

## Online Group Buying Factors – Conceptual Model for Understanding Consumer Value

Neringa Langvinienė and Vidmantė Guobytė

Kaunas University of Technology  
Donelaicio 73, LT-44029 Kaunas, Lithuania

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### Abstract

Online group buying business has been growing already for several years. The factors that are stimulating customers to register with more and more group sites, proposing products and services as well as the factors that are forcing to buy on these sites are discussed in the article. As traditional trade channels concede the market to e-trade, businesses and consumers move to the Internet market, too. Online group buying sites is the next step to sell products and services in the Internet. A few of online group buying sites are more successful, whereas a few of them are less. However, this way of the trade is becoming very popular among the Internet users in the global world.

Drawing on research literature analysis, the model of the factors to buy on the online group buying sites is shaped. The specificity of online group buying in comparison to other e-trade models is disclosed. The model is developed from the viewpoint of consumer and value appreciated for purchasing in OGB sites.

**Keywords:** online group buying (OGB), customer value, conceptual model, influencing factors.

### Introduction

Online group trade as a business model takes the urgent position in different kind of the products and services trade. Originating from the USA (Cheng, 2012), group sites took the strong position in Asia with a large market of the Internet users and entered the European market. The sellers in group buying sites expect to sell multiply items in a shorter than a usual time, to attract more and more users of the Internet, to stimulate to make a purchase quicker because of temporary proposal of different goods and services. Online group buying enables the traders to get economy of scale not only for products (Malik and Guptha, 2013), but for services, too. This is very important for the services what could not be stored as goods and should be sold modelling the consumer behaviour immediately. Kim et al. (2012; 2014) emphasize the opportunity to sell online the products of *low touch*, as well as *no touch* services. Products of low touch or services with no touch are products with less consumer influence on the final quality. That is why the consumers seek out of the best price for clearly defined quality.

Consumers hope to save their money buying cheaper because of negotiation power, to shorten the process of purchasing, to shape greater value (Kim et al., 2012; Sigala, 2013) too.

The rapid increase of information and communication technologies involved into different kinds of business is stimulating the group buying site business, too. More and more people are using the Internet to save their money (Perez-Hernandez and Sanchez-Mangas, 2011; Tsai et al., 2011), not to waste time for seeking information (Kim, 2010), to access online stores 24/7 (Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012), etc. Personal background (Chang et al., 2014) and experience to buy products and services online force consumers to think about new possibilities to purchase, such as group buying, which is even cheaper than other online purchased products or services. Virtual communication, chats, social networking sites are means for sharing the information among the Internet users. Pai and Tsai (2011) underline the increase of loyalty intentions on the ground of virtual community participation. Consumers in online group buying pool together their purchase with aim of lowering the price of a service or a product (Yin and Liu, 2012). The price of product or service offered in online group buying sites plays a very important role, according to the research by Erdogmus and Cicek (2011). However, price alone cannot be the only motive to buy in online group buying sites, prices for a product or service could be compared in the Internet space very quickly. The Internet space guarantees the opportunity to split the information as soon as possible, as well as recommendations of consumers who are already customers of online group sites.

E-WOM is another key determinant of online group buying behaviour (Cheng and Huang, 2013). E-WOM is beneficial for companies and offers them OGB as an effective marketing tool to compete (Munzel and Kunz, 2014). It is also beneficial for a society sharing experiences with other individuals' online supports the development of social capital as it helps to connect with peers and builds social contacts. Online shopping is a product of our modern life, which brings unrestricted services, comprehensive information about products, helps to save labour and time and costs less (Milong, 2011). Online group buyers normally take the recommendations and comments of previous users of the online group sites. This way of buying can be an opportunity to minimize risk of

buying online. Trust and risk perception act as important factors to buy online (Liu and Forsythe, 2010; Azam and Qiang, 2012; Faqih, 2013). Information and communication technologies and virtual networks act as a platform for any necessary information for making a decision about a purchase.

There is a lot of research carried out in order to identify the specificity of e-trade comparing to traditional ways of trade, its advantages and disadvantages for consumers; however, the research on the specificity of online group buying behaviour is quite fragmental. The phenomenon of online group buying assumes that consumers who buy in online group buying sites are loyal enough (Abdul-Muhmin, 2011). Impulsivity also plays its own role in forcing the intentions to buy in online group buying sites (Ling et al., 2010). Proposals are of temporal use and stimulate customers to take decision to buy quicker than in any other online store that can be visited for seeking information about the product or service (Ling et al., 2010). Repeated purchasing in OGB is more obvious than in e-trade generally and comes with loyalty (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2009). Consumers become to be loyal and buy everything in online group buying sites: leisure services, travel, clothes, products, home equipment, etc.

The research questions of this article address several issues: what factors are important for online group buyers, as online group buyers are usually Internet users and e-consumers already? What value consumers expect and appreciate in online group buying sites? Does it differ (or is similar) in comparison to the general e-trade value?

The aim of the paper is to disclose the factors of intentions to buy in online group buying sites and prepare the behaviour model of online group buying from the perspective of consumer value.

The methods of the research are literature analysis. A graphical simulation for the model of online group buying consumer value is used.

The first part of the article discloses the specificity of online group buying as one of the business models used in the Internet space. The second part presents the value for a consumer who uses online group buying sites. The model of factors beyond the intent to buy in online group buying sites from the perspective of consumers' value is developed and limitations of the model are discussed in the third part of the article.

### Online group buying: literature review

Online group buying (further referred to as OGB) is one of online shopping models with very rapidly growing popularity. The phenomenon of OGB is not limited to any specific product or services industry, to the geographical area (Chen, 2012). Group buying has been in vogue for a long time, but the World Wide Web made it much more practical than before due to the wave of innovative online market-based mechanisms (Chang et al., 2014). Even though online shopping values and limits are analysed in the research literature, the specificity of online group buying remains a relatively obscure area.

Cheng and Huang (2013) quote Kauffman and Wang saying that online group buying unites customers in the Internet and enhance their bargaining power against the sellers in order to lower the price. Special discount for products and services is the main feature of online group buying comparing to general online buying.

Online group buying is a way for business to attract the potential consumers in a very short time. It may be a new channel to sell the same product, trying to promote it very quickly (Kim et al., 2014). This is why dual value creation for the consumer and the seller is provided. In a predetermined time buyers succeed to form a group that gets product or service at the same discounted price. A determined time duration for the validity of price forces the consumer to take decision quicker than usual.

Online shopping has many advantages (Ling et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2014): a) online shopping reduces dramatically the search effort for price and product information, since it can be done just with a few clicks; b) efficiencies in the form of increased market access and information, range and availability of products or services at competitive prices, easy comparison across vendors; c) flexible operational timings, across geographical boundaries. Multiple buyers can form coalitions with each other on the world wide web in a short period of time and buy goods at a discount price or share freight costs even if they are unacquainted (Chang et al., 2014). Moshrefjavadi et al. (2012) quote Karayanni that reasons for shopping online have been cited for time efficiency and avoidance of crowds.

More advantages of e-commerce for consumers are as follows:

1. Convenience:
  - better use of consumer's time (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011; Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012);
  - capability for 24 hour per day, 7 days per week shopping (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011; Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012; Chang et al., 2014);
  - better opportunity to save time and labour costs (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011; Milong, 2011; Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012);
  - benefit (Ling et al., 2010).
2. Product variety:
  - wide range of the products and services (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011).
3. Purchase surroundings:
  - fun to buy a product or service online (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011);
  - low pricing on the Internet or even some services could be obtained for free (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011; Ling et al., 2010);
  - no push from company's personnel to buy something (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011).
4. Comprehensive information:
  - ability to collect detailed information on product or services (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011; Milong, 2011);
  - easier ability to compare prices offered by different sites (Bagdoniene and Zembyte, 2011; Milong, 2011).

Online shopping also has disadvantages. The disadvantages of e-commerce for consumers are as follows:

1. Risk:
  - improper product or service may be delivered (Bagdoniene and Zemblyte, 2011; Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012);
  - product return information sometimes is unclear (Bagdoniene and Zemblyte, 2011);
  - unsecure payment (for example, necessity to give credit card number) (Bagdoniene and Zemblyte, 2011; Milong, 2011; Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012);
  - shipping costs are too high (Milong, 2011).
2. Time and socialization:
  - preference to buy in the local shops, as consumers don't like to wait for the product or service delivery (Bagdoniene and Zemblyte, 2011);
  - preference to buy in the local shops, as consumers like to socialize with the shop personnel (Bagdoniene and Zemblyte, 2011);
3. Sense:
  - difficulty to decide to purchase based only on the description, specification or a view of product or service (cannot see and inspect the real product in advance) (Ling et al., 2010; Bagdoniene and Zemblyte, 2011; Milong, 2011; Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012).

There are also some advantages of e-commerce for suppliers. Motivating factors of e-commerce for suppliers are as follows:

1. Low costs, flexible operating form:
  - merchants can save a lot of used in the purchasing of facilities or renovation, instead just small amount of money will be taken for web design and maintenance (Milong, 2011);
  - group-buying for the specific product or service can be quickly built and removed (Gou et al., 2013);
  - new channel, new online promotion form for the service or product (Gou et al., 2013).
2. OGB can break the geographical constraints from the traditional group buying:
  - consumers with common interests can get together easily through the Internet without the limitation of members or district (Chang et al., 2014).
3. Strong potential for the market development and considerable economic returns:
  - shopping, which is relatively low before, has the tendency of clearly growth (Milong, 2011).
4. New distribution channel for the same product:
  - OGB site could be a way to sell the product, what is already sold traditionally, new promotion idea (Gou et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2014; Sigala, 2013).
5. E-WOM as tool:
  - marketing tool for adds (Sigala, 2013);
  - shopping online enables to share the information, experience among many potential customers belonging to the social networks;

- support for other consumers through recommendation;
- support for other service provider through recommendation, venting positive feelings (Munzel and Kunz, 2014).

Thus, there are a lot of advantages of e-commerce for customers. Three important factors, what impact the consumer choice of on-line shopping are as follows: the online shopping utility, the consumers' perceived product and service risks (perceived privacy protection, perceived security protection), consumer and e-vendors qualities (consumer disposition to trust, e-vendors' positive reputation) (Azam and Qiang, 2012). There are also some disadvantages, such as unsecure payment information (the necessity to give credit card number) or shipping costs are too high. It should be noticed, that the lower the perceived risk for purchase, the higher the propensity for online shopping (Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012).

A few shopping motives are more utilitarian, whereas others are more hedonic. Both hedonic and utilitarian motives drive visits to online stores. However, utilitarian motives, including convenience, product selection, product information, prices, and promotion, have more salient effect on the online buying than hedonic motives such as new experiences, freedom and control (Liu and Forsythe, 2010). Motivation is defined as the basic driving force behind all actions of the consumer (Chen, 2012).

The act of online group buying is characterized by the dual value creation philosophy of marketing that both sellers and buyers benefit through it. OGB has a lot of advantages (Table 1).

There are a lot of advantages or motivating factors to use OGB (Table 1). The most important motivating factor is low cost.

It is also important that using OGB it is easy to find people in a short period of time, to share freight costs and to buy in bulk.

Website quality is also important enough or motivating factor in the OGB. In order to ensure the quality of the web sites, firstly, designers should improve the user friendliness of OGB systems, making them both easier to use and more accessible to every potential customer. Secondly, to sustain a successful group buying website, attention must be paid to the enhancement of user attitudes towards virtual community.

Virtual communities should focus on bringing people together to interact through chat rooms and forums, where they can share personal information and ideas about various OGB topics (Tsai et al., 2011). Thus, one of the most important motivating factors for consumers is social influence, especially E – WOM (electronic word of mouth).

Virtual community participation helps to reduce the risks for the consumers and increased confidence in the e-retailers (Pai and Tsai, 2011; Munzel and Kunz, 2014). They can share positive and negative information on the product or service. Thus, OGB can be explained from the social capital perspective, which is positively associated with the likelihood of the OGB's success. The virtual community is composed of communication platform and social network through which people with the same

Table 1

**OGB motivating factors for the consumers**

Factors		Authors											
		Yin and Liu (2012)	Tsai et al. (2011)	Erdogmus and Cicek (2011)	Chen (2012)	Liu and Forsythe (2010)	Pai and Tsai (2011)	Cheng and Huang (2013)	Moshrefjavadi et al. (2012)	Kim (2010)	Kim et al. (2012)	Chang et al. (2014)	Munzel and Kunz (2014)
Profit	Low price	+	+	+	+							+	+
	Discount amount			+									
	Perceived quality of the services or products			+									
	Convenience				+	+						+	
	Availability					+							
Product information	Broad product or service selection					+							+
Website quality	System quality attitude		+						+				
	Information quality attitude		+						+				
	Service quality attitude		+						+				
Enjoyment	Exploration of new activities			+						+		+	+
	Seeking joy and variety			+									+
Usefulness	The validity period of the campaign			+		+							
	Ease of use					+			+		+		
	Value				+								
	Emotion				+								
	Different offers each day			+									
Social influence	Usefulness		+										
	Virtual communities (E-WOM)	+	+						+		+	+	
Convenience	Innovativeness/novelty			+					+				
	Being able to reach all the campaign deals at the same time from one intermediary			+		+				+	+	+	
Psychological factors	Trust and reputation of the services provider		+	+				+	+	+	+		
	Emotional motivations				+								
	Satisfaction							+			+		
	Extraordinary nature			+									
Demographic factors	Age											+	
	Gender			+								+	
	Education			+								+	

Table 2

**OGB demotivating factors for the consumers**

Factors		Authors		
		Erdogmus and Cicek (2011)	Liu and Forsythe (2010)	Moshrefjavadi et al. (2012)
Lack of reliability	Financial risk			+
	Non-delivery risk			+
	Dishonest behaviour of the supplier	+		
Product evaluation	Preliminary assessment of quality cannot match the expectation		+	
Channel risk	Credit card number may not be secure		+	
	Personal information may not be kept		+	

interests and objectives can interact with one another in cyberspace. A virtual community can provide a viable trading and marketing platform that enables commercial interaction between the sellers, the buyers and the intermediaries (Yin and Liu, 2012). OGB also has some disadvantages for the consumers (Table 2).

As Table 2 shows, there are some demotivating factors for customers such as dishonest behavior of the supplier. For example, dishonest behavior may happen when coupon buyers cannot register for the service until the end of coupon expire time. Also, one of the most demotivating factors is channel risk – a credit card number may not be

secure. In addition, product evaluation is also one of the demotivating factors: customers cannot try on the clothing online. This is why preliminary assessment of the quality of the product cannot match the settled expectation. In addition, a short time to buy the product or service with the discount is also one of the most demotivating factors.

It is also important to mention the main OGB advantages for the suppliers (Table 3). Virtual communities are one of the motivating factors for the suppliers. Generally, the virtual communities of transaction contribute to the business value creation in three ways:

- firstly, the information generated with virtual communities enables the vendors or enterprises to adjust their product or services to the consumers' demands, needs and expectations;
- secondly, efficient mouth - to - mouth (WOM) marketing enables the virtual communities to serve as well-organized marketing targets for the sellers (Munzel and Kunz, 2014);
- and thirdly, a large purchase power exists in the virtual communities, representing the tremendous opportunity to form buying groups at a low costs. (Yin and Liu, 2012).

Thus, such virtual communities act as the function of the main source of the social influences in this process, since they will influence the online shopping decisions (Tsai et al., 2011). Also the OGB is beneficial for the merchants, because, for example, for the firms going through hard times, such as a recession, such discount floods in new customers and make sales (Erdogmus and Cicek, 2011). Chen (2012) stressed that the majority of the sellers would like to assure that they could sell their products in large bulk in the return for a little cheaper cost. Since the sellers are integrated to many consumers at one time rather than from each individual consumer, comments and feedbacks are easier to manage. That is, the comments and feedback can be considered as a consensus opinion from the group of consumers.

### Value for online group buying customer

The most preferred service in the OGB websites of the customers are restaurants coupons usually. People buy at least one restaurant campaign coupon through the online group buying. Sport activities, vacation, personal care services, cinema, and concert tickets also are bought often enough. The consumers were interested in buying the recreational activities and services through the online group buying rather than products (Erdogmus and Cicek, 2011).

It is important to mention the factors the most motivating people to buy in online group are buying. The most motivating factors are as follows:

- low price;
- large discount (people take part in the group purchase that is why they have the negotiation power);
- validity period of the coupon;
- sharing information and experience with other potential or previous customer (on Twitter, Facebook, blog's, etc.);
- better use of time (the faster access to information, the consumers can select and purchase goods at any time in anywhere);
- 24- hour per day, 7 days per week shopping capability;
- online shoppers enjoy using the OGB website because it is easy to use;
- online shoppers have fun performing a given task on a system that is easy to use;
- new experience (OGB creates exciting and surprising shopping activity) creation;
- consumers are faced with different offers every day;
- large speed of inspection of new offers.

Table 3

**OGB advantages/motivating factors for the suppliers**

Factor		Authors			
		Yin and Liu (2012)	Erdogmus and Cicek (2011)	Chen (2012)	Chang et al. (2014)
Economy scale	OGB sites may help generate the sales faster and more voluminous manner than selling the items individually	+			+
	Sell product in large bulk in return for a little cheaper cost			+	+
Personalized sales	New customers/ make sell		+		
	OGB provides the value of comments and feedback to the sellers			+	
Break of geographical constrains	Consumers with common interests without the limitation of members or district				+

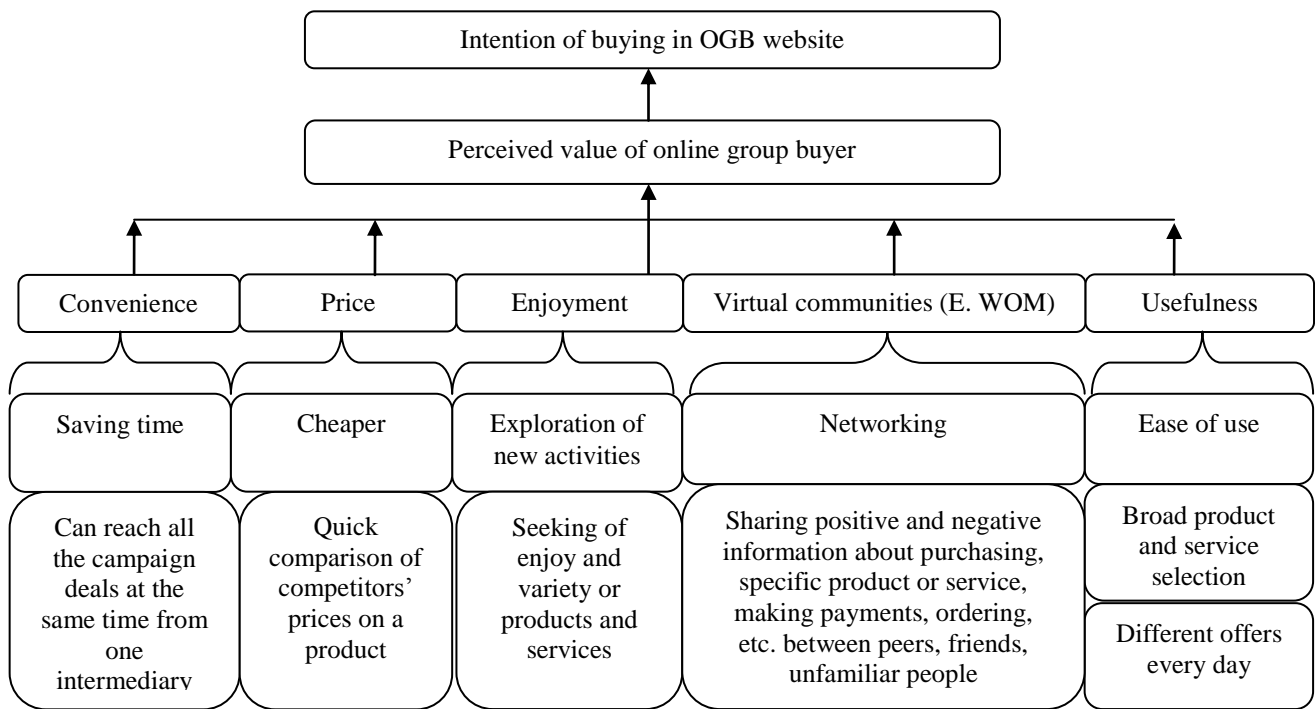


Figure 1. The conceptual model of online group buying value (contributed by authors)

To sum up, there are a lot of motivating factors which give value for the online group buying consumer, such as low price; it is also easier to obtain larger discounts when more people take part in a group purchase (Tsai et al., 2011). Erdogmus (2011) mentioned more motives, which give value for the consumers: they can be listed as exploration of new activities and places, seeking joy and variety, trial of non-routine activities, etc.

### Model development and discussion

The research model used in this article (Figure 1) was developed to explore what factors give the value for OGB consumers.

The model combines various factors, such as convenience, price, enjoyment, virtual communities and usefulness. They are the main factors influencing group shopping online user's intention to buy in group buying portals.

As seen in Figure 1, online group buying perceived value influences a number of the factors: *convenience*, what involves such factors as – saving time and opportunity to reach all the campaign deals at the same time from one intermediary; *low price* of the product or services, as well as quick comparison of competitors prices on the same product; *enjoyment*, which involves exploration of new activities and seeking joy and variety; virtual communities such as *E – WOM*; and *usefulness*, which involve broad product or service selection, different offers each day and ease of use online group websites.

There are several limitations of this model:

1. There are a lot of factors affecting online group buyer consumer's behavior. The factors what are influencing online group buying consumer's behavior are not examined in this article, as this model of

online group buying value was not tested empirically. The authors are going to test it in further research.

2. The model is not adopted for specific products or services. To examine this model for any specific services or product customer behavior analysis, any other motivating factors could be added (tested).

### Concluding remarks

There are a lot of similarities in e-customer and online group buying sites' customer behaviour. The same important motivating factors for purchasing online can be pointed out: convenience to buy 24/7, availability of wide information about the products and services online, socialization and E-WOM tool, innovativeness and novelty in the purchasing form, etc. There are some demotivating factors in the OGB similar to e-trade too: risk of losing personal data, uncertainty about the product or service paying in advance and consuming only after that, etc.

There is some specificity in the online group buying customer behaviour, as the OGB sites provide better price. OGB customers have negotiation power because of purchasing in bulk. Thus, the best offer of the price is one of the most important motivating factors for OGB consumers. OGB consumers usually have a possibility to reduce the financial risk and the risk of uncertainty about the product or service, as they are able to chat with other OGB users, members of social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter, and blog's, etc., to share bad or good experience. However, specific amount of products or services should be purchased. Otherwise, the proposition on the OGB site becomes not valid. Making payment for a service or product does not guarantee the purchase if not all coupons for a specific offer are spread out in OGB. Temporarily duration of the proposition of OGB can also

be referred to as one of disadvantages of OGB in comparison to other online buying sites. Consumers usually have not enough time for making decision about purchasing, as they see online how many coupons for the service or product is left. Thus, they are punished to take decision impulsive enough without long contemplation.

The most important motivating factors for OGB customers are the following: 1) convenience to seek for information, to order, make payment, etc., 2) competitive price, which cannot be so attractive in traditional e-sites; 3) enjoyment in finding new solutions, supply of the products or services, new chains for purchasing, novelties; 4) virtual communities, E-WOM, socialization that enables individuals to feel themselves member of consumers' society; 5) usefulness in getting a more recent information about new offers for the products or services.

Further research should include empirical survey in testing the motivating factors to buy in OGB sites. Specific services or products consumers' behaviour can also be examined.

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## Grupinio apsipirkimo internetu veiksniai – konceptualus vartotojų vertės suvokimo modelis

Santrauka

Grupinis apsipirkimas internetu kaip verslo modelis užima gana svarbų vaidmenį prekiaujant skirtingais produktais ar paslaugomis. Kilę iš JAV (Cheng, 2012) grupiniai tinklapiai užima svarbią Azijos interneto vartotojų rinkos dalį ir jau žengia į Europos rinką. Pardavėjai grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose tikisi gausiai parduoti savo produkciją per trumpesnę nei įprasta laiką, pritraukti vis daugiau ir daugiau interneto vartotojų, motyvuoti priimti greitesnius sprendimus pirkti dėl laikino paslaugų ir produktų pasiūlos galiojimo. Grupiniai apsipirkimai internetu leidžia pardavėjams įgyti masto ekonomiją ne tik produktams (Malik & Guptha, 2013), bet taip pat ir paslaugoms. Tai ypač svarbu paslaugoms, kurios negali būti sandėliuojamos kaip kad prekės ir turi būti parduotos modeliuojant vartotojų elgseną nedelsiant. Kim ir kt. (2012; 2014) pabrėžia galimybę parduoti internetu produktus, kurie yra mažai apčiuopiami, taip pat ir paslaugas, kurios nėra apčiuopiamos. Produktų, turinčių mažą apčiuopiamumo galimybę ir paslaugų, kurios apskritai nėra

apčiuopiamos, kokybė yra mažiau įtakojama vartotojų. Štai kodėl vartotojai ieško geriausios kainos aiškiai apibrėžtai kokybei. Vartotojai taip pat tikisi sutaupyti savo lėšų įsigydami pigiau dėl įgytų derybinių pozicijų, trumpesnio pirkimo proceso, didesnės vertės (Kim ir kt., 2012; Sigala, 2013).

Staugus informacinių ir komunikacinių technologijų augimas, kurį panaudoja skirtingos verslo rūšys, stimuliuoja ir grupinio apsipirkimo portalų verslą. Vis daugiau žmonių naudojami internetu, siekdami sutaupyti savo pinigų (Pérez-Hernandez ir Sanchez-Mangas, 2011; Tsai ir kt., 2011), negaišti laiko ieškodami informacijos (Kim, 2010), prisijungdami prie internetinės parduotuvės 24/7 (Moshrefjavadi et al., 2012) ir pan. Individo kvalifikacija (Chang et al., 2014), patirtis pirkti produktus ir paslaugas internete verčia vartotojus pagalvoti apie naujas galimybes apsipirkti, pavyzdžiui, grupiniuose portaluose, kas yra dar pigiau nei kituose tinklapiuose įsigyti prekes ar paslaugas. Virtualus bendravimas, pokalbiai, socialiniai tinklai yra priemonės pasidalinti informacija tarp interneto vartotojų. Pai ir Tsai (2011) pabrėžia lojalumo intencijų padidėjimą, kurį sąlygoja dalyvavimas socialiniuose tinkluose. Vartotojai grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose sujungia savo perkamąją galią siekdami sumažinti paslaugos ar produkto kainą (Yin ir Liu, 2012). Produktu ar paslaugos, siūlomos grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose, kaina vaidina itin svarbų vaidmenį, remiantis Erdogmus ir Cicek (2011) tyrimais. Tačiau kaina viena negali būti vieninteliu motyvu pirkti grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose, kainos produktui ar paslaugai internete gali būti palyginamos itin greitai. Interneto platybės garantuoja galimybes paskleisti informaciją kiek įmanoma greičiau, taip pat ir vartotojų, kurie jau yra grupinių apsipirkimo portalų vartotojai, rekomendacijas.

Elektroninė žodinė reklama (angl. *e-WOM*) yra kitas svarbiausias grupinių apsipirkimo portalų elgsenos determinantas (Cheng ir Huang, 2013). Elektroninė žodinė reklama yra naudinga kompanijoms ir pasiūlo joms grupinio apsipirkimo portalus kaip efektyvią marketingo priemonę konkurencijai (Munzel ir Kunz, 2014). Tai taip pat vertinga bendruomenei pasidalinant patirtimi su kitais individualais ir tai padeda užmegzti socialinius kontaktus su kolegomis, bendraamžiais. Apsipirkimas internetu yra mūsų modernaus gyvenimo produktas, kuris sukuria neribotas paslaugas, visapusišką informaciją apie produktus, padeda taupyti laiką ir darbo kaštus ir kainuoja mažiau (Milong, 2011). Grupinio apsipirkimo pirkėjai paprastai renka atsiliepimus, komentarus iš ankstesnių grupinių tinklapių internete vartotojų. Šis apsipirkimo būdas gali būti galimybė sumažinti riziką pirkti internete, pasitikėjimas ir rizikos suvokimas veikia kaip svarbūs veiksniai pirkti internete (Liu ir Forsythe, 2010; Azam ir Qiang, 2012; Faqih, 2013). Informacinės ir komunikacinės technologijos, virtualūs tinklai veikia kaip platforma bet kokiai informacijai, kuri mums būtina darant sprendimus pirkti.

Esama nemažai tyrimų identifikuojant elektroninės prekybos specifika palyginti su tradicine prekyba, jos pranašumus ir trūkumus vartotojui, tačiau tyrimai, analizuojantys grupinio apsipirkimo internete elgseną, gana fragmentiški. Grupinio apsipirkimo internete fenomenas grindžiamas vartotojais, kurie yra pakankamai lojalūs pirkti grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose (Abdul-Muhmin, 2011). Impulsyvumas taip pat vaidina savo rolę verčiant daryti skubotus sprendimus pirkti grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose (Ling et al., 2010). Pasiūlymai pirkti yra aktyvūs ribotą laiką. Tai verčia priimti sprendimą pirkti greičiau nei kitoje internetinėje parduotuvėje, kurią galima aplankyti ieškant informacijos apie prekę ar paslaugą (Ling et al., 2010). Pakartotiniai pirkimai grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose yra dažnesni nei bendrai elektroninėje prekyboje ir didina lojalumą (Bagdoniene ir Zembyte, 2009). Vartotojai tampa lojalūs ir perka viską grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose: pradedant nuo laisvalaikio paslaugų, kelionių, baigiant drabužiais, produktais, namų apyvokos reikmenimis ir pan.

Moksliniame straipsnyje formuluojami tyrimo klausimai: kokie veiksniai yra svarbūs grupinio apsipirkimo portalo pirkėjui, kadangi grupinio apsipirkimo portalo vartotojas jau ir taip jau yra interneto vartotojas ir e-vartotojas? Kokios vertės tikisi vartotojas ir ką vertina grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose? Ar ji skiriasi (o gal yra panaši) su bendra e-prekybos verte, ir pan.?

Straipsnio tikslas yra identifikuoti ketinimų pirkti grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose veiksnius bei parengti vartotojų vertės grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose elgsenos modelį.

Tyrimo metodai yra mokslinės literatūros analizė ir sintezė, lyginamoji analizė. Grafinis vaizdavimas buvo panaudotas pristatant grupinio apsipirkimo internete vertės vartotojui modelį.

Pirmoje straipsnio dalyje siekiama atskleisti grupinio apsipirkimo internete kaip vieno verslo modelių specifika. Antroje straipsnio dalyje pristatoma vertė vartotojui, kuri įtakoja vartotojo sprendimus pirkti grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose. Veiksnių, įtakojančių pirkti grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose, vertės požiūriu modelis pateikiamas trečioje dalyje, kaip ir modelio apribojimai. Straipsnis baigiamas išvadomis.

Straipsnio rezultatai parodė, jog egzistuoja gana daug panašumų tarp e-vartotojo ir grupinio apsipirkimo portalo vartotojų elgsenos. Analogiški motyvuojantys veiksniai pirkti internete ir grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose: patogumas pirkti 24/7; plačios informacijos apie produktus ir paslaugas internete prieinamumas; socializacija ir elektroninė žodinė reklama kaip įrankis; novatoriškumas ir apsipirkimo formos naujovės; ir pan. Demotyvuojantys veiksniai pirkti grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose taip pat panašūs į e-prekybos: rizika netekti asmeninių duomenų kontrolės, nežinomybė apie produktą ar paslaugą perkant iš anksto ir vartojant tik po to, ir pan.

Galima išskirti tam tikrą specifika grupinio apsipirkimo portalų vartotojų elgsenoje, kadangi grupinio apsipirkimo portalai siūlo geresnę kainą. Grupinio apsipirkimo portalų vartotojai turi derybinių galių dėl to, jog pirkimai įgauna didesnį mastą. Taigi geriausias kainos pasiūlymas yra vienas iš svarbiausių motyvuojančių veiksnių grupinio apsipirkimo portalų vartotojams. Grupinio apsipirkimo portalų vartotojai turi galimybę sumažinti finansinę riziką ir nežinomybę apie produktą ar paslaugą riziką, kadangi jie gali kalbėtis su kitais grupinio apsipirkimo portalų vartotojais, socialinių tinklų, tokių kaip Facebook, Twitter ir blog'ai dalyviais, dalintis gera ar bloga patirtimi. Tačiau tam tikras produktų ar paslaugų skaičius turi būti nupirktas. Priešingu atveju – grupinio apsipirkimo portalo pasiūlymas tampa negaliojančiu. Apmokėjimas už paslaugą ar prekę negarantuoja jų įsigijimo, jeigu nėra realizuojami visi kuponai grupinio apsipirkimo portale konkrečiam pasiūlymui. Laikinas pasiūlymų grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose galiojimas gali būti įvardintas kaip vienas grupinio apsipirkimo portalų trūkumų palyginti su kitais internetiniais puslapiams. Vartotojai paprastai neturi pakankamai laiko priimti sprendimus pirkti, kadangi jie mato, kiek tuo metu yra likę kuponų prekei ar paslaugai. Jie spaudžiami daryti pakankamai impulsyvius sprendimus be ilgų apsvarstymų.

Patys svarbiausi motyvuojantys veiksniai grupinio apsipirkimo portalų vartotojams yra tokie kaip: 1) patogumas ieškoti informacijos, užsakyti, daryti mokėjimus ir pan.; 2) konkurencinga kaina, kuri negali būti ne tokia patraukli kituose tradiciniuose elektroniniuose portaluose; 3) malonumas rasti naujų pasiūlymų, produktų ir paslaugų pasiūlos, naujų apsipirkimo kanalų, naujovių; 4) virtuali bendruomenė, elektroninė žodinė reklama, socializacija, kuri leidžia individui pasijusti vartotojiškos bendruomenės dalimi; 5) naudingumas gaunant naujausią informaciją apie pasiūlymus pirkti produktus ar paslaugas.

Tolimesni tyrimai turėtų apimti empirinius tyrimus, testuojant motyvuojančius veiksnius pirkti grupinio apsipirkimo portaluose. Taip pat galėtų būti atliekami specifinių produktų ir paslaugų vartotojų elgsenos tyrimai.

*Reikšminiai žodžiai:* grupinis apsipirkimas internetu, vertė vartotojui, konceptualus modelis.

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