

## The Consumer Behavior of the Generation Y on Sport Products through the Internet

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The internet has been utilized as an outlet for diverse media in many of America's business industries (Stevens, Lathrop, & Bradish, 2005). Findings from a 2003 study by Ahuja, Gupta, and Raman indicated that 30 percent of consumers utilize the internet to search for product information, with 24 percent of these users purchasing products through this media. Based on the projection that nearly 3 billion dollars per year is spent online for sporting goods, apparel and footwear (Hur, Ko, & Valacich, 2007), sport organizations are increasingly using their web sites to sell tickets, licensed products, and other goods and services (Seo & Green, 2008). It is evident, given these trends that many positive and negative characteristics can differentiate the on-line market from the traditional market where transactions have historically taken place (Novak, Hoffman, & Yung, 2000). Generation Y, the classification of the group of persons born between 1975 and 2003, has proven to be a highly valued youth market (Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001; Howe & Strauss, 2000), being represented in three times the amount of persons that their predecessors, Generation X (Bennett, Henson, & Zhang, 2003). With an estimated 150 billion dollars in direct purchasing power and another 500 billion in indirect purchasing power (Alch, 2000) a focus on the expenditures of this group is warranted. Recent literature has failed to create a specific scale of factors which measure specific consumer behaviors of members of the Generation Y demographic in relation to the purchasing of sport products through the internet. Therefore, the aim of this study intended to identify factors of influence on the specific sport consumer behaviors of Generation Y individuals who purchase products via the internet.

A total of 351 responses were collected for use in the study. Approximately 45% of the survey respondents were the age between 18 and 20 (n=160), followed by 21-25 (n=165; 47%), 26-29 (n=14; 4%), and older than 30 (n=11; 3.1%). The survey respondents identified themselves as people who had very good computer skills (n=108; 30.8%), good skills (n=181; 51.6%), fair skills (n=56; 16.0%), and poor skills (n=6; 1.7%). For the internet experience, more than 6 years of experiences were 72.9% (n=256). 63.0% of respondents (n=221) were using internet 1-3 hours per day. For the actual online buying frequency through internet per month, 59.8% of respondents (n=210) purchased some products more 1-5 times per month. Social-motivational aspects of Generation Y on-line consumers were evaluated on measures from three previous studies by Bhattacharjee (2000), Davis & Lin (2007) and Taylor & Todd (1995). Participants were asked thirty socio-motivational questions using a seven point Likert scale.

A confirmatory factor analysis with maximum likelihood estimation was executed using AMOS v. 7 (Arbuckle, 2006). The results indicated that the chi-square for the model was significant  $\chi^2=922.06$ ,  $df=339$ ,  $p<.01$ , indicating that the hypothesized model and the observed model had statistically significant difference. The value of the NC ranging from 2.0 to 3.0 and as high as 5.0 is recommended as an indication of reasonable fit (Bollen, 1989). A value of the NC (2.71) was lower than the suggested cut-off value. Alternative fit indices were further examined, including the RMSEA, SRMR, and CFI. The RMSEA value indicated that the model had an acceptable fit (RMSEA = .070, 90% CI = .065 - .076; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The SRMR (.058) was of a good value (Kline, 2005). CFI was .92, which was considered acceptable (Kline, 2005). Overall, goodness of fit indexes revealed that the 12-factor with 30 item measurement model reached an acceptable or good fit to the data, Internal consistency reliability to test the unidimensionality was assessed by Cronbach's alpha. The resulting alpha values ranged from .529 (PEU) to .914(SN).

Convergent validity is the degree to which multiple attempts to measure the same concept in agreement. For the convergent validity, factor loadings and critical values were above the suggested cut-off criterion (.50; Hair et al, 2006), with the exception of PEU1 (.427), ranging from .427 (PEU1) to .932 (PBC1). Critical ratio value that exceeds 2.58 for a two-tail test would be considered statistically significant at the .001 level (Arbuckle, 2006). Critical ratio values ranged from 6.38 (PEU1) to 26.42 (A1), indicating that all values were statistically significant. Discriminant validity of the scale was examined to test how distinct the constructs are from one another. First, the inter-factor correlation showed that the relationship between AU and BI were above .85. Second, the AVE values for each construct and the squared correlations were examined. If the squared correlation of the two referent factors is greater than the AVE score of either factor, then it denotes a lack of discrimination. (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results of the inter factor correlation and the AVE test of discriminant validity are also discussed.

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The results from the study verified 12 factors for the scale as to a specific target population, including actual usage; behavioral intention; perceived usefulness; perceived ease of use; compatibility; attitude; subjective norm; perceived behavioral control; interpersonal influence; external influences; self-efficacy; and facilitating conditions. These factors were enabled to construct the on-line consumer behavior model in terms of socio-motivational aspects, especially for the Generation Y group.