The phenomena of Online Purchasing

Why do consumers make the choice of canceling their purchase online?

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Abstract

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**Purpose:** This study aims to identify the most influential aspects that affect the consumer’s behavior regarding purchasing online, also why consumers choose not to complete their purchase or actually do complete it.

**Research questions:** How do an online retail store companies create a consumer experience resulting in a purchase or cancellation, and how do consumers perceive online experience?

**Methodology:** A qualitative research approach was conducted, utilizing semi-structured interviews with two online retailing stores and five online consumers.

**Conclusion:** The wants and needs in order to fulfill a purchase is the same for the companies and the consumers. However, the companies are clearly lacking on some aspects since they both confirmed that they have plenty of cancellations and items left in the basket. Consumers base their knowledge on previous experience, and companies base their knowledge on their own investigations. The connection is lost sometimes, and then i results in cancellations and left items.

**Keywords:** Online retail store, consumer experience, online purchasing, cancellations
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1 Introduction

In the following chapter a background will be introduced including the subjects of e-commerce and consumer purchasing, as well as a problematization which will lead to the purpose of this study.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 E-commerce and Consumer Purchasing

Internet is described as an effective way to transfer information and make it more accessible, this can be a additional aspects to the fact that consumers spend more time on the internet. Hence, it can be perceived as a phenomenon for pleasure and fun, and be found to be a more flexible and the opportunities are unlimited (Frankel, 2007). Despite that the growth in retail did not have the extreme effect on the market as wanted back in the 1990’s, today marketers can provide more specific offers and an complex world online for the consumer. In the Swedish market the digitization grows rapidly, hence to the fact that the online shopping and e-marketing is still growing. The online retailing in Sweden has increased with 15 percent per quarter, and according to a study on iis (2016) about four out of ten purchases are made online (iis.se, 2016).

Online purchasing has grown hectic the past few years and has become a dominant alternative to the physical and traditional retail stores. The current technology provides the information of consumers’ browsing history to companies, hence it has become more easy for companies to improve the experience on their websites for the consumers. The most common purchased online includes various visits on the website throughout the consumer process the information on the website and then make a purchase (Grewal, Levy, & Kumar, 2009; Ning Shen et al., 2016).

It is known that consumers of all ages make purchases online, however according to Silverman (2000) and Cheung et al. (2015) younger people between 18 and 22 are the most common consumers to generate revenue and growth in online purchasing. Hence, because they are interested in the latest products and developments and has an easier way of accepting new trends (Silverman 2000; cited in Seock & Norton, 2008; Cheung et al., 2015). Online shopping communities are being transformed the way consumers communicate their own opinions and provide with their knowledge about the product. This new form of interaction among consumers on the online platforms has received significant attention. Opinions that are being shared and exchanged between consumers
online have been found to influence the consumers purchasing decisions (Cheung et al., 2015).

Page views and visits of a website is of big importance for online companies (Lin et al., 2010) due to the fact that the basket value is of interest for the companies. Their profit is directly connected to the shipping cost of the purchase which is shown to be more than half of the firm’s operating costs in comparison to the physical stores where the total sale is in focus (O’Neill & Chu, 2001). According to literature from previous researchers, different characteristics of the online environment can cause consumers to make purchases online (Adelaar et al., 2003; Kukar-Kinney et al., 2009; Parboteeah et al., 2009). These researchers refer to these characteristics as environmental cues that tend to influence the behavior of the consumer (Wells et al., 2011). Rose et al. (2012) state that since websites are the primary platform for the online shopping experience, their characteristics strongly influence the experience of the customer which in turn can influence potential behavioral outcomes. However, the aspects and factors that supposedly has an influence on the basket value, and why consumers choose to purchase, has not been explored.

### 1.1.2 Consumer purchasing behavior

Consumers tend to adjust their behaviour regarding of the environment and the stimuli aspects that affects their perception of the environment, resulting in a purchase. Also, customers with high level of self-efficiency of collecting information can effectively gain product specifications, for the purpose of making comparisons in order to reach the best purchase decision (Zha et al., 2013). According to Parboteeah et al. (2009) if a stimulus is created by an online retailer’s website it creates a positive cognitive response, a person should perceive the e-commerce as useful which then will increase consumers purchase behavior (Parboteeah et al., 2009). Visual signals from the surroundings can be perceived as sensations and interpreted by the individual's sensory motion. Perception is described as the process in which stimuli is interpreted and recognized and is then recorded into the individual's memory. Perception is more or less meant to be putting the individual in contact with the outside world, or as in this case the online environment, and create a useful knowledge about it. The external stimulus which the user is exposed to by the website affects impulse buying online which will elicit a reaction of the consumer (Chan et al., 2017). These responses which come from the stimulus will then act as a catalysis for a certain behavior, in this case the urge to
buy impulsively (Parboteeah et al., 2009). For example, a study conducted by Nielsen Company showed that almost 60 percent of consumers actually check the reviews of the product before purchasing it, in case it is a new product. Furthermore, some on the consumers even claimed that they would be willing to pay at least a 20 percent more for a product with “excellent” rating. This has resulted in companies recognizing that well-established online communication can provide important benefits which then can lead to consumer loyalty towards the company (Cheung et al., 2015).

It has said to be critical for online retailing stores to know how to attract consumers to their website, how to engage them to make a purchase and also how to make their consumers to return to the website (Chaffey, 2009). According to Chaffey (2009) “Online communications techniques used to achieve goals of brand awareness, familiarity and favorability and to influence purchase intent by encouraging users of digital media to visit a web site to engage with the brand or product and ultimately to purchase online or offline through traditional media channels such as by phone or in-store”. This statement shows that the marketing and effort of an website can affect the consumer more than we think. The question appears of how to mix the new social media and other developed technology into an effective strategy for online marketing platforms, to obtain the wanted transition from visitors to consumers. Hence, what does interest the consumers to actually make and purchase, and why do they in the end chose to cancel it?

A large portion of the canceled purchases and abandonment carts are a natural consequence of how consumers browse websites. Many of the consumers do window shopping, price comparison, saving it for later, looking over gift options and so on. These are types of abandonments that are unavoidable. The latest study of Baymard Institute (Baymard.com) says that 58.6% of the United States online consumers that abandon their cart within 3 months because they were “browsing or/and not ready to buy”, most of the abandoned purchases happens even before the checkout. However, the remaining reasons according to Baymard Institute’s study are presented as following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extra costs too high (shipping, tax, fees)</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The site wanted me to create an account</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too long / complicated checkout process</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn't see / calculate total order cost up-front</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website had errors / crashed</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I didn't trust the site with my credit card information</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery was too slow</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returns policy wasn’t satisfactory</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There weren’t enough payment methods</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The credit card was declined</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Baymard.com, 2017
1.2 Problem discussion

Online retail stores have, in comparison to physical stores, a harder time to meet and satisfy the needs of the consumer, because the online stores cannot apply the actual feeling and that sort of contact to the product before purchase (Porter, 2001). The customer experience may be misunderstood in this matter, since companies seem to focus on the wrong aspects of the experience. Market research is usually done by attributes and functional aspects of a product or service, and also the psychological benefits they provide (Zaltman, 2003). If a strategy of influence is chosen by the company it can be put into action, simply through making a decision of what the primary target is and will be. There are, for example, word-of-mouth from ordinary people and consumers, according to Burns (2016) people whom are less famous can be perceived as more trustworthy, however the influencer - more famous person - could extend the reach.

Problems that can occur around e-shopping and and possibility affect a consumer to not purchase online is the trust between consumers and the company. The trust can be affected by, for example, delivery problems, dissatisfaction of the product, return fees and more (Ah-Wong et al. 2001; Han & Maclaurin, 2002). Social media can be seen as a key element in order for an online company to build their brand (Gao, 2016). Turgid (2014) means that by promoting various exercises through social media and other marketing channels, the company can establish a pleasing and positive experience for the consumers - mainly because of the allowed interaction, when it comes to marketing and media, between the consumer and company. Authors mean that by increasing that interaction, the consumers will generate trust and pleasure into the company (Laroche et al. 2013; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Solem & Pedersen, 2016).

According to Royle & Laing (2014) digital tools are being used by online companies in order to find specific target groups, measure them and most importantly please them, in various ways and not by only using traditional methods. The digitalization has been shown to affect multiple companies in regards of marketing and communication (Royle & Laing, 2014). According to Chang et. al. (2015) social media can be labeled as communication in combination with marketing, meaning that social media can be - and is - used in order to reach out and communicate to consumers through marketing. This statement is supported by Kohli et. al. (2015) whom means that online companies can
no longer be relying on traditional branding strategies, it is considered that the “control” has been transmitted from the marketers to the consumers. Kohli et. al. (2015) also states that transparency and authenticity are concepts of importance in online marketing, since consumers are asked to be involved in every step.

Effective information about a product can affect the consumer's’ satisfaction and hence result in a purchase. In a certain online platform environment consumers acquire information for two different channels; broadcast media and a more spontaneous referral. Meaning that both types of information forms can affect the consumer. Advertising from online companies are often manipulated by marketers. However, consumer reviews provide information where other consumer can relate and have similar profiles based on the shopping history. Consumers’ perception about the influence of product information may enrich the theory of consumer satisfaction. However, the impact of receiving information on the consumers decision quality, which relates to the process of decision making by consumers, has been overlooked (Zha et al., 2013).

1.2.1 Problem formulation
How do an online retail store companies create a consumer experience resulting in a purchase or cancellation, and how do consumers perceive online experience?

1.3 Purpose
This study aims to identify the most influential aspects that affect the consumer’s behavior regarding purchasing online, also why consumers choose not to complete their purchase or actually do complete it.

1.4 Delimitations
This study consists of some concepts that in turn have created delimitations in the chosen topic. The study is focused on applying the knowledge on purchases and cancellations, this could be a delimitation regarding missing to investigate other entry modes possibilities. Other delimitations is that the study is focusing only on an online based purchase. In the following chapters; literature review, method and finally results and conclusions will be presented.
2 Literature review

In the following chapter a review of previous research will be presented, as well as the basis for the research gaps.

2.1 E-commerce & Consumer experience

E-commerce tend to be one of the strongest and fastest changing forces that have changed the behavior of individuals online. According to the literature, an increasing number of younger consumers are being affected by the technology today including computers and mobile phones. This in connection to the internet connectivity leads to an increasing global online generation. This phenomenon of online stores and online purchasing have changed how individuals and companies take use of the internet. A “good” online website is considered to add value for the visiting individual while attracting the actual customer (Húlten et al., 2011).

An online based retail store can offer a interaction between company and consumer where the goal is to get the attention of the consumer, in order for them to make the final purchase. In order for an interaction to happen between the company and consumer it may be of importance that the electronic service channel offers sensory commitment (Cho, 2015). A traditional way of reaching specific groups of consumers through marketing is to use platforms as Television, papers and magazines or radio. However, over the years the platforms of social media have changed a lot for the online companies in regards of branding, marketing and reaching out to consumers. The focus online has mostly became about exchanging of information between companies and consumers, which in turn has led to improvement of brand and shopping-experience for the actual consumer (Shen & Bissell, 2013). When, as a consumer, browsing the internet for products or services the consumer can often face various and confusing alternatives which can bring some uncertainty to the experience and over all purchasing-decisions.

The product and the marketing will for sure affect the consumers experience, and the various aspects roundabout could affect the consumer to purchase or not (Keller & Lehmann, 2006).

The customer experience online can be affected by multiple aspects, for example; how information is being presented, waiting time, the perceived welcome from the company and much more. According to Ewerman (2015) there are a desire (for companies) to
increase the knowledge of customer experiences, however there is a lack of the actual knowledge of how a good customer experience is conducted and looks like. A definite challenge for the future can hence be to find the effective methods in order to expand and develop customer experience. The consumer self wants to higher their expectations and to be able to pass that experience forward (Ewerman, 2015).

According to Húlten et al. (2011), consumers and companies can integrate with each other through an service based landscape. Hopkins et al. (2009) means that a service based landscape can not only be found in physical stores, but also online. The online environments include design and other features that has impact on the consumer (Hopkins et al., 2009). Ha et al. (2007) strengthens this by claiming that the service based landscape have the same meaning online, as the intention is to have the consumers to get the attention of the consumers and have them visit the website, feel prosperous and in the end make a purchase.

Information contribution of the online world is acknowledged as an research topic of importance. Within the online world consumers with the same or common interests, backgrounds or goals can participate in a activity of sharing information by sending reviews, in the form of questions, answers or debates. In the past few years, more and more companies online have shown interest in exploring the aspects that drive consumers to participate and share, as well as the aspects that are affecting the consumers resulting in purchases (Cheung et al., 2015). When reading literature about consumer behavior, it indicates that in general consumers shop in order to fulfill their own functional, experiential and social needs. Hence, the literature can identify three offline channels aspects that can ease for consumers in order for them to reach these goals (Shen et al., 2016). Building on the theory that the behavior is of reasoned action, the researcher can only assume that consumer attitudes towards aspects of offline and online channels are affecting their purchase behavior.

Consumers are already customary to traditional offline channels, such as social media etcetera. However, it is not necessary of truth that by adding an offline channel into an already established online store is going to provide more consumers and more purchases, or even drive the regular consumers back to their old ways of purchasing. Hence, the researchers will focus on consumers who have knowledge about offline
channels online, and who have experienced it. Experienced online consumers, in comparison to traditional consumers, have a better way of adapting to online environment and communication of online stores and products. However, consumers overall have a need of feeling complement and need attention to the product in order for them to be attracted and make the final purchase, regardless of the other aspects (Shen et al., 2016).

2.2 Perception

The world is full of aspects that combine and create a powerful flow of potentially good information. Throughout all of that information that gets to the individual, there can not be any overload of information to which the individual is exposed to. Hence, only a part of all the information that is available is necessary for the individual's daily needs. Everything that the individual does is simply based on what he or she sees, hears, feels, smells and tastes (Seculer & Blake, 2002).

Visual signals from the surroundings can be perceived as sensations and interpreted by the individual's sensory motion. Perception is described as the process in which stimuli is interpreted and recognized and is then recorded into the individual's memory. Perception is thus considered as meaningful to how individuals understand their surroundings and sensations refer to a fundamental stimulation of individuals' sensory organs (Rookes & Willson, 2000). Perception is more or less meant to be putting the individual in contact with the “outside” world, or as in this case the online environment, and create a useful knowledge about it. By being able to distinguish objects and events in the environment, the individual becomes able to sort out their desired and wants from the unwanted (Sekuler & Blake, 2002).

There is an understanding that the consequences in sensory stimulation is considered to be affecting the individual's behavior and choices they make online (Sekuler & Blake, 2002). Perception can be considered to be based on phenomena that occur in that specific environment that a customer visits, and consist of an entire sequence of events. Stimulus is often considered to be when the customer responds to these affecting aspects based on his or hers previous experiences, based on that they will make the choice of purchasing and in the end come back as a customer (Sekuler & Blake, 2002).
2.3 Market communication and AIDA

According to Schilz & Coblery (2013), the knowledge of what “communication” is as a definition has been changing over the past years in terms of purpose, nature and channels. However, in general communication can be presented as a social process and various ways that can enable individuals to share information. The evolution of technology have made it easier for companies to reach out to consumers and strengthen the marketing communication, resulting in a big affection on the consumer. Therefore, the online environment becomes all more important (Schilz & Coblery, 2013; Hansen & Machin, 2013). Modern technology is an indispensable part of the everyday online communication, it is considered to be an intense addition or/and a replacement for face-to-face communication. Consumers are being motivated to engage in the networking of various platforms and are therefore also enabling themselves to be affected (O’Leary, Wilson, & Metiu, 2014). According to Smith (2011), for online companies the communication between them and their consumers has shifted from one-way to a dialogue relationship.

Literature take use of the AIDA model in order to make sense of the connection between the consumer and the online communication world. The AIDA model is a description of what can happen when consumers engage with any sort of communication in the form of advertising or marketing. By getting attention from the consumer they can gain an interest in the actual products. Once the interest is established the online store benefit from making the consumers desire the products which can result in a purchase, or as in the model, action. As mentioned, the AIDA model stands for four different steps in which marketers use in order to result the visit in a purchase; Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. (Rawal et. al., 2013)
This study will be focusing on Action (A), and look at what Attention aspects are the most driven for the consumers in order to make it to Action. In Action, when a store or a brand promotes something through advertising they should be most certain that that specific ad can convince the consumers to make the final step of purchase (Rawal et. al., 2013). The advertising have to be able to give the consumers reassurance that the decision of purchasing that product was the “right thing to do” and that the word-of-mouth will be positive for potential consumers (Gharibi et al., 2012).
3 Method

In the following chapter the methodology will be presented including a description of the strategy, approach, design and data sources. Sample and data collection- and analysis methods will be presented, followed by operationalization and limitations.

3.1 Research approach and design

3.1.1 Inductive vs. Deductive Research

When conducting a research two different methods can be used; inductive and deductive. Deductive approach can be used if the study aims to test already existing theories by applying them to new empirical data. Deductive approach, however, use literature to identify theories that can be tested out. In inductive approach, when used, the researchers explore the empirical data of the research and then make theories from the data. (Saunders et al., 2009; Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005)

This study will aim to identify the most influential aspects that affect the consumer’s behavior regarding purchasing online. Therefore, the researcher chose a deductive approach for this study. This approach will allow the researcher to utilise a theoretical framework in order to collected the most valid and needed data, and based on that conduct an accurate analysis in order to reach the purpose of the paper.

3.1.2 Qualitative vs. Quantitative

There are various of methods that can be used in a research in order to support the study with correct data. The three approaches that can be used are quantitative, qualitative and mixed. According to Creswell (2014) qualitative and quantitative are not meant to be perceived as strict or as the opposite of one and other. The mixed method however, locates in the middle as it merges both methods (Ibid). The standard form of Qualitative research is one in which the findings come from the data, meaning that the researcher begins the study with an open mind. This form also includes various of emerging questions, that can be focused on the individuals significations and the effect of seeing the actual level of complexity in a situation. (Creswell, 2014)

Quantitative research is based on investigating objective theories and evaluating the link between variables. Those variables are then measured in order for the data to be analysed (Creswell, 2014). The Mixed method is where the researcher combine both qualitative and quantitative, and allows the researcher to create a balance. (Ibid)
This study will be using a Qualitative study method, since the chosen subject need more of an in-depth investigation. The purpose of this study is aimed to be reached by valid data and full scale interviews with one company and five customers.

3.2 Research design

Research design for this study is formed to answer the objectives and to form a framework in order to answer the research question. The research design introduces valid data that has been collected and analyzed in a fair way. (Bryman & Bell, 2003) According to Ghauri & Grönhaug (2005) there are three different types of designs that can be used in order to conduct a research; Exploratory design, Causal research design and Descriptive approach.

Causal Research Design tends to examine if one variable can decide the value of another variable. The main reason of this design is to reason out the cause and effect relationship. Hence, it highlights the reason of why some events happen in certain situations. (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005) In order to support the research process in this study, Casual research design was chosen since the study aims to examine variables agains each other.

3.3 Data sources

During the collection of data, two methods can be used; primary and secondary data. The methods can be used separately or be combined depending on the research method of the study.

3.3.1 Primary data

Primary data tends to be collected for a specific reason in order to support the objectives and purpose, by using different types of instruments that fits the research problem the best. When using primary data the researchers will gain deeper understanding of the subject.

Interview

Interviews are a common phenomenon that come in various different forms. The different forms of interviews shown some common features, for example; information is
exchanged between the parties, the degree of formality is based on different rules and the practical implementations of the interview. The aim of interviews is to provide information about behavior, values, attitudes, opinions and norms of the respondent. There are a few different types of interviews, however, unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews are considered to be the two most important forms in qualitative studies. Qualitative interviews are considered to cover both types. (Bryman & Bell, 2010)

The purpose of qualitative research interviews is to understand the subject based on the interviewee’s perspective. Because the study is qualitative oriented, the interview technique will follow the same qualitative approach. In qualitative interviews, the approach are usually less structured – this is because the initial questions are considered to be more general and then the emphasis instead being placed on the interviewees’ own interpretations. By having follow-up questions and allowing the respondent to discuss more freely, the possibility of creating knowledge about the experience and it will result in a more meaningful and relevant interview. A less structured interview also gives the interviewee more room for changing the questions during the interview and adding questions. However, qualitative interviews is considered more profound and usually result in more detailed answers, which also means that the interviewee have the opportunity to interview the same person several times. (Bryman & Bell, 2010)

This study will be using less structured interviews, or semi-structured interviews. The researcher will be taking notes and taping the interviews in order to keep a better track of the collected data and minimize the risk of leaving any important information out. The interview begins with an explanation of the study and the purpose of the interview, of course the respondents was asked if recording was approved by them.

3.3.2 Secondary data
Secondary data is usually already collected data in another context, for example under another study or an earlier made survey. In most studies, the researcher considers only using primary data to be difficult. Secondary data includes searching the internet, analyzing existing material, taking part of previous studies etcetera in order to gain knowledge that is of use for their own study. Problems that may occur in researching secondary data are to find relevant information and facts to base their study on, but the
enrollment of the collected data is not considered to be a problem for the researcher. (Lekvall & Wahlbin 2001)

This study will be depending on secondary data in the form of academic articles, literature and other electronic sources to support and complete the collected data.

3.4 Sample and data collection

When conducting a case study the researches have a variety of data collection arrangement that can be considered in order to apply the most accurate technique. There are six different collection sources that can usually be used when conducting case studies; documentation, archival records, interviews, observations, participant-observation and physical artifacts - however, it is clear that none of the different ones have an advantage over the rest. Hence, according to Yin (2009) the usage of as much source as possible is only beneficial for the support of the data collection.

3.4.1 Selection

When performing a collection of primary data, the researchers needs to consider the target audience they want to focus on. Many researchers choose to make a so called “selection”, meaning that the researchers get more time for each individual and collected more detailed data. “Selection” is therefore based on selecting the respondents who are suitable for the study. (Christensen, L et al., 2014)

There are two types of selections that can be used in a study,; probability selection and non-probability selection. Probability means that each individual chosen is randomly selected and has the same chance of being included in the survey. In order for a probability selection to be performed, the researches must have access to the register about each and every respondent included the specific population, this is usually called a selection frame. A selection frame can be divided in categories, for example; age, income, gender etcetera. (Christensen, L et al., 2014).

Non-probability selection means that the chance for an individual to be chosen can not be predicted and that the selection is not made randomly. The risk of getting unfitting respondents for the study becomes minimal. Thus, in the case of a non-probability selection there is a category selection called convenience. This selection is based on
selecting only those respondents who are able to participate in the specific study (Christensen, L et al., 2014).

The interview with the company has been limited to two retail stores online whom only make sales online and is not involved in any physical stores. Two companies was selected for this specific study and therefore two interviews was made. The consumer interviews was limited to those who shop online and are familiar with all the new technology and has knowledge about the internet and online retail stores, five interviews was made with consumers.

3.4.2 Pretest and structure
Pretesting method is important to conduct during the research. Researchers should do a pretesting the questions of the interview before actually conducting the interviews, hence to check if the questions will be proper and suitable for the research (Oghazi, 2009). For this study, one teacher gave feedback on the interview questions for the company and another teacher gave feedback on the questions for the customers. A pretesting was also made for the customer questions by two individuals. They claimed that the questions was easy to understand but that some things could be added in order to get more out of it. Based on all of the pre testing and response, the researcher adjusted the questions.

This study will be conducted with semi-structure interviews, meaning that there is an transcript of the questions in advance but there is room left for probing questions between each question (Myers & Newman, 2006). The purpose of conducting an semi-structured interview is to investigate the more open information from the respondents in relation to the research question. There can also appear opportunities to collect information in order to find further issues to conduct the research efficaciously.

3.5 Operationalization
The reason of applying an Operationalization process is to define variables to measurable factors, this method also helps the researcher to define unclear concepts and differentiate each one from the other, based on its meaning (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In order for the researcher to be able to highlight the most relevant concepts, the researcher focused on the main concepts in the theoretical frame which can be directly combined
with the purpose. Thereafter, break it down into detailed explanations and concepts that are easier to understand.

The following table shows this operationalization:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Conceptual Definition</th>
<th>Keywords, Definition</th>
<th>Questions / Consumer</th>
<th>Questions / Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| E-commerce   | E-commerce tend to be one of the strongest and most fast changing forces that have changed the behavior of individuals online. (Hultén et al. 2011) | Websites, online retailing stores, product, service | 1) What attracts You when visiting a website?  
2) What affects You when making a purchase online? | 1) Explain a little about the Company and what Your aim is regarding customer service.  
2) What do You think attracts the customers in visiting your website?  
3) What do You think affects the customer when browsing the website? |
| Perception   | The world is full of aspects that combine and create a powerful flow of potentially good information, which the individual is exposed to. (Seculer & Blake, 2002) | Head, heart, relations, positive, negative, need and want | 3) What would increase the possibility of You making a purchase on a website?  
4) What is the most common or popular product/category that You look for when making purchases online? → why? | 4. What is the most common or popular product or category on Your website? → why?  
5. Do You conduct many cancelled checkouts or |
| Market communication | Communication can be presented as a social process and various ways that can enable individuals to share information. (Schilz & Cobley, 2013) | Expectations, demands, emotions, value, satisfaction and pleasure, affinity | 5) Do You conduct many cancelled checkouts or non completed purchases? → Why do you think that is?  
6) What is, to You, an ideal purchase? | 6) What do You as a company do to minimize the cancellations - and what would increase the possibility of customers making a purchase on Your website?  
7) What is, to You as an individual, an ideal purchase? |
4 Result

The following chapter will be presenting the collected data from the conducted interviews, and show what the result of them interviews was.

4.1 Company Interviews

Company 1

Company number 1 is an online retail store with a mix of exclusive and budget items, in the category of fashion. They explain that the company puts a lot of work into campaigns on their website, and wants everything to work most optimally. They mean that it should be easy for the consumers to enter the website, find what they need or are looking for and then be able to finish the purchase. When asked about what they believe attracts their consumer to the website, the company mentioned that they believe in the campaigns and offers they have for their consumers - new or standard. They trust that their website is modern and easy enough for the consumer to get around without any complications, these aspects are considered to be affecting the consumer positively.

What the company believes could affect the consumers negatively is the fact that they do not offer the consumer to see their products in action, since they have made the choice of not using videos - the company says them self that when it comes to fashion online security in what the consumer will get in the mailbox is crucial. Company 1 also mentioned that the marketing team follows up with the design team carefully in order for the website to be at it’s best - including what products should be exposed, colors and design, and of course information. The company also points out that their e-commerce team is working constantly to emphasize the products on the website and make the pictures as true as possible in order for the consumer to feel secure when purchasing. If the colors, information and other aspects are fulfilling the consumers expectations, then the chance of a purchase increases.

When asked about cancellations on their website, the company strengthens the fact that they have many cancellations and that consumers leave the products in the basket without checking out and purchasing. The company believes that this is based on the fact that consumers may feel it gets to expensive or that they forget about the items in the basket and move on to the next. Since it’s mostly higher prices of the products on the website, the fact that the total cost gets high is not something unusual. However, the company is arguing that this is not something that can be certain since their target group
is mostly older consumers with a proper income. Continuing on this topic the company states that what they then do, in order to remind the consumer and make them come back and purchase, is that they send out emails about the forgotten products in the basket as a reminder. Sometimes they even remind the consumer that the company has an offer of 10% off if you are a new customer or visitor, which can lead to that the consumer does not feel that the total cost gets as high as it was. Regarding their website design and platform, they are confident that it is up to date and easy enough.

When asked about the consumer experience, the respondent says; "We want the customers to have a simple and comfortable experience. We want to make it as comfortable and easy for them as we can online, and that is why we are investing a lot in customer service. Make sure the customer gets help as quickly as possible if they need it". As an online company they strive to reach what has been promised to the consumers, which includes free and easy returns of the products. It is pointed out that in the future, the company will extend the time limit of returns and acquire express delivery at a cost well below their competitors.

**Company 2**

Company number 2 is an online retail store with mostly items in the theme of "Scandinavia", it is a furniture and interior design online store and have a higher price range. Even though the company started out in the year 2002 they have already managed to get consumers all over Europe and in 2016 the company’s total annual profit was 200 million SEK. Regarding customer service the company states that that kind of service is depending on what country it is concerned, the main thing the company wants to achieve in customer service is that the consumer should always be happy with or without a purchase. One thing the company strives for is to have an easy access through questions and other wondering about, for example, a product. Meaning, that the time limit for answering customer emails should always be as short as possible and that the phoneline always should be open for contact.

When asked about what possibly attracts their consumers to their website and products, the company stated that it is because they have an very large and mixed assortment regarding products – included that their assortment is within the category of "Scandinavia" which has shown to be popular around Europe and of course, in
Scandinavia. There has also been shown that furniture and interior design from Sweden and within this category has been interesting and wanted in other countries. The company also states that the brand itself has grown large and well known, and that the fact that they have product categories is something that is perceived as positive with consumers that are looking for this types of products online. According to the company, when a consumer is out on the internet searching for a specific product type the key is to make it as easy as possible for them to find it fast and not get tired of the website and possibly move on. Therefore, product categories is a key online in order to keep consumers pleased. When asked about what the company considers is or could be affecting the consumers when browsing and shopping on their website, the respondent said that this also depends on the country. Aspects that are considered here are for example delivery time, delivery cost, what type of bank and cards the specific consumer is using and if the checkout offers Paypal and Klarna as in Sweden, or not. The respondent also states that delivering to other countries can come to become a crash since, for example, in Germany the consumers want and need more information about the products but in Sweden this amount of information get get overwhelming and not perceived as a positive thing. The fact that the delivery is faster and that the payment is easier in Sweden and Scandinavia, makes their number one purchasing target group Swedish consumers. According to the company, what they sell the most on their website is depending on a various of aspects. Consumers nowadays are considering everything before actually making a purchase online which is making the online companies to be on their best game at all times and keep up with new technology etcetera.

When asked if the company have many cancellations and that consumers leave the products in the basket without checking out and purchasing, they responden that they do have many cancellations. However, it depends on what season of the year it is and also what type of product it is concerning. For example, the respondent says; that plates, glasses, kitchen textile, porcelain and so on are often ordered more since that is smaller products and can be fairly presented online. But larger interior as sofas and other furniture is harder to sell since the consumer can not sit on it, feel the material etcetera. Therefore, the company thinks they have many cancellations. They are however very certain with applying the fact that this is something they are working on to minimize daily. The total offer is of course important and crucial, the company states. More specific the price and the payment is a big reason of why consumers gets resisting of
purchasing online. However, the company states clearly that the higher price range of their products is not a bad thing, since consumers often associate high price with high quality and a certain seriašhet. Other aspects that the company consider itself be working on constantly in order to minimize the cancellations is the information and the customer comments on the website and the products. The respondent says that in Sweden they use TrustPilot where consumers can leave comments and rate the website on a scale from 1-5.

An ideal purchase according to the company should be including the right price, meaning affordable and/or that the product meets the expectations of the price. The website should be fast and easy, the checkout should be easy to manage and understand and that the online companies website uses familiar concepts as Klarna for example, in order for the consumer to feel safe.

4.2 Customer Interviews

**What attracts You when visiting a website?**

The majority of the respondents said that the main thing attracting them when shopping online are the actual products. Even if it is out of interest or actual need, consumers tend to browse a website based on product categories. One respondent said that the reason she often visited a website was because she was searching for a specific product or category, for example if she “needs a dress for an event, and know the type of dress wanted, then I browse”. While another respondent claimed that the reason she browses websites and what attracts her is the inspiration. Another attracting aspect according to the respondents is the information about the products, most of the respondents wanted good information with clear pictures. One respondents claimed that; “I do prefer when it is easy to navigate and when the layout contains both pictures and text because then it is easier to get an overview over the content”.

The website is mentioned by the respondents and is considered to be important, especially when visiting a new website. They agreed on that the website should be easy but not boring. One respondent claimed she wanted ”easy navigation” while another mentioned that ”the design is important to catch my attention”. One respondent was more then sure of what was attracting her regarding websites, and she said; ”The website needs to be neat, easy to grasp, minimalistic and stylistically pure”.
What affects You when making a purchase online?

According to the respondents, the price came up as an important aspect that usually affects the consumers while making a purchase. Some of the respondents mentioned that the price can be as low as possible, but if the total cost at the checkout is too high they will get unsure. One respondent mentioned that the price is crucial, however the same respondent also comments that “…if the product is worth the price, in material and so on, I can pay a lot if it is good quality”. Another aspect that also was mentioned by some of the respondents was the website, if it is hard or tricky they rather not do it. A mutual agreement amongst the respondents was the design and the products, meaning that they mentioned that the design should be appealing and the products should be easy to find through for example categories. One respondents said; “…the layout of the website, how easy it is to get an overview over the products, how easy it is to navigate and find what you are looking for”. The same respondent continued; ”There needs to be categories so that I can delimitate myself depending on what I am looking for, i.e. colors, type, etc.”.

Yet another aspect that came up was the shipping rates. One respondent mentioned that if the shipping cost is too high, then when it gets added onto the price it will get too pricey. Another respondent also mentioned the shipping cost, and the return cost. She says; ”if you are buying online you are already vulnerable since you can’t try and feel the product, so why add extra cost? That definitely affects me when shopping online”.

What would increase the possibility of You making a purchase on a website?

One common thing all of the respondents mentioned they believe would increase the possibility of completing a purchase is if the checkout and payment is, or becomes, easy enough so that the consumer does not have to think twice. Along with that, respondents also mentioned that if they felt like they could earn something on the purchase – as for example not paying shipping and return cost, or getting discount offers and vouchers – it would be as a push for them to feel more comfortable with purchasing. One respondent said “…if I get a discount for a first-time purchaser” while another mentioned the ”…discounts for loyal customers and new ones!".
Other aspects mentioned by the respondents was the design of the website, competitive prices and customer service. The design is mentioned as an aspect of catching the interest of the consumer, for them to be inspired and wanting to make a purchase online. Along with customer service and making the consumer to feel safe and wanted, one respondent mentioned that “contact via phone or chat” is of importance to her because it could be crucial if she will make the purchase or not. If she has a question about a product and would get the answer directly via an online chat, it would increase the possibility of her making the purchase the same moment.

**What is the most common or popular product/category that You look for when making purchases online? → why?**

The answers to this question was mostly based on the respondent’s interest and need, however, all of them said that they either just browse or shop interior design online. One respondent said that she category she mostly shops online is fashion, but that “…what I am always looking at is interior design because I find it so interesting and I love it”. While another respondent based that on her need, that respondent claimed that interior design is her passion but right now she was shopping that category online simply based on the fact that she had just moved to a new house – therefore, needed new furnitures and interior design items. One respondent claimed that “It is the easiest to purchase products for your home as you do not need to try them out or care about the fit”.

One respondent said that the thing he purchases the most online was gym and work-out products simply because that had to do with his hobby. Since workout accires protein powder and such eatable products, it has to be bought often. What this respondent does then is to check for the most affordable prices and the best brands. Other respondent said that ”clothes, bags and shoes” are the most bought items online for them, one of those respondents strengthens this statement with that it is because of the easy availability – if she had been looking at a bag or some type of clothing, then it is easier to order it from your home then to go to a physical store.

**Do You conduct many cancelled checkouts or non completed purchases? → Why do you think that is?**

The respondents agreed that they all have done some non completed purchases or left their items in the online basket. Some of the respondents claimed that this was because
of the price and if it would get too expensive for them in the end. One respondent said that her reasons are “mostly because it gets to expensive and I would rather wait for a sale, or a discount or something”, while another respondent claimed that “…it can be that it gets to pricey for me. Like, I want it but I can’t afford it or I already have spent a lot this month. The shipping cost affects me a lot, that can make the price go way up and then I’ll just leave the basket”.

One of the respondent however claimed that she does not often leave items in the basket, and either not complete a purchase. According to her it has happened, but that she “usually tend to put a lot of items in either the basket or below saved items”, she explained that as a student sometimes she purchase is just no affordable, she continues with; ”sometimes I do not have time to complete the purchase there and then which is then why I do so. Or it could also be because I do not have the money to spend at that time so that I feel like I need to think about it further before I make any purchase. However, if I, let’s say, would receive any discount code of 10-20% it might affect me to complete it there and then. So that is something that absolutely affects me!”

Two other respondents mentioned that they can get hesitating or even cancel the purchase simply because of the long shipping waiting time, while one of these respondents also says that he always wants to look around at other online stores before making a purchase.

**What is, to You, an ideal purchase? From beginning to end.**

The similar aspects that all of the respondents mentioned are easiness of the website, on respondent says that when visiting a website, it should be providing “easy-to-grasp information about price, design, material etcetera”. Another respondent says “The website's design is important, it shows how serious the company is” and pushes the fact that since the website is the first thing you see as a consumer, it is of great importance in order to attract and please the consumer from the beginning.

Moving on regarding this question, all of the respondents agreed on that information and pictures are of importance in order to feel safe and sure while purchasing online. One respondent talked about online clothing shopping and she said; ”I want good information about the actual product, I always compare myself to the model so if it says
what height she is and what size of the dress she is wearing it can make me buy the product”. The respondent explained that that the value of information is far bigger than expected, one other respondent said the same thing and strengthened it ”I prefer having several pictures of the product and if it concerns clothes, I also prefer having the ability to watch a video to get as clear picture as possible. This increases the reliability and trust in the retailer as I then perceive them to be transparent in comparison to those who do not offer the same tools”.

Moreover, some respondents says that the brand itself and how it is marketed is important to them as consumers. A collaboration with celebrities or other brands can even, according to one respondent, make it ”cooler”. All of the respondents agreed on that the most important step of a purchase is the payment and checkout, if it is easy to manage and understand it makes the process go ”faster” and in the end, if the checkout is simple and easy to grasp, all of the respondents thinks it increases the chances of making a purchase. One respondents said ”There needs to be as few steps as possible between the moment I decide to purchase it to the moment when I have ordered it. It needs to be super convenient to navigate to the basket and finalize my purchase. The promotion code field needs to be easy to find as many retailers offer student discount. The retailers also need to provide the customer with the option to pay within either 14 or 30 days because that is what customers seeks today. If not, there is a clear drawback”. Another respondent also mentioned that sometimes companies have a discount or an offer of free shipping if you purchase for a certain amount, and according to her this is ”that little extra thing from the company that I was not expecting” and can surprise the consumer in a positive way, and can most definitely make the consumer feel wanted.
5 Analysis

This chapter will present an analysis of the current results of the collected data in relation to previous research within this specific topic. The discussion of this analysis has intention of presenting the results into generalization.

As Hultén et al. (2015) mentions the sight is often the first sense that is stimulated when it gets in contact with a brand or product online. This is something that both companies puts great effort on, and works on their websites constantly in terms of design, information and influence. Influencers, such as consumers who leave comments or celebrities who promote, have the power to strengthen a brand or company via various of social platforms. It is also shown that this could potentially hurt the company’s image if the promotion is done by someone not suitable for the company or brand, and could then result in that the consumers chooses not to make a purchase (O’Leary, Wilson, & Metiu, 2014).

Company 1 strives for their images on the website to be as true as possible in order for the consumers to feel safe when purchasing, however the company say that they do not use moving images or ”live images” in the form of on a model, or in a real life situation. Being a fashion online retailing store this could be a setback for them since clothing is harder to sell online, simply based on the fact that a garment can not be felt, tested out or seen in any other way online. This aspects is also mentioned by one of the respondent, saying that pictures, and sometimes videos, can be crucial for her in order to make a purchase. Shen & Bissell (2013) states that the focus online has been put on the communication between the company and the consumer, which in turn can improve the experience for the consumer. This has also been shown from the results of the collected data that communication can be of great importance when it comes to the consumer feeling trust and want for making purchases.

Hultén et. al. (2011) also states that the consumers perception of the company is based on the image that the company sends out and how they present products, information and the website. Since the respondents all agreed on that the website matters, including the information and how products are being presented in order for them to be interested in conducting a purchase – this makes a very important link for the relationship between consumer and company. Both company 1 and 2 argues that they are working on customer service continuously and company 2 even mentioned that they work on the
website design a lot in order to keep it updated, modern and appealing to the consumers. Hultén et al. (2015) suggests that the consumer's visual experience is based on visual impressions that can be expressed in the form of product display, design, information and much more. The respondents expressed that they were not tempted to purchase in case that the website was lacking on some visual experience aspects. Company number 1 is, for example, lacking the aspect of videos when presenting clothes – which was something that was wanted from the respondents, rather more than less. This could be connected to furnitures online as well, since the aspect of only having to rely on pictures could cause some uncertainties and result in a cancellation of the purchase, where the consumer may feel more safe to go to a physical store and get a more realistic view of the furniture or clothing.

According to Shen et al. (2016) in consumer behavior, consumers purchase in order to fulfill their own functional, experiential and social needs. Which can be seen as true in this study, since some respondent talked about their needs (in order to make a purchase), where one respondent talked about her experiential needs in the form of inspiration-searching. Shen et al. (2016) also claims that the behavior is of reasoned action - which made the researcher assume that consumer attitudes towards aspects of offline and online channels are affecting their purchase behavior and decisions. This assumption can now be seen as proven correct, according to the respondents themself it is almost always those kind of aspects that are affecting the purchase. Yes, sometimes aspects like the personal economy can be affecting but based on this study it is safe to say that aspects of marketing, website and other are of huge influence on the consumer experience and decisions. Both company 1 and 2 is, however, aware of this. But the fact that online companies are aware and are constantly working on this matter of pleasing the consumer and creating an ideal shopping experience, does not mean that it is right for that specific company. Online retailing stores are alike in various ways, but every company have a different target group and need to focus on different aspects to highlight in order to sell. According to Sekuler & Blake (2002) perception of an experience is based on phenomena that occur in that specific environment (website) that a customer visits, and when the customer responds to affecting aspects based on his or hers previous experiences – which can also be interpreted as that it is obvious all consumers reach differently, and are affected differently, online. Simply because of values, previous experience and what type of online retail store it is.
Connection between company and consumer

Over all, what the companies say that they want to provide to the consumers are something that the consumers mentions wants when making purchases online. For example, easy access, easy payment, delivery and more. The customer view of an ideal purchase is basically the same as the company view of it, however and ideal purchase is not possible simply based on the fact that all are affected differently and all want differently. O’Leary, Wilson & Metiu (2014) states that consumers are - and if not, should be - motivated to engage in the networking of various platforms and are therefore also enabling themselves to be affected. Company number 2 compares the Swedish market to the German market and says that it is almost impossible to please both and that general choices for the company have to be made.

Both companies state that their website should function in an optimal way as their intentions are that the consumer will easily find what they are looking for and easy complete the purchase. It can be assumed that the companies actually have managed to create some kind of optimal website when they state that this is the fact, and the consumers then state that those aspects is what they want when purchasing online. However, since company number 1 clearly says that the information and layout on their website is hard to make ideal for them, based on the fact that they sell to various countries around Europé, it can easily be misunderstood by the consumers who visit – since Swedish consumers, for example, want something else then German consumers. The researcher believes that what the consumers state that they want and need out of an experience when purchasing online is aspects that have been collected from various websites and put together into one ideal purchase experience. When interviewing the consumers, the state of satisfaction is sparsely – but in the end, the consumers make purchases based on small things as discounts, easiness of payment or even because it’s a product or service they have been longing for. Companies are aware of the market and the knowledge of that consumer experience should be improved, however both companies are saying what they are doing to improve it based on their own customers opinions and what the companies believe himself to be of usage in improvement. None of the companies ever stated the simple fact that they wanted to, or actually were, comparing himself to other online stores in order to win their customers over. One respondent mentioned that always before he makes a purchase, he checks the other
websites for other affecting aspects. Based on this the researcher can assume that the knowledge of how to maximize a purchase experience and minimize the cancellations is not too broad within the online market.

6 Discussion and Conclusion
Based on previous research, it is described that the challenge the online retailing world has is to find suitable influencers, the right communication in order to reach out and what, online, will have the most effective outcome for both companies and consumers (Roelens, Baecke & Benoit, 2016). The results from the collected data consists of over all the same opinions on this matter and it can be explained as an "easy" situation, since both companies know what is wanted and the consumers know what they want - even if the use of marketing online differs from the traditional methods. However, it is safe to say that a comparison between what consumers wants and what companies provide or want to provide, and the connection here in order to conduct a purchase and not have any cancellations, has not been fully explored. You can say that the both companies, and other, probably think the same regarding when it comes to customer experience in order to minimize cancellations. However, the companies do it so directly focused on them self and their own consumers – and choose not to broaden that knowledge. Which is also a smart move since their regular consumers can provide information of what is "safe", however the new or somehow only browser-consumers may want differently and that could result in cancellations.

Based on this study, it is clear that both company 1 and 2 use their own strategies in e-commerce in order to create customer experiences. It is also safe to say that what the consumers mention that they want or need in order to complete a purchase, and not make a cancellation at checkout, is basically what the companies say they do. Company 2 was very clear that an easy checkout and payment when purchasing is of great importance, for the company and for the consumers – this is what all of the respondents said was important to them.

So yes, agreed that the wants and needs in order to fulfillment a purchase is the same for the companies and the consumers. However, the companies are clearly lacking on some aspects since they both confirmed that they have plenty of cancellations and items left in the basket. Both companies have a clear vision of why they personally think they have
that many cancellations, and have tried to “fix” the problems, nevertheless without success. Therefore, it can be stated that a lack of knowledge of this phenomenon called online purchasing exists. Consumers base their knowledge on previous experience, and companies base their knowledge on their own investigations. The connection is lost sometimes, and then it results in cancellations and left items.

Since the study - first of all - aims to identify the most influential aspects that affect the consumer’s behavior regarding purchasing online, it is safe to say that the study result has answered that. The most influential has been shown to be; payment, checkout, customer service and information. This of course in combination with price and design. And - second of all - also to identify why consumers choose not to complete their purchase or actually do complete it. Which, in this study, also has been answered - why they do not chose to complete are affected by various aspects, such as for example delivery and return costs. However, discounts, price worthiness and easy payments seems to be an affecting aspects when it comes to actually conducting a purchase.

7 Managerial implications
Online retailing stores can come in use of this study in order to consider when working on customer experience regarding purchases and cancellations. The result of this qualitative study indicates that there are aspects affecting the consumer already at start, meaning that the affecting aspects can be seen from the moment the consumer enters the website, to the moment they need to conduct the purchase. Online companies should also consider that there is a gap in the knowledge of what to do in order to minimize the cancellations, since the actual knowledge of what is the "problem” and how do "we fix it” is there – but simply not working. Online retailing stores can design their website and that environment in such way that the purchasing experience for the consumers become enjoyable, easy and evokes feelings of a fulfilled need or want. This can then lead to minimization of cancellations and both the consumers and companies could be happier in the end.

8 Limitations and Further research
One limitations that was made was too only conduct consumer interviews with individuals whom are familiar to online environments and online purchasing. Also, only
five consumer interviews was made and can be seen as a limitations regarding the trustability.

Further studies may consider gathering a larger amount of respondents in order to increase the generalizability of the findings, and to increase the reliability of the collected data. One recommendation can also be that only companies could be used for this kind of study, if the amount is big enough. Furthermore, future researchers may also consider measuring other affecting aspects, such as for example culture. Since this study only focused on the visual experiences as a stimuli, other stimulus could also be considered as a factor and be researched if and how effective they are online.
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Apendix

Company Interview

1. Explain a little about the Company and what Your aim is regarding customer service.

2. What do You think attracts the customers in visiting your website?

3. What do You think affects the customer when browsing the website?

4. What is the most common or popular product or category on Your website?
   → why?

5. Do You conduct many cancelled checkouts or non completed purchases?
   → Why do you think that is?

6. What do You as a company do to minimize the cancellations - and what would increase the possibility of customers making a purchase on Your website? (for example; design, price, the offer etc.)

7. What is, to You as an individual, an ideal purchase? From beginning to end.
Consumer Interview

1. What attracts You when visiting a website?

2. What affects You when making a purchase online?

3. What would increase the possibility of You making a purchase on a website? Could it be for example; design, price, the offer (utbud) etc.

4. What is the most common or popular product/category that You look for when making purchases online?
   → why?

5. Do You conduct many cancelled checkouts or non completed purchases?
   → Why do you think that is?

6. What is, to You, an ideal purchase? From beginning to end.