THE EFFECTS OF SPAMMING AND INFORMATION OVERLOAD ON ONLINE PURCHASE DECISION MAKING IN MANADO

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ABSTRACT

The growth of e-commerce and electronic media users rapidly increase, but lack of knowing on how people make decision to buy products through internet cannot be denied. The fact is that many vendors that sell their products on internet through beautiful and attractive website with attractive and beautiful images on it. They strive to make their websites look good on people's eyes to persuade them to explore their website while putting some information or description of products to let people choose the products offered. As an effort to gain loyal consumers, sellers realize that buyers need information. The aim of this study is to analyze the effects of spamming and information overload on online purchase decision making in Manado. Research method that is implemented in this study is qualitative research where it is to figure out the effects of spamming and information overload on online purchase decision making and to see which of them that affects the most. The population of this study is young people in Manado who have been experiencing and or had experienced online shopping. There are 8 respondents as research samples. The result of this study shows that spamming does not affect people in making decision to buy products online, while information overload affects people in making decision to buy products online.

Keywords: *information, information overload, spamming*

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

Information Technology and Communication (ITC) is the needs of people in this digital era. Human beings as the users of Information Technology and Communication never stop at developing and creating new technology to meet people's needs and wants and to make the activities of users easier. The same case happens pertaining to shopping behavior developed and created by people today for better and easier way to help other people buying products. In traditional purchasing activities, people went to traditional markets to buy products like daily food, vegetables, fruits, equipment and so forth and almost or probably stuffs that they used to buy in the traditional markets. Then it changes to a more modern way that is buying products at Supermarkets and Malls or stores where the places are cleaner but the price is higher and no negotiation to meet the demand of sellers and buyers in terms of pricing. People keep creating and developing better way to help them become more effective and efficient. People do not need more time to go outside and choose what they want to buy; they can open their laptop, computer, or smartphone to do On-line transaction. Internet is not a new thing to be known by people nowadays. People use it anytime and anywhere and it may be their needs in doing activities.

Seeing the opportunity of how people develop and create way for easier daily transactions to meet the needs and wants of people, e-commerce or online shopping is nowadays booming to public for all ages especially to people in big cities. Kurnia (2009:5) stated that e-commerce is indeed relevant to Indonesia, despite the current limitations with the existing infrastructure and other issues related to the economical and socio-cultural conditions. E-commerce may offer excellent opportunities for growth in developing nations like Indonesia. The growth of e-commerce and electronic media users rapidly increase, but lack of knowing on how people make decision to buy products through internet cannot be denied. Everything depends on information. Information is really needed and having big role to people making decision. The more complete and qualified the information, the more people will start to decide to do transactions. But it is really different when the

information is unwanted by people or receivers. In another case, the information categorized as spamming and information overload is assumed by many people that the information does not have big roles on making decision to buy products.

Spam is the use of electronic messaging systems to send unsolicited bulk messages, especially advertising, indiscriminately. Most of people will feel annoyed for the messages that they do not even want and need yet. For the unwanted messages, people ignore the messages and feel afraid due to spamming messages are publically pertained to hacking messages. Information is defined as the usefulness of available information of certain products to help people as decision maker to evaluate the good, the use and the quality of products. Information Overload is the amount of information available to certain product. This information overload can be said as the explosion of information that rapidly grows pushes people to criticize, and be more selective in searching and taking the information.

Buyer Decision Process is the decision making process by consumers in regard to a potential market transaction before, during, and after the purchase of a product or service. In online transaction, people need to have information as much as possible to start to decide and to buy a certain products, due to the transaction is not directly to the shop venue, such as Mall, Market, Minimarket, etc. Information is really needed and having big role to people making decision. The more complete and qualified the information, the more people will start to decide to do transactions. But it is really different when the information is unwanted by people or receivers. Internet Media in Indonesia is often used by mostly people to know anything seeing the growth of social media, electronic portals or even communities. People do search through search engine or even got recommendation from partners or even community. In doing online transactions, the higher the insight of consumers about online transaction technology and system, the higher the belief of people to do transaction.

Research Objective

The objective of this research is to analyze the effect of spamming and information overload on online purchase decision making in Manado simultaneously and to identify which of spam and information overload that has the most significant effects on online purchase decision making in Manado.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories

Spamming

Bennett (2012:33) stated that spam is the sending of messages in bulk (same message sent to two or more addresses) to persons or organizations with which the sender had no prior dealings. Sisalem et al (2009:127) have another word explaining what spam is which is the same with what Bennet had said, that is spam is the bulk sending of unsolicited messages. Basically spamming is the messages such in emails, sms, or instant messaging like blackberry messenger that is unwanted by the receivers of messages. Himma (2008:45) criticized and made clear the definition of spamming that it is a big mistake to think that spam can be defined simply as unwanted or unsolicited messages. Himma (2008:45) stated that an email that is from an unsolicited, commercial, bulk messages, often considered spam, may provide a receiver with just the information that he/she does want. Himma (2008:46) also added that some messages/email, such as email/messages informing someone that he/she is fired, is unwanted but not a spam. It is right to say that unsolicited messages do not mean unwanted and unwanted messages do not mean spam. It depends of what kind of messages the receivers have got. In this digital era, many people communicate using digital devices such as laptop, computer, smarthphone, handphone, and many more.

The way how people do communication using modern tools opens a big opportunity to people who not only see it as a way to do communication, but a way to expand business and earn money. Information is the way how people persuade other people to be attracted to products offered, and chasing for more earning people send bulk of messages in the same time with the same content to as many people as they have. The bulk of messages received is called spam/spamming. Spamming is defined by two characteristics that is, primary characteristics and secondary characteristics. Primary characteristics are including electronic message, sent in bulk, unsolicited, and commercial. By seeing all the characteristics in the primary characteristics people will directly assume that it's spam.

1. Spam is an electronic message.
2. Spam is unsolicited. When the recipient has no comment and just agreed with the message so it's not spam.
3. Spam is sent in bulk. It means that the senders of information send messages in a large number with the same content.
4. Commercial. It implies that the messages the recipients got are a commercial asking people to buy products offered.

The remaining characteristics is secondary ones are frequently associated with spam, but not necessarily associated with spam.

Information Overload

Eppler and Mengis (2003:10) stated that information overload occurs when the supply exceeds the capacity. Supply exceeds the capacity means there are too much information available to a certain issue. Various researchers define information overload in the context of volume, time, and information processing ability of humans. Attempting to process too much information causes a breakdown in the decision-making process, theory of information overload states that there is a limit to how much information a person can process in a limited amount of time.

Earning much more money absolutely needs more efforts. People realize that to get more consumers must have clear information to convince them about the products and or the organization/ company/ institution/ seller that sell products. But many parties send information continuously and significantly which is making the information overload or too much. Information overload can be defined by knowing the meaning of each word. Information is the usefulness of available information of certain products to help people as decision maker to evaluate the good the use and the quality of products; while overload refers to too much or the explosion of information that rapidly grow. Information is important because of its potential influence on a number of marketing can lead people to make decision to buy products offered.

Decision Making

Koontz et al. (2006:15), decision making is the selection of a course of action from amongst alternatives; it is at the core of planning. Miller et al. (2007:78) stated that planning can be defined as a structured event series that generally contains one or more goals. Miller et al. (2007:78) added that plans range from the short term and motoric to the long term and cognitive. Decision making is the process undertaken by consumers in regard to a potential market transaction before, during, and after the purchase of a product.

Previous Research

Jie and Zheng (2005) found that unconscious thought is an effective way to solve the information overload problem and is thus worthy of special attention in the design of e-commerce web pages. Buchanan and kock (2000) found that approximately 60% of the reasons given for information overload relate to task factors; principally information and time pressure issues. The remaining 40% of reasons are attributable to individual Factors, notably a lack of organizing skills and issue relating to the style (decision, management, cognitive) of the decision maker. Gotterbarn (2010) found that sender-ID does nothing for spam because spammers are adopting it quicker than regular users.
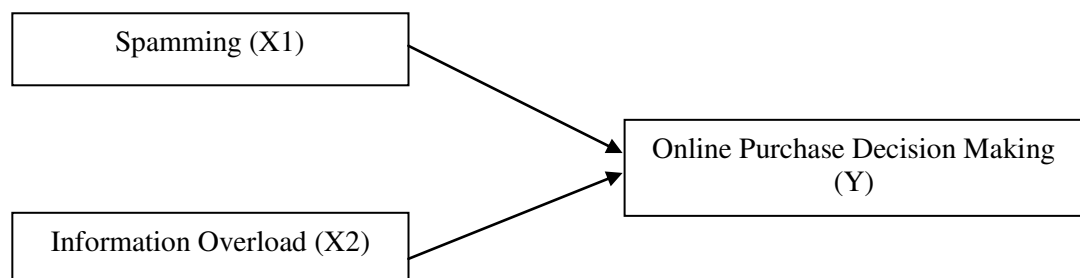

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework
Source. Data Processed 2013

RESEARCH METHOD

Type of Research

Type of this research is descriptive which is collecting interviewee's perspective and arguments with qualitative method to investigate and figure out of what is happening, why it is happening and how it's happening. Maxwell (2005:32) stated that in descriptive observation you may concentrate on observing the physical setting the key participants and their activities, particular events.

This research is based on collecting interviewee's perspective and arguments with qualitative method to investigate and figure out of what is happening, why it is happening and how it's happening. The goal of this research is to discover the effects of spamming information and information overload online purchase decision making to young people in Manado. Sekaran and Bougie (2009:369) define that qualitative data are data in the form of words. It can come from a wide variety of primary sources and/or secondary sources such as individuals, focus groups, company records, government publications and the internet.

Place and Time of Research

Research was conducted in Manado, North Sulawesi. The time duration of the research is started from June to August 2013 and provides information on knowledge of online shopping. Interviewing starts spread on July 2013

Population and Sample

Population of this research is people in Manado who experience online purchasing. The sample of the study is young people aged 17 to 36 years old in 2013; this research finds 8 respondents to participate the study.

Data Collection Method

This research is qualitative research. Hancock (1998:9) stated about qualitative data collection that, unlike quantitative data, raw qualitative data cannot be analyzed statistically. It implies that data in qualitative research cannot be analyzed statistically since it comes from a depth interview, focus group, and observation where the process takes long time, Hancock also pointed out that there are three techniques of collecting data in qualitative research, they are face-to-face interviews, focus group and observation. The data from qualitative studies often derives from face-to-face interviews, focus groups or observation and so tends to be time consuming to collect. Samples are usually smaller than with quantitative studies and are often locally based. Data analysis is also time consuming and consequently expensive.

Case study as the tools to study complex social phenomena will see what happen within the context; in this case to see what happens to the society in Manado responding spamming and information overload on online purchase decision making whether there will be correlated or not between spamming and online purchase decision making and an overloaded information on online purchase decision making.

Rowley (2002:17) says that there are three factors that determine the best research methodology:
1. The types of questions to be answered
2. The extent of control over behavioral events, and
3. The degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events.

Case studies are one approach that supports deeper and more detailed investigation of the type that is normally necessary to answer how and why questions. To summarize, qualitative research with case study method is a research designed to get more understanding about how people will make decision by seeing the role of consumers' perception to purchase certain products through online with some variables considered that are quality information and information overload by collecting information needed to answer the questions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This research is to analyze whether spamming and information overload both affect online purchase decision making or not and what factors that drive both affect or do not affect. This research is also to see which of spam and information overload that affects the most. the researcher found that almost all respondent had the similar opinion, although every respondent had their own view point and experience in buying products by online. Also the respondents had the differences in the range of time of buying products by online, the level of importance of buying online for them, and reasons why they buy products by online.

The appearance of the findings is similar in their answers and reasons. But the researcher found that every single respondent is unique and had their own experiences and thoughts. By seeing the differences of reason they brought up, researcher also found that even the different answer they gave, the reasons behind the answer could be correlated one another and their mind-map was just the same.

Spamming

Within the interviews, the researcher concluded about what people think on spamming and the effect of spamming on online purchase decision making. Spamming, on what people think about, is the unwanted messages that come continuously and the content of the messages is just the same. The findings within the interviews showed that most respondents agreed that spamming is not good and not meeting the needs and wants of people currently. But some other respondents said that even spamming is not that good, but it affects people to purchase products online.

Information Overload

Within the interviews the researcher concluded about what people think about information overload and the effect of information overload on online purchase decision making. Information overload on what people think about is the information of products that has been given in a big amount in the same time. The findings within the interviews showed that most respondents agreed that information overload is good and meeting the needs and wants of people to purchase products online. But some other respondents said that even information overload affects online purchase decision making. Too much information will lead to confusion, and some type of persons will not buy products when the information is confusing.

Discussion

There are various reasons and factors affecting a person to purchase products by online. In this case, the researcher is curious to investigate the effects whether spamming affects online purchase decision making or not, information overload affects online purchase decision making or not, what factors drive people to buy online and or why people do not like to purchase products by online, what's on young people' mind about online purchasing, and how people make decision in buying products by online.

Spamming

Researcher found that mostly all respondents feel that spamming is not good and total 5 out of 8 respondents claimed that spamming does not affect online purchase decision making. One of the respondents, Informant 4 explained that spamming does not affect people buying online shopping, since what people buy is products that have been planned, needed and wanted. Spamming is unwanted messages. People will not buy random products when they get the information. Informant 4 explained that when she usually gets messages, she just ignores them, she does not read it. She said that spamming just makes the storage of memory full. On the other hand, there are some respondents that said spamming affects future purchase, like what informant 3 said; Informant 3 sees the positive things of spamming that he is trying to collect information as much as possible for future buying. Informant 3 does not see the negative aspects of spamming, but she is striving to see the positive ones. She collects information as much as she can, then she saves it for future buying.

In overall majority of the respondent agreed that spamming does not affect people decision purchase products online, but they ignore it since the messages are not needed and wanted currently. These findings are consistent with Qiansheng and Jingmin (2004:1) that stated rubbish mail has already become obstacles which baffles the development of e-commerce.

Information Overload

Researcher found that most of all respondents feel that information overload is needed and total 7 out of 8 respondents claimed that information overload affects online purchase decision making. Total 5 out of 8 respondents claimed that information overload affects people not to buy online since the overloaded information is confusing. Informant 5 said that information overload affects online purchase decision making due to that people need complete information before making decision to buy online. But informant 5 also added that the overloaded information is also confusing, which leads people not to buy online because of too much information gained by buyers. Informant 5 said that it is fine to have information; it is a very crucial and important aspect before making decision to buy products by online, but the confusing overload information leads to people not to buy products by online.

In overall, majority of the respondent, agreed that information overload affects online purchase decision making. But in some cases, information overload drive people to be confused of the products due to the much information they gain. These findings are consistent with Lucian and Farias (2009:37) that stated the main implication of information load was the feeling of not having done the best buy, generating a possible repentance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The result proved that spamming does not affect online purchase decision making and information overload affectson online purchase decision making whether respondents buy or not buy, and by seeing those two variables can be seen that respondents still want to purchase products online later or not.

1. Spamming
   Spamming does not affect online purchase decision making due to that spamming is unwanted messages with random products that people do not need to buy yet, then people ignore them without reading the spam first.
2. Information Overload
   Information overload affects online purchase decision making due to that information overload is the information needed by buyers to do transactions. Buyers need information to analyze whether the products are qualified and needed currently or not.

Recommendation

Spamming and information overload are the information where many people do not realize that they usually use it and they do not know yet the effects on using spamming and sending overloaded information. Spamming and information can be negative information to some groups of people but can be positive to the others. The recommendation for individuals or business that active in purchasing or selling products online and or individuals who are about to learn how to purchase and to sell products online is to have an insight into what kind of trusted sources/sites that can do transactions online and for sellers to enable to know buyers' opinion about sellers in spreading their products.

For other researchers who want to conduct a research about Spamming or Information Overload or Online Purchase Decision Making, this research is expected to be a good reference in the research about e-commerce. Researcher recommends to the sellers not to send repeatedly messages with same contents to random people because that kind of marketing does not work to majority of people. Information overload sometimes makes people confused due to the much information gained. So the researcher recommends to the sellers on internet not to put too much information, because the overloaded information will lead to confusion.

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