

## MARKETING ASPECTS OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

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**Abstract:** *Electronic commerce has become an indispensable segment of contemporary business, resulting in a transformation of the way companies operate and how consumers access products and services. The focus of this study is on analyzing the impact of marketing aspects within the realm of electronic commerce, with a particular emphasis on the role of marketing in the digital business environment. Within the scope of the research, the concept of the marketing mix in e-commerce is thoroughly examined, with a specific focus on the four fundamental elements – product, price, distribution, and promotion – in the digital context. Additionally, consumer behavior in e-commerce has been analyzed, aiming to understand the factors influencing their purchasing decisions and interactions with online brands. Through this study, insights into key aspects of marketing strategies in electronic commerce are provided, emphasizing the importance of innovation, adaptation, and continuous monitoring of trends to ensure companies remain competitive and successful in the digital environment.*

**Key words:** *Electronic commerce, Marketing aspects, Marketing mix, Consumer behavior, Innovations*

**JEL classification:** *L81, M31, F02*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary business environment, an ever-increasing number of companies are acknowledging the necessity of integrated marketing and electronic commerce as a pivotal factor in attaining and maintaining success and viability in the market. This trend stems from the

rapid development of technology and changes in consumer behavior, with consumers increasingly using digital channels for information gathering, product research, and purchasing. To effectively respond to these changes, it becomes essential for companies to align marketing strategies with the specificities of electronic commerce, leveraging the wealth of data and analytics to personalize communication with consumers and enhance user experiences. Additionally, an increasing number of companies acknowledge the significance of integrating marketing activities with technical and operational processes of e-commerce to create sustainable competitive advantages and maximize results. In this context, the connection between marketing and electronic commerce becomes a crucial factor for achieving success and long-term sustainability in the market. This paper is divided into the following sections: the first part focuses on the key elements of integrating marketing and electronic commerce; the second part examines in detail individual segments of the marketing mix adapted to e-commerce, while the third part is dedicated to analyzing consumer behavior in e-commerce, particularly exploring the advantages that electronic business brings.

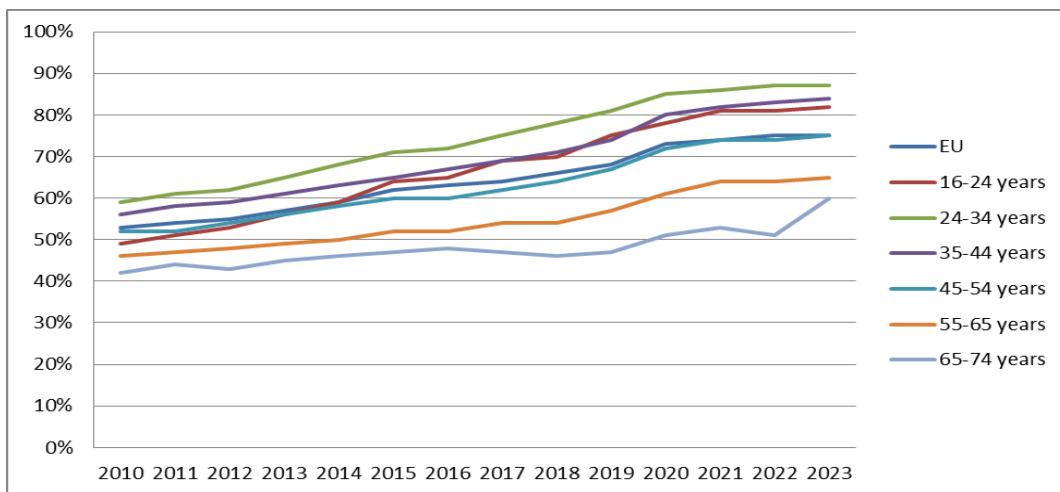
### 2. CORE ELEMENTS OF MARKETING AND E-COMMERCE INTEGRATION

In a world where digital technology is increasingly becoming commonplace, electronic commerce becomes the key point of interaction between companies and consumers. This new paradigm enables access to the global market with just a few clicks, opening doors to unprecedented opportunities and transforming traditional business practices. E-commerce encompasses a wide range of activities, including network

infrastructure such as routers, servers, and Internet-supporting software. A broader definition includes all electronic transactions, including those conducted via credit cards, along with the necessary infrastructure for their execution. At a stricter level, e-commerce is based on the process of buying and selling goods and services over the Internet, regardless of whether they are paid for or delivered through online platforms (Semerádová & Weinlich, 2022). This type of commerce encompasses various platforms such as online stores, electronic marketplaces, and digital service delivery platforms. E-commerce has become a fundamental component of the contemporary economic infrastructure, facilitating the global reach of companies and offering users a vast array of products and services. With the increase in internet speed and the development of secure online payments, e-commerce has experienced explosive growth in recent decades. Today, users can purchase almost anything they need online, from everyday essentials to luxury products, with just a few mouse clicks or screen touches. The accessibility and convenience of e-commerce have become an integral part of the modern consumer's life.

Since 2015, there has been a discernible generational divide among internet users with regard to their attitudes towards online shopping. Younger age groups, such as 16-24 years old, 25-34 years old, and 35-44 years old, are above the EU average in terms of online shopping frequency, while older age groups, such as 55-64 years old and 65-74 years old, are below average. In 2023, 87% of individuals aged 25 to 34 used internet services to purchase goods or services for personal use. This represents an increase in comparison to the figures for 2021. When online shopping surged particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. In terms of percentage, the age group of 35 to 44 follows with a share of 84%, which also represents an increase compared to 2021. In 2023, 82% of the age group of 16 to 24 bought or ordered goods or services via the internet, representing a 1 percentage point increase compared to 2021. The age group of 45 to 54 accounted for 75% in 2023, which is in line with the EU average for that year and 1 percentage point above the participation of this age group in online shopping in 2021. The share of the remaining two age groups (55-64 years old and 65-74 years old) was below the EU average, with a share of 65%, i.e., 60%, by the end of 2023. (Eurostat, 2024).

*Chart 1. Distribution of internet users in the EU who made purchases or placed orders for personal use within the last year, categorized by age groups*



**Source:** Eurostat (2023)

However, merely setting up an online store is not enough to achieve success in e-commerce. It is crucial to attract the attention of consumers among the numerous competitors on the internet. This is where marketing comes into play. Marketing encompasses all the strategies and activities a company employs to boost the sales of its products and services. This involves adjusting production

and distribution methods to meet consumer needs and demands. marketing, in the context of e-commerce, includes strategies and techniques that companies use to attract, engage, and retain users on their online platforms (sfetcu, 2015). through the use of digital channels such as social media, email, and targeted advertising, marketing plays a role in enhancing the visibility of e-commerce, behavior. Additionally, marketing enables companies to tailor their products or services to

the needs and desires of the target audience, thereby increasing the likelihood of converting visitors into customers. Marketing in e-commerce plays a crucial role. Building customer relationships is essential in e-commerce. Through personalized campaigns, relevant content, and effective communication, companies can build loyalty among their users, which contributes to the long-term stability and growth of their business. In summary, marketing is crucial for e-commerce success because it enables companies to reach the right target audience, build customer loyalty, and gain a competitive advantage in the digital market. Without effective marketing, even the highest quality products or services may go unnoticed amidst the vast online offerings. Consequently, it becomes imperative for all companies engaged in e-commerce to invest in effective marketing strategies.

To fully leverage the potential of marketing and e-commerce, it's necessary to integrate these two disciplines, creating synergy that allows companies to reach their target audiences most efficiently and achieve sustainable growth in the digital environment. Digital platforms such as websites, mobile applications, and social media provide the primary channel for promoting products and services, enabling companies to reach a broader audience and establish their online presence. Through the use of digital platforms, companies can directly interact with consumers and tailor their marketing strategies to meet their needs. However, for these platforms to be effective, it's essential to track their performance and user responses. This is achieved through analytics and tracking, where companies can gain insights into how users react to their digital marketing activities. Analytics enables companies to identify trends and user behavior patterns to adjust their strategies accordingly. Based on this information, they can optimize their strategies and content to improve their results.

In this process, SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and SEM (Search Engine Marketing) play a crucial role, allowing companies to be more visible online and attract more users to their digital platforms. Through the use of SEO and SEM techniques, companies can improve their rankings on search engines and target advertise their products and services to users who are interested in them. Through these optimizations and better visibility, companies can create a positive user experience on their online platforms, focusing on elements that will enhance user interaction, increase customer loyalty, and encourage repeat purchases. The integration of digital platforms, analytics, SEO, and SEM forms the basis for a successful e-commerce strategy

that caters to the needs of modern consumers (Šarac, Radovanović and Jevremović, 2018)

### **3.MARKETING MIX IN ELECTRONIC COMMERCE**

In the world of marketing, the concept of the marketing mix represents a key tool that companies use to effectively position their products or services in the market. It is not a scientific theory but a conceptual framework that identifies the main decisions managers make when configuring their offerings to meet consumer needs. These tools can be used to develop both long-term strategies and short-term tactical programs (Palmer, 2012). Electronic commerce has further evolved this concept, offering companies new opportunities to adapt their strategies to the digital environment and create competitive advantages. Through electronic commerce, the marketing mix becomes an even more crucial factor in business, as online platforms enable more direct interaction with consumers and faster responses to changes in the market environment. With the help of digital tools, companies can more accurately track customer needs and preferences, adjusting their marketing mix accordingly.

#### **3.1. E – PRODUCT**

The growth of e-commerce has not only changed the product element of the marketing mix but has also led to fundamental transformations in the nature of products themselves. The original definitions of products were based on physical goods or services, however the advent of digital technologies has introduced new dimensions. First, products now combine tangible components with digital services, opening the door to a wide range of new possibilities and experiences for consumers. Second, the advent of digital technologies has facilitated the networking of products, thus integrating them into a broader digital ecosystem, creating additional value and interaction for users. Third, products are increasingly transformed into digital services, emphasizing the growing importance of the digital experience in e-commerce (Kannan and Li, 2017). In the context of electronic commerce, the essence of the "Product" segment partly overlaps with the traditional concept but also brings new aspects. E-commerce enables the development of new electronic distribution channels and creates a virtual environment that fosters the production of goods and consumer goods tailored to online demand. A key characteristic of the assortment of electronic retailers is the ability to develop product clusters that do not have a physical form but are based on digital or virtual forms. The essential characteristics of such goods are that

they implement an "economic form" of information, namely forms of its economic realization, exchange, transfer, use, and consumption. This trend underscores the increasing impact of digitalization on how we perceive and consume products in e-commerce (Hamari and Keronen, 2017).

### **3.2. E – PRICE**

Pricing is an intriguing topic in the online environment as it is the only element of the marketing mix that generates revenue (Allen and Fjermestad, 2001). The pricing segment within the marketing mix in e-commerce plays a significant role in attracting and retaining customers, but it differs from traditional market approaches. In e-commerce, prices are more transparent and subject to dynamic changes due to the rapid and easily accessible access to market condition information.

One of the key aspects of pricing in e-commerce is dynamic pricing, where algorithms analyze data on demand, competition, and other factors to automatically adjust product prices in real-time. This enables companies to optimize their revenue and profitability, as well as attract consumers with offers that are relevant to their needs and preferences. Prices are dynamic in the online environment due to several key factors. First, the online market is highly transparent, meaning consumers can easily compare prices of products from different sources. Second, competition is very intense, with a large number of sellers offering similar products. Third, digital technologies allow companies to automatically adjust prices in real-time based on factors such as demand, supply, and competitor behavior. This puts additional pressure on companies to be competitive and constantly adjust their prices to match changing market conditions. Additionally, various pricing strategies are often used in e-commerce, such as dynamic price differentiation for different consumer segments, offering personalized discounts and promotions, and using tools for dynamically tracking competitor prices. All of this aims to maximize value for consumers and increase competitiveness in the online market.

It is important to note that in e-commerce, price is not the only factor influencing a customer's decision; providing additional value through fast delivery, easy navigation, transaction security, and quality customer support is also crucial.

### **3.3. E – PLACE**

Unlike traditional stores, where physical location is significant, e-commerce platforms operate in a virtual environment where geographical barriers are virtually non-existent. Today's consumers are not limited to a specific location for shopping but

can access online stores wherever they have an internet connection (Allen and Fjermestad, 2001). The emergence of e-commerce has redefined the concept of distribution, emphasizing accessibility and convenience for consumers worldwide. Online stores provide customers with accessibility, meaning they offer flexibility in choosing the time and place for shopping. This means that customers can purchase products or services at any time of day or night, regardless of their location. Online stores offer a particularly useful alternative, eliminating the necessity to physically travel to physical stores, which results in reduced congestion, shorter wait times, and reduced travel costs. Customers are provided with access to a wide range of products and stores that may not be available in their vicinity, further increasing convenience and choice.

While many companies remain or start as virtual merchants without physical presence, an omnichannel approach is becoming increasingly prevalent. Instead of limiting purchases to a specific physical location, an omnichannel strategy allows customers to access products or services through different channels, including online platforms, physical stores, and mobile applications. Particularly significant is the integration of channels when customers seek information in one but make purchases in another (Chen, Cheung and Tan, 2018).

In the traditional distribution model, logistics was a crucial element in the transfer of physical products from manufacturers to end consumers. This process required building a supply chain that would enable efficient management of warehouses, transportation, and product distribution. However, the development of information technologies and the internet has changed the way distribution occurs. Today, instead of relying solely on physical products, distribution increasingly relies on the transfer of information, ideas, and services over the network. This new approach enables the transfer of software, digital products, and services with almost instantaneous effect, without the need for physical distribution. This transition to virtual exchange of information and services via the network brings numerous benefits, including cost reduction, greater speed and efficiency, as well as greater flexibility for all parties involved. It also opens the door to new business models and innovations that are impossible in the traditional distribution model.

### **3.4. E – PROMOTION**

In e-commerce, the promotion of products or services takes place through digital channels such as websites, social media, email, and other online platforms. These channels enable companies to

reach a wide range of consumers globally, using various techniques and tools for promotion. Promotion elements in e-commerce may include creating effective digital advertisements displayed on websites or social media, organizing promotional events online, sending personalized emails or direct marketing messages, as well as using influencers or bloggers to promote products through their online channels.

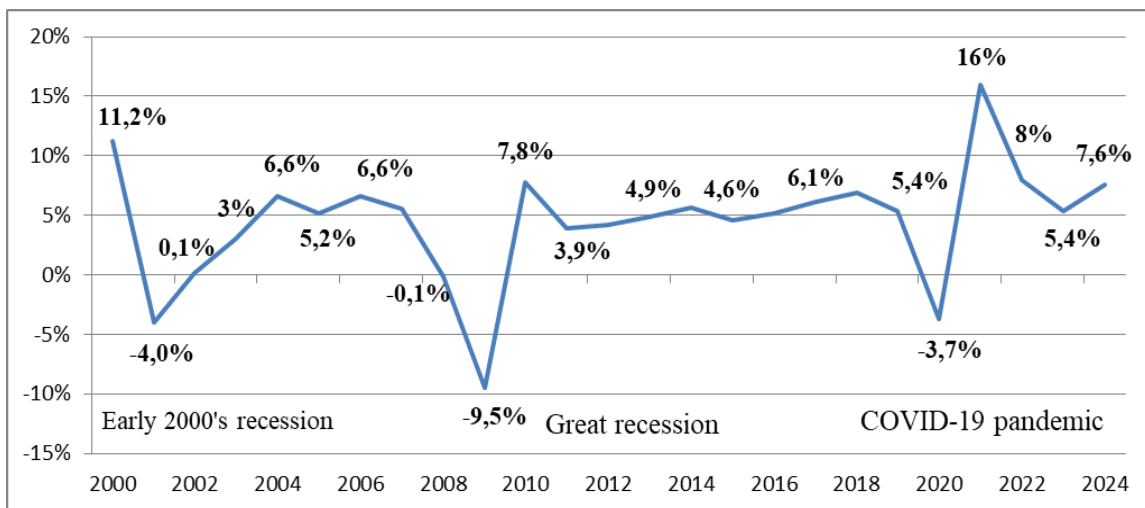
Global advertising expenditure analysis is the process of studying and interpreting data on advertising spending worldwide to understand trends, patterns, and dynamics in this sector. This analysis is important as it provides insights into economic, social, and technological trends, enabling companies to make informed decisions about resource allocation and advertising strategy to maximize efficiency and gain a competitive advantage. The analysis of the global advertising market from 2000. to 2024. reveals a dynamic picture of changes in advertising costs during that period, reflecting economic and social events that have shaped the industry over the past two decades.

At the beginning of the millennium, the world faced the challenges of an economic recession, which was particularly pronounced during 2001. and 2002. These recession periods were reflected in fluctuations in advertising costs, including an unexpected decline of -4.0% in 2001. The period

thereafter was characterized by moderate growth in costs, up to 6.6% in 2006. However, in 2008, a global economic crisis occurred, which had a serious impact on the advertising market. Costs plummeted to -9.5%, marking a significant decline. This period was extremely challenging for many industries, including advertising. After 2011, the situation slowly stabilized, with average advertising cost growth remaining at around five percent. Then, the world faced a new challenge in 2020. when the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a significant decline of -3.7% in advertising costs. Despite the aforementioned challenge, 2021. was distinguished by an impressive growth of 16%., which will prove to be the highest percentage of the observed period. According to forecasts, the industry anticipates a resurgence in costs by 7.6 percent by 2024. (Statista, 2024).

Promotion aims, among other things, at informing, persuading target customers, and reminding. This explains the objectives of promotion. (Tjiptono, 2008). Firstly, promotion aims to inform consumers about the company's products or services, providing them with relevant information about the characteristics, benefits, and features of the products or services.

Chart 2. Global expansion of advertisig



Source: Statista (2023)

Secondly, promotion seeks to persuade target consumers to choose the company's product or service, using various techniques and marketing strategies to attract attention and stimulate the desire to purchase. Thirdly, promotion serves the

purpose of reminding consumers of the existence and advantages of the company's products or services, keeping them present in consumers' minds and encouraging them to reconsider their choice or return to purchasing. All these purposes

of promotion aim to increase sales, create consumer loyalty, and build brand awareness.

The structure of advertising media has become increasingly complex as digital platforms have become ubiquitous and diverse. With a wide range of channels for promoting products or services, marketing professionals are faced with the challenge of choosing the most effective media and reaching their target audience. This growing number of media requires a deeper understanding of consumer preferences and habits, as well as adaptable advertising strategies to achieve optimal impact and return on investment. At a global level, segments such as Audio Advertising, Banner Advertising, Classifieds, Influencer Marketing, Search Advertising, and Video Advertising stand out.

**Audio Advertising:** Audio advertising refers to the promotion of products or services through audio formats such as radio commercials, ads on music streaming platforms, or advertisements in podcasts. Audio Advertising has experienced gradual growth, reaching approximately 10 billion dollars by 2023.

**Banner Advertising:** Banner ads are digital advertisements displayed on web pages in the form of static or animated images. Banner Advertising remains one of the primary means of advertising, continuing to attract the attention of marketing professionals. Since its inception, this form of advertising has undergone significant evolution, adapting to technological and social changes, and catering to the needs of modern internet users. During the observed period, investments in banners have nearly doubled.

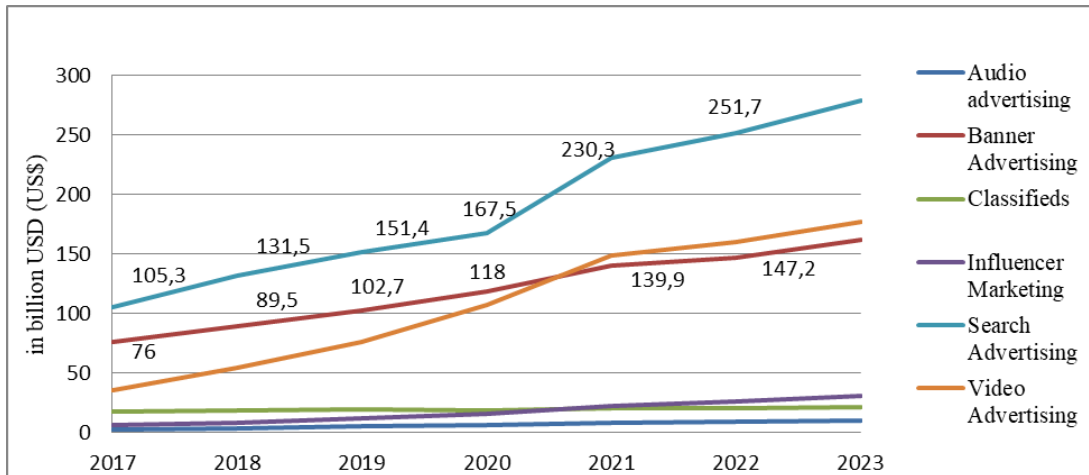
**Classifieds:** Classified ads are advertisements used for selling or renting products or services, typically organized into categories such as real estate, jobs, or personal ads. Classifieds have demonstrated the greatest stability during the observed period, ranging from 17.5 to 21.1 billion in U.S. dollars.

**Influencer Marketing:** Influencer marketing involves collaborating with influential individuals, known as influencers, on social media platforms to promote products or services. Influencer Marketing is gradually growing, considering the increasing influence of social media and the power of influencers in shaping consumer opinions and behaviors. This trend underscores the growing importance of authentic and personal recommendations over traditional advertising methods, as brands increasingly recognize the value of partnering with influencers to directly engage their target audience on digital platforms. In 2023, an estimated 30.8 billion was invested in Influencer marketing..

**Search Advertising:** Search advertising is a form of digital advertising where ads are displayed to users based on their searches on search engines such as Google, Bing, or Yahoo. The significant growth in this segment is a result of the increasing use of the internet and search engines as the primary source of information, leading companies to invest more in this effective form of advertising. This segment dominates due to the growing popularity of search engines as the main source of information for users. Companies recognize the value of advertising on search engines as an efficient way to reach a target audience actively seeking specific products or services, resulting in a high return on investment in this area. Investments in Search Advertising are by far the largest, reaching 251.7 billion in 2023.

**Video Advertising:** Video ads are promotional videos or commercials displayed on digital platforms such as YouTube, social media, and video streaming services. The significant growth in this segment is due to the increasing popularity of video content on the internet, as well as the effectiveness of video ads in capturing audience attention and conveying marketing messages.

Chart 3. Segmentation of online advertising (2017-2023)



Source: Statista (2023)

#### 4. CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR IN ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

In the context of traditional shopping environments, consumers encounter a multitude of constraints that frequently impede the shopping experience. These include the necessity to visit the store in person in order to make a purchase, which required time, effort, and often travel. Furthermore, the selection of products was constrained to those available in local stores, which frequently resulted in consumers being unable to locate products that met their specific needs or preferences. In the modern era, consumers seek convenience, transparency, and advanced technological solutions to enhance their shopping experience.

Consumer behavior provides key insights into their needs, preferred shopping locations, and factors influencing their purchasing decisions. These decisions can be influenced by social, personal, and psychological factors. Understanding how consumers recognize needs, seek information, evaluate options, make decisions, and react after purchase is crucial for the success of product sales.

This trend underscores the growing importance of the video format in digital marketing, as brands increasingly recognize the power of video content in capturing audience attention and conveying complex marketing messages. Video Advertising is experiencing rapid exponential growth, reflected in nearly fivefold increase in investments in this area in 2023. compared to 2017.

However, understanding this behavior is challenging due to the diversity of consumer characteristics and preferences. (Cirqueira, Hofer, Nedbal, Helfert and Bezbradica, 2019).

With the advent of e-commerce, these limitations have disappeared, and consumers have become aware of the many advantages offered by online shopping. Online stores provide personalized product recommendations based on previous searches and purchases. This feature adds value to users, allowing them to discover new products or accessories that may be useful or interesting to them. This capability contributes to a more efficient and personalized shopping experience, which is often lacking in traditional stores where recommendations are less individualized.

Convenience and accessibility are among the greatest advantages of e-commerce, allowing consumers to shop from the comfort of their homes or mobile devices, whether they are at home, at work, or even on the go. This continuous access to shopping allows consumers to explore and purchase products at any time, regardless of geographic location. These factors make shopping a faster and simpler process. The process of purchasing with a few mouse clicks or screen touches enables consumers to quickly and efficiently complete their purchases without long lines or waiting at the checkout. The expediency and simplicity of the aforementioned process facilitate the ease of use for consumers to use their free time for other activities, further enhancing their satisfaction with the shopping experience. (Meng, 2009). Additionally, product personalization and recommendations are key features of e-commerce that have revolutionized how consumers research and decide on purchases. Through the analysis of past purchases, searches, and browsing behavior, e-commerce retailers can provide personalized product recommendations relevant to each individual consumer. This not

only helps consumers find products that best meet their needs but also increases the likelihood of conversion.

During online shopping, there are several factors influencing consumer behavior. These include trust in sellers, often based on store reputation, customer reviews, and transaction security. Additionally, internet accessibility, page loading speed, and availability of mobile applications play a crucial role in attracting users. Payment convenience, with various options such as credit cards, e-wallets, and bank transfers, significantly impacts the shopping experience. The variety of products on offer enables consumers to select items that align with their specific preferences, while competitive prices often determine the final decision. The presence of products that may not be available in physical stores and the ability to shop at any time further motivate users. (Sullivan and Kim., 2018).

User satisfaction, expressed through positive engagement, is crucial for marketing success as it builds the foundation of loyalty and long-term support. Customer satisfaction in e-commerce arises from the convenience and comfort of the purchasing process. E-commerce allows customers to shop according to their own schedule and preferences, without the need to physically visit a store, while the convenience of online shopping enables them to explore a diverse range of products or services in a straightforward manner. This customer satisfaction in e-commerce is not just a mere privilege but also a key factor in solidifying loyalty and increasing engagement. When customers feel satisfied with their experience, there is a higher likelihood that they will choose the same brand again for their needs. Satisfied customers are more willing to recommend products or services to their friends and family, becoming unofficial brand ambassadors. This not only contributes to brand growth but also creates a positive reputation that attracts new customers. Therefore, creating a positive shopping experience becomes a priority for companies aiming to maintain customer loyalty and achieve long-term success in e-commerce.

## CONCLUSION

The complexity and differentiation of marketing aspects in electronic commerce clearly demonstrate that the integration of marketing and e-commerce is a key factor for success in digital business. Through the analysis of key integration aspects, it has been proven that effective coordination of marketing strategies with the technical and operational processes of e-

commerce enables companies to create a sustainable competitive advantage in the market. This paper has highlighted the importance of adapting the classical marketing mix to the specifics of e-commerce. By properly utilizing the elements of product, price, distribution, and promotion, companies can effectively attract, engage, and retain online consumers. The analysis of consumer behavior in e-commerce emphasizes the need to understand their preferences, habits, and expectations. Through personalized marketing strategies, tailored content, and experiences, companies can enhance interaction with consumers and increase conversion rates. In conclusion, this research underscores the complexity and dynamics of e-commerce, but also highlights the numerous opportunities offered by the integration of marketing principles. Through continuous adaptation of strategies and ongoing learning from consumer behavior, companies can achieve significant success in the digital market. Marketing plays a crucial role in promoting, attracting, and engaging online consumers in e-commerce, while e-commerce simultaneously provides important data and platforms for marketing strategies and analysis, which are crucial for the development of effective marketing campaigns and business improvement.

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