned such as the web, social networking sites, media channels, etc (Rauthan 2020).

3.2 Framework for marketing automation

As one of the pioneers of the 5 level frameworks for marketing automation, Little (2001) has been considered the standard in the field. This framework is used extensively while creating marketing activities. There are the 5 levels of Little's Framework for marketing automation summarized by Heimbach (2015) including data inputs, real-time decision rules, updating decision rules, feedback to site management, and strategy choice.

3.3 Marketing Automation Process

Little (2001) reviewed and evaluated the five levels of marketing automation. At the same time the activities correspond to the classic marketing management process. At level 1, data availability of customer or user information is considered important because of the early evaluation or adjustment stages. Data is still important for analysis, the data can be derived from the customer database and it can also be derived from the user journey. Because the operation of marketing actions is in direct response to the customer, the user has information that is available or is coming or changes. Simple rules that lead to activities are linked to information. Therefore, leading to level 2, at this level a marketing action will be predefined if there is a certain behavior shown by customers and users. The main benefit can be seen in that operations are automated for tasks once rules are defined.

It is evident that even with automation, machines can only learn and automate to a certain extent. This is level 3. For example, marketing automation software will apply options with the plan to maximize the goal continuously and randomly if certain applicable options are given. And at level 4, is also the last level mentioned by Little (2001). Obviously, the aforementioned levels include the optimization

and performance of the rules, which can be changed, adjusted and monitored by the administrator at any time. Figure 5 below is an image depicting the general process of marketing automation.
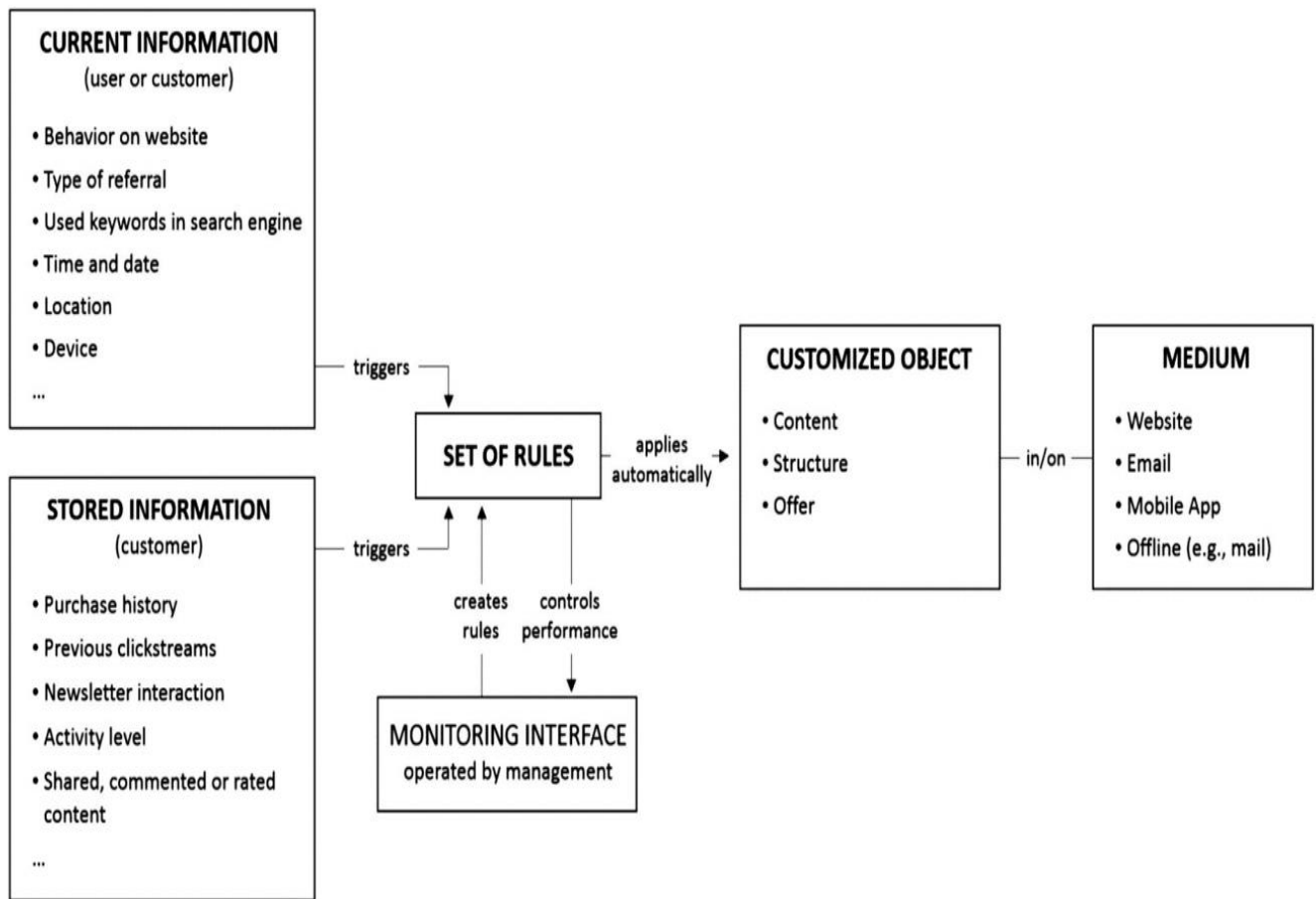
FIGURE 5. The general framework of marketing automation (Heimbach et al. 2015, 131)

As mentioned by Heimbach et al. 2015, 131, there are also marketing rules that still do well to enhance customer utility without forcing them to rely on insights and optimization processes. And for such functions, automated marketing is simply a cost-effective and supportive tool. An example of this is that sends an automated welcome email or an automated weekly message board email.

Accordingly, the diversification of marketing automation offers will be answered through the following two questions: What is customized? Which trigger is implemented? To clarify the point of the first question is to focus on the subject and the medium. To customize the structure, content, and characteristics of the offer, marketing automation can all be used. Managers can also proactively tailor email and other communication channels including landing pages and other websites. In addition, one can also enhance traditional channels with marketing automation. An example of this is printing media information on the back of a movie ticket. The point of the second question focuses on triggers.

Customer Data collects data that can be used, based on their geographic location, demographics, or purchase history. Content may be modified to respond to technical events including time, date, IP address, device, or browser. In addition, personal information (or demographics) of keywords entered when searching in a search engine, purchase history, and previous or current browsing behavior are also used as needed. (Heimbach et al. 2015, 131.)

3.4 Features of Marketing Automation

Customers in the age of internet connection and diversity of information are now fully equipped with skills in researching as well as finding information about the market and products that are suitable for their needs. Connecting with potential customers without determining what they already know about the product is difficult indeed. Marketo (2013) mentioned many of the functions provided by a marketing automation platform. These include email marketing, lead nurturing, campaign management, lead generation, landing pages, social marketing, and lead management.

3.4.1 Email marketing

Currently, there are many platforms and development channels to attract social users, but email marketing still exists, and the demand for use is also increasing day by day. Because of its many benefits, the form of email marketing has received a lot of attraction from businesses, thereby deploying a lot of effective communication plans.

The most important online marketing channel is email marketing, and it is even more effective when combined with other platforms. It is known that different providers have different levels of email functionality provided, but email service providers (ESPs) will often be superseded by automation systems (Marketo 2013). Email marketing is a practical element of marketing automation, its convenient feature is not only to create email and newsletter designs, but it also sends them to target audiences and potential customers easily. With the features that email marketing brings, sending emails via email can be automatically triggered or automated according to a predetermined schedule. This also depends on customer behavior, as an email will be sent at the right time with the right content for the potential customer. In addition, the feature of the email marketing tool also provides data, which is the analysis, typically the information about the number of people who received and read emails or click on links in emails. (Miller 2012)

3.4.2 Lead Nurturing

An essential feature of marketing automation that cannot be overlooked is lead nurturing. Create automated campaigns to move customers through the buying cycle from one stage to another. Lead nurturing is not only a process of finding new customers but also retaining old customers. Of course, this will be a time-consuming, labor-intensive process and at the same time must have a clear purpose and plan. With diverse activities in many different forms, one can create the right automated campaigns to convert potential customers into buyers. In short, when customers find a business, but maybe for some reason they are not ready to buy your products or services, this is where lead nurturing is used to create positive effects and maintain relationships with potential customers to motivate them to buy. (Creech 2014)

3.4.3 Social media marketing

Social media marketing is a particularly clever feature of marketing automation. This software owns many tools to help one analyze social media. For example, customer posts are followed, people interested are viewed, and content is shared. Social media is an effective way to build relationships with potential customers. Besides that, marketers are provided with an effective marketing method through the feature of social media marketing. Deliver the content marketers want to customers and interact with potential customers and partners with high efficiency and cost savings. Further, marketers get to proactively choose the best social platforms for their brands with the right tools and strategic approach. When understanding the needs of social network users, businesses can build their own optimized content, and promote interactive features that will help brands become easily associated with the daily habits of users' data. An accurate and relevant social media strategy not only drives revenue for the business but also drives buyers further in the customer purchase lifecycle. (Marketo 2013.)

3.4.4 Analytics

Based on the analysis, the business will understand how all activities are progressing. Then, marketers just need to come up with the necessary solutions, and rearrange the work order, time, staff, and resources, etc. Marketing automation collects and analyzes data, and looking at the reported data and analyzing them is also considered evidence for the marketing process of the business. One thing in common is that all vendors guarantee to provide some level of marketing measurement and analytics. But they will not be the same in terms of functions, more clearly the calculation that affects revenue (Marketo 2013).

After scaling marketing personalization to a wider audience, marketers will conduct an in-depth analysis. Analytics helps determine return on investment by tracking goals, costs, and performance and it also improves support for these activities (Miller 2012). Marketing automation can generate reports or campaigns based on collected and analyzed data. This information can be used to drive sales or included to evaluate the effectiveness of internal marketing. (Biegel 2009.)

3.4.5 Landing pages

Customizing landing pages and collecting customer forms also helps marketers develop ads that attract potential customers. The landing page in the actual case can be understood as the web page that appears when the user clicks on the link, it can be sent in an email or from elsewhere. The purpose of a landing page is to increase conversion rates for marketing campaigns and reduce lead conversion costs and sales costs. Users can receive marketing messages from a custom landing page. Landing pages not only help increase conversions but also provide a better user experience so it has always been an important component of marketing campaigns (Miller 2012).

3.5 Potential Risks and Benefits of marketing automation from customer perception

Potential risks and benefits of marketing automation from customer perception will focus on the potential benefits and risks of marketing automation from the customer's perspective. will focus on assessing the potential benefits and risks of marketing automation from the customer's perspective. The truth is that customer service automation is an important part of marketing automation, helping businesses deliver customer service more quickly and efficiently. However, there are two sides to everything, some of the benefits and risks are outlined below (Benny 2021).

3.5.1 Potential Benefits of marketing automation

Marketing automation offers several benefits, including personalization, improved customer experience, increased convenience, enhanced interoperability, and provision of accurate information and products. For personalization, companies can rely on marketing automation to create personalized messages and content, and the content of those messages will be tailored to each customer's preferences. Next is improving customer experience, marketing automation technologies like chatbots can help customer improve. By providing quick and timely responses, marketing automation can enhance the experience of overall customer satisfaction and leads to increased customer satisfaction. For increased convenience, marketing automation reduces customer time and effort when searching for product or service information, ordering, paying, and receiving goods. Customers can save time when engaging in automated marketing activities such as online purchases, and service subscriptions. Next to enhanced Interoperability, marketing automation can provide customers with new channels of interaction, such as chatbots or automated chats, allowing customers to interact with the business whenever the customer wants. And with provide accurate information and products, marketing automation helps customers access products and services that best match their needs and preferences through filters and algorithms.

3.5.2 Potential Risks of marketing automation

While marketing automation offers numerous benefits, there are several key challenges that companies should consider, including privacy concerns, lack of human contact, the potential for confusion or errors, security risks associated with large data, and the risk of excessive communication. The first is about privacy concerns, marketing automation may use customers' personal information to create marketing campaigns. Customers may feel uncomfortable or compromised if companies collect too much personal data and use it for marketing purposes without permission. Next is lack of human contact, customers may feel disconnected from the company if all their interactions are automated, resulting in reduced proximity and customer interest in the brand. For potential for confusion or errors, marketing automation can cause errors or confusion in customer orientation or marketing content creation. For example, sending the wrong message to the wrong customer or at the wrong time reduces the accuracy and effectiveness of marketing campaigns. For large data, marketing automation systems

often contain amounts of personal data, which can make them targets for cyberattacks and data results, resulting in disinformation. Customer sensitivity can be compromised. For excessive communication, automated marketing messages can sometimes be perceived as spam, or may receive excessive advertising or automated messaging. This can be annoying and reduce the customer experience and lead to reduced engagement.

4 METHODOLOGY AND DATA

In this methodology and data chapter, we will explain why we chose our methodology for this paper and how it was done. For the purpose of describing the research objective, the methodology was selected and the questionnaire was designed. The results will be analyzed using the method and review.

The research method that was chosen was quantitative research. It was conducted with the aim of reaching the participants by survey. The data is collected through a survey. The reason for choosing this method is because it is a proven method to be extended to the research topics. Respondents will be free to express their personal views and choices on the question. The purpose of this method is that the interviewer can gain a deeper understanding of the topic from the perspective of the participants being asked about the topic such as factors influencing customer behavior as well as benefits and drawbacks of marketing automation from a customer perspective. All of the participants are people who have experienced online purchases, so they are likely to provide valuable and reliable feedback on the topic.

Primary data and secondary data were the two types of data used in this investigation. Data from a primary source that is made available to researchers for use in their own research is referred to as secondary data. One researcher might have gathered data for a particular undertaking and then made that data available for use by another researcher, as an example. Data that is designated as secondary to one study may be considered primary by another. When data is reused, it becomes the main data for the initial study and secondary data for the subsequent study (Hillier 2022). Newspapers, books, websites, personal sources, and public records from both internal and external governments, including the Internet and published documents, are just a few examples of secondary data sources. According to Hillier (2022), the use of secondary data to create large, high-quality databases is useful in solving research problems. The quality and accuracy of the insights that analysts gain from their datasets can be improved by collecting secondary data. However, gathering secondary data has a number of drawbacks. One of them is the fact that the information is not always relevant to the issue at hand. For instance, secondary data gathering can take place during a time period or in a region that is inappropriate for your analysis. This can also limit the insights that analysts can get from the data since they were not present when it was initially collected.

A research approach based on primary data, as opposed to data gathered by others previously, is one that uses direct data acquisition. In qualitative research, primary sources are frequently incorporated, particularly in survey techniques, questionnaires, focus groups, and other interview styles. Although it is available, quantitative primary research is limited. (George 2023). The study topic-related survey questions are chosen, and survey respondents will respond with information and opinions. Depending on the circumstances of the research, the survey may be conducted offline or online. According to George (2023), this method has the advantage of maintaining control over the quality of the data gathered and directly ensuring its objectivity, trustworthiness, and authenticity. It does, however, have significant drawbacks. One of them costs money and takes time. It might be challenging to carry out your own superior exploratory study if you have a tight budget or limited time.

A survey is the primary method of data collection. Random sampling is the probability method for collecting data. 100 people made up the sample, and there were 100 responses overall. People of all ages who have experience with internet buying are the study's population of interest. Participants can respond to questions online. Twenty-two questions are asked in the poll about the procedure, respondents' opinions of the online buying experience, and both the benefits and drawbacks of utilizing and being exposed to marketing automation. Multiple-choice questions, checkboxes, short answers, and paragraphs will all be included in the survey's design. The questionnaire has been divided into three key sections: participant personal information, factors impacting online customer purchasing behavior, and the possible disadvantages and advantages of marketing automation as perceived by customers.

5 RESULTS

Twenty-two questions made up the survey, and 100 survey participants provided the information and data that were used to produce the results. Data from the survey will be thoroughly analyzed to determine how customers' attitudes and behaviors during the purchasing process as well as their opinions on how the e-commerce industry's shopping trends are impacted by marketing automation. The theoretical framework and survey results form the foundation for developing and achieving this thesis research's key objective.

5.1 Participants' information

TABLE 1. The gender of the respondents

Gender	Respondents	Percentages
Male	60	60%
Female	40	40%
Total	**100**	**100%**

At the beginning of the survey, we asked questions to understand the background of the respondents. The question about the gender of the respondents was the first question. The results show that (TABLE 1), we collected 100 answers from 100 people, and the results show that those who often shop online are more females than males. Specifically, 60% of shoppers are female, and 40% are male.

TABLE 2. The age of the respondents

Age	Respondents	Percentages
18 to 30	72	72%
31to 45	22	22%
Over 45	6	6%
Total	**100**	**100%**

In the second question, we asked about the age of the participants. There are three main ages we have listed. The percentage of participants between the ages of 18 and 30 who took part in the survey accounted for 72%. This was the highest percentage, indicating that the majority of participants were

young and middle-aged. Followed by the age group 31-45 accounted for 22% of the total 100 participants. This is a rather high percentage, indicating that a smaller but still article portion of participants are middle-aged. In the last age group, over 45, this is the lowest rate at 6%.

5.2 Factors influencing online customer buying behavior

The results of the survey for the question "Have you ever made a purchase online?", which included 100 candidates, show that all respondents chose "yes" to answer the question. This demonstrates how widespread and extensive online purchasing has become in the current lifestyle. Additionally, it demonstrates how the online business model has expanded significantly and how consumers nowadays consider online shopping as a convenient and well-liked option.
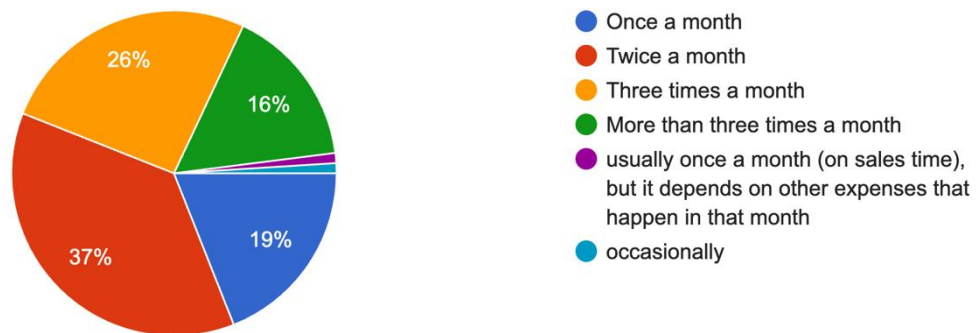

FIGURE 6. How many times per month do you make purchases online?

For this survey question, four choices were given to this answer once a month, twice a month, three times a month, and more than three times a month respectively. The candidate's results for the customer's online purchase frequency question is that 37% of the candidates choose twice per month, accounting for the highest proportion, followed by three times per month with a proportion of 26%. In addition, 19% and 16% are the proportions of customers' online purchases once a month and more than three times a month, respectively. In addition, the results also show more customers' opinions about their online purchases as follows: usually once a month (on sales time), but it depends on other expenses that happen in that month. The survey's findings indicate that a majority of online purchases

are made on a regular basis, however there is no consistency and they can change from month to month. The number of an individual customer's online purchases also depends on other elements, such as previous expenditures made that month. This demonstrates how monthly monetary factors and consumer preferences can affect internet purchases. Additionally, the candidate's response's use of the phrase "usually once a month (on sales time)" demonstrates that some consumers take advantage of online shopping during promotional seasons to receive special deals and discounts at lower costs. This suggests that certain buyers could be prone to hold off on making an online purchase until there are discounts available. This demonstrates the versatility and flexibility of consumers when shopping online.

5. Which method do you often use for shopping?
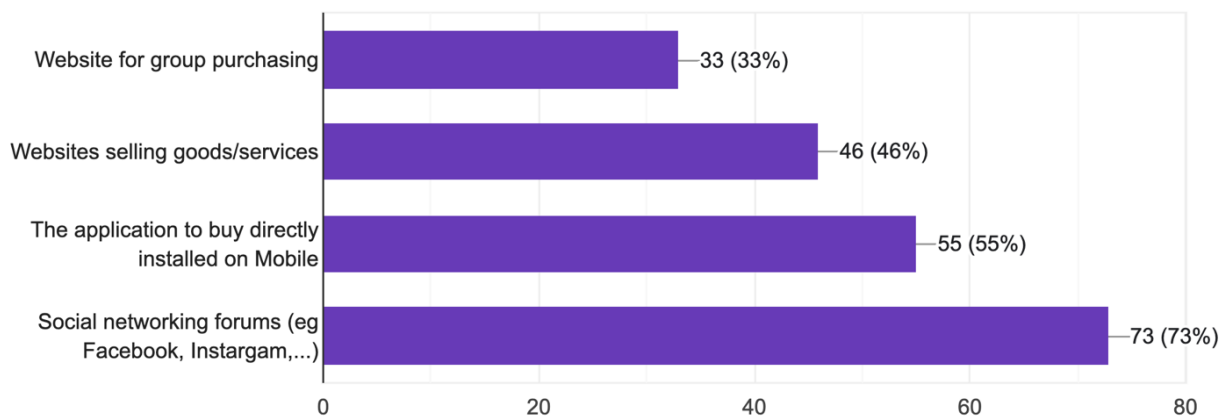100 responses

FIGURE 7. Which method do you often use for shopping?

Regarding the methods that customers often use when conducting online shopping, the results show that social networking forums (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) Accounted for the highest proportion of 73%, while websites for group purchasing accounted for the lowest proportion of 33%. Additionally, methods like the application to buy directly installed on mobile and websites selling goods/services accounted for 55% and 46%, respectively. The findings of the questionnaire for this query demonstrate the range of online purchasing strategies that consumers choose. With 73%, social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram make up the largest portion. This demonstrates how social networking sites have become a vital resource for consumers looking for product information, sharing their shopping experiences, and connecting with online retailers. Methods include installing a mobile direct-purchase application (55%) and using websites that sell goods and services (46%), both of which illustrate the use of mobile direct-purchase apps and websites, is common. Customers frequently use

stores to make online purchases. However, at 33%, the group buying website has the lowest share. This could reflect that consumers are more likely to buy alone and that group shopping is less common than it previously was.

6. What sources do you use to research before making an internet purchase?
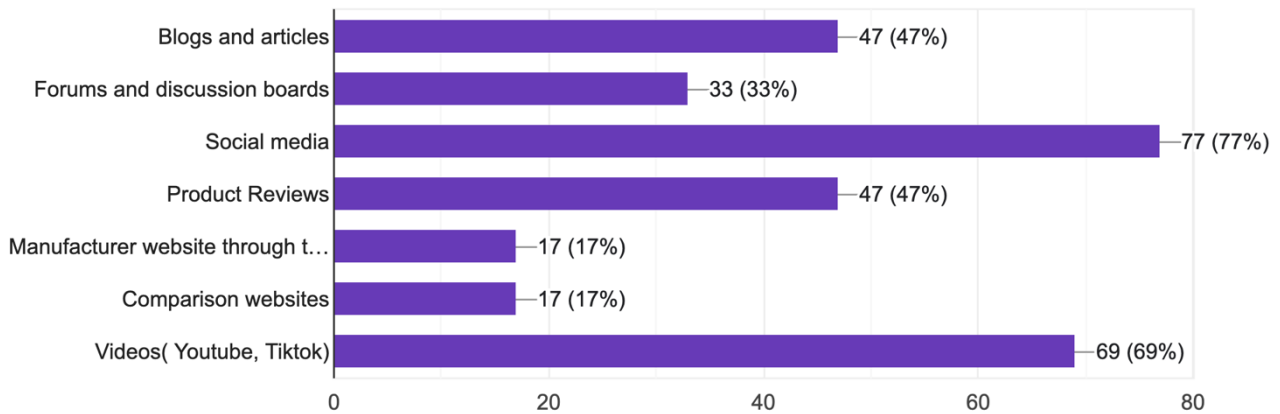100 responses

FIGURE 8. What sources do you use to research before making an internet purchase?

For the questions related to the source of information that customers use before making an online purchase, the survey results show that social media accounts for the highest percentage of 77%, then videos (Youtube, Tiktok) is 69%. However, comparison websites and manufacturer websites through the use of chatbots accounted for only the lowest percentage of 17%. In addition, blogs and articles and product reviews both have an equal percentage of 47%, and forums and discussion boards have an equal percentage of 33%. According to survey findings, consumers frequently research products using social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and videos on websites like YouTube and Tiktok before making an online purchase. A smaller fraction of websites that employ chatbots to converse with clients includes comparison sites and those of manufacturers. In addition, a lot of customers utilize blogs, articles, and product reviews, whereas fewer customers use forums and conversation sites. As a result, buyers consult a range of sources for information before making purchases online, particularly on social networking platforms.

For the question "Do you compare prices of products across different online retailers before making a purchase?", the results of the survey showed that 83% of respondents chose "Yes", 4% of respondents said selected "No", and 13% of the respondents did not give an opinion on this survey question. The

information that was collected demonstrates that customers' online purchase decisions are significantly influenced by the comparison of prices.

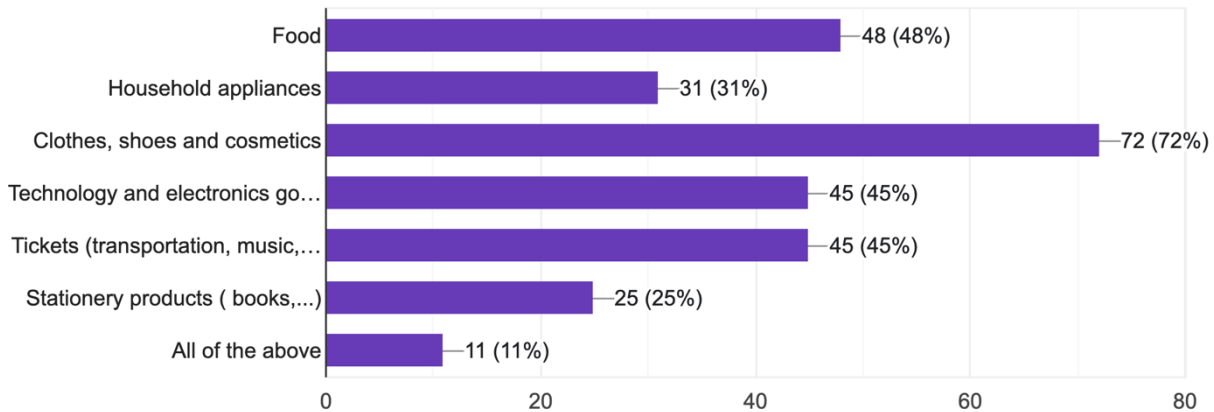### 9. What goods/services do you usually buy online?
100 responses

FIGURE 9. What goods/ services do you usually buy online?

On the question of what items customers usually buy online, the results show that clothes, shoes, and cosmetics have the highest share at 72%, followed by food with 48%. In addition, tickets (transportation, music, movies, etc.) and technology and electronic goods both make up the same percentage of 45%. In addition, products related to household appliances and stationery products (books, etc.) have a percentage of 31% and 25% respectively. And 11% is the percentage of interviewees who chose all of the above items. According to survey findings, consumers have a variety of interests when it comes to making purchases online, with clothing, shoes, and cosmetics being the most popular types. However, certain digital consumers also choose to purchase other goods including food, tickets (for entertainment, travel, music, movies, etc.), and electronics and technology. Some people also enjoy purchasing stationery and home appliance-related goods. Businesses and shops will be better able to offer products and services and boost their capacity to attract potential customers by understanding the items that people frequently purchase online.

10. What is the usual form of payment you use to pay for products/services ordered online?
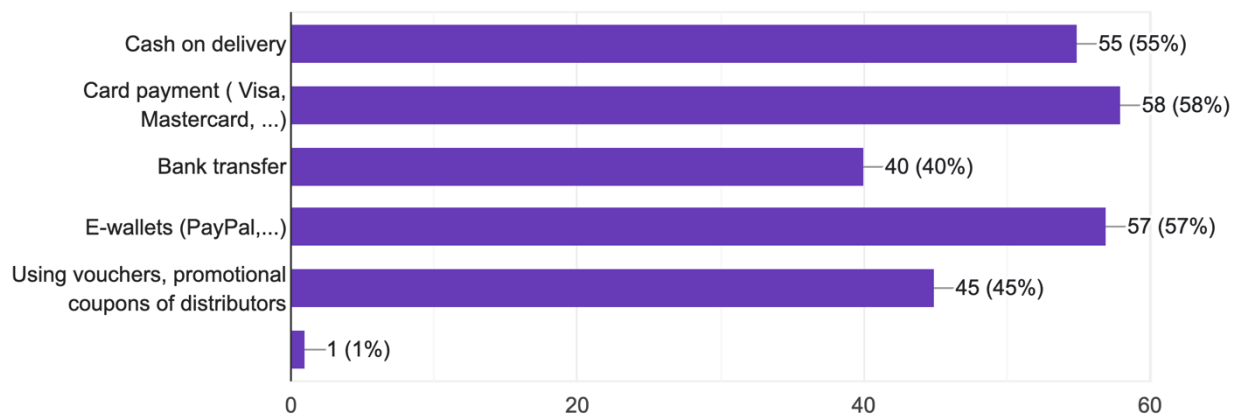100 responses

FIGURE 10. What is the usual form of payment you use to pay for products/ services ordered online?

For survey questions related to payment methods, the payment methods used by the participants varied quite evenly. Card payment (Visa, Mastercard, etc) is the most used method in the survey, accounting for 58%, and then E-wallets (PayPal, etc) and Cash on delivery accounted for 57% and 55% respectively. In addition, the percentages of payment methods through using vouchers, promotional coupons of distributors, and bank transfers are 45% and 40% respectively. The survey's findings indicate that consumers utilize a wide range of payment options when making purchases online, and no one method is clearly the most popular. And one participant who surveyed this question chose another payment method. This demonstrates the variety and adaptability of how consumers make payments, and retail stores must match this requirement by providing a range of acceptable payment ways to draw customers.

When asked how important online customer service is to customers, the survey's findings revealed that absolutely important received the highest response percentage of 53%, while 2% is the lowest amount for hardly important. In addition, the percentage of participants who chose important is 23%, followed by quite important and slightly important with a percentage of 16% and 6% respectively. The survey's findings indicate that consumers affect considerable importance on online customer service. The majority of survey participants rated it as "absolutely important" or "important." This demonstrates how strongly customers appreciate getting access to online customer service that can assist them in the purchasing process and address related questions or problems.

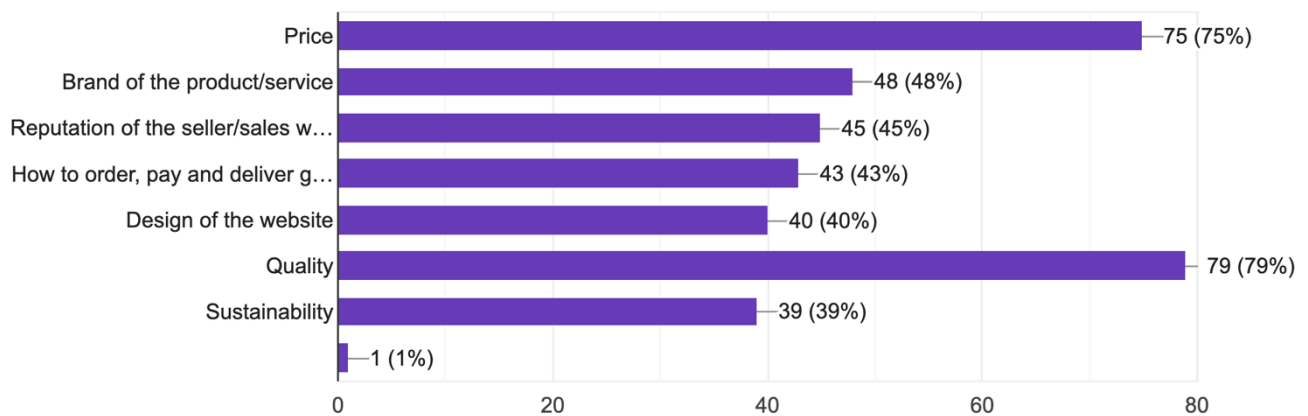## 13. What factors do you consider when shopping online?
100 responses

FIGURE 11. What factors do you consider when shopping online?

The results of the survey questions about what factors are influencing customers' online buying behavior show that the quality factor accounts for the biggest percentage of 79%, followed by the percentage of price at 75%. The brand of the product or service element contributes 48% to the total, followed by the reputation of the seller or sales website and the processes for purchasing, payment for, and delivering the products, which contribute 45% and 43%, respectively. Additionally, 40% of respondents chose the factor related to website design, and 39% of respondents selected the feature related to sustainability. And one participant who surveyed this question chose another opinion. Overall, this finding demonstrates that when making purchases online, consumers give careful consideration to a wide range of aspects, including brand, price, quality, reputation of the seller, ease of purchasing and delivery, website design for mobile devices, and sustainability. To provide clients with a positive online buying experience and meet their needs, retailers must concentrate on these aspects.

For this research question" Do you leave reviews for products you purchase online? Why or why not?", the participants offered three different opinions. The first opinion they give is that they often leave feedback and reviews about the product, and most of the people who take the survey give that opinion. Most of the reasons they give for this opinion are that it reflects the quality of the product, it is helpful for other buyers to know the quality of the products or services, and the sellers can get feedback and improve their products or services. In addition, it is useful information that they can check before making a purchase online, they can receive a lot of coupons, gifts, and coin that is really

useful for the next purchase when they evaluate and leave comments on it. Besides, a small number of survey respondents said that they leave almost no feedback and reviews for the product, only rating them. The reason they give for this opinion is that they just leave feedbacks products if the quality of the product's really good or bad. However, a small sample of survey participants said that they never leave feedback or comment on products, and the reason they make that opinion is that they feel it is neither necessary nor important for them to evaluate it. Additionally, a few comments indicate that some people are unwilling to take the time to give the product their honest evaluation because they are too lazy to evaluate it. All in all, this outcome demonstrates the variety of customer approaches to giving product reviews and comments. This may be a result of variations in online buyers' perceptions, opinions, and preferences.

17. What are the advantages you see when buying online?
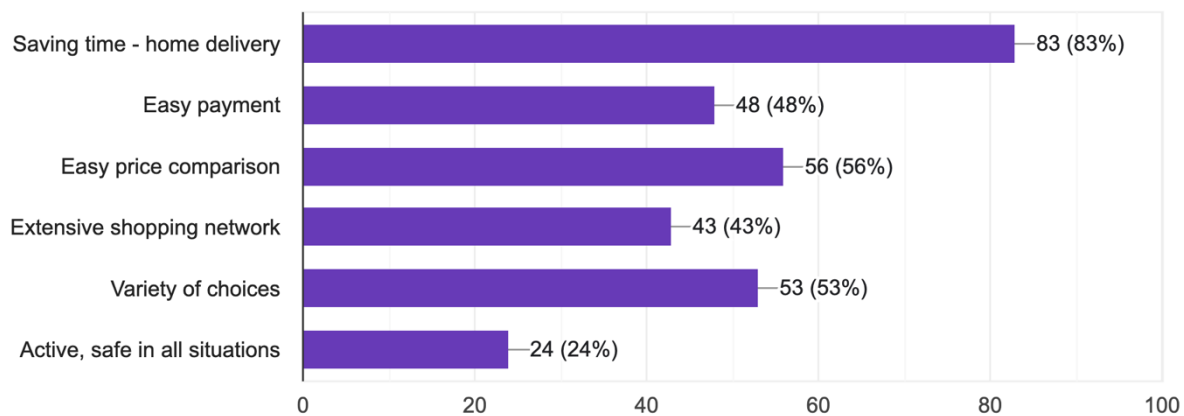100 responses

FIGURE 12. What are the advantages you see when buying online?

The saving time - home delivery element accounted for the biggest proportion of 83% in the investigation's results for the benefit of online purchasing. Besides, the percentage of participants choosing the easy price comparison and variety of choices factor was 56% and 53%, respectively. In addition, the percentages of easy payment and extensive shopping network factors selected by survey respondents accounted for 48% and 43%, respectively. The percentage of active, safe in all situations selected by survey participants is 24%. Consumers shop online for a variety of reasons, according to the survey findings, but time savings, a simple price comparison, and a large selection of products are what they are worth most. This demonstrates that online retailers must concentrate on offering effective delivery services that save customers time and give them a wide range of product options in

order to attract consumers and keep their customer base. Customers additionally attribute great importance to an easy and safe online buying experience.

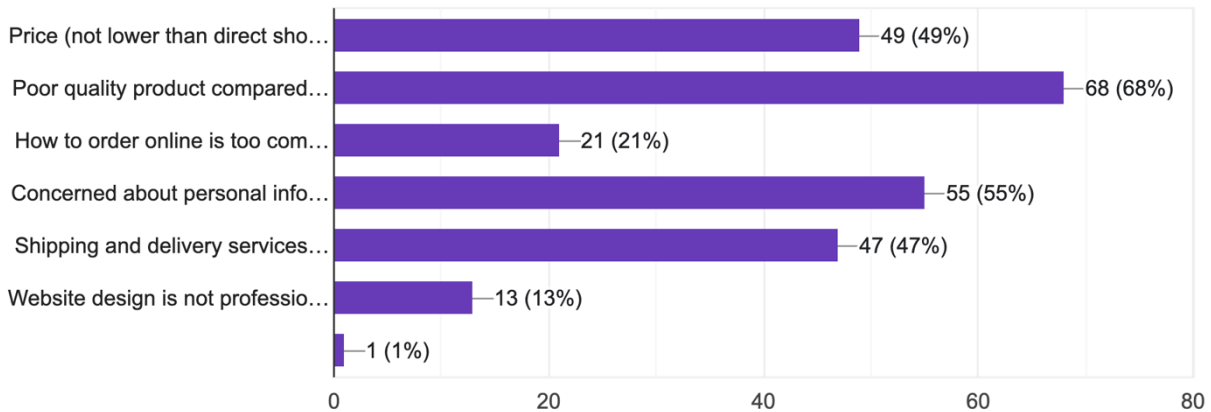### 18. What obstacles do you face when shopping online?
100 responses

FIGURE 13. What obstacle do you face when shopping online?

For the question related to the obstacle caused by customers face when shopping online, the results show that poor quality products compared to advertised is the factor with the highest percentage of 68%, while website design is not professional is the factor that accounts for the lowest percentage of 13%. In addition, concerned about personal information being revealed was the second highest percentage factor in the survey question at 55%, followed by price (not lower than direct shopping/unclear) with 49%. Furthermore, the percentages of the factors shipping and delivery services are limited and How to order online is too complicated are 47% and 21%, respectively. And one participant who surveyed this question chose another opinion. The survey's findings indicate that there are several obstacles for customers to face when shopping online. The main consideration is that the product's quality is lower than what was shown, which shows that the customer is concerned about receiving an unsatisfactory or inaccurately described product. Customers worry about their personal information getting released due to the issue of personal information security. When buyers worry that the cost is too high or unclear, the price is also brought up as a barrier. Customers' challenges were also attributed to limitations on shipping and delivery services. However, it can be maintained that unprofessional website design is the least significant barrier for consumers.

5.3 Potential risks and benefits of marketing automation from Customer perception

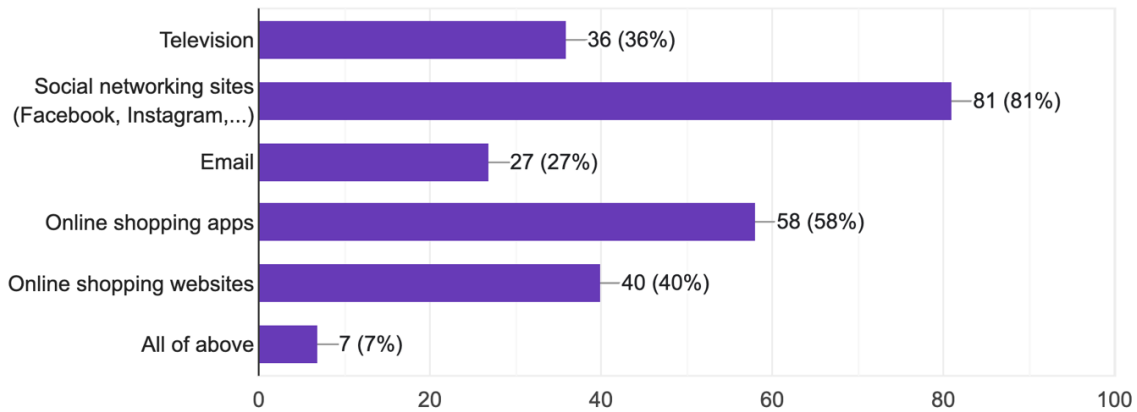7. Where do you typically find online product advertisements?
100 responses

FIGURE 14. Where do you typically find online product advertisements?

The participants were asked where they usually look for products online. Up to 81% of the 100 participants chose social networks as a place to regularly meet products online. This is also the highest rate showing that "Social media" is the place to reach potential online shoppers. Next, "Online shopping apps" were chosen with a fairly high proportion, specifically 58% of all participants. It shows that online shopping applications are where they often find product ads online and play an important role in buying and selling products. "Online shopping websites" are also chosen with a relative 40% of where they find their products. Therefore, it can be seen that this is also a quite popular channel to search for products online. 36% of "Television" votes, showing that this is still an important channel to promote products. Only 27% of votes voted for "Email", which is a fairly low percentage, which proves that email is not yet a main channel to promote products to customers. In the end, 7% of the total participants chose all of the above.

11. What tools do you usually get online customer support services through?
100 responses
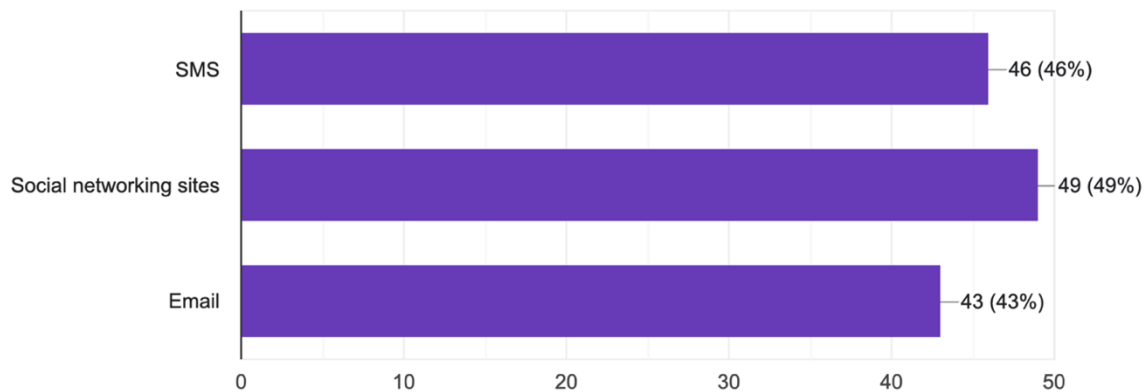
FIGURE 15. What tools do you usually get online customer support services through?

Survey results for the question "What tools do you usually get online customer support services through?" indicated that "Social networking sites" accounted for the highest percentage at 49%, while the "Email" factor accounted for the lowest percentage at 43%. In addition, the percentage of survey respondents who choose the SMS element is 46%. The survey results show that all three elements "Social networking sites", "Email", and "SMS" are popular tools to support the exchange of information between customers and sellers.

15. Do you receive emails or text messages from sellers after you make a purchase? If yes, how do you feel about this?
100 responses

FIGURE 16. Do you receive emails or text messages from sellers after you make a purchase? If yes, how do you feel about this?

In the question, how do the participants feel when they receive an email or text message from a seller after making a purchase? "Very sat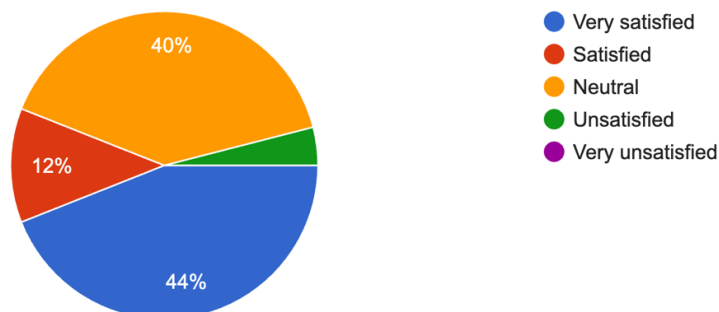isfied" is the highest voted rate with 44% of all participants. It can be seen that a large number of users feel positive and satisfied with receiving the message after making a purchase. Next comes a relatively high percentage of those who feel neither disappointed nor satisfied, with 40% of the votes. It shows that some users do not have a clear opinion or are not much influenced by receiving messages after making a purchase. Only 12% voted "Satisfied", this is a small percentage, but it can be seen that these people are still actively receptive to the message. There are 4% who feel "Unsatisfied", and this is a small percentage of those who are not excited. And no one chooses "Very unsatisfied" when receiving an email or text message from the seller after making a purchase.

16. Do you feel that the products recommended on the shopping site based on your behavior (e.g. products related to products you have previously purchased) match your needs?
100 responses
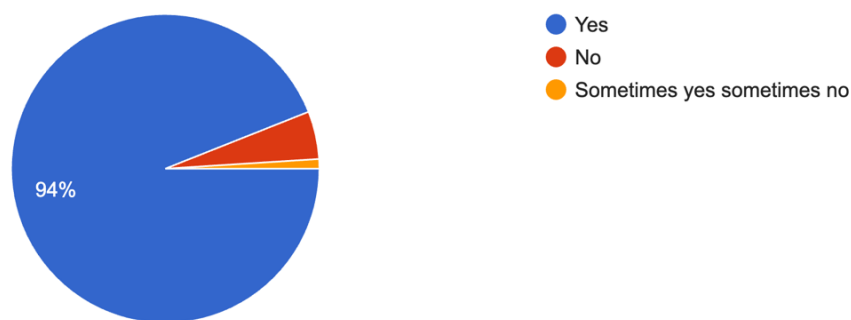
FIGURE 17. Do you feel that the products recommended on the shopping site based on your behavior match your needs?

The follow-up question asked the respondents whether the products recommended on the shopping site based on their behavior matched their needs. With a surprisingly high rate because up to 95% of people choose "Yes". This shows that most users have a positive feeling and are satisfied with getting the right product recommendations. Besides, some users are not satisfied "No" with receiving product recommendations as small as 5%. And 1% said that sometimes they are satisfied and sometimes they are not.

19. How do you feel when you see ads customized just for you on your website or on social media?
100 responses
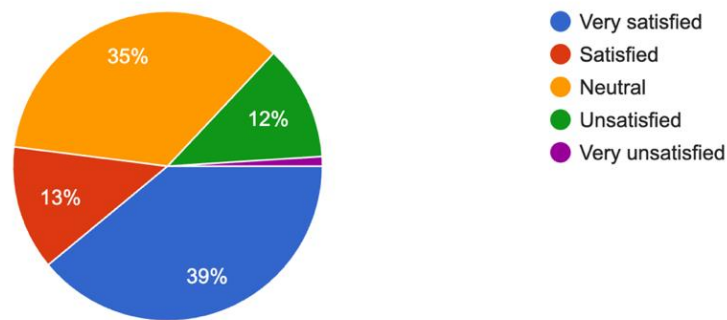
FIGURE 18. How do you feel when you see ads customized just for you on your website or on social media?

We asked survey respondents how they felt when they saw ads customized for them on a website or on social media. As can be seen in the chart, 39% of the 100 participants said they were "Very satisfied" when they saw ads customized specifically for them on a website or social network. This is the highest rate, showing that a large number of users have a positive and satisfied feeling when seeing personalized ads. Next accounted for a fairly high proportion with 35% of the votes, the neutrals did not have a clear opinion or were not affected much by seeing personalized ads. 13% of participants chose "Satisfied", indicating that some users rated seeing personalized ads positively. Participants who indicate that they are "Unsatisfied" make up 12% of the total. In the end, only 1% of all participants felt "Very unsatisfied".

20. Are you willing to share personal information with sales sites to receive product information, promotions, and discounts?
100 responses

FIGURE 19. Are you willing to share personal information with sales sites to receive product information, promotions, and discounts?

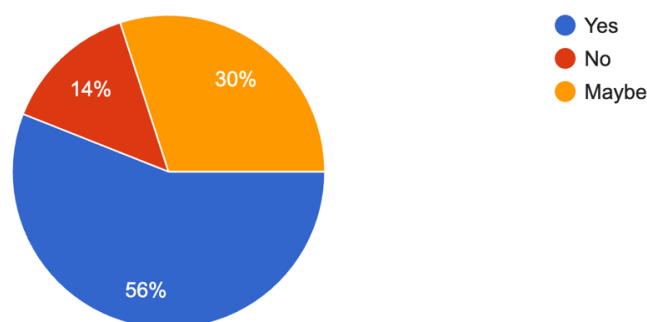From the collected results, it can be seen that 56% of participants said that they are willing to share personal information with sales websites to receive product information, promotions and discounts. This is the highest percentage, indicating that most users agree to share personal information to receive benefits related to products and offers. In addition, a fairly good percentage of 30% chose, indicating that some users intend to consider sharing personal information. Besides, 14% of participants said they were unwilling, which is a small percentage but still shows that some users do not want to share their personal information.

21. As a consumer using online purchase services, what potential benefits do you see from automated marketing?
100 responses
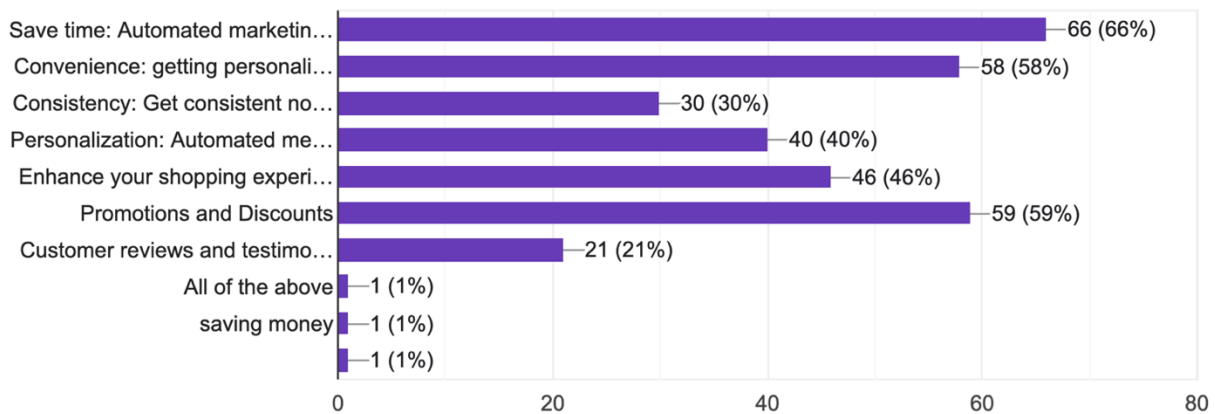
FIGURE 20. As a consumer using online purchase services, what potential benefits do you see from automated marketing?

First starting with the highest rate of 66%, they agree that the benefit of marketing automation for them is saving time in their shopping journey. Next 59% chose "Promotions and Discount". It is no wonder that most online shoppers have experienced, there are many discount codes and offers when we go through the process of buying and selling online. Again, 58% of the total participants selected "Convenience", they approved the messages sent to them at the right time, personalized. Instead of putting in the effort of searching, they now receive the services and information they want automatically. Up to 46% voted "Enhance your shopping experience", which is a pretty high percentage, showing that automated marketing is increasingly reaching users to help enhance their experience when shopping online. With 40% admitting that automation automatically brings benefits

to them, namely "personalization". Not only does it save users time shopping and searching for products, but it also makes users feel focused and cared for. The percentage of survey participants choosing "Consistency" is 30%. This ratio shows that they are satisfied with receiving consistent notifications and offers across different channels. In addition, automatic automation brings benefits to online shopping as users can refer to the testimonials of previous buyers. Specifically, "Customer reviews and testimonials" received 21% of the votes. Only 1% choose all of the above and 1% say they save money.

22. As a consumer using online purchase services, what potential risks do you see from automated marketing?
100 responses

Intrusiveness: marketing messages sent too often.	49 (49%)
Deception: messages that make you feel that many products ar…	50 (50%)
Lack of human contact: loss of personal connection and intera…	52 (52%)
Security and privacy: confidentiality of personal infor…	63 (63%)
Unwanted content: receiving irrelevant and unwanted marke…	44 (44%)
All of the above	1 (1%)
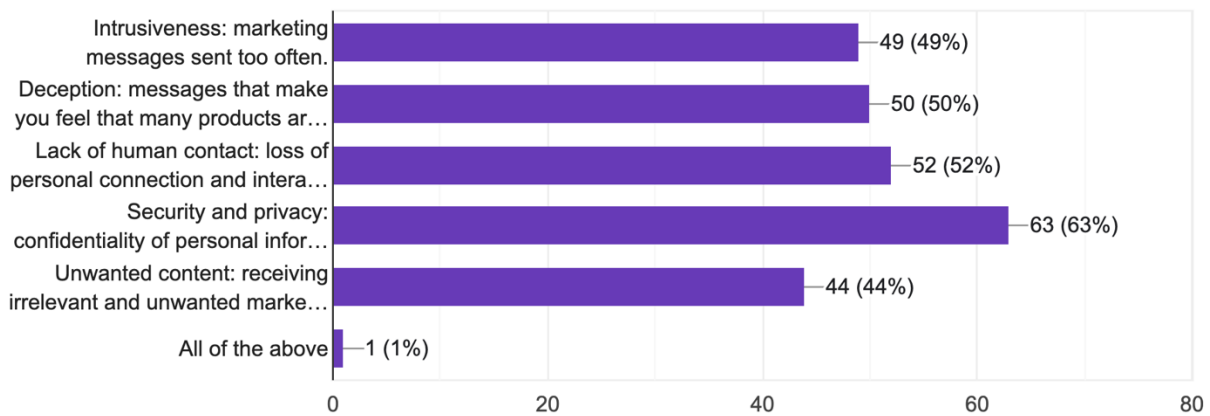
FIGURE 21. As a consumer using online purchase services, what potential risks do you see from automated marketing?

Contrary to the question about the benefits consumers get from automation, in this question we ask about the risks they see they can take in their online buying journey. Starting with risk the highest choice is "Security and privacy" with 63%. This is the highest rate showing that many users are concerned that their personal information may be disclosed or misused in the automated marketing process. This is followed by "Lack of human contact" with the second highest with 52% saying they see a risk from a lack of human communication in marketing automation. This can refer to the loss of personal interaction and support from employees or sales representatives. The percentage of survey participants who chose "Deception" is 50%. This may involve receiving inaccurate or misleading information from automated advertising. Next comes a pretty high percentage, with 49% of the participants voting "Intrusiveness", indicating that they perceive the risk of harassment from marketing

automation. This can mean receiving too many unwanted notifications, emails, or advertisements and it is annoying for the user. 44% of all respondents agree with the risk of "Unwanted content". They see the risk of receiving unwanted content from marketing automation. This may include receiving advertisements that are irrelevant or not tailored to individual interests and needs. Only 1% selected all of the above risks, they saw the risk from all of the above-mentioned marketing automation.

6 DISCUSSION AND CLARIFICATION

6.1 What factors do customers think about influencing their online purchasing decisions?

Consumer behavior has a critical role in the field of online retail. When consumers utilize digital platforms to make purchases or use services, it includes their actions, decisions, and preferences. Companies in the field of e-commerce must understand consumer behavior in order to develop effective marketing strategies, improve customer satisfaction, and boost sales.

In the world of online retail, the purchasing process is a crucial aspect of consumer behavior. Consumers engage in a variety of activities, including need identification, information search, choice assessment, purchasing decision, and post-purchase analysis. Numerous factors, including personal preferences, needs, promotions, and external influences, have an impact on each of these stages.

Consumer behavior in the online retail industry is influenced by a wide range of variables. The first aspect that can be considered is convenience and the buying experience. On E-commerce platforms, customers demand a convenient and simple shopping experience. They choose to spend money online since it is simple and quick, from the product search through the payment and shipping procedures. In the E-commerce sector, reliability, as well as security, are significant variables influencing consumer behavior. Online consumers are interested in making secure purchases. Consumers' comfort and confidence when making purchases online are greatly influenced by aspects like product reviews, ratings, return and warranty policies, and protection of personal information privacy. The diversity and choice of products available can significantly influence customer behavior. In order to satisfy their individual wants and preferences, consumers demand a wide variety of options from various brands, models, sizes, colors, and prices. Product variety increases interest and improves choice, enhancing consumers' capacity to shop on E-commerce platforms. Consumer purchase behavior is also significantly influenced by user reviews and comments. Consumers frequently look for user opinions and reviews to determine how good the quality of goods, services, and the dependability of online shopping sites. Consumers can develop excitement and trust by reading positive customer comments and reviews, which can motivate them towards continuing shopping online. In the field of E-commerce, marketing, and promotion activities can have a significant impact on customer purchase behavior. The attractiveness of discounts, free delivery, special offers, and promotions may stimulate

buying thoughts and boost customer motivation. Good marketing initiatives aim to benefit consumers and keep them interested in the purchasing process.

The previously mentioned elements significantly affect consumer behavior in the e-commerce industry. Consumer engagement and purchases on E-commerce platforms can be influenced by a variety of factors, including convenience, dependability, a large selection, favorable reviews, and persuasive marketing campaigns. It is crucial for businesses to comprehend these factors and how they influence consumer behavior in the E-commerce industry in order to maximize their marketing efforts and provide customers with the best shopping experience possible.

6.2 What are the potential risks and benefits of marketing automation from customer perception?

A study conducted by James (2011) and published in the Harvard Business Review demonstrated that potential customers are seven times more likely to make a purchase from a business that responds to their inquiries within one hour. But research also shows that 63% of companies responding to customer inquiries take longer than that. The sales of the business will certainly be directly proportional to the customer satisfaction. Therefore, they must choose a potential investment option to benefit them, which is an automated marketing system that responds to customer needs within an hour of contacting the business.

The application of marketing automation is currently being implemented by many individuals and businesses in their marketing activities and of course, has achieved outstanding efficiency. However, to better understand and evaluate this marketing method more accurately, we will understand its advantages and disadvantages from the perspective of consumers.

Online shopping has helped users get more time in their shopping journey, which with the help of automation also helps them save more time and effort. They can get instant information and support through automated systems without having to conduct a search or talk directly to marketers. This ensures that customers can access information and services easily and quickly. In addition, automation brings convenience to customers. Consumers can access product and service information anytime, anywhere thanks to marketing automation. Even when the business is not open, the system is automatically operating continuously to help customers access important information, learn about items, view promotional content and make online purchases. Marketing automation facilitates online shopping.

Without waiting in line or calling, customers can quickly get the information they need, request support, or get answers to questions. Through automated interface or mobile application, customers can easily check order status, update personal information, review transaction history. Customers can manage their personal information and shop more easily and in control thanks to this. Also, it is about personalization. Automated systems can send messages and documents customized to each customer's unique preferences and needs. This improves communication and fosters a connection with customers. In addition, the consumer experience has been enhanced. By providing convenient, personalized, and top-notch services and information, marketing automation enhances the customer experience. Automation enables organizations to recall and understand customer preferences, purchase history, and interactions to make recommendations and recommendations tailored to those insights. By improving the consumer experience, this increases customer satisfaction and loyalty. For sudden and urgent needs, customers will be very satisfied with the continuous interaction and quick response of marketing automation. Consumer interactions are seamless and responsive thanks to marketing automation. Through marketing channels such as chatbots, automated emails, texts, or mobile apps, automated systems can quickly respond to, help, and assist with consumer inquiries. Customers can interact with the business more easily and are satisfied as a result.

Technology is a field of constant innovation, helping to optimize business progress. Therefore, the use of marketing automation methods in their marketing process is something that companies must do to compete in today's market. Many businesses are already using marketing automation as a powerful tool to benefit their marketing campaigns. As is evident, we live in the digital age. In contrast, marketing automation not only helps companies to expand, generate more income, and provide customers with new experiences but also helps companies keep up with technology. Marketing automation offers many benefits to consumers.

Consumers can enjoy many important advantages of marketing automation, but there are also certain risks. Customers can experience difficulties and annoyances in the process that can affect their experience. Potential dangers include loss of personalization in interactions, lack of human involvement, and loss of control over the privacy of personal data. Consumers also face challenges due to incomplete information and a lack of skills in assessing product quality. Consumers need to be aware of the risks involved in order to take advantage of the benefits of marketing automation.

When we talk about the risks that can be brought by marketing automation, they are security and privacy risks. Large amounts of customer personal data must be collected and processed for marketing

automation to work. Personal information can be misused or leaked if not adequately secured, which raises concerns about the potential breach of privacy and security for consumers. Next comes the risk of a lack of human interaction. Marketing automation often relies on technology and automated methods that don't interact directly with people. As a result, the human element, open communication, and the ability to understand customer requirements and problems can be somewhat reduced. Customers can sometimes feel a lack of human contact and support when they shop and deal with a company. Besides, intrusiveness and deception are also worth mentioning. Consumers may find marketing automation too annoying and frustrating. Customers can feel as though they are being watched and their privacy is compromised as the system automatically collects data and tracks behavior. Consumer freedom and privacy can be compromised by persistent promotional messages, unsolicited emails, or untrustworthy sharing of personal information. Misrepresentation is another concern associated with marketing automation. Businesses can sometimes mislead customers by using automated processes to create false information or advertising. This can damage the relationship between the company and its customers and lead to a loss of customer trust. There may be instances of inaccurate information or mistakes in the distribution of products, prices, promotional information, and other factors during the automation process. This may cause misconceptions, a breakdown in trust, and consumer unhappiness.

In marketing automation, consumers need to be aware of the risks and challenges that consumers may face. However, to take advantage of the benefits of marketing automation, consumers need to carefully select and learn about the businesses and services they interact with. At the same time, businesses also have a responsibility to ensure transparency, trustworthiness and respect for customers' privacy. By building a trusted marketing automation environment and creating human interaction, businesses can build trust, create better experiences, and maintain long-term customer relationships. consumption. It is important to consider and work together to take advantage of the benefits of marketing automation while preserving trustworthiness and respecting the interests of consumers.

6.3 Impact of customer behavior on automated marketing in the e-commerce industry

Consumer behavior can influence the design and implementation of marketing automation programs. We look at how customers influence the success of your business, by generating essential data and information for process automation, as well as their impact on demand and eliciting responses through creating impactful interactions and online marketing automation campaigns. In addition, it examines

how consumer behavior affects the development of the optimal marketing experience and contributes to the development and improvement of automation technology.

For creating customer experiences. Automated marketing experiences are generated by consumer activity. The customer experience with automated interfaces is determined based on comfort, adaptability, and customization. Customers can easily and quickly obtain goods, services and information that make them happy and comfortable. Customers can also take advantage of interactive and automated consultations, including chatbots, product recommendation systems or automated emails, helping them find information and get support quickly. As a result, customers benefit from a convenient and efficient marketing experience, saving them time and effort when searching for and purchasing products. Next, the performance and effectiveness of marketing automation can also be affected by consumer behavior. Customer responses, interactions, and feedback are important indicators of how well marketing automation initiatives are working and performing. To better meet customer requirements and expectations, businesses can now customize and enhance their marketing efforts in real time. In addition, virality and social interaction can also be generated by the behavior of users when sharing and interacting with online content and information. Customers can influence the purchasing decisions of others by sharing their shopping experiences, product reviews or recommendations with others. This can present an opportunity or challenge for organizations trying to develop and maintain a positive brand identity and foster customer connections.

Customer behavior has an impact on the development of goods and services in addition to being a valuable source of information and feedback for businesses. Customers act as active marketers by interacting with the business and providing feedback. This allows companies to better understand their customers' wants and expectations, helping them develop and personalize their goods and services to be more responsive. Consumer services and delivery procedures are also affected by consumer behavior. The shipping and delivery process is influenced by the customer's online choices and purchases. Quality and customer service experience can also suffer when interacting with automated services like chatbots and self-service portals.

Customers are important in driving social engagement and virality. Through social media platforms and online reviews, users can influence the purchasing decisions of others by sharing their shopping experiences, product reviews, and recommendations. Therefore, building relationships with customers and keeping a positive brand image is essential to setting up marketing automation. In summary, customer behavior has a profound impact on marketing automation in the e-commerce industry.

7 CONCLUSION

Through research, in the field of e-commerce, customer behavior has a significant and profound impact on marketing automation. Customers are important sources of information and feedback for businesses, as well as the recipients of information and goods. Through using and interacting with automation technology, marketing automation creates demand, interacts, and creates experiences for customers. Customer behavior provides important insights into the receptivity and acceptance of new technologies, helping companies create and enhance marketing automation tools. Customers also provide feedback and opinions, helping to develop goods and services. They have an impact on customer service and delivery processes through online interactions and purchases. Virality and social interaction are also facilitated by consumer behavior. Through social media and online reviews, customers can influence the purchasing decisions of others by sharing their experiences and product reviews. Therefore, the growth of marketing automation depends on having good customer relationships and a great brand image.

However, there are also dangers associated with marketing automation, including privacy violations, loss of personal interaction, and privacy issues. Therefore, in order to gain customer trust and support, marketing automation must uphold ethics, reliability, and dependability. In summary, customer behavior has a major impact on marketing automation in the e-commerce sector. Customers are an important source of data because they create demand, provide input, and shape the customer experience. To better understand customer requirements and expectations, businesses need to work closely with them. Businesses must pay attention to customer suggestions and feedback, act quickly to address them, and then use the information to enhance their service to customers. While collecting and using customer information, it is important to maintain it ethically and securely. Businesses must comply with laws governing the security and privacy of customer information and ensure that automation technologies are used properly and for the benefit of consumers.

Finally, in the ever-evolving landscape of marketing automation, the customer remains at the center of everything. Businesses need to establish relationships of trust and build trust with customers by providing superior customer value and experience. Effective marketing automation strategies that benefit customers can be created through customer engagement and insights.

In conclusion, the impact of customer behavior on marketing automation in the e-commerce industry cannot be underestimated. Customers play an important role in creating demand, satisfying, and creating customer experiences. However, to be successful, businesses need to listen to and stand with customers, ensure safety and ethics in the use of information, and create trust and value for customers.

As automated marketing becomes more prevalent, it is essential to examine the moral ramifications and difficulties brought on by consumer behavior. Examining privacy issues, data protection, and trust transparency in automated marketing methods to build with customers can be the main emphasis of future work. Besides, effective use and careful analysis of consumer behavior. To learn more about consumer behavior in the context of automated marketing in e-commerce, more studies can be done. This may entail researching particular client segments, their preferences, thought processes, and the variables that affect how they respond to automated marketing. Future research might also look into how to improve personalization and interaction in automated marketing to better harness consumer behavior. In order to create customized experiences and real-time interactions that match client preferences and demands, this may involve cutting-edge technology like artificial intelligence and machine learning. By focusing on these recommendations for future work, researchers and practitioners can gain deeper insights into the impact of customer behavior on automated marketing in e-commerce, leading to the development of more effective and customer-centric marketing strategies.

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APPENDICES: QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 1/8

1.   1. What is your gender? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Male

   ◯ Female

2.   2. What is your age? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ 18- 30

   ◯ 31- 45

   ◯ Over 45

3.   3. Have you ever made a purchase online? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

4. 4. How many times per month do you make purchases online? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Once a month

◯ Twice a month

◯ Three times a month

◯ More than three times a month

◯ Other: _____

5. 5. Which method do you often use for shopping? *

Check all that apply.

☐ Website for group purchasing

☐ Websites selling goods/services

☐ The application to buy directly installed on Mobile

☐ Social networking forums (eg Facebook, Instargam,...)

☐ Other: _____

6. 6. What sources do you use to research before making an internet purchase? *

Check all that apply.

☐ Blogs and articles

☐ Forums and discussion boards

☐ Social media

☐ Product Reviews

☐ Manufacturer website through the use of chatbot

☐ Comparison websites

☐ Videos(Youtube, Tiktok)

7.   7. Where do you typically find online product advertisements? *

Check all that apply.

☐ Television
☐ Social networking sites (Facebook, Instagram,...)
☐ Email
☐ Online shopping apps
☐ Online shopping websites
☐ All of above

8.   8. Do you compare prices of products across different online retailers before   *
making a purchase?

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes
◯ No
◯ I don't know

9.   9. What goods/services do you usually buy online? *

Check all that apply.

☐ Food
☐ Household appliances
☐ Clothes, shoes and cosmetics
☐ Technology and electronics goods
☐ Tickets (transportation, music, movies, ...)
☐ Stationery products (books,...)
☐ All of the above

10. 10. What is the usual form of payment you use to pay for products/services *
ordered online?

Check all that apply.

☐ Cash on delivery
☐ Card payment (Visa, Mastercard, ...)
☐ Bank transfer
☐ E-wallets (PayPal,...)
☐ Using vouchers, promotional coupons of distributors
☐ Other: _____

11. 11. What tools do you usually get online customer support services through? *

Check all that apply.

☐ SMS
☐ Social networking sites
☐ Email
☐ Other: _____

12. 12. Is online customer service important to your online purchasing decisions? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Absolutely important

◯ Quite important

◯ Important

◯ Slightly important

◯ Hardly important

13. 13. What factors do you consider when shopping online? *

Check all that apply.

☐ Price
☐ Brand of the product/service
☐ Reputation of the seller/sales website
☐ How to order, pay and deliver goods
☐ Design of the website
☐ Quality
☐ Sustainability
☐ Other: _____

14. 14. Do you leave reviews for products you purchase online? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. 15. Do you receive emails or text messages from sellers after you make a   *
purchase? If yes, how do you feel about this?

Mark only one oval.

◯ Very satisfied

◯ Satisfied

◯ Neutral

◯ Unsatisfied

◯ Very unsatisfied

16. 16. Do you feel that the products recommended on the shopping site based on *
your behavior (e.g. products related to products you have previously
purchased) match your needs?

Mark only one oval.

( ) Yes

( ) No

( ) Other: _____

17. 17. What are the advantages you see when buying online? *

Check all that apply.

☐ Saving time - home delivery

☐ Easy payment

☐ Easy price comparison

☐ Extensive shopping network

☐ Variety of choices

☐ Active, safe in all situations

18. 18. What obstacles do you face when shopping online? *

Check all that apply.

☐ Price (not lower than direct shopping/unclear...)

☐ Poor quality product compared to advertised

☐ How to order online is too complicated

☐ Concerned about personal information being revealed

☐ Shipping and delivery services are limited

☐ Website design is not professional

☐ Other: _____

19.   19. How do you feel when you see ads customized just for you on your website *
       or on social media?

       Mark only one oval.

       ( ) Very satisfied

       ( ) Satisfied

       ( ) Neutral

       ( ) Unsatisfied

       ( ) Very unsatisfied

20.   20. Are you willing to share personal information with sales sites to receive   *
       product information, promotions, and discounts?

       Mark only one oval.

       ( ) Yes

       ( ) No

       ( ) Maybe

21.   21. As a consumer using online purchase services, what potential benefits do   *
       you see from automated marketing?

       Check all that apply.

       [ ] Save time: Automated marketing makes information available.
       [ ] Convenience: getting personalized messages at the right time.
       [ ] Consistency: Get consistent notifications and offers across multiple channels.
       [ ] Personalization: Automated messages tailored to preferences and needs.
       [ ] Enhance your shopping experience.
       [ ] Promotions and Discounts
       [ ] Customer reviews and testimonials
       [ ] Other: _____

22. 22. As a consumer using online purchase services, what potential risks do you *
see from automated marketing?

Check all that apply.

☐ Intrusiveness: marketing messages sent too often.

☐ Deception: messages that make you feel that many products are more valuable than
they really are.

☐ Lack of human contact: loss of personal connection and interaction.

☐ Security and privacy: confidentiality of personal information and data.

☐ Unwanted content: receiving irrelevant and unwanted marketing messages.

☐ Other: _____