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Author(s): Kettunen, Eeva; Kemppainen, Tiina; Lievonen, Matias; Makkonen, Markus; Frank, Lauri; Kari, Tuomas

Title: Ideal types of online shoppers : a qualitative analysis of online shopping behavior

Year: 2018

Version: Accepted version (Final draft)

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Please cite the original version:

Kettunen, E., Kemppainen, T., Lievonen, M., Makkonen, M., Frank, L., & Kari, T. (2018). Ideal types of online shoppers : a qualitative analysis of online shopping behavior. In P. Kourouthanassis, P. Markopoulos, A. Pateli, N. Pouloudi, A. Pucihar, & J. V. D. Cunha (Eds.), MCIS 2018 : 12th Mediterranean Conference on Information Systems (pp. 1-16). MCIS. https://aisel.aisnet.org/mcis2018/30

IDEAL TYPES OF ONLINE SHOPPERS – A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

Research full-length paper

Track: Digital Markets

Kettunen, Eeva, University of Jyvaskyla, Jyvaskyla, Finland, eeva.k.kettunen@jyu.fi

Kemppainen, Tiina, University of Jyvaskyla, Jyvaskyla, Finland, tiina.j.kemppainen@jyu.fi

Lievonen, Matias, University of Jyvaskyla, Jyvaskyla, Finland, matias.lievonen@jyu.fi

Makkonen, Markus, University of Jyvaskyla, Jyvaskyla, Finland, markus.v.makkonen@jyu.fi

Frank, Lauri, University of Jyvaskyla, Jyvaskyla, Finland, lauri.frank@jyu.fi

Kari, Tuomas, University of Jyvaskyla, Jyvaskyla, Finland, tuomas.t.kari@jyu.fi

Abstract

Due to the growing popularity of online shopping, there is a growing demand for understanding the motives and behaviour of online shoppers. This study aims to increase this understanding by examining online shopping behaviour from the perspective of UTAUT2 theory integrated with self-efficacy and risk avoidance components. The thematically analysed data from 31 participants highlights the unique aspects of online shoppers by grouping them into ideal types, presenting the data as extensively as possible. An ideal type is an analytical construct used to ascertain similarities and deviations to concrete cases in an individual phenomenon. This study discovered five ideal types of online shoppers: Conservative Shoppers, Rational Shoppers, Hedonistic Shoppers, Spontaneous Shoppers and Vanguard Shoppers. The main theoretical contribution of this study are the formed ideal shopper types enriched with practical implications for online shop providers on how to best meet the needs of each ideal type. The purpose of the ideal types is not to categorize online shoppers under one category but rather help to understand regularities of different types of online shopping behaviour. This understanding is beneficial for online shop providers as well as for academics interested in studying online shopping behaviour from the information systems point of view.

Keywords: Online shopper, online shopping, ideal types, user experience, UTAUT2, customer, web store.

1 Introduction

Understanding the wants, needs and behaviour of a customer plays a crucial role in all kinds of business fields. Since shopping and purchasing has shifted from physical "brick and mortar" stores to online in recent years, it is important to further understand the motives, habits and expectations of different types of online consumers. Despite some similarities between online shopping and traditional physical shopping, the motives for online shopping are fundamentally different (Ganesh 2010).

The purpose of this study is to increase the understanding of motivations and behaviours of different types of online shoppers by analysing their behaviour from initial need recognition all the way to their post purchase behaviour. To highlight the unique characteristics and aspects of different users, the characteristics were formed into ideal types. Presenting the results in the form of ideal types makes it easier to understand the different types of behaviours and what affects them. The purpose is also to look at shopping behaviour from the perspective of the service provider and learn how online shops could further develop to meet the needs of different consumer types. By increasing the understanding of consumer behaviour in online shopping we also aim to contribute to the research field on online shopping and information systems (IS).

Online shopper typologies have been discussed particularly in marketing related research (scf., Ganesh et al. 2010; Rohm and Swaminathan 2004). Lately, online shopping behaviour has also been discussed in information systems research by focusing on the acceptance and use of technology (scf., Tandon et al. 2016; An et al. 2016; Yaprakli et al. 2013.) This paper combines online shopper typologies and the technological perspective. Whereas the main theoretical contribution of this paper is the creation of these ideal types, it can also be seen as contributing to the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT2). As a qualitative study, this paper aims to further clarify the theoretical constructs of the theory in the context of online shopping behaviour. However, it is important to note that the theory is used in the study only as a background model for guiding the data collection and analysis process and therefore the analysis of online shopping behaviour is not limited only to the model of UTAUT2 and the aim is not to quantitatively test the model. Using the ideal type concept, particularly in IS research, is rather new. The following section explains more about the concept.

1.1 Weberian Ideal Types

Weber defines sociological studies as trying to understand the social phenomenon created by individuals and their behaviour. This behaviour is directed by motives that cannot be empirically observed, giving the responsibility to the researcher to conceptualize and understand the motives that have led to the behaviour. According to Weber this understanding can be done through sense-making that brings out the significant and not just the observed. The results of this sense-making lead to the definition of Weberian ideal types (Heiskala 1990; Kaesler 2003), which can be described as fictional characters or personas based on interviews and/or ethnographic observation (Cooper 1999).

The purpose of ideal types is to distinguish and emphasize the most essential and important aspects of a social phenomenon. The Weberian ideal types are based on social reality but are not meant to be understood as descriptions of the reality. Instead they work as measurement tools that can be used when explaining and measuring the reality. The aim of the ideal types is to reduce the complexity of the social reality by making it easier to understand in an analytic way (Weber 1988). Ideal types either fit or do not fit a given situation in the reality but cannot be understood as being empirically right or wrong. According to Weber ideal types have a twofold function: in addition to being a measurement tool for reality, it is also possible to contrast the created ideal types with empirically observed situations. This enables the identification of regularities and causalities within the observed phenomenon or the observed social system. According to Kaesler (2003) these regularities and causalities can be further used in explaining and understanding the social on a higher level of abstraction.

The thinking and usage of Weberian ideal types has had strong impact on designing products and technologies by enabling the use of fictional people in the design process. The ideal type concept has been previously used in information systems research (Kettunen et al., 2017) and additionally in typologizing sport-related consumers, services and tourism (scf., Ahtiainen, Piirainen and Vehmas 2015; Vehmas 2010). However, to our best knowledge, this approach has not been used before in the context of online shopping and information systems, although it is a suitable method of studying and describing the behaviours of online shoppers. The online shopping phenomenon has been studied previously using categorization methods (scf. Bhatnagar and Ghose, 2004; Barnes et al., 2007). However, unlike categorization, ideal type method does not try to categorize people into one category based on their behaviour. Instead, ideal type method aims to combine sets of causal behaviours under one ideal type, leaving a possibility for a person to identify themselves with more than one ideal type.

2 Theoretical Framework

In this study the online shopping behaviour was studied all the way from need recognition and information search to evaluation, purchase and post purchase behaviour. The theoretical framework for this study comes from the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT2) model by Venkatesh et al. (2012) integrated with perceived risk and self-efficacy components. All parts of the theoretical framework are presented below.

2.1 UTAUT2

Venkatesh et al. (2003) combined determinants of technology acceptance and use into one unified model, the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT). UTAUT has four core determinants of intention and use that directly affect the adoption and use of technology: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. UTAUT also presents four moderators of those key relationships: gender, age, experience, and voluntariness of use (Venkatesh et al. 2003). Venkatesh et al. (2012) then extended the UTAUT model and introduced UTAUT2, to cover the individual consumer context by introducing three new determinants of intention and use into the original model: hedonic motivation, price value, and habit. In UTAUT2, facilitating conditions is also a determinant of behavioural intention (Venkatesh et al. 2012). Originally, the UTAUT theory has been connected more to quantitative studies, but in recent years, the theory has been also used in qualitative research in order to increase the understanding of the acceptance and use of technology (e.g., Kiwanuka, 2015; Williams et al., 2012).

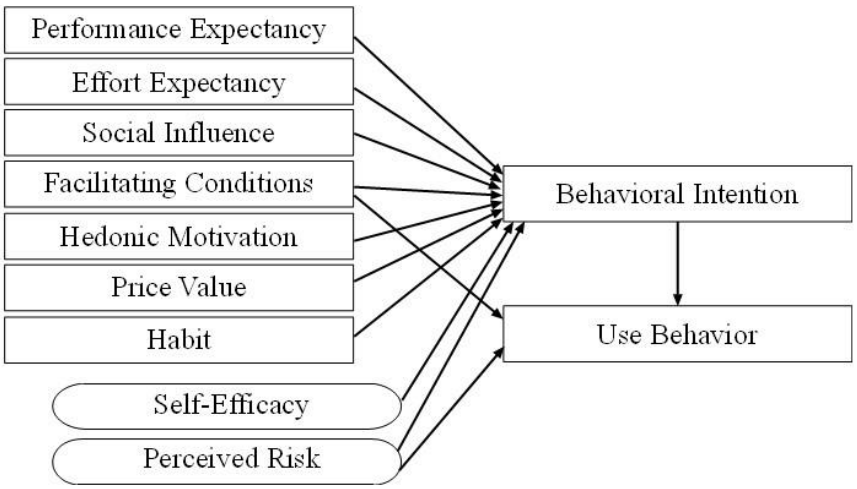

Figure 1. UTAUT2 with self-efficacy and perceived risk (Adapted from Venkatesh et al. 2012)

The UTAUT and UTAUT2 models have been used in several studies related to online shopping (scf., Tandon et al. 2016; An et al. 2016; Yaprakli et al. 2013) In previous studies the effort expectancy and performance expectancy have highlighted to be the strongest predictors influencing online shopping (Sareen and Jain 2014; Yaprakli et al. 2013). Also facilitating conditions seem to be an important factor base on the study by Lian and Yen (2014). However, as highlighted by Im et al. (2011) the impact of performance expectancy and effort expectancy can be culturally bound.

Performance expectancy, effort expectancy and facilitating conditions can be closely linked with the perceived website usability when talking about online shopping. According to Flavián et al. (2006), usability in an online environment most commonly consists of the following elements: structural clarity of the website, simplicity, time required to search for wanted options or content in a web site, and feeling of control. Usability has traditionally been seen as the most important factor when examining user preference (Lee and Koubek 2010). Simple yet informative web sites are more likely to be perceived as usable. This makes online shopping more rewarding and increases the chance for an online shop to generate income. There is likely to be too much rather than too little information available online for a customer to thoroughly process. Users makes choices quickly and often subconsciously, which leaves no room for error as shoppers quickly shift their loyalty if they feel the online store is not usable.

As Flavián et al. (2006) note, perceived usability can play a similar role as the appearance of a traditional physical shop: a well-planned display and an organized look of the shop attract potential customers to go inside to take a closer look. In an online environment, this means having all the necessary information easily accessible. If a customer searching for information feels uncertain on a web page at this stage, they are unlikely to return to later. There is no single determinant of what makes an appealing web site, as there are various norms within different industries of what is considered appealing (Lee and Koubek 2010). Regardless of the customer's intentions, improving web site usability making it easy for them to navigate and feel in control of the evaluating process can make an online store more successful. Usable purchasing process increases the level of trust in at least three ways: by offering the customer all the relevant information to place an order, boosting customer's self-confidence by letting the buyer know at which point of the buying process he or she is currently at and by evoking feelings of pleasure through suitable design (Flavián et al. 2006).

So far, we have been talking about utilitarian factors. However, Tandon et al. (2016) suggested hedonic motivation plays an important role in online shopping. It has been well acknowledged that shoppers oriented to utilitarian value are focused on task-related outcome, while shoppers oriented to hedonic value seek a pleasurable experience (Bradley and LaFleur 2016). The utilitarian shoppers have been regarded as problem solvers who have a conscious pursuit of an intended consequence; hence, consumption is cognitively driven, instrumental and helps accomplish a practical task (Strahilcvitz and Myers 1998). Conversely, hedonic consumer behaviour is related to fun, pleasure and excitement. Hedonic value is thus more subjective and personal, and reflects shopping's potential emotional and experiential worth (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982). However, the two dimensions are not mutually exclusive and shopping can also produce both utilitarian and hedonic value (e.g. Babin et al. 1994).

Emotions are an integral part of hedonic online shopping experience and they moderate the quality of the relationship between consumers and service providers (Sanchez-Franco and Rondan-Cataluna 2009). Emotions during online shopping encompass pleasure and arousal (Richard & Chebat, 2016) and increase or decrease the likelihood of purchase (Kim and Lennon 2010). Valence of consumer emotions tends to increase impulse buying online (Ozen and Engizek 2014). In fact, Bonera (2011) stresses that either high or low hedonistic emotional commitment is vital when consumer perceives and evaluates the usefulness of an online store. The hedonic values and emotions related to online shopping can also have a social aspect, which stands out especially in the online environments. For example, either positive or negative emotions after an online shopping experience can lead into a word-of-mouth (WOM) behaviour having a direct effect on repurchase intentions of the consumers

(Matute et al. 2016). According to Yeganegi and Elias (2016) WOM is positively correlated with social influence and social influence is again positively related to behavioural intention to shop online.

An effective way to motivate an online shopper towards a certain behaviour is making the user experience more playful and enjoyable and thus, increasing the hedonistic value. This can be done by gamification (Deterding et al. 2013; Kari et al. 2016). Gamification has been defined in different ways. Its classical definition refers to the use of game elements in non-game contexts (Deterding et al. 2011). Gamification in many online businesses means the application of game mechanics in hopes of enriching the experience of shopping online. Some examples are reward programs, customer competitions and the like. In online retail spaces this often means people tend to stay loyal to a particular online store. Reward systems are the simplest way of rewarding buying customers. These reward systems may impact the shopping experience immediately or may incentivize the customer to return to the same site.

2.2 Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy has also previously been included as an additional factor to the UTAUT model in the study of Yuen and Yeow (2008). The study by Sung et al. (2015) also highlighted that self-efficacy is an important antecedent of performance expectancy, effort expectancy and social influence. According to Dash and Saji (2008) consumer self-efficacy and social-presence on a website affect online customers' perceived usefulness, trust and perceived risk. The term self-efficacy refers to an individual's own beliefs in their capabilities to perform a certain task and it is developed by external experiences and self-perception (Bandura 1986). People with high self-efficacy believe they can perform well and therefore see difficult tasks as challenges, rather than tending to avoid them. If a person perceives a task as too difficult it can also decrease their level of motivation (Bandura 1998).

When looking at online shopping from the self-efficacy theory point of view, it can be understood that people with a higher level of self-efficacy have less barriers that might prevent them from finalizing the purchase. Internet self-efficacy refers to a person's own believes regarding their own capabilities of using the internet and being able to successfully utilize it. It is important to note that self-efficacy does not refer to the level of individual's skills, only to the perception the individual has about their skills. It is possible to extend the theory of self-efficacy even further. Whereas general internet self-efficacy refers to the perceptions of using various internet service domains in general, web-specific self-efficacy means an individual's perceptions of their capabilities to use a specific web domain. Whereas general internet self-efficacy is trait-oriented, more stable and developed over time, web-specific self-efficacy is state-oriented and can vary a lot between different web domains (Hsu and Chiu 2004). Self-efficacy judgements are positively correlated with the outcome expectations of online shopping (Oliver and Shapiro 1993). People with higher internet self-efficacy tend to use the internet and the computer itself more effectively and efficiently, whereas people with lower self-efficacy tend to make more mistakes and are more hesitant to create new approaches for information search if their previously used approach did not give results (Tsai and Tsai 2003).

2.3 Perceived Risks

Another component that has been attached to UTAUT2 theory in previous information systems studies regarding online shopping, is the level of perceived risks. Tandon et al. (2016) highlighted the significance of negative impact of perceived risk on behavioural intention regarding online shopping. Perceived risk derives from the feeling of uncertainty that is present in the online environment, due to its distant and impersonal nature (Pavlou 2003; Kim et al. 2008). Perceived risk can also be defined as one's subjective belief of a loss followed by certain actions online (Pavlou 2003; Pires et al. 2004; Chang and Chen 2008). Researchers have identified various types of risks associated with online shopping. According to Kim et al. (2008), three particular risks can be said to be the predominant ones: financial risk, product risk, and information risk. Financial risk relates to the possibility that a

consumer loses their money in the transaction. Product risk derives from the possibility that the product is not as expected, for example, defective or the wrong size. Information risk is related to the security and privacy of transactions. For example, a consumer might fear their credit card information will be stolen.

In the online shopping context, according to Kim et al. (2008), perceived risk is a significant factor that may inhibit consumers from making online purchases. Pavlou (2003) also found that perceived risk has a negative effect on consumers' intention to transact in online shops. According to Pires et al. (2004) and Comegys et al. (2006), perceived risk influences consumers' behaviour when searching for information. Consumers set purchase goals for themselves after they have recognized a need for purchasing something, and seeking to meet these goals influences the way they search for information. Pires et al. (2004) state that if a consumer's actual purchase experience is likely to be very different from the goal they have set for themselves, the level of perceived risk will be high. Perceived risk is also a factor that influences consumers' behaviour when evaluating the alternatives. Chang and Chen (2008), suggested that the key aspects of reducing perceived risk are how well-known the brand is, and the quality of the website. If consumers recognize a brand as being well-established and have a high-quality website, the perceived risk will be lower. The same principle also works in reverse. An important aspect of post-purchase behaviour is the intention to repurchase (Comegys et al. 2006). If a consumer has a positive purchasing experience, perceived risk decreases, and they are more likely to shop again.

3 Methodology

A multimethod design was used in data collection. By using more than one method within a research problem, a more complete picture of the phenomena can be obtained (Morse 2003). The data of this study includes individual online shopper interviews (N=3), small-group discussions (N=10, 2-3 participants per group) and written personal reflections (N=18). The 31 participants' (21 women and 10 men) ages varied from 23 to 86 years. However, the majority were young adults under 35 years. In terms of socioeconomic status most were students (71 %), whereas 19 % were employed or entrepreneurs and 10 % were pensioners. More information from the participant data can be seen from the appendix A. The interviewees and participants for group discussions were recruited through the university's mailing lists targeted to students and staff. The interviews and group discussions lasted approximately 60 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed. The essays of approximately 500-1000 words were collected during a marketing course held at the university. Essays were guided by open-ended questions to gather customer-led data. In all cases, the participants were asked to describe themselves as online shoppers in order to find out how and why they shop online, how they make purchase decisions, what are the perceived benefits of online shopping, and what is a good or bad online shopping experience. Focus was also on the preferences regarding visual and technical elements of online shops as well as usability factors, marketing elements and trust elements.

The analysis method used in this study was thematic analysis. This is a method for "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 79) and therefore was suitable for the ideal type concept study. Thematic analysis is the most widely used analysis method in qualitative research (Guest et al. 2012). It allows describing and organizing the data set in rich detail (Braun and Clarke 2006). It is often divided into the following phases: organizing the data, generating categories or themes, coding the data, testing emergent understandings of the data, searching for alternative explanations of the data, and writing the analysis (Marshall and Rossman 1999).

This study follows the thematic analysis guidelines by Braun and Clarke (2006), but, as suggested by the authors, the guidelines were adopted with some flexibility in order to fit the data and the research aim. The first step of the analysis was categorizing information received from the interviews and reflections to a table. This data included information about the participants' personal habits, motives, characteristics, likes and dislikes. The next phase of the analysis was searching for recurring themes and recursively reviewing them in relation to the data set. The baseline for searching recurring themes

derived from the theoretical framework and was more on psychological, behavioural, social, hedonic and technological related factors rather than comparing the participants directly based on their online shopping activity or purchase preferences. The next step was determining what kind of similarities these sub-themes had regarding their online shopping behaviour and preferences. These similarities or differences then led to producing the report of different ideal types.

According to Gerhardt (1994) in ideal type analysis, individual cases are the focus in three different stages of research. Firstly, cases are units of analysis used in data processing. In this stage the cases are arranged as sequential patterns so that each case can be compared with other cases included in the data set. Secondly, cases are selected based on their relative capacity for ideal type presentation. This means that when the clusters of similar cases emerge, a few paradigmatic cases can be highlighted that present the respective typical pattern. Thirdly, case explanations are the objective for an ideal type analysis explaining systematically the dynamics developed of the empirical cases.

Here is an example of the creation process of one ideal type in order to increase the understanding of the entire process of the ideal type analysis. The process started with analysing each participant based on the themes provided in the theoretical background. The next phase was searching for commonalities based only on one theme at a time, for example the level of self-efficacy. Participants who seemed to have very low self-efficacy were then taken under closer focus. The next phase was searching for similarities within these participants. Other features that were very common within these participants were high level of risk avoidance and high effort expectancy. After finding the participants who shared all these features, the focus was on their preferences, behaviour and needs. This lead to ideal type forming.

4 Findings

This study identified five ideal types of online shoppers. The ideal types were formed based on the features each participant highlighted the most regarding their online shopping behaviour. The main focus was on finding relationships and connections between different substantial features meaning that none of the participants were singlehandedly categorized as any particular ideal type. On the contrary, their features can be found inside several different ideal types. The five different ideal types found are presented below. Each ideal type description includes references from the participants who have elements that match the description of the particular ideal type.

4.1 The Conservative Shoppers

"You also have to be careful about extra hidden costs."(Female, age 67)

For the Conservative Shoppers, physical stores are considered the main source of purchases. Online shops are viewed as alternative sources used only when needed. The Conservative shops are preferred because these people want to see and feel the product before purchasing. Online shopping is considered an option only with purchases that "cannot go wrong". Even with those purchases the price must be considerably lower than physical store prices. Sometimes the information search and evaluation processes are done in physical stores but if the price is lower online, the final purchase could be done there. The typical products bought online are travelling and event related tickets and sometimes clothing or other lower value purchases needed in everyday life. In general, the Conservative Shoppers' online shopping activity is low and they appreciate not having to manage all aspects of their life via the internet.

"I want to see the product in real life. Physical stores are my thing."(Male, age 79)

For the Conservative Shoppers, online shopping has to feel easy and simple. If the website is unclear, requires registration or seems suspicious in any way, the purchase will remain undone. Also, the product delivery has to be fast, easy and preferably free. Simplicity and clarity are the key issues. The purchases are usually made with a computer because shopping on a bigger screen is considered safer than

on, for example, a mobile phone. Online banking is considered the most convenient and safest method of payment whereas using a credit card feels more unsafe. The level of potential risks and the level of trust play an important role in the Conservative Shoppers' decision-making processes in various ways. They prefer familiar online shops they have had good previous experiences with. The selected shops are usually domestic since foreign online shops are associated with higher risk. Searching for new potential online shops over old and familiar ones is considered troublesome. So, even if a new online shop sells the exact same product cheaper, these shoppers are willing to pay more and use the familiar shops, since they are viewed as risk free and easy options.

"I prefer the same familiar and reliable online shop even though I know I could get the product cheaper from somewhere else." (Male, age 24)

The Conservative Shoppers are rational and often very conscious about their money. Online purchases are always based on actual need and they are always carefully considered. Online shopping is not considered as a way of consuming time. Therefore, shops are visited usually only with an attempt to do an actual purchase. Emotions do not play a role in purchasing, though looking for some products, such as flights, might sometimes be viewed as entertaining. Online shopping is considered a personal thing, so they do not feel obligated to give feedback or talk about their purchases with others. However, the good and bad recommendations heard from their friends regarding their online shopping experiences are considered valuable. Gamification related elements are not considered important.

4.2 The Rational Shoppers

"I'm not an emotional buyer. I don't do impulsive purchases, there is always a need. Finding the best and cheapest option after a long research makes me feel like a winner." (Male, age 25)

The Rational Shoppers are relatively active but still careful when it comes to online shopping. They buy various kinds of products and services from online shops, such as tickets, car parts, clothing and electronics, but always only after careful consideration and thorough research. The purchases are always based on actual need, and these people do not hesitate to spend a lot of time searching for product information, evaluating alternatives, and getting to know the delivery and payment details almost word by word. Visiting an online shop for the first time rarely leads to an actual purchase. Even when a suitable product, price and online shop has been found, they might still need some time for considering whether the product is actually needed after all.

"It is easier to see the selections and compare prices and products online."(Male, age 49)

Online shopping is seen as a fast, easy and efficient way to do shopping. Shopping in general is not seen as something that brings pleasure or that is related to emotions in any way. Careful information search online and also comparison between online shops and physical stores is seen as a necessity and something that increases the level of trust for the product as well as for the online shop. The Rational Shoppers tend to use both domestic and foreign websites as long as the online shop is seen as reliable. The most frequently used payment method is a credit card due to perceived level of security, but online banking is seen as a clear option when purchasing from a domestic online shop. Since these people spend a lot of time in the internet they tend to have fairly good online and technical skills. Advertisements are seen more annoying than useful. Personalized marketing and obtrusive advertising are viewed more as a trick trying to confuse the customer, and it creates a more unreliable image for the online shop. The only time advertisements do work for the Rational Shoppers are situations when the purchase decision has already been made in the shopper's mind. Sometimes chat services can also seem annoying and more like unwanted advertisements. However, in a case of an emergency, a chat can be seen as an effective way to receive important information with no time at all.

"When choosing an online shop I appreciate simplicity and functionality but most of all the security. I always read all certificates and other information regarding the security issues."(Female, age 24)

The Rational Shoppers tend to give and take feedback regarding online shopping, but only if the service or the product has been really good or really bad. They also appreciate having an easy and suita-

ble way of giving feedback to the online shop. These people do not like returning their purchases but will do it if the product was wrong or if it did not match the descriptions on the web site. All in all, the rational shopper appreciates online shops that are clear and simple. The technical elements also play an important role. If the web site is too unclear or if additional and unexpected costs suddenly appear in the later phase of the purchase transaction, it is very likely that these online shops will never be used again. One bad experience is enough and therefore the Rational Shoppers tend to end up using the same shops they had previous good experiences with. However, this does not happen automatically.

4.3 The Hedonistic Shoppers

"I used to buy a lot of clothing from online shops because it felt so easy and was almost a habit. Nowadays, I don't feel I need to buy anything but can get enjoyment from only browsing and desiring."(Female, age 26)

For these people, the internet makes shopping easy and relaxing by offering a chance to do the shopping whenever it feels best for them. The internet also enables an easy way of seeing product selections and comparing products and prices without having to go to a physical shop. It also serves as a source of inspiration for what to buy. Online shopping purchases are not always based on need but more often on personal desire, price advertisements and personalized advertisement. However, these emotional shoppers tend to be more impulsive when shopping in a physical store. The products the Hedonistic Shoppers most often order are clothes, cosmetics and other relatively cheap commodities. Often the shopping lists includes a variety of similar products in different sizes and the assumption even before the purchase is that some of them will be returned anyway. Since these people appreciate easiness, they often tend to do shopping in online shops that offer free delivery, easy return policy and flexible payment methods. They prefer already familiar and domestic shops in order to reduce the level of risk.

"When I feel sad or bored, I amuse myself by shopping without no intentions to buy."(Female, age 24)

Online shopping itself brings pleasure to the Hedonistic Shoppers and is seen as entertainment. It can also be a way to reduce anxiety and get back into a happier mood. Merely seeing the products and services brings joy, and therefore, visiting online shops does not necessarily end with purchasing, at least not immediately. Since online shopping is an emotional experience as well as used for emotion regulation, it is important that it can be done whenever and from wherever. Therefore, information search and the evaluation of alternatives is often done with solutions that are nearby, such as mobile apps. However, the final purchase is often made with a computer. The recommendations from friends are highly valued and trusted. Since online shopping is as a social phenomenon, sharing information with friends or even in social media is important and part of the shopping experience.

"Shopping needs to feel like an experience. This feeling should be easy to create with current technology, however, it is underutilized."(Female, age 42)

The Hedonistic Shoppers appreciate and use online shops that are visually attractive, that are easy to use and where they can easily compare different products. The style of the shop has to meet their personal style. However, one of the most important criteria is good customer service. A good online shop understands a customer's entire shopping experience from initial visit to strong post-purchase service and is able to create a fulfilling experience. Good customer service is considered very important in creating the feeling that the customer is highly valued. Online chat is highly appreciated, since it is considered an easy and fast way to communicate with the shop. Together with chat it is important that the shop offers various other ways of communication. Receiving bad customer service even once might be a good enough reason for not using the online shop anymore. These people are interested in online shop memberships and are loyal customers to the online shops that meet their needs and treat them well.

4.4 The Spontaneous Shoppers

"I am an impulsive person and make decisions fast. If I get an idea, I tend to execute it immediately." (Female, age 86)

The Spontaneous Shoppers are impulsive very active when it comes to buying online and their behaviour is affected by emotions. Online shopping is considered an easy, simple, and most importantly a fast option providing a chance to shop whenever they feel like it. Most importantly internet enables these shoppers to receive different kinds of sales advertisement and therefore not miss out on any important sales. Online shops provide better selection and cheaper prices which is what these people are looking for. The purchases can be done from domestic or foreign online shops. The biggest reasons for using foreign shops is usually finding good sales and cheaper prices that the domestic shops do not offer. The products or services bought online vary from art, food, clothes and tickets to high-end fashion products.

"Advertisement is a present-day phenomenon. The boundaries of privacy should be redefined again in people's own minds."(Female, age 24)

Advertisements are the most important factor that draws attention to a particular shop or a particular product. The Spontaneous Shoppers do not usually buy for a special need, and therefore, the initiative for making a purchase often comes from the shop, perhaps in the form of a Facebook ad, an email or a banner advertisement. Personalized messaging is seen as a service and an opportunity rather than being annoying. Seasonal sales are the golden time for these shoppers. A good online shop will offer giveaways along with big purchases, which may encourage the Spontaneous Shoppers to spend a bit more. Another way to encourage these shoppers is to remove or even reduce the shipping costs if the purchase exceeds a certain amount. A priority for Spontaneous Shoppers is that their product is delivered fast and without extra trouble. They rarely return their products, since they find it troublesome. An easier way to get rid of unwanted purchases is to sell or give them to friends and family. Otherwise, online shopping is not the number one topic discussed with friends and family even though suggestions and opinions of friends regarding online shop qualities are taken seriously. These shoppers appreciate fast and personalized service and therefore prefer chat and call service. They do not tend to give feedback to the shop unless they benefit from it in some way. They are used to doing shopping with various electronic devices and appreciate having different payment methods, especially the ones that give them cheaper prices or extra bonuses or offers regarding future purchases.

"When I need something I don't have the patience to wait and get it from a store at the next day" (Female, age 24)

The Spontaneous Shoppers appreciate clear websites, which are easy to navigate in. This enables them to find the needed information quickly and also see all the information without spending effort on searching. Even though these shoppers do not tend to spend much time on information search and decision making, they still do appreciate having the chance to visualize the product and its end use in the shopping phase. Therefore, they appreciate photos where they can zoom in and rotate or photos of the product in use. Also, services like kitchen design programs are highly appreciated by giving the customer a chance to imagine the product for their use and this way increase the level of personality of the product. Gamification related elements such as rewards from previous purchases are seen positive.

4.5 The Vanguard Shoppers

"I am a person who is usually among the first to test out new things. I visit various online shops just out of curiosity." (Male, age 49)

The Vanguard Shoppers are usually very experienced in online shopping and are used to doing most of their purchases in the internet whether it relates to work or personal usage. They feel comfortable in shopping online and consider online shopping as a modern up-to-date phenomenon. Other people might view them as forerunners who are always aware of new trends related to online shopping and can adjust easily to them as well as to new technical features. These people tend to buy various things

from the internet and do not hesitate to do more expensive purchases online. Online shopping offers better product selection and a better platform for information search and comparison. It is also preferred due to overall easiness, cheapness and fastness. Even though some purchases would be made in a physical store, the preliminary information search, the evaluation and even the decision is usually made online. In general, rationality overcomes emotions and online purchases are based on need, research and evaluation instead of impulses. Since the Vanguard Shoppers usually feel in control when it comes to online shopping they are not easily persuaded by advertisement. However, in situations when something looks really interesting, the emotions can persuade finding the rationality for the purchase.

"As a consumer I have more power when shopping online."(Female, age 24)

These people do not expect to get big discounts from online shops since they feel that the seller needs to profit from the sales in the same way that they would in actual physical stores. The reasons that make the Vanguard Shoppers return to the same shops are good previous experiences, the high level of website functionality and quality as well as good product selections including novelty products. They believe gamification is part of the future development of online shops. The Vanguard Shoppers use foreign online shops as much as they use the domestic shops, and they do not necessarily even separate them in their minds. The reasons that affect the online shop choice over its nationality are the quality, the clarity, the aesthetic outlook and even the nature friendly green values. Of course, the price-quality relationship also plays an important part in the product selection. For the Vanguard Shoppers, fast delivery is important, and sometimes it could even be the reason for choosing a foreign shop over a domestic shop. These people are used to shop in online shops that do not offer service in English or in their native language, just as long as they otherwise seem reliable and high quality. The Vanguard Shoppers appreciate having multiple choices of payment methods even though the most common method is the credit card. Purchasing can be done with multiple different devices.

"Price and quality go hand in hand. I don't expect to get big discounts from quality products. The seller needs to get some benefit as well." (Male, age 45)

Online recommendations regarding online shop service and functionality are viewed important. Whereas the Vanguard Shoppers are willing to give recommendations if needed, they can also be sceptical when it comes to trusting other people's personal opinions, especially if they conflict with their own opinions. Even though these people trust their own instincts and opinions they might also follow online trend setters such as fashion bloggers. Despite the fact that these are considered mostly as advertisements, following bloggers and other trend pioneers is a good way to stay up to date on the latest trends. Online shopping serves as an easy way to buy products that help stand out from the masses.

5 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to increase the level of understanding of people's behaviour, motives and habits regarding online shoppers. This study was conducted by forming ideal types of online shop users. These ideal types help to better understand online shopping behaviour and the results can be valuable for business purposes as well as for future research. The data was based on 31 participants' behaviours and preferences regarding online shopping. The data was collected via interviews, group discussions and personal essays. The data was analysed using thematic analysis focusing on psychological, behavioural, social, and technological factors. The findings of the study highlighted five different ideal types: the Conservative Shoppers, the Rational Shoppers, the Hedonistic Shoppers, the Spontaneous Shoppers and the Vanguard Shoppers. Their differences and similarities can be seen on the table below.

	Conservative shoppers	**Rational Shoppers**	**Hedonic Shoppers**	**Spontaneous Shoppers**	**Vanguard Shoppers**
Performance Expectancy	Easier to buy from a physical store	Online shops offer more information with less effort	Online shopping brings pleasure	Online shopping allows fast purchasing at any time	Access to worldwide selection of products
Usability (effort expectancy & facilitating conditions)	Online shops need to be easy to use and clear	Need a lot of information presented clearly and logically	Value design, esthetic and good customer service	Appreciate advertisement banners, notifications and messages	Adapt easily to different online stores
Social influence	Interested in others' opinions	Interested in others' opinions	Very social, want to share experiences	Somewhat interested in others' opinions	Can be influencers to others
More Hedonic or Utilitarian	Utilitarian	Utilitarian	Hedonic	Hedonic	Utilitarian
Price value	Cheaper prices high motivators	Cheaper prices high motivators	Desire comes before price	Controlled by advertisement and low price	Appreciate quality over price
Habit	Prefer familiar stores to avoid risks	Prefer familiar stores to avoid risks	Value memberships	Select shops based on offers	Select shops based on price and supply
Self-efficacy	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Risk avoidance	High	High	Medium	Low	Low

Table 2. Characteristics of the different ideal types

As seen in the table above, the high level of risk avoidance plays a key role in the behaviour and decision making of the Conservative Shoppers. Since their internet self-efficacy (and sometimes even their computer self-efficacy) is low, the best way for the online shop providers to reduce the level of perceived risk is to create simple and clear websites. Even though the clarity and usefulness of online shops also play an important role for the Rational Shoppers, the main focus for them is to receive a large amount of information they feel they need, which is found easily and reliably. Whereas advertising is not a beneficial tool for getting their attention, the best way to attract them is by presenting an online store that is both technically high-quality and has excellent content. As the Hedonistic Shoppers see online shopping as an entertainment experience, visual elements and gamification are important, serving to attract and retain this type of shoppers. Since online shopping is viewed as a social phenomenon, the high quality personalized service is an important factor that service providers should pay attention to. These customers can be loyal and may bring in other customers, but if treated badly, they do not hesitate to share their experience. The Spontaneous Shoppers also attach emotions to online shopping. Advertisement, even personalized ones, are seen as a good service, which enables them to receive important information and do impulsive purchases whenever wanted. Ensuring fast and smooth buying and delivery process is something service providers should focus on if they want to entice the Spontaneous Shoppers to purchase again. The Vanguard Shoppers have a very high self-efficacy for online shopping and are used to purchasing from high quality sites offering high class products, independent of the origin of the online shops. Since these customers are seen as pioneers, their opinions are listened to and respected, it is important for the service providers to ensure these people have pleasant shopping experiences by focusing on the overall quality.

Despite the differences between the ideal types, there are also a few commonalities worth addressing. All ideal types felt that online shopping offers better selection with cheaper prices compared to physical stores. Most ideal types also considered online shopping to be more convenient, giving a chance to

shop whenever and wherever they want. This goes together with the findings of Sareen and Jain (2014) and Yaprakli et al. (2013) who highlighted the importance of performance expectancy and effort expectancy as predictors of online shopping behaviour. All ideal types appreciate clear and easy to use online shops. Whereas for some ideal types, website clarity increases the level of visual beauty or enables faster purchases, for other ideal types, having a clear website is the key element determining whether the purchase will or will not be made at all. This supports the findings of Ha and Stoel (2009) stating that website design is the biggest factor affecting the perceived quality of online shops and that positive perceptions of quality predict consumers' beliefs about ease of use, level of trust and level of enjoyment. Despite hedonic motivation only being an influential factor for a couple of ideal types, its impact was still significant for the particular types. This agrees with the study of An et al. (2016). Habit, on the other hand, seems to have a role in the behaviour of all ideal types. Whereas some ideal types return to same shops in order to reduce perceived risks some ideal types like to use familiar shops because of quality, functionality and purchase reward related reasons. Also, the level of perceived risk plays an important role in online shopping within all ideal types, although in different ways. This finding goes together with findings of Tandon et al. (2016) and Martins et al. (2013). The level of self-efficacy goes hand in hand with the concept of risk avoidance. This was also confirmed in the study Hsu and Chiu (2004). The general rule seems to be that the higher the level of self-efficacy regarding online shopping, the lower is the level of risk avoidance, meaning bigger purchases can be made and less attention be paid to the location of the online shop. Since it is hard for online shops to affect the level of user's self-efficacy, our recommendation is that the attention should be focused on increasing the level of online shop usability and providing fast and personalized customer service.

6 Limitations and Future Research

A notable limitation for this study is the relatively homogenous group of participants. Even though the participants' ages varied from 23 to 86 years, 74% of the participants were under 35 years old. However, as described by Comegys et al. (2006) the young people born between 1977 and 1997, are called the "Net Generation". Since these people have been using information technology throughout their entire lives, they form the key target group for online shops. Therefore, the homogeneity of the participants in this study can also been seen as focusing on the behaviour of this key customer group. Having a larger number of female participants can also been seen as a limitation. However, due to the overall high number of participants, the study also included enough male participants to receive a heterogeneous enough data set. It is important to notice that cultural elements can play an important role when analysing online shopping behaviour. Since this study included participants from only one country, Finland, it can be suggested that similar studies could be done in other countries or even comprising a set of participants that are from different countries and cultures.

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APPENDIX A: Description of the participants

	Male interview	**Male reflection**	**Female interview**	**Female reflection**	**Total (N)**
Age					
<25	1	1	4	3	9
25-34	1	4	2	7	14
35-44	-	1	1	2	4
45-54	1	-	-	-	1
55-64	-	-	-	-	0
64<	1	-	2	-	3
All	4	6	9	12	31
Socioeconomic group					
Student	2	5	4	11	22
Employed	1	1	3	-	5
Entrepreneur	-	-	-	1	1
Pensioner	1	-	2	-	3
All	4	6	9	12	31