

Social Commerce and Impulse Buying Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of social media platforms has transformed traditional e-commerce into a more interactive and engagement-driven model known as social commerce. Social commerce integrates shopping features within social media platforms, enabling consumers to discover, evaluate, and purchase products without leaving the platform. This research paper examines the relationship between social commerce and impulse buying behavior, focusing on how social interaction, influencer marketing, user-generated content, and platform design stimulate unplanned purchases. Using secondary data collected from academic journals, industry reports, and prior empirical studies, the paper analyzes key drivers of impulse buying in social commerce environments. The findings suggest that emotional triggers, social proof, real-time engagement, and personalized content significantly increase consumers' tendency to make impulsive purchase decisions. The study concludes that social commerce has redefined consumer buying behavior by blending entertainment, trust, and convenience, thereby creating a powerful impulse-driven marketplace.

I. INTRODUCTION

The evolution of digital marketing has significantly altered the way consumers interact with brands and make purchasing decisions. With the widespread adoption of social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and WhatsApp, businesses have shifted from traditional e-commerce models to social commerce. Social commerce refers to the buying and selling of products and services directly through social media platforms using integrated shopping features. Unlike conventional online shopping, social commerce emphasizes social interaction, peer influence, and content-driven engagement. Impulse buying behavior is characterized by spontaneous, unplanned purchases driven by emotional and psychological stimuli rather than rational evaluation. The interactive nature of social commerce platforms, combined with real-time content, influencer endorsements, and peer reviews, has intensified impulse buying tendencies among consumers. Similar to how technological innovation reshapes sustainable practices in industries, social commerce represents a digital transformation that has reshaped consumer purchasing patterns. This paper aims to analyze the factors influencing impulse buying behavior in social commerce and assess its implications for marketers and consumers.

II. CONCEPT OF SOCIAL COMMERCE

Social commerce is an extension of e-commerce that leverages social media platforms to facilitate online transactions. It allows consumers to shop while engaging in social interactions such as liking, commenting, sharing, and reviewing products. Key features of social commerce include shoppable posts, live-stream shopping, in-app checkout, influencer collaborations, and personalized recommendations. The success of social commerce lies in its ability to reduce the gap between product discovery and purchase. Consumers no longer need to switch platforms to complete a transaction, which increases convenience and reduces decision-making time. The integration of social proof, such as likes, shares, and comments, enhances trust and encourages quick purchase decisions.

III. IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOR IN DIGITAL CONTEXT

Impulse buying behavior is influenced by emotional appeal, visual stimulation, and environmental cues. In social commerce, these factors are amplified through visually rich content, limited-time offers, and influencer recommendations. Consumers are often exposed to curated content tailored to their preferences, increasing the likelihood of spontaneous purchases. Social validation plays a crucial role in impulse buying. Seeing others endorse or use a product creates a sense of desirability and urgency. Live shopping events and flash sales further stimulate impulse purchases by creating fear of missing out (FOMO). As observed in technology-driven behavioral changes across industries, digital platforms significantly shape consumer decision-making processes.

IV. FACTORS INFLUENCING IMPULSE BUYING IN SOCIAL COMMERCE

Several factors contribute to impulse buying behavior in social commerce environments:

1. **Influencer Marketing:** Influencers create trust and relatability, encouraging followers to make immediate purchases.
2. **User-Generated Content:** Reviews, testimonials, and real-life usage videos increase authenticity and credibility.
3. **Emotional Engagement** Entertaining and relatable content triggers emotional responses that lead to impulsive decisions.
4. **Platform Design:** Easy navigation, one-click purchases, and personalized feeds reduce cognitive effort.
5. **Social Proof:** Likes, comments, and shares reinforce positive perceptions and purchase confidence.

These factors collectively create a highly stimulating environment that promotes unplanned buying behavior.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of secondary literature indicates that social commerce significantly increases impulse buying behavior compared to traditional e-commerce platforms. The interactive and immersive nature of social media enhances emotional involvement, which plays a key role in impulsive decision-making. Consumers are more likely to trust recommendations from peers and influencers than traditional advertisements. However, increased impulse buying may also lead to post-purchase regret and financial stress among consumers. From a marketing perspective, businesses benefit from higher conversion rates and customer engagement, but ethical concerns regarding consumer manipulation must be addressed. Similar to sustainability challenges discussed in technological adoption studies, a balanced approach is necessary for long-term success.

VI. CONCLUSION

Social commerce has emerged as a powerful marketing channel that significantly influences impulse buying behavior. By integrating social interaction, emotional engagement, and seamless purchasing processes, social commerce platforms encourage spontaneous consumption. While this presents significant opportunities for marketers, it also raises concerns related to consumer well-being and ethical marketing practices. The study concludes that social commerce will continue to shape consumer behavior in the digital era, and future research should focus on developing responsible marketing strategies that balance business growth with consumer protection.

REFERENCES

Academic literature on social commerce and consumer behavior

Industry reports on social media marketing trends

Research studies on impulse buying behavior

Secondary data methodology reference