The Man-Machine Relationship on the Web: Motivation to Use the Internet

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Abstract. In an environment characterized by turmoil and unpredictability, by the digital transition and transformation, and by the economic and social effects caused by the global public crisis (COVID19), this study aims to analyze the motivations for using the internet and making online purchases, identifying the perceived benefits and consumer satisfaction. For this, an exploratory study with descriptive design was carried out, through the administration of a questionnaire (google forms). 385 consumers responded. The data show that there are significant differences between groups (buyers and non-buyers) in terms of motivation, perceptions of benefits and satisfaction. The use of online shopping platforms fosters a relationship that favors efficiency and enhances feelings of control and freedom in purchasing behavior. The experiences lived through technological intermediation, given the possibility of interaction and personalization, add value to brands, create an innovative identity, while contributing to obtaining a memorable and satisfying experience.

Keywords: Man-machine · Relationship · Web · Motivation · Satisfaction

1 Introduction

Currently, we are witnessing a technological evolution that allows for an expansion and globalization of digital networks, building and spreading through the interconnection of messages, in the context of virtual communities in constant mutation, in a «cyberspace» that breaks with space borders-temporals. There is, in this way, a diversification and simplification of the «interfaces» articulated with the digital phenomenon that flow towards a large-scale adhesion in «cyberspace» with the worldwide interconnection of computers.

In this period of transition and digital transformation, which many authors called the "fourth industrial revolution" or "industry 4.0" [1], new technologies emerge such as

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the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Environments Cyber-physics, Robotics, Sensors, 3D Printing, Big Data, Augmented Reality, cloud computing.

This turbulent, dynamic, volatile, and unpredictable environment [2], was aggravated by the recent global public crisis (COVID-19) that affected the competitiveness of organizations [3]. Digital infrastructure and technologies have been more critical than ever during the Covid-19 crisis. Communication infrastructure and access to the Internet have been strategic in supporting economic and social life. Quarantine has increased the virtualization of economic and social relationships (telework may prevail in more sectors and regions), further accelerating digitization and stimulating investment in automation and robotics, as well as increasing the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools.

The Internet provides personalized interactivity, and increasingly multimedia, due to its ability to incorporate new combinations of text, images, moving images and sound. It also has an almost unlimited space to offer levels of depth, texture and context, impossible in any other medium. Thus, the company, to customize its information, will have to, when interacting with each audience, acquire detailed and updated information about the customer, to present its content, according to the habits of each user, enabling each one of its consumers, transforming itself into a potential co-creator and intervening customer in the dynamics of the brand and the product.

The Internet imposes itself in the digital context with certain capabilities that are fundamental for the affirmation of different areas, such as Marketing, Advertising or Management. In this sense, multimedia, convergence, synergy and interactivity are the potential that stand out the most in the online phenomenon.

The user interface is the part of an application that is dedicated to dialogue with its user. It is what establishes between man and machine, a relationship of interactivity.

This concept refers to the type of relationship that makes the behavior of one system change the behavior of the other. By extension, a device or a program is interactive when its user can modify its behaviors or developments. While computer software and video games are, by construction, interactive, audiovisual programs and classic films imply passive user behavior [4, 5].

Electrotechnology seems to be evolving according to a feedback process, giving rise to new technologies. And, in fact, it was computers that introduced a series of new interface-relationships between users and screens, contrary to the passive relationship established until then by television, in a mass market by large one-way communication audiences. The computer screen, when inserting bidirectional interactivity modalities, increased the speed, fully immersing the integrated hypermedia [4].

This new communicational support presents its contents in a different way from the conventional means, being able to customize and direct them to each individual of an audience, providing a responsiveness and allowing, therefore, a more effective company-client interactivity.

Faced with this paradigm shift, Internet users will not react in the same way to the interaction facilities that cyberspace provides and to the persuasion that companies do with online consumers. It is pertinent to observe the Man-Machine interaction with regard to motivation and perception regarding the use of the Internet and their online purchase satisfaction.

2 Literature Review

For many multimedia specialists, it is in the transition from analogue to digital video that the key to the success of the New Information and Communication Technologies lies with the public. Some problems arising from analogue media, such as the loss of information quality with distance and the duplication or limitation of expression imposed by this technology, find in digital a greater assimilation of the animated image and sound, by easily inserting purely synthetic images to perform truncations and editing and modulate transmission according to the desired quality, reception conditions and the type of programs [6, 7].

Computers already have the ability to solve numerous tasks that were confined to human thought, with speed and precision that surpass everything that human beings can achieve, fostering a telepresence enabled by communication technologies and projected to the outside world through the connection of computers to the network, stimulating an extreme diversity of media, namely, the ease of access to large national and international files, anywhere and almost instantaneously [8].

In today's society, social networks establish relationships and interactions between individuals of a certain group and enjoy a determining function of spreading information, ideas and influences through Internet communities that encourage their members to share information of common interest. These nuclei have characteristics that are totally different from traditional social groups, which were confined to geographic and temporal proximity [9].

Currently, with the Internet, subjects elect the communities they want to exert their influence there and create a public or semi-public profile and establish contact with users of that network [10].

In addition, online social networking applications allow users to create virtual social networks that facilitate communication through an interactive network, which include user profiles, photos, groups, emails, blogosphere or music, enabling multiple users to join together in a virtual environment [9].

The information society creates a rupture in the paradigm instituted by the industrial society, through the development of the Internet and its platforms, where, in turn, the technological engine determines new models of economic and social organization. It is a society with new rules, structures and patterns of behavior. Emerging forms of business dynamization based on the technological component also appear and revolutionize the way companies and consumers communicate, evolve and market products [11, 12].

The technological phenomenon imposes rapid changes in the pattern of consumption, purchase and commercial offer, in three main areas: in the office, at home and on the move. At the business level, the use of the Internet as a tool for competitive advantage became essential, initially functioning as a communication and relationship support tool in sales, fostering new forms of service provision, with a view to greater customer loyalty. Later, the Internet became part of a fundamental information tool, contributing to greater business productivity [13].

Through the dissemination of information, social networks enhance knowledge and the ability to influence the diffusion of innovation, become a platform for sharing knowledge between social groups, but also become the support for interaction with companies, brands and applications. In this context, Marketing seeks to create empathy with network members, instilling in the group a feeling of commitment, with the aim of arousing interest and sharing of content. In this way, companies see their communication suffer the viral effect and thus reach a large number of recipients per propagation [14].

New digital technologies have imposed certain forms of commercialization on the market, which in turn, develop different online behaviors. These forms of customer relationships on the Internet undoubtedly go through motivations that drive consumers to establish an interactive relationship with companies and their products [15–17].

There is a significant range of studies related to consumer motivations for online shopping that focus exclusively on utilitarian motivations, consolidated by rational shopping experiences. Currently, there is a tendency to also study the phenomenon of emotional satisfaction motivation in the Internet purchase process, such as pleasure, aesthetics, emotion and fun as additional purchase motivations.

It can also be observed that consumers, in line with utilitarianism, are more concerned with purchasing efficiently and without wasting time, which contrasts with the hedonic perspective, with emphasis on the pursuit of pleasure, fun and fantasy. Online utility buyers are looking for a purchase process that favors the performance of the website based on the privileges obtained in view of the fulfillment of the access objective, reflecting its value and the usefulness of the website in solving their needs. This form of relationship seeks efficiency in purchasing and enhances feelings of control and freedom in choosing their products [18, 19].

Hedonic behaviors look for recreational motivation, more attendance, longer duration and propensity to explore the website. The stimuli provided by the research process are as or more important than the purchase of the product, and the greater the recreational component, the greater the positive impact on mood, satisfaction and the possibility of impulsive purchases. The hedonic aspect has, therefore, greater affluence to websites where the customer is continuously motivated and seeks the surprise effect, exclusivity, enthusiasm, socialization/community and involvement [20].

The knowledge of this motivational issue is fundamental for the applicability of persuasive techniques that companies can implement with online consumers, when they use animation and creativity in the creation of the website [21].

Companies promoting motivation in their potential customers in browsing and shopping online also contribute to their trends and respective satisfaction.

Effectively, the ability of brands to exceed expectations is the formula for customer satisfaction, pleasure and loyalty. However, this satisfaction cannot be confined to the product because customers may be satisfied with the products, but not satisfied with the quality of the service provided, or with the price. Furthermore, some studies present satisfaction as a fundamental element for trust [22, 23].

Based on the particularities developed in web shopping, the author [24] show a model developed by Matthew K.O. Lee, who states that, in addition to the differentiating factors of products or services, there are other elements, such as speed and ease of use, essential for consumer satisfaction. Thus, the greater the satisfaction, the greater the appreciation for repeating the experience. The antecedents of satisfaction are confined to the delivery capacity of the products, customer support, price and different features of the website. In addition, the content of the website, the quality and the way in which the products or services are presented, the clarity of the pages, the usefulness of the store, the interactivity with the customer, the convenience of use and the selection of available products are important [25–28].

The role of Experimental Marketing is referred as a process to identify and satisfy the needs and aspirations of customers, promoting reciprocal communication that stimulates the brand's personality and adds value to the segment, creating memorable experiences that generate the buzz/word-of-mouth, renewing the consumer into a prescriber and as a brand promoter [29].

3 Methodology and Sample

The purpose of this article is to analyze the motivations and perceptions of consumers regarding internet use. In this sense, the following research questions were defined:

[Q_1] - Are the motivations for using the Internet related to online shopping?
[Q_2] - What are the perceptions of consumers regarding internet use?
[Q_3] - What is the satisfaction of users with online shopping platforms?

Additionally, it is intended to analyze whether the perceptions of consumers are different in two groups, those who make online purchases and those who do not.

To pursue the objective, a structured questionnaire based on the literature is developed, covering the dimensions "motivation for using the internet", and "satisfaction with online shopping platforms". The pre-test was applied to a convenience sample of 25 respondents, which allowed for some improvements in the layout of the questionnaire, but no changes were made to the main variables. The questionnaire was made available online and data collected between February and May 2021. The answers were given on a Likert scale, ranging from "1" with "totally disagree" to "5" with "totally agree".

The study population consisted of internet users, without any type of restriction. For the calculation of the sample, a margin of error of 5% was defined, resulting in a value of 400 respondents as a representative sample of the universe.

The sample consisted of less than 15 subjects, as they had to be eliminated for not having completed the survey, thus leaving 385 respondents (Table 1) with an average age of 28 years and the majority (58.2%) are women. Most respondents (42.1%) use the internet more than 4 h a day.

It should also be mentioned that 224 of the respondents are students (48.2%) and 57 are professors (14.8%), two groups who use the internet daily and collaborate in research work.

Table 1. General characteristics of the sample

Variables	Attributes	N	%
Sex	Feminine	224	58,2%
	Masculine	161	41,8%
Internet usage	Up to 8 h/week	38	9,8%
	>8 h <20 h/week	185	48,1%
	>4 h/day	162	42,1%
		385	100,0%

4 Analysis and Discussion of Results

The following tables show, for each item to be analyzed, the mean (M) of respondents' responses according to the Likert scale and the respective standard deviation (SD) for online shoppers (Yes) and non-shoppers (No). The Student's T-statistic (t) and the respective degrees of freedom (gl) are also presented, as well as the p-value corresponding to the statistical test of the null hypothesis the mean of the variable being equal to zero (p-value).

Table 2 intends to analyze whether the motivations for using the internet are related to online shopping.

Table 2. Motivation for using the Internet versus online shopping

	Yes (n = 356)		No (n = 29)		*t*	*gl*	*p-value*
	M	SD	M	SD			
– See how people vote or comment on a topic/product	3,22	1,024	3,16	1,120	0,531	383	0,432
– Interact with the website	3,04	1,142	3,07	1,109	1,121	383	0,128
– Discuss or talk about something I saw	3,56	1,125	3,12	1,105	−0,452	383	0,672
– Interact with other people	3,76	1,194	3,75	1,174	−0,563	383	0,254
– Show me	2,07	1,142	2,60	1,187	−1,022	383	0,153
– Vote or comment on a topic	2,93	1,089	2,68	1,205	0,789	383	0,345
Add information to the website	2,82	1,076	2,37	1,167	0,793	383	0,219
– Faster access	3,85	1,107	3,99	1,204	0,843	383	0,395
– Maximize the information I want	3,74	1,106	2,69	1,117	0,867	383	0,236
– Compare prices	3,78	1,115	3,73	1,294	1,099	383	0,157

(*continued*)

Table 2. (*continued*)

	Yes (n = 356)		No (n = 29)		*t*	*gl*	*p-value*
	M	SD	M	SD			
– Low cost	3,74	1,039	3,45	1,197	0,983	383	0,145
– Search information by topics	3,82	1,043	3,56	1,145	1,521	383	0,122
– Search for information by past affairs	3,65	1,045	2,98	1,278	0,783	383	0,287
– Decide what I want to see	3,28	1,106	2,76	1,188	0,730	383	0,423
– Being able to see several notes or news at the same time	3,73	1,102	3,01	1,637	−0,248	383	0,574
– Be constantly updated	3,65	1,121	3,49	1,123	−0,145	383	0,644

As shown in Table 2, it appears that the motivations for using the internet do not vary significantly with the habit of shopping online or not. It is concluded that in the sample under study, the use of the internet is independent of whether or not respondents make online purchases.

Although there are no differences in the motivations for using the internet and shopping online, it seems important to understand the perception of those who make online purchases (yes) and those who do not (no), regarding the strategies used by Digital Marketing. Table 3 intends to show whether there is a difference in attitudes and trust between those who buy and do not buy via the internet.

Table 3. Consumers' perceptions regarding online purchases

	Yes (n = 356)		No (n = 29)		*t*	*gl*	*p-value*
	M	SD	M	SD			
– Possibility of personalized treatment	3,34	1,072	3,12	1,453	1,541	383	0,121
– Possibility to contact the company	3,67	0,845	3,45	1,291	0,856	383	0,245
– Possibility of being contacted by the company	3,55	0,097	3,37	1,032	1,012	383	0,278
– Possibility to compare prices	3,78	0,874	3,21	1,123	2,423	383	0,023
– Possibility to view the most up-to-date information	4,12	1,023	3,67	1,206	0,873	383	0,234
– Biggest and best offer	3,31	1,023	3,89	1,301	1,194	383	0,132
– Obligation to view content (pop-up, advertising banner)	2,25	1,122	3,21	1,432	−0,987	383	0,328

(*continued*)

Table 3. (*continued*)

	Yes (n = 356)		No (n = 29)		*t*	*gl*	*p-value*
	M	SD	M	SD			
– Shopping online is easy and convenient	2,77	1,021	3,11	1,013	5,410	383	0,001
– I like shopping online	2,99	1,056	2,12	1,123	6,981	383	0,002
– I find it very interesting to shop online	3,28	1,091	2,27	1,302	6,175	383	0,011
– Buying online satisfies my needs	3,64	1,045	2,33	1,221	5,032	383	0,000
– It's exciting to shop online	2,79	1,112	2,67	1,305	2,994	383	0,002
– Buying online is much more fun than in traditional commerce	1,98	1,174	2,23	1,321	1,072	383	0,138
– Shopping online is boring	2,45	1,101	2,54	1,165	−3,482	383	0,008
– Online communication is annoying	2,12	0,973	3,02	1,201	−2,673	383	0,000

It appears that there is a differentiation between online buyers and non-buyers in 8 of the 15 dimensions evaluated. In fact, non-buyers find webmarketing strategies significantly more irritating and annoying than buyers.

The T-student statistic reveals that the motivations did not differ according to the use of the Internet, to buy products or not. Both groups present as a reason for using the Internet the update, the search for information, the maximization of both the information and the news they choose, and the interaction with other people.

Regarding the perceptions of the benefits of online shopping platforms, respondents emphasize "update", "contact", "personalization" and "response to user needs". On the part of non-buyers, they show greater irritability and annoyance with regard to webmarketing strategies.

From the analysis of Table 4 and regarding satisfaction, it appears that there is a differentiation between online buyers and non-buyers, however, despite finding statistically significant differences between "buyers" and "non-buyers", consumers consider themselves satisfied with online purchases, with the services provided and with the usefulness of the portals and platforms for these purchases.

The data obtained in this study are in line with the scientific evidence identified in the literature, as there are favorable motivations for using the internet [30] and the use of online shopping platforms fosters a relationship that privileges efficiency and enhances feelings of control of freedom in purchasing behavior [18, 19].

Furthermore, the experiences lived through technological intermediation, as defended by Smilansky [29] given the possibilities of interaction and personalization [27, 28], add value to brands, create a innovative identity, while contributing to the achievement of a memorable and satisfying experience [15, 17].

Table 4. Satisfaction with online shopping platforms

	Yes (n = 356)		No (n = 29)		*t*	*gl*	*p-value*
	M	SD	M	SD			
– Overall, I am satisfied with my online shopping experiences	3,01	1,023	3,98	1,032	4,765	383	0,002
– I am satisfied with the services (payment, delivery, after-sales, …) of the online stores	3,08	1,036	3,98	1,077	4,739	383	0,003
– I am satisfied with the usefulness of the Internet for my purchases	3,45	0,875	3,02	1,207	5,968	383	0,002

5 Conclusions

Today's society is experiencing a period of transition and digital transformation, where organizations are called to innovate and find new ways of relating to customers. Gradually, the creation of digital business models and the development of portals and online channels, as well as other online tools, allows them to increase their visibility in the market and promote a personalized and interactive relationship with consumers.

The study developed in this investigation allowed the identification of consumer motivations regarding online purchases, highlighting the "capacity for interaction", "collaboration", "autonomy" and "speed". On the other hand, significant differences were found regarding the strategies used by Digital Marketing between those who buy online and those who don't, at the level of "trust" and "consumer satisfaction".

Regarding perceptions of the benefits of online shopping platforms, respondents highlight "updating", "contact", "personalisation" and "response to user needs".

Non-buyers find web marketing strategies significantly more irritating and annoying.

In general, although there are statistically significant differences between "buyers" and "non-buyers", consumers consider themselves satisfied with online shopping, with the services provided and with the usefulness of online shopping portals and platforms.

The study's findings may be of interest to companies that are migrating to digital, as through knowledge of the perceptions of the benefits of online channels and consumer motivations, they can adapt their offer, creating the highest quality, interactive online stores, up-to-date and easy to use. Likewise, recognizing the reasons for resistance to online shopping, they can develop actions that mitigate and reduce these risks, creating conditions for them to start shopping online.

On the other hand, companies that are already exploring online channels and resorting to web marketing can assess consumer satisfaction and, recognizing the factors that contribute to satisfaction, create the conditions for a memorable experience.

However, despite the interest, relevance and implications of the study, the results described here only represent the opinions of the consumers surveyed, making it impossible to generalize the conclusions to the entire population.

It is suggested that in the future the sample of respondents be expanded, the investigation extended to other types of consumers (young and seniors), that gender issues be explored and that a particular sector be focused (for example, banks), as well as consider other dimensions (e.g. recommendation, loyalty).

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