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**The Elements That
Impact the Consumer
Online Behavior**

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Introduction

- Online consumer behavior discusses the process of shopping online from the consumer's point of view.
- It is referred to as the study of trends, such as the impact of internet advertising, consumer willingness to click on links and so on.
- Moreover, the decision-making process of an online consumer is often very different from that of a consumer in a physical store.

Scarcity

- Scarcity polarizes preferences.
- This means that when individuals view certain items to be scarce then they will choose the most preferred one to themselves. In other words, consumers will not be exploring products but they will focus on their leading option.

Popularity

- In the eyes of the consumers, product popularity increases product quality and certainty about that quality.
- It also increases product acceptance.
- For instance, when wanting to purchase an electronic device from an e-commerce website we immediately check the reviews for many reasons. One of them is to see positive/negative reviews and the other reason is to see how many reviews does this particular product have.

Affinity

- Instances of affinity include word-of-mouth (WOM) as well as electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM).
- Consumers are more likely to feel WOM, regarding a product, from a close friend more trustworthy than from an ordinary friend. Moreover, EWOM is deemed less trustworthy when WOM from a close friend suggests the opposite.
- On a further note, when online consumers cannot decide from external information, they tend to rely on emotional factors.

Authority

- When purchasing, consumers tend to examine multiple viewpoints and gather feedback from various sources.
- One of these sources is an expert opinion, which is considered a highly credible source. In turn, this provides an authoritative viewpoint.
- On a further note, such authority is highly effective when it comes to acquiring new consumers but that does not mean it is not effective in terms of current consumers.

Consistency

- Humans have an obsessive desire to be, and appear, consistent with their previous actions. For instance:
- When you make a choice, you face personal and interpersonal pressure to commit to that choice. All information that comes after the choice, will not change your mind.

Reciprocity

- Individuals often feel the need to return a favor or reciprocate kind gestures.
- For instance, in terms of consumers, there are multiple ways reciprocity is used for mutual benefit.
 1. Offering a free sample
 2. Discounts

Conclusion

- Each of these factors play an important role in influencing the online consumer decision/behavior towards purchasing a certain product or acquiring a certain service.
- Even though the online consumer behavior is different than that of a regular consumer behavior, the factors in hand apply to both types of consumers.

References

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