

CONSUMER PERCEPTION TO MOBILE COMMERCE

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Abstract

Mobile commerce has enormous potential as a new technology even though it is still in its infancy in India. With the arrival of 3G and 4G, the speed of internet connectivity on mobile phones has increased many fold and this has definitely made an impact on the growth of m-commerce transactions in India. In order to realise the maximum potential, it is very important for marketers to find out as to why people buy, what their aspirations are and perceptions about the various mobile commerce activities. It is expected from them that they should understand consumers' worries, fears and phobias and make an effort to provide them with the best possible services. Despite the technological innovations, there are still slow network connections and lack of Internet connectivity plaguing many parts of the country. This is by far the biggest hurdle in the growth of m-commerce. Lack of information about mobile commerce, loss of privacy, information security and the threat of government regulation has also played an important role in limiting the growth of mobile commerce in India. Majority of consumers are either unaware about the various mobile applications which are available to them, or do not know how to install them on their devices.

Consumer expectations and perceptions about mobile commerce also play a very important role. They are generally formed by their past experience with various mobile applications. It depends to a large extent on the ease with which consumers are able to find information about the product by searching or browsing on their mobile. Price, product specifications and available information has to be competitive and correct. Speedy and timely delivery of the products is a must to ensure a satisfied consumer. Privacy and security of the personal information provided plays a very important role. Above all a satisfactory return policy enabling straightforward return or replacement becomes equally significant in forming consumers' perceptions in mobile commerce.

One of the difficult tasks for m-commerce is to ensure consumers' trust by making them feel comfortable with wireless transactions. People are not comfortable entering their personal information into their mobile phones, fearing loss or theft of their devices or exposing their credit card information to public wireless networks. Thus, it is important to ensure that m-payments are safe and secure. The cash on delivery option is generally included in mobile commerce to give safety and security option to the consumers.

In the current article, we have made an attempt to understand various services and benefits provided by the m-commerce companies to their customers. At the same time an account of the various factors limiting the growth of mobile commerce in India has also been made. An effort has been made to provide the 7C's framework and the interactive brand-building processes which can be used by m-commerce companies to build high brand loyalty and create a favorable consumer perception. In the end we have tried to give some more suggestions to effectively implement m-commerce transactions in India. Following these guidelines the scope and potential of m-commerce can be increased many-fold in a country like India.

Keywords: M-Commerce; Consumer Perception; Mobile Applications; Showrooming; 7C's Framework; Customization; Always on