

Title: Consumer Decision-Making of Slow Moving Consumer Goods in the Age of Multi-channels

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Summary:

Today's consumer decision-making is influenced by an increased adoption of a variety of channels, called multi-channel retailing, which can be defined as a retailer using a combination of channels for promoting and selling products and services. There has been an evolution from the two main channels: the website and the traditional store, to the introduction of mobile channels: smart phones and tablets. The purpose of this study was to address the gap of how the consumer decision-making in this context looks like and to attain an insight about the consumer decision-making process for Slow Moving Consumer Goods (SMCG) in the context of multi-channels. The study is positioned within three research streams: consumer decision-making, multi-channels and slow moving consumer goods. The investigated consumers are two groups: the Millennials and the Mothers of Millennials. The Millennials were chosen due to the fact that they will soon have great purchasing power and thus belong to the main target group for SMCG. The Mothers of Millennials were chosen since they are the current target group and thus interesting to study. The empirical material was mainly collected through at home interviews and in-store interviews. These two methods were supported by in-store observations.

We based our theoretical framework on Karimi's (2013) consumer decision-making model, which was adapted for multi-channel environment and SMCG. Our findings indicate that there are differences in the consumer decision-making process between Millennials and the Mothers of Millennials within a multi-channel context. The main differences were during the search and decision-making stage, the postpone stage, the appraisal stage and the post purchase stage. We also believe that the retailers will need to adapt omni-channels soon and that the consumers will consider interacting with a brand, and not an online or offline channel that is separated from other channels. Consumers perceive online channels with different retailers and brands very similar to each other, which is called prototypical website design. We believe that there will be an evolution of offline and online channels towards a more integrated experience, which successful retailers need to adopt in order for them to distinguish themselves and attain a competitive advantage.