Swift Guanxi Data Analysis and its Application to E-commerce Retail Strategies Improvement

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Abstract

E-commerce has changed retail, offering an opportunity to sell products online. Before retailers can take advantage from e-commerce however, they need to understand the factors driving consumers' intentions to purchase online as well as the factors motivating product re-purchase. To date, a number of studies have been commissioned with an aim to support e-retailers in those efforts. These studies show the key role of trust in consumers' initial and continuous use of e-commerce sites. E-retailers however find online trust difficult to establish due to buyer-seller social and temporal separation online. Recent studies argue that this limitation of online channels can be overcome by computer-mediated communication technologies, which enable 'swift guanxi' that facilitates online trust. This study extends this stream of research by analyzing data generated through swift guanxi in order to help retailers establish online trust and improve their online strategies.

Key words: Swift guanxi; social media; Twitter; social media data; big data; e-commerce; e-commerce acceptance; trust

Introduction

Originally designed for data exchange, the Internet became a point of interest for retailers and consumers alike. This is because the Internet offers an indispensable opportunity to sell and purchase products online through e-commerce. E-commerce has since rapidly developed into a major retail platform (Sprano and Zakak, 2000). This fast development is linked to the advantages consumers might derive from e-commerce sites. The most important

benefit appears to be effective and efficient satisfaction of consumer needs (Miyazaki and Frenandez, 2006). Despite advantages deriving from online shopping sites to consumers, it appears that not all consumers accept e-commerce and use it as their main shopping channel. In search of the factors stimulating consumers' e-commerce acceptance a number of research projects have been executed. At first, researchers focused on the examination of factors driving initial acceptance and e-commerce sites use. Due to the growing importance of consumer retention, researchers also looked at consumers' re-purchase intentions as only consumers regularly purchasing from e-commerce sites can ensure those sites' sustainability.

The aforementioned research streams highlight the importance of trust, which appears to be crucial for successful online transactions. The creation of online trust however appears to be a major challenge for e-retailers due to buyer-seller physical and temporal separation online. Recent research by Ou et al. (2014) however indicates that trust can be facilitated by the so-called 'swift- guanxi'. Swift guanxi is a form of Chinese oriented concept of 'guanxi' and it is defined as a close and pervasive interpersonal buyer-seller relationship online. Ou et al. (2014) claims that swift guanxi can address the above-mentioned limitation of online retailing as it increases perception of buyer-seller interaction and presence online. This is because swift guanxi allows for buyer-seller personalized communication via computer-mediated communication technologies. This in turn, enables the seller to address consumers' risk perception regarding online transaction and hence establish trust. This current study aims to closely examine and analyze the result of the buyer-seller interaction and specifically the exchange of information online (i.e. swift guanxi data), in order to identify the key consumers' concerns while making purchase online. Consequently, this study aims to analyze swift guanxi data in order to guide retailers in their e-commerce strategies improvement. By addressing consumers' concerns sellers can gain consumers' trust and hence ensure the sustainability of their e-commerce strategies.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. First the literature relating to e-commerce acceptance is reviewed in the next section. Specifically, a range of intention-based models used to assess consumers' attitudes towards e-commerce, their intention to use online shopping sites and the actual use of those sites is discussed. Next, the importance of assessing not only the intentions to purchase but also products re-purchase intentions is stressed and the most recent research on consumers' online re-purchase behavior is also reviewed. This is subsequently linked to the discussion of swift guanxi, which is defined as swiftly formed buyer-seller relationships based on interaction and exchange of information online. The outcome of the online interactions and information exchange is argued to be a valuable data source, which this study aims to analyze. In the following section, the research methodology is discussed. Specifically, this study builds on an approach to social media data analysis proposed by Chan et al. (2015a). Data sourced from the result of buyer-seller interactions of

online fashion retailer is extracted from Twitter and subsequently analyzed. The results of the analysis are presented and discussed in the penultimate section. The study finishes with a conclusion and recommendations section drawing on the analysis conducted.

E-commerce literature review

Researchers have employed a range of models in order to identify the factors stimulating consumers' e-commerce acceptance. The employed models mainly originate from Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). TRA is one of the first, and the most influential theory used to evaluate direct motives driving consumers' acceptance of technologies, such as e-commerce sites. As demonstrated by TRA, consumer behavior (e.g. e-commerce site use) can be predicted by intentions. Consumers' intentions, in turn are determined by attitudes towards a given behavior. This attitudes-intention-actual behavior paradigm initiated a series of the so-called intention-based models, which have been extensively applied by researchers, who focus on the assessment of consumers' e-commerce acceptance and use. This is because those models focus on behavior (e.g. e-commerce use) rather than on consumers' attitudes towards product or service offered on e-commerce sites (Hansen et al, 2004). In other words, intention-based models specifically focus on reasons driving consumers' e-commerce site acceptance and use, rather than characteristics of products being sold on those sites.

TRA exclusively focuses on two attitudes that supposedly determine consumers' intention to use and subsequent usage of e-commerce site. Those are; consumers' favorable or unfavorable feelings about the behavior, which Fishbain and Ajzen (1975) term attitudes towards behavior, and subjective norms (the perceived opinions of other people about the particular behavior). Later, Ajzen (1991) extended the original TRA by adding perceived behavioral control (the perception of the availability or lack of the necessary resources needed to exhibit the behaviour in question). This extension of the TRA resulted in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which researchers examined when evaluating the direct motives driving consumers' e-commerce acceptance and use (e.g. Pavlou, 2002; Pavlou and Chai, 2002; George, 2004).

Introduced by Davis (1989), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is yet another extension of Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) TRA. Davis (1989), however, instead of adding attitudes to the TRA, replaced them with perceived usefulness (the belief that using a particular technology will enhance the consumers' exhibition of the behaviour in question) and perceived ease of use (the belief that using a particular technology will be free of effort). TAM, similar to TPB, has been extensively applied by researchers investigating consumers'

e-commerce acceptance and use. Those researchers have confirmed the high explanatory power of the model (e.g. Gefen and Straub, 2000; Gefen et al., 2003).

In spite of the good explanatory power of both TAM and TPB, neither model has been acknowledged as being superior. As a result researchers continue to introduce and test new theories and models in order to provide better insight into the direct factors stimulating consumers' e-commerce acceptance and use. To this end, researchers have adopted other models based on an attitudes-intentions-actual behaviour paradigm. For example, researchers have employed the Motivational Model by Davis et al. (1992) in order to assess the impact of intrinsic motivation on e-commerce acceptance (e.g. Ha and Stoel, 2009; Luo et al., 2011). Furthermore, in this research stream we can also observe researchers not only adopting existing frameworks but also combining and deconstructing them. For example, Taylor and Todd (1995) deconstructed variables of TPB. Even more, in order to reveal factors stimulating consumers' e-commerce acceptance and use researchers have developed extensions to the existing theories and frameworks. For example, Venkatesh and Davis (2000) have extended TAM to TAM2 and later Venkatesh and Bala (2008) developed yet another TAM extension, which they termed TAM3. Most recently in the efforts to assess consumers intentions and technology use Venkatesh et al. (2003) introduced the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which they claim explains 70% of the total variance in behavioural intentions and about 50% of usage. UTAUT has also been extended; in 2012 Venkatesh and colleagues introduced UTAUT2. Both UTAUT and UTAUT2 have been employed into the investigation of consumers' intentions to accept and use e-commerce sites.

All of those above-mentioned models have been successfully employed in the investigation of consumers' intention to use e-commerce sites and those sites usage. Nevertheless, there still seems to be a lack of agreement on the factors that truly stimulate consumers' e-commerce acceptance and use. This is because while some researchers recognized the key role of one model or a factor, others failed to identify its impact on e-commerce acceptance and use (see Gefen and Straub, 2000). This lack of agreement on which factors drive consumers' intentions to accept and use e-commerce sites has encouraged researchers to search for other reasons or factors which might play an important role in consumers' e-commerce acceptance. Among a range of factors studied (including demographic factors, economic factors etc.) trust have received significant research attention and in fact many researchers view trust as the 'preliminary condition to consumers' e-commerce acceptance' (Corbatt et al., 2003). In order to develop trust researchers proposed a number of trust-building techniques aimed at encouraging consumers to purchase as well as re-purchase from e-commerce sites (see Ranganathan and Ganapathy, 2002; Constantinides, 2002). This is because research has revealed that trust does not only impact consumers initial

intentions to use e-commerce sites but it also encourages continuous use and product re-purchase (Wen et al, 2011; Lee et al, 2011).

Consequently, building on the consumers' e-commerce acceptance and use research stream, researchers attention has shifted to consumers' re-purchase intention and continuous use of e-commerce sites (see Chiu et al, 2009). This was due to the realization that attracting new consumers without retaining existing ones is unprofitable and unsustainable for online retailers (Zhang et al, 2011). However, research reports (ibid) that despite significant effort to retain consumers less than one percent of consumers decide to re-purchase products from e-commerce retailers. Consumers' reluctance to re-purchase products online results in low consumer retentions rates, which researchers claim, is directly related to a lack of trust in e-commerce intangible environment (Wen et al, 2011; Lee et al, 2011).

The literature acknowledges that trust plays an important role in an online environment, which due to its intangible nature, suffers from a number of limitations. For example, e-commerce sites are unable to effect a face-to-face interaction between the consumer and the seller, which ultimately results in both parties' social and temporal separation (Ba and Pavlou, 2002). This buyer-seller separation makes it difficult to form relationships, which are preconditions for trust (Lin and Lekhawipat, 2014). Researchers recognize therefore that due to the intangible nature of the e-commerce marketplace and hence buyer-seller social separation, it is impossible, or at least very difficult, to establish relationships and subsequent trust. This results in consumers struggling to accept e-commerce and continuously use it. It can be concluded therefore, that temporal and social separation of buyers and sellers has a profound impact on e-commerce retail and may result in its failure. However, a more recent study by Ou et al. (2014) seems to challenge this assumption. Ou et al. (2014) claim that in the online environment buyers and sellers are able to establish close and pervasive interpersonal relationships, which they refer to as a swift form of 'guanxi'.

To date researchers have executed numerous studies investigating guanxi; each provides a different definition of the concept. Chen and Chen (2004) for example, define guanxi as an informal, particularistic and personal connection between two individuals. Similarly, Gu et al. (2008) refers to guanxi as social connections or networks, which they state, are used to exchange favours. Lee at al. (2001) agrees with Gu et al. (2008) stating that guanxi can be used to exchange favours between two parties. They however refer to guanxi as 'particularized and personalized relationships' rather than simply connections or networks between individuals. Those relationships are naturally established in an offline environment. Nevertheless, Ou et al. (2014) believe that those connections, networks or relationships between two parties can be formed not only offline but also a swift form can be developed online. They claim that those online relationships are temporal and are created when a buyer aims to complete a transaction (i.e. purchase product online). Such a temporal social

connection between online buyer and seller is termed 'swift guanxi'. Specifically, Ou et al. (2014) define swift guanxi as a buyer's perception of swiftly formed, informal, interpersonal relationships with an online seller. Ou et al. (2014) therefore contest previous research by arguing that buyer-seller relationships online can be established in a form of swift guanxi, which can facilitate trust and hence it plays an important role in consumers' e-commerce acceptance and its continuous use.

According to Ou et al. (2014), swift guanxi has three dimensions; mutual understanding, reciprocal favours and relationship harmony. Mutual understanding refers to 'buyers' and sellers' appreciation of each other's needs' that, they claim, can be achieved by effective communication. For example, a buyer and a seller can discuss and reach an agreement on pricing or delivery options that satisfy both parties. The second dimension of swift guanxi, reciprocal favours refers to 'positive beliefs from buyer's and sellers' interactions', which according to Ou et al. (2014) are 'magical openings to effective transactions'. In practice reciprocal favours refer to discounts offered to a buyer or small gifts, which may aid the conclusion of a transaction. Finally, the relationship harmony dimension of swift guanxi refers to mutual respect and conflict avoidance, which may reduce the perception of e-commerce sites' disadvantages (e.g. intangible nature of online environment, social and temporal buyer-seller separation etc.). Relationship harmony can be achieved when a seller shows interest in satisfying consumers' needs and solving problems encountered. For example, the seller can help solve delivery problems or show interest in consumer product satisfaction by offering after sale support. This, according to Ou et al. (2014), can be done via online conversation and effective communication at the time of e-commerce transaction. As such, Ou et al. (2014) echo previous research which argue that high quality buyer-seller communication is a key success factor for online transactions (Liu and Arnett, 2000)

Based on the above-stated dimensions of swift guanxi it appears that communication is the key to successful relationship formation online, i.e. guanxi. Ou et al. (2014) argue that by integrating computer-mediated communication tools, such as social media tools (e.g. instant messengers, message boxes and feedback systems) it is possible to facilitate repeated transactions with the seller by building swiftly formed relationships online. This was also supported by Kaplan and Haenlein (2009), who state that social media tools can be used to facilitate interpersonal connections between buyer and seller online. This is because via social media tools sellers can improve perception of interaction and presence (Fang et al., 2014). Specifically, via social media, buyers can communicate and interact with sellers in order to acquire the information needed to make purchase decision. Furthermore, via social media, sellers can enhance their presence, which refers to 'perception of intimacy or being close to the other person' (Lowry et al., 2009). This is a key component of guanxi (Ou et al., 2014). It can therefore be concluded that social media tools such as instant messengers, message boxes

and feedback systems are necessary in order to facilitate buyer-seller relationships online and trust. These are important in consumers' e-commerce product purchase and re-purchase decisions.

Currently, a number of e-commerce retailers use social media tools to communicate and interact with consumers. For example Chinese online shopping mall – TaoBao.com introduced *Ali Wang Wang*, which is used to facilitate buyer-seller communication online and hence it helps to establish swift guanxi. Despite swift guanxi being a Chinese oriented concept, it can be observed that many western retailers also utilize computer-mediated communication tools in order to increase perception of sellers' interactivity and presence. For example, British online fashion retailer Asos.com uses social media sites such as Twitter in order to effectively communicate with its online consumers. It can be argued therefore that western e-retailers also use computer-mediated communication tools to build temporal relationship with consumers. Chan et al. (2015a) notes that such buyer-seller interaction via computer-mediated communication technologies (e.g. social media sites) leads to the generation of potentially valuable data known as online data, social media data or big data.

Social media sites are defined as 'web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site' (Ellison, 2007). Furthermore, Chan et al. (2015a) states that social media refers to the applications that allow users to exchange their views online. Those applications built on Web 2.0 technologies allow their users, both sellers and consumers, effective communication online (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Both *Ali Wang Wang* utilized by TaoBao.com as well as Twitter used by Asos.com are examples of such applications. As already stated, communication via social media sites results in online content, also known as social media data (Akar and Topcu 2011). Chan et al. (2015a) argue that such content is a valuable source of data as it contains information and knowledge that are key to businesses operations. Furthermore, Ngai et al. (2009) argue that this information and knowledge extracted from social media data can be particularly useful in creating or adjusting business strategies. Chan et al. (2015a) and Chan et al. (2015b) confirmed this hypothesis by analyzing social media data in the context of new product development. This study aims to build on this research stream and demonstrate how companies can make effective use of the social media data resulting from the deployment of swift guanxi communication in their e-commerce strategies improvement. Therefore, for the purpose of this study we make a clear distinction between swift quanxi data and social media data. This is because as far as all swift guanxi data can be considered to be social media data, not all social media data can be classified as swift guanxi data. This is because, swift guanxi data

refers to data arising from personalized buyer-seller communication online, while social media data is a much broader dataset and it includes not only buyer-seller online exchanges but also consumer-to-consumer interactions online. Consequently, this study aims to extend swift guanxi research while examining swift guanxi data in order to improve e-commerce strategies.

Research methodology

This study builds on the approach to social media analysis proposed by Chan et al. (2015a). The approach by Chan et al. (2015a) was selected to drive data analysis, as to the best of our knowledge theirs is the only study that focuses on content of social media data rather than social media metrics. As such the approach allows for conversion of social media qualitative content into quantifiable factors. Furthermore, it also allows for the retrieval of relationships between individual factors, all of which results in the extraction of 'true value of social media data'. Consequently, by applying Chan et al.'s (2015a) approach the true value of swift guanxi data can be assessed. This value can directly inform retailers in their e-commerce strategy improvement.

Social media data based on the communications between a fashion retailer- Asos.com, and its consumers has been extracted by the means of NCapture, a plug-in for Nvivo 10. Twitter posts which were addressed to '@Asos_HeretoHelp' has been extracted for this study's analysis. This ensured that data used in this study refers to swift guanxi data, rather than any other buyer-seller communication via Twitter.

As it is with social media data, swift guanxi data is massive in terms of size and volume. Therefore, it is infeasible to analyze the entire database. Hence researchers (e.g. Chew et al., 2010) randomly select a sample of the larger dataset for detailed analysis. This current study adopts the same approach. Specifically, out of entire swift guanxi database over 4500 tweets were downloaded among which 1000 were randomly selected for the analysis. As indicated by Chan et al. (2015) the content analysis was carried out employing conceptual analysis and follow-up relational analysis, which allows for assessment of statistical cluster analysis. The conceptual analysis involves quantifying the occurrence of concepts in the dataset. This can be done on the basis of previously extracted concepts/codes from the literature according to which the data is coded. Alternatively, the so-called 'open coding' can be employed when researchers generate codes/concepts according to their occurrence in the dataset. In the case of this study open coding strategy was employed, as swift guanxi data seems to be explicit in nature. This is because swift guanxi communication refers to e-commerce transactions and factors that may affect it.

Next, following Chan et al. (2015) the relational analysis was conducted in order to assess relationships between individual concepts/codes. In order to examine those relationships statistically cluster analysis was carried out along with Pearson correlation analysis. The results of data analysis and discussion are presented next.

Data analysis and discussion

Following the random selection of swift guanxi data of 1000 tweets, 865 tweets were coded, while 135 tweets were excluded. This is because those tweets did not contain any 'useful' information concerning e-commerce transaction. Those tweets included graphical content or 'thank you' or 'ok' answer to seller lines of communication. The open coding analysis of the remaining tweets however revealed a number of concepts/codes, which directly concern e-commerce transaction. The full list of codes/concepts is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Codes/ concepts

Name	Frequency
Wrong items dispatched	18
Third party	18
Stock items	26
Returns	61
Refund	35
Price	4
Payment	8
Order dispatch info	36
Order change	6
Order placement	83
Missing order	8
Lost parcel	6
Item quality	23
Exchange	15
Discount	76
Damaged order	12
Delivery tracking	23
Delivery details change	29
Delivery	156
Consumer support	125
Cancel order	32
Account problem	11

As can be seen from Table 1, delivery issues were the most common problems consumers discussed with online retailer in the selected sample. Among all codes/concepts coded, delivery was mentioned over 150 times, which equals almost a fifth (18%) of all the tweets coded. While discussing delivery issues with the seller, consumers mainly express their

concerns with late deliveries or problems encountered with the 'next day delivery' option (see Twitter users 1–4)

> Twitter user 1; '*my order 179841529 is realllllly late. 3 days late*'
>
> Twitter user 2: '*Pay next day delivery and my parcel isn't here*'
>
> Twitter user 3: *Please am I still expecting the delivery on an order I made since 11/11/2015. Order number 177268584*'
>
> Twitter user 4: '*@Asos_HeretoHelp hey I've ordered some shoes and they've not turned up though it says they've been delivered? eek*'"

Another issue discussed during swift guanxi buyer-seller interaction on social media site is related to consumer support. Out of 865 codes, 125 codes/concepts (14.4%) referred to 'consumer support'. Specifically, consumers referring to consumer support demanded more effective and efficient communication with sales support officers. Hence, they asked for direct phone numbers, e-mail addresses or other effective and efficient means of communication with the consumer support team (see Twitter users 5–7).

> Twitter user 5: '*I have DM you and still awaiting a reply?*'
>
> Twitter user 6: '*there not just a email or phone contact I could use*"
>
> Twitter user 7: '*@ASOS_HeretoHelp I'm desperately trying to find a phone number to contact you. Where will I find this?*'

The third issue consumers discussed with sellers via social media tools is related to 'order placement'. Specifically, problems encountered with order placement has been mentioned 83 times by consumers, which refers to nearly 10% of all tweets analyzed (see Twitter users 8–10).

> Twitter user 8: '*@ASOS_HeretoHelp for some reason my order from about 24 hous ago is still processing. This is the first time this has happened. Any reason?*'
>
> Twitter user 9: '*@ASOS_HeretoHelp hi there I placed an order this morning and still haven't had any conformation email*'
>
> Twitter user 10: '*@ASOS_HeretoHelp I've has an order with status 'order processing' for 3 days. Will this be confirmed?*'

Those three main factors discussed during the open coding of swift guanxi data are directly related to other issues, which have been revealed during relational analysis and Pearson correlation coefficient test (see Table 2).

Table 2. Pearson correlatoin coefficient

Concept/ Code	Concept/ Code	Pearson correlation coefficient
Cancel order	Order placement	0.832886
Order placement	Order dispatch info	0.826157
Account problem	Consumer support	0.821343
Delivery tracking	Delivery	0.813056
Third party	Delivery	0.812869
Returns	Refund	0.810093
Delivery tracking	Order placement	0.798729
Order placement	Delivery	0.797582
Returns	Consumer support	0.796511
Discount	Delivery	0.794848
Discount	Consumer support	0.787825
Delivery	Consumer support	0.77367
Cancel order	Refund	0.771583
Item quality	Demerged order	0.771184
Delivery details change	Delivery	0.764973
Item quality	Consumer support	0.762296
Missing order	Consumer support	0.761294
Refund	Consumer support	0.749715
Account problem	Item quality	0.749498
Third party	Consumer support	0.743775
Returns	Delivery	0.741634
Account problem	Discount	0.741507
Account problem	Returns	0.741428
Order placement	Discount	0.739513
Delivery tracking	Cancel order	0.738651
Order placement	Refund	0.738482
Stock items	Consumer support	0.737926
Delivery tracking	Consumer support	0.735891
Order placement	Consumer support	0.733974
Lost parcel	Delivery	0.731961
Cancel order	Delivery	0.73172
Third party	Discount	0.727
Returns	Order placement	0.726116
Missing order	Delivery	0.724076
Returns	Discount	0.723475
Damaged order	Stock items	0.72103
Cancel order	Payment	0.716992
Order placement	Payment	0.716975
Item quality	Stock items	0.71217
Returns	Wrong items dispatched	0.712073
Cancel order	Consumer support	0.711201
Cancel order	Order dispatch info	0.711005
Delivery tracking	Discount	0.709939
Lost parcel	Third party	0.709386
Payment	Consumer support	0.708819
Delivery tracking	Returns	0.708652
Cancel order	Discount	0.708591
Delivery details change	Order placement	0.708328
Delivery tracking	Lost parcel	0.707389
Delivery tracking	Third party	0.70689
Exchange	Returns	0.706635
Discount	Payment	0.704612
Missing order	Returns	0.70284

Damaged order	Consumer support	0.701063

As observed in Table 2, order placement is highly correlated with problems related to order cancellation as well as with the possibility to obtain product dispatch information online. Specifically, the correlation coefficients of order placement with order cancellation and order dispatch information are 0.832 and 0.826 respectively. Furthermore, order placement issues are highly correlated with problems related to delivery; delivery tracking issues as well as product delivery problems. According to Pearson correlation coefficient test results order placement is also highly correlated with delivery tracking, with a correlation coefficient of 0.798, while order placement and problems related to delivery have a correlation coefficient of 0.787. Furthermore, it can be observed that delivery issues are not only correlated with problems related to order placement but also online delivery tracking problems and issues concerning delivery by a third party. Pearson correlation coefficient test revealed that delivery is highly correlated with both delivery tracking and third party, with highly coefficient values of 0.813 and 0.812 respectivelly. Finally, according to relational analysis the third most commonly coded factor, consumer support, is also highly correlated with the following factors: discount (correlation coefficient of 0.787), delivery (correlation coefficient of 0.773), account problems (correlation coefficient of 0.821) and returns (correlation coefficient of 0.796). The correlations between individual factors are visually presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Dendogram of the cluster analysis
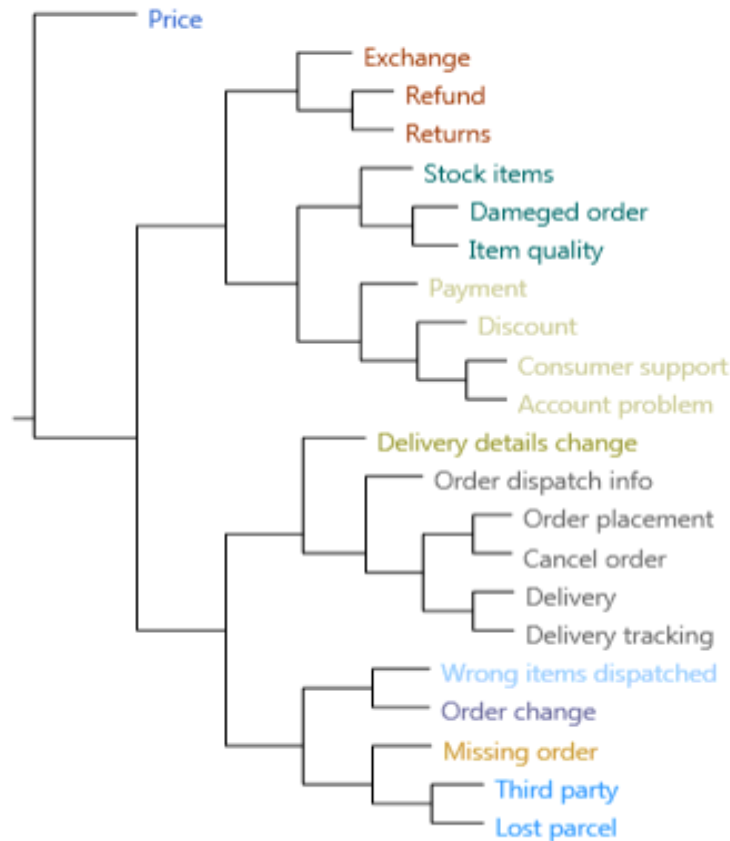
Conclusion

E-commerce is regarded as the fastest growing marketplace globally. In order to ensure continuous growth of e-commerce, retailers selling products online have to encourage consumers to purchase and also become return customers online. This is because previous research has recognised that only retaining consumers can ensure sustainable growth of e-business and hence the ultimate success of e-commerce strategies. However, achieving this is challenging due to the intangible nature of the e-commerce environment. The intangibility of the online market place results in retailers finding it difficult to establish relationships with consumers, build trust and hence motivate consumers to purchase and re-purchase online. Ou et al. (2014) however challenges this assumption. They argue that in the online enviornment buyers and sellers form a swift form of relationship which is termed swift guanxi. According to Ou et al. (2014) swift guanxi can be faciliated by computer-mediated communication tools such as social media sites, which increase seller interractivity and presence online and also allows for effective and efficient online communication. This study extends this stream of research by analysing the results of this communication online in order to identify the factors that are of concern to consumers when shopping online. Addressing such factors can result in e-commerce strategies improvement.

Specifically, data arising from buyer-seller online communication was extracted from the Twitter account of online fashion retailer, Asos.com. The data was analysed by adopting the approach suggested by Chan et al. (2015a). Specifically, swift guanxi data was analysed following the principles of content analysis and relational analysis. The results show a clear pattern of codes/concepts, which can be used by retailers in their e-commerce staretgies improvement.

The analysis of 865 randomly selected tweets suggests that consumers contact sellers while encountering problems related to delivery and order placement as well as when requesting contact information of consumer support teams. Retailers therefore should improve those three aspects in order to ensure that those problems are minimalised. Further analysis show that those three main concepts are highly correlated with other issues such as problems related to order cancellation, return and refund. Consumers are also expereincing problems with accessing products dispatch and shipping information, various account problems and deliveries by third party companies. It is recommended therefore that in the first instance companies should look into problems related to consumer experience with product delivery and order placement as well as issues related to access to consumer support teams. Once these are resolved, it is suggested that retailers closely monitor other factors highlighted by the content analysis and its relationship to the earlier stated three main issues. Significantly improvements in the identified areas could lead to retailers gaining consumer trust once consumers develop the view that their 'voices' are integral to the e-commerce strategies infrastructure.

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