

Customers' Choice between Online or Offline Channel about Search Products, Experience Products and Credence Products

Yicheng Liu¹

¹Department of Marketing, School of Economic and Management, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China

Correspondence: Yicheng Liu, Department of Marketing, School of Economic and Management, Tsinghua University, Room 105B, Building #15, Zijing Apartment, Haidian District, 100084, Beijing, China. E-mail: liuych.08@sem.tsinghua.edu.cn

Received: September 7, 2016

Accepted: September 21, 2016

Online Published: September 23, 2016

doi:10.5539/ibr.v9n11p38

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v9n11p38>

Abstract

This study aims to find out customers' decisions between online or offline channel about search products, experience products and credence products. For this purpose, we analyzed 120 volunteers with 5 experiments, to verify 6 hypotheses. We summarized traditional online and offline channel theory and tried to research this topic in five aspects, which are website design, offline shop distance, customer group selection, media publicity and offline channel's help for online. According to the results of 5 experiments, we finally find out customer's choice between online and offline channel influenced by the category of products and 5 different factors. Besides, we also offer some suggestions about how to attract customers from offline channel to online channel.

Keywords: search products, experience products, credence products, online or offline, channel choice

1. Introduction

During the speed development of O2O business, more and more customers go shopping online, instead of the tradition way. As online and offline shops become two available choices for the customers, it's necessary to know their preference between the two channels under different conditions.

The category of products is the most important element to influence customer choice between online and offline channel. As Nelson (1970, 1974), Darby and Karni (1973) said, we classify products into 3 types, search products, experience products and credence products. Every type has its own characteristic, which will lead to different shopping environment requirements for the consumers. This environment can be shopping location or interpersonal environment, like shopping alone or with friends.

This study aims to find out customers' decision between online or offline channel about search products, experience products and credence products, based on 5 influence factors. For this purpose we analyzed 120 volunteers with 5 experiments, to verify 6 hypotheses. All the hypotheses are based on 5 factors, calling website design(Chocarro and Mónica Cortinas, 2013), offline shop distance(Raquel Chocarro, Mónica Cortinas and María-Luisa Villanueva, 2013), customer group selection(Raquel Chocarro, Mónica Cortinas and María-Luisa Villanueva, 2013), media publicity(Koen Pauwels, Peter S.H. Leeflang, Marije L. Teerling and K.R. Eelko Huizingh, 2011) and offline channel's help for online(Shuiqing Yang, Yaobin Lu, Ling Zhao and Sumeet Gupta, 2011).

Previous references did research about each factor alone, but never made a general analysis about all the influence factors. Our study tries to summarize all kinds of influence factors and do some empirical test.

We have organized the remainder of this article as follows. Part 2 provides a literature review and the research background. Part 3 describes the hypotheses. Part 4 explains the experiments and methodology. Part 5 summarizes the results.

2. Literature Review

Nelson (1970, 1974), Darby and Karni (1973) divided products into three kinds, search products, experience products and credence products. (Tulay Girard, Paul Dion, 2010)

They defined search products as standardized products that the customers can know their quality, size, performance, style and safety without using. Wallpaper, footballs and cups are search products, because we can

know their performance, size and style just by having a look.

Experience products are something that the customers cannot know their quality, size, performance, style and safety without using. For instance, shoes, drinks and books are known as experience products.

An experience product's quality is difficult to assess prior to purchase, largely due to the limited availability of information before consumption. (Goksel Yalcinkaya, & Tevfik Aktekin, 2015) What's more, when consumers decide to buy an experience product, they may hesitate to make the decision because they don't know how long it takes to learn the application method. (Darron Billeter, Ajay Kalra, & George Loewenstein, 2011)

Credence products are defined as the products that the customers can only know their quality, size, performance, style and safety after a long-term usage. In other words, they cannot know the information by short-term experience. This kind of products usually has a long life cycle. For example, insurance products, debit card service and educational training are all credence products.

Search products are naturally suitable for selling online, because the customers can know all the property without using. Online selling has a higher speed of information transmission and trading efficiency than offline.

With other conditions unchanged, experience products are suitable for offline sales. The customers can only know the quality, size, performance, style and safety after using. In other words, products usage experience is a necessary course to know its property. As a result, the consumers will be like to experience the product before buy it, which gives the offline shop an important advantage than online shop.

Credence products are very special, whose property cannot be known until being used for a long time. For this kind of products, introduction and recommendation from the service persons will be quite necessary, which can only be acquired in the offline shop.

Tobias Kollmann, Andreas Kuckertz and Ina Kayser (2012) described the different factors that will influence consumers' decision between online or offline channel.

Gila E. Fruchter and Charles S. Tapiero (2005) made a strategy about pricing of online or offline channel. Retailing pricing of online or offline channel was a popular topic, some researchers made reviews. (Dhruv Grewal, Ramkumar Janakiraman, Kirithi Kalyanam, P.K. Kannan, Brian Ratchford, Reo Song, & Stephen Tolerico, 2010)

People also imaged the multi-channel store as a perfect sample of selling goods. (Tibert Verhagen, & Willemijn van Dolen, 2009)

Generally speaking, when online and offline channel compete with each other, there will be 5 different factors, calling website design, offline shop distance, customer group selection, media publicity and offline channel's help for online.

Website design is an important factor to influence the customer's decision. According to the paper of Raquel Chocarro and Mónica Cortinas (2013), a simpler website layout will lead to a higher probability online shopping. For search products, this effect is very obvious. However, for experience products customers, the simplification of website layout is not that important, because consumers need to know some details about experience products. In other words, the desire for detailed information will weaken the aversion for a complex website process. Credence products are very special, which cannot be fully known by the customers only by means of internet information. As a result, credence products consumers will prefer offline channel.

Perceived website quality will have a great influence on the trust of consumers for retailers. Some introduction about products performance is important to the website quality, because it will help customers understand the products and improve online purchase. (Gee-Woo Bock, Jumin Lee, Huei-Huang Kuan and Jong-Hyun Kim, 2012)

Offline shop distance is important to the purchase choice. A long distance will decrease the possibility of customers to choose offline shop, and this phenomenon is more obvious for search products than experience products. (Raquel Chocarro, Mónica Cortinas and María-Luisa Villanueva, 2013) Consumers of experience products will need an offline shop to experience the quality of products, even if the shop is far away. Consumers of credence products need some detailed introduction from the salesmen, so they will naturally tend to offline channel. Their capacity for tolerance of distance is even better than experience products consumers and search products consumers.

Customer group selection is an interesting topic. When people go shopping with their friends or relatives, they will prefer offline channel (Raquel Chocarro, Mónica Cortinas and María-Luisa Villanueva, 2013). This effect will be more significant for experience products consumers than search products consumers. Credence products

buyers are even more interested in offline shop than experience products buyers, because they want more products information than others. Originally, there are two kinds of people, one enjoys social contact and the other fears it. Someone chooses online shopping because of their fear of social contact. However, shopping with friends or relatives will give people familiarity feeling, which will ease the feeling of fear about social contact.

Media publicity is a popular research field. In the long term, the introduction of news internet will reduce the sales of offline shop but will increase the average sale of all goods including online or offline channel. In other words, media publicity will guide consumers to online channel, because they can acquire products information from the media. Although some of the customers turn to online channel, the total sales will be higher because the average sale of all goods increases. (Koen Pauwels, Peter S.H. Leeflang, Marije L. Teerling and K.R. Eelko Huizingh, 2011)

Internet word of mouth has a significant influence on consumers' perceived trust for the products, and bad word of mouth will have a punishment effect on products sales. The influence of word of mouth on trust will be more obvious before than after interaction with consumers. If the merchant wants to attract customers, they should keep a good product image before the interaction with them. (Gee-Woo Bock, Jumin Lee, Huei-Huang Kuan and Jong-Hyun Kim, 2012)

Online information from different group will have different influence on search products and experience buyers. For experience products buyers, online information from customers will be more important. However, for search products buyers, online information from retailers and suppliers will be more significant. Besides, the neutrality of the website will be an important factor for experience consumers. Generally speaking, if online shops want to attract customers to buy experience products, they should keep good internet word of mouth from a neutral website. (Lien-Ti Bei, Etta Y. I. Chen and Richard Widdows, 2004)

Consumers will choose a different complaint channel in an online shopping environment than in an offline shopping environment, and there will be an interaction between the purchase environment and the consumer's degree of dissatisfaction (Seul Lee & Brenda J. Cude, 2011)

Social media will influence the search products and experience products consumers significantly. (Jeen-Su Lim, Abdulrahman Al-Aali, & John H. Heinrichs, 2015)

Offline channel's help for online is known as that the perceived offline service quality of customers will have a positive influence on online consumption. If consumers can feel good perceived service quality in the offline experience shop, they online consumption will increase as well. (Shuiqing Yang, Yaobin Lu, Ling Zhao and Sumeet Gupta, 2011) Customers' past shopping experience will be important to their future judgment. (Stephen J. Hoch, 2002)

3. Hypotheses

According to the literature part, when online and offline channel compete with each other, there will be 5 different factors, calling website design, offline shop distance, customer group selection, media publicity and offline channel's help for online.

Besides, the influence those 5 factors have on consumers' decisions will vary with different kinds of products. Search products, experience products and credence products will make a difference to the influence.

3.1 Website Design

According to the literature, consumers will choose simple and easy process when they buy search products. When considering the decision for experience products, complicated information and process on the website will be less disgusted, so the simplicity of website is not very important for them. Credence products consumers will be willing to accept complex process online and get more information for the products, so simplicity is also not attractive to them. (Raquel Chocarro and Mónica Cortinas, 2013)

As a result, we can make the hypothesis 1 that:

H1. The simpler the online shopping process is, the more possible the customers will use online channel.

H1a. For search products, the simpler the online shopping process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will be much higher.

H1b. For experience products, the simpler the online shopping process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly.

H1c. For credence products, the simpler the online shopping process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly.

3.2 Offline Shop Distance

Naturally, customers will prefer offline shop in short distance. If the distance is too long, some of them will choose online channel, especially for the search products consumers who can easily know the performance and quality of products. Experience products customers are not so easy to know the information about the products, so offline shop will be convenient to get more details. Consumers for credence products will not feel a big difference between online channel and offline channel, because even if the offline shop cannot let them know the products well. (Raquel Chocarro, Mónica Cortinas and María-Luisa Villanueva, 2013)

So we can have the hypothesis 2 that:

H2. The longer the distance of the offline shop is, the more likely the customers will use online channel.

H2a. For search products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will be much higher.

H2b. For experience products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly.

H2c. For credence products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will almost stay the same.

3.3 Customer Group Selection

Consumers are usually divided into two kinds, calling social active and social phobia consumers. Social active consumers enjoy communicating with people, so they will like offline shopping. However, social phobia consumers dislike communication, which means that they will prefer online channel.

When social active consumers and social phobia consumers make the decision of search products, experience products or credence products, their choice will not be the same. For example, shopping with friends or relatives will reduce their fear for social communication, especially for social phobia consumers, but this effect will not be quite obvious for social active consumers. (Raquel Chocarro, Mónica Cortinas and María-Luisa Villanueva, 2013)

To study the difference between two kinds of consumers when they shopping with friends or relatives, we design hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 4:

H3. Social active consumers prefer offline channel.

H3a. For search products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will not change a lot.

H3b. For experience products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will be lower.

H3c. For credence products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will be even lower than experience products consumers.

H4. Social phobia consumers prefer online channel.

H4a. For search products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be lower.

H4b. For experience products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be even lower than search products consumers.

H4c. For credence products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be even lower than experience products consumers.

3.4 Media Publicity

Internet word of mouth has a significant influence on consumers' perceived trust for the products, and bad word of mouth will have a punishment effect on products sales. Internet word of mouth is quite important, because it can leave a good impression on consumers' mind. (Gee-Woo Bock, Jumin Lee, Huei-Huang Kuan and Jong-Hyun Kim, 2012)

The neutrality of the website will be an important factor for experience consumers. (Lien-Ti Bei, Etta Y. I. Chen and Richard Widdows, 2004)

Social media will influence the search products and experience products consumers significantly. (Jeen-Su Lim, Abdulrahman Al-Aali, & John H. Heinrichs, 2015)

Based on the literature above, we can hypothesis 5 that:

H5. Good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will increase long-term sales of online channel.

H5a. For search products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will not make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel.

H5b. For experience products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel.

H5c. For credence products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel, but the improvement will be less than in experience products.

3.5 Offline Channel's Help for Online

As the literature tells us, offline channel can help the online channel by a positive effect on online consumption from the perceived offline service quality of customers. If consumers can feel good perceived service quality in the offline experience shop, they online consumption will increase as well. (Shuiqing Yang, Yaobin Lu, Ling Zhao and Sumeet Gupta, 2011) Customers' past shopping experience will be important to their future judgment. (Stephen J. Hoch, 2002)

We have hypothesis 6 that:

H6. The higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online.

H6a. For search products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online.

H6b. For experience products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online, and the possibility will be even higher than search products.

H6c. For credence products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the possibility of customers' online consumption will not increase significantly.

4. Experiments and Methodology

To test the 6 hypotheses above, we design 5 experiments. We choose all the volunteers during 20-25 years old university students. About half of the volunteers are male and the other half are female. The experiments were done in December, 2015.

4.1 Experiment 1

Experiment 1 is a 3×2 design, to test hypothesis 1. We chose 120 volunteers, who were divided into 6 teams, each with 20 volunteers. Then we let them shop on two designed websites, one is a simple and direct shopping website, the other is a complicated website including a lot of products information before shopping.

60 volunteers used the first website, the other 60 volunteers used another. One third of each 60 volunteers would buy search products, one third would buy experience products, and the last one third would choose credence products. The result of the 6 teams is shown below:

Table 1. Experiment 1 design

A:Search products, direct shopping	B:Search products, reading complicated introduction before shopping
C:Experience products, direct shopping	D:Experience products, reading complicated introduction before shopping
E:Credence products, direct shopping	F:Credence products, reading complicated introduction before shopping

By comparing team A and team B, team C and team D, team E and team F, we can see the differences of the possibility of shopping online or offline, then we can test hypothesis 1.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team A and team B, we can test hypothesis 1a.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team C and team D, we can test hypothesis 1b.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team E and team F, we can test hypothesis 1c.

4.2 Experiment 2

Experiment 2 is a 3×2 design, to test hypothesis 2. We chose 120 volunteers, who were divided into 6 teams, each with 20 volunteers. Then we let them choose online or offline channel to buy products. The online channel is a simple website, on which you could consume directly. Half of the volunteers were told that the offline shop was quite far away, while the other half of the volunteers were given a short-distance shop. One third of each 60 volunteers would buy search products, one third would buy experience products, and the last one third would choose credence products. The result of the 6 teams is shown below:

Table 2. Experiment 2 design

A: Search products, nearby offline shop	B: Search products, long distance offline shop
C: Experience products, nearby offline shop	D: Experience products, long distance offline shop
E: Credence products, nearby offline shop	F: Credence products, long distance offline shop

By comparing team A and team B, team C and team D, team E and team F, we can see the differences of the possibility of shopping online or offline, then we can test hypothesis 2.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team A and team B, we can test hypothesis 2a.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team C and team D, we can test hypothesis 2b.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team E and team F, we can test hypothesis 2c.

4.3 Experiment 3

Experiment 3 is a $3 \times 2 \times 2$ design, to test hypothesis 3 and hypothesis 4. We chose 120 volunteers, who were divided into 12 teams, each with 10 volunteers. Then we let them choose online or offline channel to buy products. Half of them are social active consumers and half are social phobia consumers. One third of each 60 volunteers would buy search products, one third would buy experience products, and the last one third would choose credence products. Every kind of consumers for search products, experience products and credence products was divided into 2 parts, one made decisions alone, the other went shopping with their friends or relatives. The result of the 12 teams is shown below:

Table 3. Experiment 3 design

A: Social active, search products, shopping alone	D: Social active, search products, shopping with friends or relatives	G: Social phobia, search products, shopping alone	J: Social phobia, search products, shopping with friends or relatives
B: Social active, experience products, shopping alone	E: Social active, experience products, shopping with friends or relatives	H: Social phobia, experience products, shopping alone	K: Social phobia, experience products, shopping with friends or relatives
C: Social active, credence products, shopping alone	F: Social active, credence products, shopping with friends or relatives	I: Social phobia, credence products, shopping alone	L: Social phobia, credence products, shopping with friends or relatives

By comparing team A and team G, team B and team H, team C and team I, team D and team J, team E and team K, team F and team L, we can see the differences of the possibility of shopping online or offline, then we can test hypothesis 3.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team A and team D, we can test hypothesis 3a.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team B and team E, we can test hypothesis 3b.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team C and team F, we can test hypothesis 3c.

By comparing team A and team G, team B and team H, team C and team I, team D and team J, team E and team K, team F and team L, we can see the differences of the possibility of shopping online or offline, then we can test hypothesis 4.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team G and team J, we can test hypothesis 4a.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team H and team K, we can test hypothesis 4b.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team I and team L, we can test hypothesis 4c.

4.4 Experiment 4

Experiment 4 is a 3×2 design, to test hypothesis 5. We chose 120 volunteers, who were divided into 12 teams, each with 10 volunteers. One third of each 60 volunteers would buy search products, one third would buy experience products, and the last one third would choose credence products. All the consumption behaviors were online, which would be influenced by good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites. The result of the 12 teams is shown below:

Table 4. Experiment 4 design

A:Search products, no publicity, no word of mouth	B:Search products, publicity, good word of mouth	E:Experience products, no publicity, no word of mouth	F:Experience products, publicity, good word of mouth	I:Credence products, no publicity, no word of mouth	J:Credence products, publicity, good word of mouth
C:Search products, with publicity, no word of mouth	D:Search products, publicity, good word of mouth	G:Experience products, with publicity, no word of mouth	H:Experience products, publicity, good word of mouth	K:Credence products, with publicity, no word of mouth	L:Credence products, publicity, good word of mouth

By comparing team A and team B, team A and team C, team E and team F, team E and team G, team I and team J, team I and team K, we can see the differences of the possibility of shopping online, then we can test hypothesis 5.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team A and team B, team A and team C, we can test hypothesis 5a.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team E and team F, team E and team G, we can test hypothesis 5b.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team I and team J, team I and team K, we can test hypothesis 5c.

4.5 Experiment 5

Experiment 5 is a 3×2 design, to test hypothesis 6. We chose 120 volunteers, who were divided into 6 teams, each with 20 volunteers. One third of each 60 volunteers would buy search products, one third would buy experience products, and the last one third would choose credence products.

Before they made the online shopping decisions, we would let them experience in the offline experience shop firstly. Half of them would enjoy high quality service, while the other half would experience normal service. The result of the 6 teams is shown below:

Table 5. Experiment 5 design

A:Search products, high quality service	B:Search products, normal service
C:Experience products, high quality service	D:Experience products, normal service
E:Credence products, high quality service	F:Credence products, normal service

By comparing team A and team B, team C and team D, team E and team F, we can see the differences of the possibility of shopping online, then we can test hypothesis 6.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team A and team B, we can test hypothesis 6a.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team C and team D, we can test hypothesis 6b.

By comparing the difference of the possibility of shopping online or offline in team E and team F, we can test hypothesis 6c.

5. Data analyses and Results

We test all the experiments to check the hypotheses.

5.1 Test 1

As we have 120 volunteers divided into 6 teams, each with 20 volunteers. The statistic result is shown below:

Table 6. The result of Test 1

	Type	Online shopping volunteers	Proportion of purchasing
A	Search products, direct shopping	16	80%
B	Search products, reading complicated introduction before shopping	10	50%
C	Experience products, direct shopping	12	60%
D	Experience products, reading complicated introduction before shopping	10	50%
E	Credence products, direct shopping	7	35%
F	Credence products, reading complicated introduction before shopping	6	30%

We can see that the proportion of purchasing of team A is higher than team B, the proportion of purchasing of team C is higher than team D, and team E is higher than team F.

H1a: Firstly let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team A and team B, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
A	20	.8	.0917663	.4103913	.6079309	.9920691
B	20	.5	.1147079	.5129892	.2599137	.7400863
diff	20	.3	.1051315	.4701623	.0799572	.5200428

mean(diff) = mean(A - B) t = 2.8536
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 degrees of freedom = 19

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.9949 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0102 Pr(T > t) = 0.0051

We can see that team A is significantly bigger than team B. So hypothesis 1a is correct, that is for search products, the simpler the online shopping process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will be much higher.

H1b: Second, let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team C and team D, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
C	20	.6	.1123903	.5026247	.3647644	.8352356
D	20	.5	.1147079	.5129892	.2599137	.7400863
diff	20	.1	.0688247	.3077935	-.0440518	.2440518

mean(diff) = mean(C - D) t = 1.4530
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 degrees of freedom = 19

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.9187 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.1625 Pr(T > t) = 0.0813

We can see that the p-values of both sides are larger than 0.05, so team C and team D do not have significant difference. As a result, hypothesis 1b is correct, that is for experience products, the simpler the online shopping

process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly.

H1c: Third, let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team E and team F, as follows:

Paired t test

variable	obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
E	20	.35	.1094243	.4893605	.1209722	.5790278
F	20	.3	.1051315	.4701623	.0799572	.5200428
diff	20	.05	.1697521	.7591547	-.3052953	.4052953
mean(diff) = mean(E - F)				t =	0.2945	
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom =	19	
Ha: mean(diff) < 0				Ha: mean(diff) != 0	Ha: mean(diff) > 0	
Pr(T < t) = 0.6142				Pr(T > t) = 0.7715	Pr(T > t) = 0.3858	

We can see that the p-values of both sides are larger than 0.05, so team E and team F do not have significant difference. As a result, hypothesis 1c is correct, that is for credence products, the simpler the online shopping process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly.

Summarizing all the 3 regressions, we can conclude that hypothesis 1 is supported, that is the simpler the online shopping process is, the more possible the customers will use online channel. However, only in the decision of search products purchasing, will the simplicity of online shopping process influence the consumers significantly.

5.2 Test 2

As we have 120 volunteers divided into 6 teams, each with 20 volunteers. The statistic result is shown below:

Table 7. The result of Test 2

	Type	Online shopping volunteers	Proportion of purchasing
A	Search products, nearby offline shop	10	50%
B	Search products, long distance offline shop	18	90%
C	Experience products, nearby offline shop	10	50%
D	Experience products, long distance offline shop	12	60%
E	Credence products, nearby offline shop	7	35%
F	Credence products, long distance offline shop	8	40%

We can see that the proportion of purchasing of team A is lower than team B, the proportion of purchasing of team C is lower than team D, and team E is not obviously different from team F.

H2a: Firstly let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team A and team B, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
A	20	.5	.1147079	.5129892	.2599137	.7400863
B	20	.9	.0688247	.3077935	.7559482	1.044052
diff	20	-.4	.1123903	.5026247	-.6352356	-.1647644
mean(diff) = mean(A - B)				t =	-3.5590	
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom =	19	
Ha: mean(diff) < 0				Ha: mean(diff) != 0	Ha: mean(diff) > 0	
Pr(T < t) = 0.0010				Pr(T > t) = 0.0021	Pr(T > t) = 0.9990	

We can see that team A is significantly smaller than team B. So hypothesis 2a is correct, that is for search products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will be much higher.

H2b: Second, let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team C and team D, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
C	20	.5	.1147079	.5129892	.2599137	.7400863
D	20	.6	.1123903	.5026247	.3647644	.8352356
diff	20	-.1	.1762176	.7880689	-.4688276	.2688276
mean(diff) = mean(C - D)				t = -0.5675		
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom = 19		
Ha: mean(diff) < 0		Ha: mean(diff) != 0		Ha: mean(diff) > 0		
Pr(T < t) = 0.2885		Pr(T > t) = 0.5770		Pr(T > t) = 0.7115		

We can see that the p-values of both sides are larger than 0.05, so team C and team D do not have significant difference. As a result, hypothesis 2b is correct, that is for experience products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly.

H2c: Third, let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team E and team F, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
E	20	.35	.1094243	.4893605	.1209722	.5790278
F	20	.4	.1123903	.5026247	.1647644	.6352356
diff	20	-.05	.1697521	.7591547	-.4052953	.3052953
mean(diff) = mean(E - F)				t = -0.2945		
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom = 19		
Ha: mean(diff) < 0		Ha: mean(diff) != 0		Ha: mean(diff) > 0		
Pr(T < t) = 0.3858		Pr(T > t) = 0.7715		Pr(T > t) = 0.6142		

We can see that the p-values of both sides are larger than 0.05, so team E and team F do not have significant difference, and the proportion of purchasing of the 2 teams is so close. As a result, hypothesis 2c is correct, that is for credence products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will almost stay the same.

Summarizing all the 3 regressions, we can conclude that hypothesis 2 is supported, that is the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the more likely the customers will use online channel. However, only in the decision of search products purchasing will the distance of offline shop influence the consumers significantly.

5.3 Test 3

As we have 120 volunteers divided into 12 teams, each with 10 volunteers. The statistic result is shown below:

Table 8. The result of Test 3

	Type	Online shopping volunteers	Proportion of purchasing
A	Social active, search products, shopping alone	5	50%
B	Social active, experience products, shopping alone	6	60%
C	Social active, credence products, shopping alone	5	50%
D	Social active, search products, shopping with friends or relatives	5	50%
E	Social active, experience products, shopping with friends or relatives	2	20%
F	Social active, credence products, shopping with friends or relatives	1	10%
G	Social phobia, search products, shopping alone	8	80%
H	Social phobia, experience products, shopping alone	8	80%
I	Social phobia, credence products, shopping alone	7	70%
J	Social phobia, search products, shopping with friends or relatives	4	40%
K	Social phobia, experience products, shopping with friends or relatives	3	30%
L	Social phobia, credence products, shopping with friends or relatives	2	20%

H3a: Firstly let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team A and team D, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
A	10	.5	.1666667	.5270463	.1229738	.8770262
D	10	.5	.1666667	.5270463	.1229738	.8770262
diff	10	0	.1490712	.4714045	-.3372225	.3372225

mean(diff) = mean(A - D) t = 0.0000
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 degrees of freedom = 9

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.5000 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 1.0000 Pr(T > t) = 0.5000

We can see that the data of team A and team D are almost the same, so hypothesis 3a is correct, that is for search products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will not change a lot.

H3b: Second, let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team B and team E, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
B	10	.6	.1632993	.5163978	.2305913	.9694087
E	10	.2	.1333333	.421637	-.101621	.501621
diff	10	.4	.1632993	.5163978	.0305913	.7694087

mean(diff) = mean(B - E) t = 2.4495
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 degrees of freedom = 9

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.9816 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0368 Pr(T > t) = 0.0184

We can see that the data of team B is significantly bigger than team E, so hypothesis 3b is correct, that is for experience products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will be lower.

H3c: Let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team C and team F, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
C	10	.5	.1666667	.5270463	.1229738	.8770262
F	10	.1	.1	.3162278	-.1262157	.3262157
diff	10	.4	.2211083	.6992059	-.1001818	.9001818

mean(diff) = mean(C - F)
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 t = 1.8091
degrees of freedom = 9

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.9481 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.1039 Pr(T > t) = 0.0519

We can see that the data of team C is significantly bigger than team F, and the proportion of purchasing of team F is smaller than team E, so hypothesis 3c is correct, that is for credence products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will be even lower than experience products consumers.

Summarizing all the 3 regressions above, we can conclude that hypothesis 3 is supported, that is social active consumers prefer offline channel. What's more, this effect will be especially obvious within the decisions of experience products and credence products.

H4a: Let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team G and team J, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
G	10	.8	.1333333	.421637	.498379	1.101621
J	10	.4	.1632993	.5163978	.0305913	.7694087
diff	10	.4	.2211083	.6992059	-.1001818	.9001818

mean(diff) = mean(G - J)
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 t = 1.8091
degrees of freedom = 9

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.9481 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.1039 Pr(T > t) = 0.0519

We can see that the data of team G is significantly bigger than team J so hypothesis 4a is correct, that is for search products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be lower.

H4b: Let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team H and team K, as follows:

Paired t test

variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
H	10	.8	.1333333	.421637	.498379	1.101621
K	10	.3	.1527525	.4830459	-.0455502	.6455502
diff	10	.5	.2236068	.7071068	-.0058337	1.005834

mean(diff) = mean(H - K)
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 t = 2.2361
degrees of freedom = 9

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.9739 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0522 Pr(T > t) = 0.0261

We can see that the data of team H is significantly bigger than team K and the proportion of purchasing of team

K is smaller than team J, so hypothesis 4b is correct, that is for experience products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be even lower than search products consumers.

H4c: Let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team I and team L, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
I	10	.7	.1527525	.4830459	.3544498	1.04555
L	10	.2	.1333333	.421637	-.101621	.501621
diff	10	.5	.2236068	.7071068	-.0058337	1.005834

mean(diff) = mean(I - L)

Ho: mean(diff) = 0

t = 2.2361

degrees of freedom = 9

Ha: mean(diff) < 0

Pr(T < t) = 0.9739

Ha: mean(diff) != 0

Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0522

Ha: mean(diff) > 0

Pr(T > t) = 0.0261

We can see that the data of team I is significantly bigger than team L and the proportion of purchasing of team L is smaller than team K, so hypothesis 4c is correct, that is for credence products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be even lower than experience products consumers.

Summarizing all the 3 regressions above, we can conclude that hypothesis 4 is supported, that is social phobia consumers prefer online channel.

5.4 Test 4

As we have 120 volunteers divided into 12 teams, each with 10 volunteers. The statistic result is shown below:

Table 9. The result of Test 4

	Type	Online shopping volunteers	Proportion of purchasing
A	Search products, no publicity, no word of mouth	4	40%
B	Search products no publicity, good word of mouth	6	60%
C	Search products, with publicity, no word of mouth	5	50%
D	Search products, with publicity, good word of mouth	6	60%
E	Experience products, no publicity, no word of mouth	4	40%
F	Experience products, no publicity, good word of mouth	8	80%
G	Experience products, with publicity, no word of mouth	8	80%
H	Experience products, with publicity, good word of mouth	9	90%
I	Credence products, no publicity, no word of mouth	2	20%
J	Credence products, no publicity, good word of mouth	6	60%
K	Credence products, with publicity, no word of mouth	6	60%
L	Credence products, with publicity, good word of mouth	7	70%

H5a: Firstly let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team A and team B, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
A	10	.4	.1632993	.5163978	.0305913	.7694087
B	10	.6	.1632993	.5163978	.2305913	.9694087
diff	10	-.2	.2	.6324555	-.6524314	.2524314

mean(diff) = mean(A - B)

Ho: mean(diff) = 0

t = -1.0000

degrees of freedom = 9

Ha: mean(diff) < 0

Pr(T < t) = 0.1717

Ha: mean(diff) != 0

Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.3434

Ha: mean(diff) > 0

Pr(T > t) = 0.8283

Then let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team A and team C, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
A	10	.4	.1632993	.5163978	.0305913	.7694087
C	10	.5	.1666667	.5270463	.1229738	.8770262
diff	10	-.1	.2333333	.7378648	-.6278367	.4278367
mean(diff) = mean(A - C)				t = -0.4286		
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom = 9		
Ha: mean(diff) < 0		Ha: mean(diff) != 0		Ha: mean(diff) > 0		
Pr(T < t) = 0.3392		Pr(T > t) = 0.6783		Pr(T > t) = 0.6608		

For the comparison of team A and team B, we can see that the p-values of both sides are larger than 0.05, so team A and team B do not have significant difference. For the comparison of team A and team C, we can see that the p-values of both sides are larger than 0.05, so team A and team C do not have significant difference, either. So hypothesis 5a is correct, that is for search products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will not make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel.

H5b: Let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team E and team F, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
E	10	.4	.1632993	.5163978	.0305913	.7694087
F	10	.8	.1333333	.421637	.498379	1.101621
diff	10	-.4	.2211083	.6992059	-.9001818	.1001818
mean(diff) = mean(E - F)				t = -1.8091		
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom = 9		
Ha: mean(diff) < 0		Ha: mean(diff) != 0		Ha: mean(diff) > 0		
Pr(T < t) = 0.0519		Pr(T > t) = 0.1039		Pr(T > t) = 0.9481		

Then let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team E and team G, as follows:

Paired t test

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
E	10	.4	.1632993	.5163978	.0305913	.7694087
G	10	.8	.1333333	.421637	.498379	1.101621
diff	10	-.4	.1632993	.5163978	-.7694087	-.0305913
mean(diff) = mean(E - G)				t = -2.4495		
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom = 9		
Ha: mean(diff) < 0		Ha: mean(diff) != 0		Ha: mean(diff) > 0		
Pr(T < t) = 0.0184		Pr(T > t) = 0.0368		Pr(T > t) = 0.9816		

For the comparison of team E and team F, we can see that the data of team E is significantly smaller than team F. For the comparison of team E and team G, we can see that the data of team E is significantly smaller than team G. So hypothesis 5b is correct, that is for experience products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel.

H5c: Let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team I and team J as follows:

Paired t test

variable	obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
I	10	.2	.1333333	.421637	-.101621	.501621
J	10	.6	.1632993	.5163978	.2305913	.9694087
diff	10	-.4	.1632993	.5163978	-.7694087	-.0305913
mean(diff) = mean(I - J)				t = -2.4495		
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom = 9		
Ha: mean(diff) < 0		Ha: mean(diff) != 0		Ha: mean(diff) > 0		
Pr(T < t) = 0.0184		Pr(T > t) = 0.0368		Pr(T > t) = 0.9816		

Then let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team I and team K, as follows:

Paired t test

variable	obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
I	10	.2	.1333333	.421637	-.101621	.501621
K	10	.6	.1632993	.5163978	.2305913	.9694087
diff	10	-.4	.2211083	.6992059	-.9001818	.1001818
mean(diff) = mean(I - K)				t = -1.8091		
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom = 9		
Ha: mean(diff) < 0		Ha: mean(diff) != 0		Ha: mean(diff) > 0		
Pr(T < t) = 0.0519		Pr(T > t) = 0.1039		Pr(T > t) = 0.9481		

For the comparison of team I and team J, we can see that the data of team I is significantly smaller than team J, and the proportion of purchasing of team J is smaller than team F. For the comparison of team I and team K, we can see that the data of team I is significantly smaller than team K, and the proportion of purchasing of team K is smaller than team G. So hypothesis 5c is correct, that is for credence products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel, but the improvement will be less than in experience products.

Summarizing all the 6 regressions above, we can conclude that hypothesis 5 is supported, that is good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will increase long-term sales of online channel.

5.5 Test 5

As we have 120 volunteers divided into 6 teams, each with 20 volunteers. The statistic result is shown below:

Table 10. The result of Test 5

	Type	Online shopping volunteers	Proportion of purchasing
A	Search products, high quality service	16	80%
B	Search products, normal service	11	55%
C	Experience products, high quality service	16	80%
D	Experience products, normal service	8	40%
E	Credence products, high quality service	6	30%
F	Credence products, normal service	5	25%

H6a: Firstly let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team A and team B, as follows:

Paired t test

variable	obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
A	20	.8	.0917663	.4103913	.6079309	.9920691
B	20	.55	.1141329	.5104178	.3111171	.7888829
diff	20	.25	.1428101	.6386664	-.0489051	.5489051
mean(diff) = mean(A - B)				t = 1.7506		
Ho: mean(diff) = 0				degrees of freedom = 19		
Ha: mean(diff) < 0		Ha: mean(diff) != 0		Ha: mean(diff) > 0		
Pr(T < t) = 0.9519		Pr(T > t) = 0.0961		Pr(T > t) = 0.0481		

We can see that team A is significantly bigger than team B. So hypothesis 6a is correct, that is for search products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online.

H6b: Second, let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team C and team D, as follows:

Paired t test

variable	obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
C	20	.8	.0917663	.4103913	.6079309	.9920691
D	20	.4	.1123903	.5026247	.1647644	.6352356
diff	20	.4	.1521772	.680557	.0814895	.7185105

mean(diff) = mean(C - D)
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 t = 2.6285
degrees of freedom = 19

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.9917 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0165 Pr(T > t) = 0.0083

We can see that team C is significantly bigger than team D, and the proportion of purchasing of team D is smaller than team B. So hypothesis 6b is correct, that is for experience products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online, and the possibility will be even higher than search products.

H6c: Third, let's do the t-test regression for the comparison of team E and team F, as follows:

Paired t test

variable	obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
E	20	.3	.1051315	.4701623	.0799572	.5200428
F	20	.25	.0993399	.4442617	.0420791	.4579209
diff	20	.05	.1534687	.6863327	-.2712136	.3712136

mean(diff) = mean(E - F)
 Ho: mean(diff) = 0 t = 0.3258
degrees of freedom = 19

Ha: mean(diff) < 0 Ha: mean(diff) != 0 Ha: mean(diff) > 0
 Pr(T < t) = 0.6259 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.7481 Pr(T > t) = 0.3741

We can see that the p-values of both sides are larger than 0.05, so team E and team F do not have significant difference. As a result, hypothesis 6c is correct, that is for credence products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the possibility of customers' online consumption will not increase significantly.

Summarizing all the 3 regressions, we can conclude that hypothesis 6 is supported, that is the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online.

6. Conclusion and Discussions

The research focuses on customers' decision between online or offline channel about search products, experience products and credence products. We study this question by 6 hypotheses, discussing the influence of 5 factors, named website design, offline shop distance, customer group selection, media publicity and offline channel's help for online.

1. Website design: Generally speaking, the simpler the online shopping process is, the more possible the customers will use online channel. For search products, the simpler the online shopping process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will be much higher. For experience products, the simpler the online shopping process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly. For credence products, the simpler the online shopping process is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly.

Originally, people will hate complicated online shopping process. (Raquel Chocarro and Mónica Cortinas, 2013) However, for experience products consumers, online introduction will be important for them to know the performance of products, so they will not feel so disgusted about complicated website process. For credence products consumers, online details are still not enough, so they will not care about the online process so much.

2. Offline shop distance: In a general way, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the more likely the

customers will use online channel. For search products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will be much higher. For experience products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will not increase significantly. For credence products, the longer the distance of the offline shop is, the possibility of the customers to use online channel will almost stay the same.

If all the other factors stay the same, customers will choose nearby offline shop. (Raquel Chocarro, Mónica Cortinas and María-Luisa Villanueva, 2013) However, for experience products consumers and credence products consumers, offline shop experience is a necessary step, because they cannot know the performance and quality without experiencing.

3. Customer group selection: On the whole, social active consumers prefer offline channel, while social phobia consumers prefer online channel. For search products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will not change a lot, while the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be lower. For experience products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will be lower, while the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be even lower than search products consumers. For credence products, when shopping with friends or relatives, the possibility of social active customers to use online channel will be even lower than experience products consumers, while the possibility of social phobia customers to use online channel will be even lower than experience products consumers.

Social active consumers naturally prefer offline channel, so shopping with friends or relatives will not make a difference. For experience products, social active consumers have necessary need for offline shop experience. For credence products, social active consumers will feel more happiness in offline shop than experience products, because the staffs' introduction can help them know the products better.

Social phobia consumers prefer online channel, but shopping with friends or relatives will reduce their fear of social communication, which can improve their willingness to offline shop. For experience products consumers, this effect will be more significant, because it's difficult for them to judge the performance of products if they don't go to the offline shop. While the effect will be even more obvious for credence products consumers, who have more need for products details.

4. Media publicity: For search products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will not make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel. For experience products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel. For credence products, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will make a big improvement in long-term sales of online channel, but the improvement will be less than in experience products.

Objectively, good word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will increase long-term sales of online channel. (Koen Pauwels, Peter S.H. Leeflang, Marije L. Teerling and K.R. Eelko Huizingh, 2011) However, people can judge the quality and performance of search products easily, so the influence of word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will not be very obvious for search products. For experience products and credence products consumers, making this judgment will be difficult. As a result, word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will be more important. For credence products consumers, word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites are not enough, so the effect will be not as significant as experience products.

5. Offline channel's help for online: The higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online. For search products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online. For experience products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the more likely that the customers will consume online, and the possibility will be even higher than search products. For credence products, the higher the perceived offline service quality of customers is, the possibility of customers' online consumption will not increase significantly.

Generally speaking, if consumers can feel good perceived service quality in the offline experience shop, they online consumption will increase as well. (Shuiqing Yang, Yaobin Lu, Ling Zhao and Sumeet Gupta, 2011) While for the experience products consumers, offline experience will be very helpful for them to know the products performance, so this effect on online consumption is more significant. However, for credence products consumers, even if they feel good perceived service quality in the offline shop, they will not likely choose online channel, because it is far away from their natural preference.

According to our findings, we can have some implications:

1. Website guide is important to let customers know the quality and performance of products well.
2. Experience products customers are the key emphases because they are easily transferred from offline channel to online channel if relevant requirements are met.
3. Word of mouth and publicity from neutral media and websites will be useful, especially for search products and experience products customers.
4. Online shops should pay more attention to social phobia consumers, because they will be more likely to shop online.
5. Offline experience shops should not be too far away from densely populated areas, and good offline experience will help online sales.

However, our study still has some shortage, which can be improved during future research. First, we don't pay enough attention to the interactive influence of different factors, which will be more interesting. Second, if we can have more diversified volunteers, the result will be more convincing. Third, we cannot find much theory support for credence products, which should be added to in the future. Fourth, we don't consider the difference brought by the brands, like private labels and national brands. (Marta Arce-Urriza, & Javier Cebollada, 2012)

References

- Darron, B., Ajay, K., & George, L. (2011). Underpredicting Learning after Initial Experience with a Product. *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, 37.
- Dhruv, G., Ramkumar, J., Kirthi, K., Kannan, P. K., Brian, R. F., Reo, S., & Stephen, T. (2010). Strategic Online and Offline Retail Pricing: A Review and Research Agenda. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 24, 138-154. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2010.02.007>
- Gee-Woo, B., Jumin, L., Huei, H. K., & Jong, H. K. (2012). The progression of online trust in the multi-channel retailer context and the role of product uncertainty. *Decision Support Systems*, 53, 97-107. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2011.12.007>
- Gila, E. F., & Charles, S. T. (2005). Dynamic online and offline channel pricing for heterogeneous customers in virtual acceptance. *International Game Theory Review*, 7(2), 137-150. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1142/S0219198905000454>
- Goksel, Y., & Tevfik, A. (2015). Brand Extension Effects and Core Attributes of Experience Product Franchises: A Bayesian Approach. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 32(5), 731-746. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jpim.12164>
- Jeen-Su, L., Abdulrahman, A. A., & John, H. H. (2015). Impact of satisfaction with e-retailers' touch points on purchase behavior: the moderating effect of search and experience product type. *Marketing Letters*, 26(1-1).
- Koen, P., Peter, S. H. L., Marije, L. T., & Huizingh, K. R. E. (2011). Does Online Information Drive Offline Revenues? Only for Specific Products and Consumer Segments. *Journal of Retailing*, 87, 1-17. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2010.10.001>
- Marta, A. U., & Javier, C. (2012). Private labels and national brands across online and offline channels. *Management Decision*, 50(10), 1772-1789. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00251741211279594>
- Raquel, C., Mónica, C., & María, L. V. (2013). Situational variables in online versus offline channel choice. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 12, 347-361. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.eleap.2013.03.004>
- Seul, L., & Brenda, J. C. (2011). Consumer complaint channel choice in online and offline purchases. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*.
- Shuiqing, Y., Yaobin, L., Ling, Z., & Sumeet, G. (2011). Empirical investigation of customers' channel extension behavior: Perceptions shift toward the online channel. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27, 1688-1696. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2011.02.007>
- Stephen, J. H. (2002). Product Experience Is Seductive. *Journal of Consumer Research Inc.*, 29.
- Tibert, V., & Willemijn, V. D. (2009). Online purchase intentions: A multi-channel store image perspective. *Information & Management*, 46, 77-82. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2008.12.001>
- Tobias, K., Andreas, K., & Ina, K. (2012). Cannibalization or synergy? Consumers' channel selection in online-

- offline multichannel systems. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 19, 186-194. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2011.11.008>
- Tulay, G., & Paul, D. (2010). Validating the search, experience, and credence product classification framework. *Journal of Business Research*, 63, 1079-1087. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.12.011>
- Yaobin, L., Yu, Z. C., Bin, W., & Shui, Q. Y. (2011). A study on factors that affect users' behavioral intention to transfer usage from the offline to the online channel. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27, 355-364. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.08.013>

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).