Phone Comparison Website

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# Abstract

This literature review was written to compare research papers and studies based on the consumer comparison websites sector.

In this study, the author investigates previous research and experiments that have been conducted in the comparison websites sector and a brief look at recommendation methods. Recommendation methods can be used to provide a more tailored and useful ranking feedback for consumers.

# Introduction

Consumer websites have become an important tool for comparing product options. Recent studies have found several problems with existing websites such as suitable result comparison methods and the lack of trust consumers have in comparison websites. A recent study reported that consumers didn’t trust comparison websites, they believed they might be shown a product that would generate the website a large commission rather than one suited to their needs.

# Literature review

## Consumer trust

Internet comparison websites allow users to save search time, by making immediate comparisons between products with features the consumer specifies to suit their needs. For a consumer to get an accurate result, the comparisons websites need to compare the whole market and return a ranking based on search parameters set by the consumer. Comparison websites must have access to up to date information.

Some surveys carried out have reported back that consumers do not perceive comparison sites as fully trustworthy. “In 2009/ 2010, the UK OFT carried out a market study into advertising of prices. This included a survey by Ipsos MORI (a leading market research company) of price comparison website usage. ICSs themselves were also invited to submit their views during the study (Gamper, 2012)”.

According to the survey 66% of consumers have used a comparison website, but did not always purchase through the website. Only 15% used a comparison website and then made a purchase. 19% have never used a comparison website. While two thirds of consumers will use one or more comparison sites. “A “Which? Money” satisfaction survey carried out in November 2009 found that two thirds of consumers thought “they would be presented with the products that make the websites the most commission.” This indicates that consumers in the survey did not trust ICSs to make an independent and unbiased comparison. (Gamper, 2012)”

Consumers trust would be greatly improved in a comparison website, if comparison sites were not biased by considerations such as commissions. One possible solution maybe to charge consumers a percentage of the saving they make on a sale through the website.

## Recommendation method

A rank-order information method allows consumer to select specifications and rank them in order of most desired to allow for a more personal feedback. An experimental study was conducted to compare the performance of several recommendations methods. The experiment concluded that methods taking personalized weights into account provide greater accuracy and higher satisfaction rates than others. (Sang, Byeong 2011).

By allowing consumers to use weighted specifications the comparison websites provide a more personal result tailored to individuals. For example, a user may value a decent camera more important the price of the phone itself weighted specifications would help find the consumer a product that they may not have previously thought suitable.

## Credibility of a comparison website.

In a study of fifty-three participants found that the credibility of a rating website is a critical factor for consumers. Credibility can be achieved through a large number of customers reviews. A large review feedback section would reassure consumers if the information provided by the website was credible. As well as having a large number of customers reviews, the study also recommended displaying reviews from recognized experts. They concluded that customization or control of information ranks second to credibility for the participants. The study reinforces the notion that saving time and effort is important as an important motive in searching for information online. (Dabholkar, A. 2015)

The study reaffirmed the notion that consumers want to avoid information overload when going to comparison website types. When it came to making a choice some users of comparison websites were willing to settle to avoid information overload and have fewer alternatives.

# Conclusion

To provide consumers with a comparison website they believe they can trust, a website must be clear on how it generates a profit. A suitable way to gain the consumers trust and generate a profit would be to reassure the consumer that the website does not take commission and is therefore unbiased when providing feedback. A website can generate profit by taking a percentage of the price a consumer saves when using the site to make a purchase.

When providing consumers with feedback on selected items, a more personalized feedback is generated when using weighted specifications to compare the mobile phones with.

# References

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