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DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, COOPERATION AND GLOBAL INTEGRATION IN THE NEW NORMAL

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TABLE OF CONTENT

APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY AND BIG DATA IN THE FIELDS OF FINANCE, ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

| | |
|--|-----|
| BANK RUN AND SILICON VALLEY BANK | 1 |
| Lam Dang Xuan Hoa, Ho Minh Khoa, Huynh Vo Nhat Linh | 1 |
| BIG DATA AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS..... | 14 |
| Le Thi Minh, Vo Trung Hau | 14 |
| THE EFFICIENCY OF THE INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEM IN RISK MANAGEMENT AT THE NAM A COMMERCIAL JOINT STOCK BANK | 23 |
| Truong Thanh Loc, Tran Ngoc Thanh..... | 23 |
| VIETNAM - AUSTRALIA ECONOMIC AND TRADE COOPERATION IN THE NEW NORMAL: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR VIETNAMESE INVESTORS..... | 30 |
| Nhu Nguyen Phuc Quynh*, Anh Nguyen Thi Nguyet, Duy Nguyen Anh | 30 |
| IMPACTS OF CREDIT GROWTH AND CREDIT RISK ON THE PROFIT OF VIETNAM JOINT STOCK COMMERCIAL BANKS | 43 |
| Dao Le Kieu Oanh*, Tran Thi Huong Ngan | 43 |
| FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMERS' DECISIONS TO USE E-BANKING AT JOINT STOCK COMMERCIAL BANKS IN HO CHI MINH CITY | 57 |
| Nguyen Duy Khanh ¹ , Pham Quoc Tham ² | 57 |
| HOW CHINA_USA POLITICAL TENSIONS AFFECT STOCK MARKET RETURN OF CHINA AND THE USA? A QUANTILE VAR CONNECTEDNESS APPROACH | 70 |
| Hao Wen Chang ¹ , Tsangyao Chang ² and Mei-Chih Wang ³ | 70 |
| BANKING HUMAN RESOURCES BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AI | 92 |
| Nguyen Huynh Chi..... | 92 |
| IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TRAINING THROUGH IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT TESTING AND ASSESSMENT – CASE IN ACCOUNTING BRANCH, UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND FINANCE | 102 |
| Thuy Thi Ha | 102 |
| ACTIVITIES OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN VIETNAMESE COMMERCIAL BANKS: AN OVERVIEW DURING THE COVID-19 RECOVERY PERIOD..... | 109 |
| Nguyễn Thị Quỳnh Châu, Đào Lê Kiều Oanh | 109 |
| OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR VIETNAM IN ATTRACTIVE FDI IN GLOBAL MINIMUM CORPORATE TAX IMPLEMENTATION | 117 |
| Ngo Hoang Thong | 117 |

DIGITAL ECONOMY IN VIETNAM, TRENDS AND POTENTIABILITY

| | |
|--|-----|
| DEVELOPING SMART HOME MODEL FOR APARTMENTS IN HO CHI MINH CITY BASED ON INTERNET OF THINGS (IoT) TECHNOLOGY | 182 |
| Dang Thanh Thuy ¹ , Nguyen Thanh Dien ² | 182 |
| TRANSPARENCY OF ACCOUNTING INFORMATION OF CONSTRUCTION ENTERPRISES IN HO CHI MINH CITY – CASE STUDY OF APPLICATION OF ACCRUAL ACCOUNTING | 193 |
| Truong Thanh Loc ^{1*} , Pham Thi Yen Nhi ² | 193 |
| FACTORS AFFECTING THE QUALITY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISES IN HO CHI MINH CITY | 207 |
| Truong Thanh Loc [*] , Dang Nguyen Tuong Han, Nguyen Ngoc Mai Phuong, Nguyen Thi Quynh Huong | 207 |
| THE CRITICAL FACTORS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' INTENTION TO USE METAVERSE TECHNOLOGY FOR SUBJECTS RELATED TO IMPORT-EXPORT LEARNING | 221 |
| Van Thuy Nguyen Ho, Chau The Huu, Luan Thanh Nguyen [*] | 221 |
| CONSUMER PERCEPTION ABOUT THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT OF LUXURY BRANDS IN VIETNAM AND CHINA MARKETS..... | 233 |
| Tran Minh Tu ¹ | 233 |
| INFLUENCE OF WOM AND EWOM IN MAKING DECISION BUYING GOODS | 247 |
| Doan Anh Tu ¹ , Kim Phi Rum ² , Nguyen Pham Hai Ha ³ | 247 |
| DIGITAL ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL IN VIETNAM..... | 257 |
| Hoang Thi Chinh, Nguyen Hoang Phan | 257 |
| BLOCKCHAIN APPLICATION IN MODERN LOGISTICS: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VIETNAM | 266 |
| Nguyen Nu Tuong Vi..... | 266 |
| FACTORS AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DIGITAL ECONOMY IN VIETNAM | 272 |
| Vo Tien Si | 272 |
| LEGAL FRAME FOR THE OPERATION OF THE REAL ESTATE BUSINESS UTILIZING THE BLOCKCHAIN PLATFORM IN VIETNAM..... | 284 |
| Le Thi Khanh Linh..... | 284 |

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION – COOPERATION – GLOBAL INTEGRATION IN BUSINESS

| | |
|---|-----|
| FACTORS INFLUENCING BUSINESS ACCEPTANCE OF INDUSTRY 4.0 TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS IN DONG NAI PROVINCE..... | 291 |
| Thanh-Thu Vo*, Minh-Huong Tang..... | 291 |
| DIGITAL ORIENTATION, INNOVATION CAPABILITY AND FIRM PERFORMANCE: A PROPOSAL RESEARCH MODEL | 298 |
| Nguyen Van Hau | 298 |
| PREDICTION OF STUDENT'S BEHAVIORAL INTENTION TO USE SMART LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: A COMBINED MODEL OF SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY AND TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE | 309 |
| Nguyen Thi Hai Binh ¹ , Dao Y Nhi ² , Nguyen Thanh Luan ³ , Dang Quan Tri ⁴ | 309 |
| THE PEDAGOGICAL IMPACT OF GRAMMARLY ON EFL WRITING COMPETENCY: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT. | 323 |
| Nguyen Thi Hong Lien ¹ , Nguyen Truong Gia Minh ² , Nguyen Ngoc Vu ^{3*} | 323 |
| FACTORS AFFECTING PURCHASING DECISION OF THE YOUTH ON TIKTOK | 336 |
| Ngoc Pham ¹ , Thanh Cong Tran*..... | 336 |
| FACTORS AFFECTING OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY BEHAVIORS OF WORKERS DIRECT PRODUCTION AT CU CHI POWER COMPANY..... | 345 |
| Minh Luan Le, Thi Trang Tran..... | 345 |
| CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR..... | 355 |
| Nguyen Xuan Hung ¹ , Ha Le Thu Hoai ¹ , Nguyen Huu My Truc ^{2&3} , Pham Tan Nhat ^{2&3} | 355 |
| THE INNOVATION CAPACITY - THE ROLE OF LEADERS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM..... | 365 |
| Huynh Nhut Nghia | 365 |
| PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS ON THE IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON BUSINESS | 376 |
| Ton Nguyen Trong Hien, Bui Tuyet Anh | 376 |
| FACTORS AFFECTING BRAND SWITCHING INTENTION IN THE CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN VIETNAM | 382 |
| Ly Dan Thanh, Nguyen Phu Quoi, Tran Hoang Nam, Vo Hong Son, Nguyen Ngoc Thuy Tien | 382 |
| ENHANCE THE DIGITAL COMPETITIVENESS | 398 |
| Tran Quang Canh, Hoang Thi Chinh..... | 398 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| ASSESSING PATIENT SATISFACTION (BRAND) AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AT THU DUC CITY HOSPITAL..... | 408 |
| Nguyen Hoang Dung ^{1*} , Nguyen Huynh Bao An ² , Van Phuong Trang ² | 408 |
| INDUSTRIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES FORM THE FOUNDATION FOR BINH DUONG'S SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | 408 |
| Hoang-An Nguyen | 417 |
| IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL FAIRNESS ON THE EMPLOYEES' KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM ENTERPRISES IN HO CHI MINH CITY | 426 |
| Le Thi Nhu Quynh ^{1,2} , Le Thi Giang ² , Truong Quang Dung ¹ | 426 |
| THE EFFECT OF PERSONAL MOTIVATION ON THE TACIT KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOR OF 5-STAR HOTELS' EMPLOYEES IN HO CHI MINH CITY | 440 |
| Le Thi Giang, Nguyen Bach Hoang Phung..... | 440 |
| DIGITAL COMPETITIVENESS AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY OF ENTERPRISES IN THE DIGITAL ERA: THE CASE OF VIETNAMESE ENTERPRISES | 453 |
| Diep Nguyen Thi Ngoc ^{1*} , Canh Quang Tran ² , Anh Bach Hoang Ngoc ¹ | 453 |
| FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTS' SELECTION OF PRIVATE PRESCHOOLS IN THU DUC CITY | 466 |
| Thi-Trang Tran ¹ , Thi-My-Dung Pham ² , Thi-Bich-Diep Le ^{1*} | 466 |

RECOVERY COMMUNICATIONS IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

| | |
|--|-----|
| DEVELOPING A SPIRITUAL TOURISM DESTINATION IMAGE MEASUREMENT SCALE OF AN GIANG | 474 |
| Nguyen Vuong Hoai Thao ¹ , Nguyen Quyet Thang ² | 474 |
| PROSPECTS OF VIRTUAL REALITY TOURISM APPLICATION IN VIETNAM TOURISM PROMOTION | 487 |
| Nguyen Thi Hong Ha, Pham Thi Huong Giang..... | 487 |
| PERSONALIZATION TRAVEL TRENDING IN HO CHI MINH CITY IN THE CONTEXT OF POST COVID-19 | 497 |
| Duong Bao Trung..... | 497 |
| IMPACTS OF MEDIA ON CUSTOMERS' DECISION TO CHOOSE FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICES POST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC | 511 |
| Nguyen Thi Bich Van | 511 |
| DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION APPLICATION TO PROMOTE THE RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT OF INBOUND TOURISM IN HO CHI MINH CITY | 521 |
| Tran Trong Thanh | 521 |
| VIETNAM TOURISM AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC | 527 |
| Nguyen Hoang Phan ¹ , Hoang Thi Chinh ² | 527 |
| NAVIGATING THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DATA MINING AND PRIVACY | 537 |
| Pham Thai Hien | 537 |
| THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENT SELF-REPORTED GENERAL WELL-BEING AND PERCEIVED SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS, TEACHERS, AND UNIVERSITY | 545 |
| Virginia Kelsey ¹ , Đặng Thị Mai Ly ^{2*} , Nguyễn Anh Khoa ² , Nguyễn Văn Tường ² | 545 |

DIGITAL VERSUS NON- DIGITAL

| | |
|--|-----|
| PROVIDING CONVENIENCE TO CUSTOMERS IN THE DIGITAL MARKETING ERA: OBSERVATIONS FROM COMMERCIAL BANKS IN HO CHI MINH CITY | 556 |
| Nguyen Quang Trung | 556 |
| VIRTUAL REALITY: AN INNOVATIVE TOOL IN TOURISM EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING | 564 |
| Thanh Nguyen Ngoc Le ¹ , Khuong Thanh Nguyen ² | 564 |
| THEORETICAL CONCEPTS OF STRATEGIC POSITIONING FOR PLACE BRANDING: A CASE STUDY OF DONG THAP PROVINCE | 580 |
| Phan Bao Giang..... | 580 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON VIETNAM'S SMALL AND THE MEDIUM BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (SMEs) | 587 |
| Lê Kim Nguyên * | 587 |

CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS IN NON-TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

| | |
|--|-----|
| PROPOSE AN ONLINE TEACHING COMPETENCE SCALE FOR UNIVERSITY LECTURERS | 596 |
| Duong Thi Kim Oanh*, Dang Thi Dieu Hien | 596 |
| EXAMINE USAGE OF LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMSS) BY FACULTY STAFF AT UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS (UEF) AND FINANCE WITH EXPANDED TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE MODEL (TAM)..... | 608 |
| Ha Truong Minh Hieu, Ngo Minh Hai*, Mach Tran Huy..... | 608 |

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AN INDISPENSABLE EVOLUTION FOR SUSTAINABLE CORPORATES

| | |
|--|-----|
| FACTORS AFFECTING THE APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING AT MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISES IN BINH DUONG PROVINCE | 618 |
| Truong Thanh Loc ^{1*} , Nguyen Thi Thanh Truc ² | 618 |
| HRM DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: TAKING A ROAD OF SUCCESSION PLANNING .. | 629 |
| Trương Phan Hoàng Anh, Giang Ngọc Anh..... | 629 |
| THE IMPLICATION OF CONTACTLESS SERVICE AS A TOOL TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER REVISIT INTENTION | 640 |
| Linh, Nguyen Duy Yen* | 640 |
| TOURISM BRAND LOVE IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE ROLE OF ONLINE TOURIST EXPERIENCES, TOURIST-BRAND RELATIONSHIP QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY | 651 |
| Thanh Nguyen Ngoc Le | 651 |
| CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS IN CROSS-CULTURAL SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (SoTL): A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY | 662 |
| Punithan Moganathas ¹ , Jenny Hill ² , Andy V.-M. Kok ² , Matt Barr ² , Ruffin Relja ^{2*} , Philippa Ward ² , Duong Tran Quang Hoang ³ , Quynh Phuong Tran ³ | 662 |
| LEVERAGING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FOR SUSTAINABLE CORPORATE EVOLUTION IN VIETNAM | 677 |
| Nguyen, Tan Dat ¹ , Le, Dinh Thang ² | 677 |

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND APPLICATIONS

| | |
|--|-----|
| FB-PROPHET MODEL FOR TIME SERIES FORECASTING IN SALES | 691 |
| Thanh Cong Tran | 691 |
| USING AI CODE IN C# PROGRAMMING | 698 |
| Nguyen Ha Giang..... | 698 |
| DETERMINANTS OF CONTINUANCE USAGE INTENTION OF MOBILE FOOD ORDERING APPLICATIONS (MFOAS) AMONG VIETNAMESE USERS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF E- SATISFACTION | 705 |
| Lam Hoang Phuong ^{1*} , Nguyen Thi Kim Lien ² , Tien Hung Nguyen ³ , Vinh Long Nguyen ⁴ | 705 |
| DECODING MARKETING INSIGHT: INSIGHT FROM OUTSIDE..... | 718 |
| Hoàng Thị Hằng, Trần Thành Công* | 718 |
| DIGITAL DISRUPTION AND DATA SECURITY: HOW FINTECH IS RESHAPING BANKING ... | 724 |
| Hoàng Văn Hiếu, Trần Ngọc Thiên Ngân..... | 724 |

TRENDS AND ISSUES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

| | |
|---|-----|
| EFL LEARNERS' ATTITUDES AND LEARNING ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNICATIVE GAME-BASED GRAMMAR TEACHING | 736 |
| Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen ¹ , Tran Quoc Thao ² | 736 |
| APPROACHES TO TEACHING L2 LISTENING:..... | 749 |
| CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN REAL-LIFE AND CLASSROOM-BASED LISTENING | 749 |
| Luu Thi Mai Vy | 749 |
| DEFINING ROLES OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY LANGUAGE CLASSROOM | 755 |
| Ho Xuan Tien, Duong My Tham..... | 755 |
| EFL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND LEARNING INVESTMENT IN PORTFOLIO - BASED ENGLISH WRITING LEARNING: A LITERATURE REVIEW | 763 |
| Ly Gia Huy ¹ , Tran Quoc Thao ² | 763 |
| EXPLORING EFL LEARNER IDENTITIES IN PROJECT-BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING AT A HIGH SCHOOL IN AN GIANG PROVINCE | 774 |
| Nguyen Hong Thien ¹ , Tran Quoc Thao ² | 774 |
| THE VALUES OF SYNTACTIC COMPLEXITY IN ACADEMIC WRITING: A LITERATURE REVIEW | 791 |
| THE ISSUE OF AMBIGUITY IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE..... | 801 |
| Nguyen Dinh Tuan | 801 |
| RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES ON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL EFL STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING | 812 |
| Huynh Thanh Nhon ¹ , Tran Quoc Thao ² | 812 |
| EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF WRITING ANXIETY ON VIETNAMESE ESL UNDERGRADUATES' WRITING PERFORMANCE: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY..... | 821 |
| Nguyen Ngoc Nguyen, Nguyen Hoang Phan..... | 821 |
| THE APPLICATION OF THE “FLIPPED CLASSROOM” MODEL IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE VIETNAMESE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT | 838 |
| THE USE OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN EFLFLIPPED CLASSROOMS | 847 |
| Nguyen Quynh Thao Vy ^{1,*} , Duong My Tham ² | 847 |
| INSIGHTS INTO ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS' USE OF PHRASAL VERBS IN ACADEMIC WRITING..... | 860 |
| Do Thi Thanh Thuy, Tran Quoc Thao | 860 |

LAW IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION

| | |
|--|-----|
| LEGALISING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY INFRINGEMENTS IN RUSSIA – A WAR TACTIC IN THE CONTEXT OF RUSSIA’S INVASION OF UKRAINE..... | 869 |
| Bui Thi Hong Ninh* | 869 |
| MODEL OF ASSET REGISTRATION WORLDWIDE AND LESSONS FOR VIETNAM IN IMPROVING ASSET REGISTRATION LAWS..... | 880 |
| Vu Anh Sao ^{1,2} , Nguyen Thi Xuan Mai ² | 880 |
| LEGAL ISSUES ARISING FROM THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) - INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS FOR VIETNAM | 887 |
| Le Hoang Minh Huy*, Nguyen Thi Thu Ha, Dao Trong Duc, Ky Dieu Linh, Bui Thi Thuy Linh, Nguyen Nam Trung..... | 887 |
| SOUTH KOREA’S EXPERIENCES ON PROPERTY REGISTRATION LAW - LESSONS FOR VIETNAM | 896 |
| Vu Anh Sao, Pham Huynh Bao Oanh..... | 896 |
| THE RISE OF REMOTE WORK: LEGAL CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT LAW IN VIETNAM | 903 |
| Nguyen Thi Xuan Mai ¹ , Nguyen Thi Ngoc Loan ² | 903 |
| CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN THE EMERGING AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE..... | 910 |
| Nguyen Thi Thu Trang | 910 |
| THE IMPACTS OF GLOBAL MINIMUM TAX ON FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) CORPORATIONS IN VIETNAM..... | 921 |
| Trần Ngọc Thanh ¹ | 921 |
| CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE ACTIVITIES AND TAX MANAGEMENT ISSUES | 933 |
| Le Huynh Phuong Chinh, Ngo Thi Khanh Linh, Pham Ngoc Lan Anh..... | 933 |
| EXPERIENCE IN KOREA AND CHINA ON TAX MANAGEMENT FOR CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE ACTIVITIES | 941 |
| Duong Anh Son ¹ , Tran Vang Phu ² | 941 |
| LEGAL PERSPECTIVE ON REGULATIONS RALATED TO PERSONAL INCOME TAX WHEN EARNING INCOME THROUGH E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS IN VIETNAM, TAKING THE CASE OF INDIVIDUALS DOING BUSINESS THROUGH TIKTOK APPLICATION..... | 946 |
| Nguyen Duc Tri ¹ , Hoang Minh Châu ² | 946 |
| THE COMPATIBILITY ON THE SCOPE OF MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE (MLA) IN CRIMINAL MATTERS AND THE CONDITIONS OF REFUSAL MLA IN CRIMINAL MATTERS BETWEEN VIETNAMESE LAW AND INTERNATIONAL TREATIES WHICH VIETNAM HAS SIGNED. | 956 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Pham Huynh Bao Oanh..... | 956 |
| TAX POLICY FOR E-COMMERCE OF COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO VIETNAM..... | 967 |
| Nguyen Thanh Minh Chanh, Ha Thi Van Anh, Pham Lam Tam Nhu | 967 |
| LEGAL REGULATIONS FOR ENTERPRISE OBLIGATIONS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON E-COMMERCE PLATFORM | 974 |
| Truong Kim Phung*, Nguyen Hoang Chuong | 974 |
| “ROBOT TAX” – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VIETNAM..... | 981 |
| Gian Thi Le Na, Pham Phuong Doanh..... | 981 |
| WTO APPELLATE BODY REFORM IN THE CONTEXT OF ESCALATING GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS..... | 988 |
| Nguyen Nam Trung..... | 988 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| IMPACTS OF STATE OWNERSHIP AND BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS ON TAX AVOIDANCE: EVIDENCE IN VIETNAM..... | 128 |
| Huyen Ngoc Nguyen, Thanh Dan Bui | 128 |
| RUSSIA'S IMPACTS AND SCENES ON BEING BANNED FROM SWIFT | 143 |
| Lam Dang Xuan Hoa ¹ , Phan Ngoc Anh ² | 143 |
| THE ROLE OF ACCESS TO FINANCE AND THE ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF YOUNGERS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN PROVINCE, VIETNAM..... | 151 |
| Vu Truc Phuc*, Nguyen Dang Hat, Nguyen An Phu, Dao Le Kieu Oanh | 151 |

INFLUENCE OF WOM AND EWOM IN MAKING DECISION BUYING GOODS

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Abstract:

The study examines the theories of WOM and eWOM, comparing the differences between WOM and eWOM. The study used descriptive statistical methods, the number of questionnaires sent out was 170, the number of votes collected was 157. Research results show that the change in consumption habits impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and the new normal life leading to WOM and eWOM both have direct impacts on each customer group. However, depending on age, gender, occupation, income, WOM and eWOM have different effects. In particular, the study found that besides WOM and eWOM, the service quality factor is also one of the deciding factors to the purchase of goods. This is the basis for the authors to make some recommendations for businesses.

Keywords: WOM, eWOM, f-factors, Covid-19, livestream

1. Introduction

The Digital 2021 October Global Statshot Report done by We Are Social and Hootsuite showed out the social network users have gained 400 million users, which is equivalent to 9.9% growth in the last 12 months to exceed 4.55 billion users in October 2021. In Vietnam, there were 68.72 million Internet users national wide, making up for 73.7% of the nation's population who have been frequently active on their social networks. Blogs, pictures, and short clips on travels have been favored and shared proactively over any other materials found on Instagram, Facebook, Tiktok, Twitter, Youtube with recorded views daily (We Are Social and Hootsuite, 2021). The concept of customer trust is no longer vertical; it is now horizontal. Customers in the past were easily influenced by marketing campaigns. They also sought for and listened to authority and expertise. But recent research across industries show that most customers believe more in the f-factor (friends, families, Facebook fans, Twitter followers) than in marketing communications. Most ask strangers on social media for advice and trust them more than they do advertising and expert opinions. In recent years, the trend has spurred the growth of communal rating systems such as TripAdvisor and Yelp (Philipp Kotler, 2017). Thus, consumers increasingly use online tools to share their opinions about the products and services they consume and to research the companies that sell them. These tools are significantly changing everyday life and the relationship between customers and businesses. The rapid growth of online communication through social media, websites, blogs, etc., has increased academic interest in word of mouth (WOM) and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) (e.g., Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Brown et al., 2007; Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Hussain et al., 2017; Yang, 2017) (Nuria, 2017). Moreover, after the Covid-19 pandemic, consumption habits have changed, customers use e-commerce more than before the pandemic. Currently, customers use two forms of buying directly and online at the same time. Therefore, this study examines the impact of WOM and EWOM on customers' purchasing decision. Thereby discussing the research results and making some recommendations for businesses in the current period.

2. Litteratures Review

2.1. Word of mouth

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966) gave out one of the earliest WOM definitions, WOM was the exchanging of marketing information between consumers in such a way that it plays a fundamental role in shaping their behavior and in changing attitudes toward products and services. Arndt (1967) have suggested that WOM is a person-to-person communication tool, between a communicator and a receiver, who perceives the information received about a brand, product, or service as non-commercial.

Furthermore, these peer-to-peer communications have a strong influence on consumer's behaviour and decision making. Building on the work of Berger et al. (2013), word of mouth (WOM) is defined as: product information orally transmitted through a private, synchronous, non-computer-mediated-offline channel from one consumer to another consumer. WOM is the exchange of information between people face-to-face (Littlejohn and Foss, 2009). Types of WOM communication include face-to-face interaction, telephone, and video conferencing (Chung and Park, 2012). In face-to-face interaction, both communicative parties share the same space and time. The receiver may perceive not only verbal and nonverbal cues the sender wants to convey, but also non-voluntary signals such as demographic or environmental cues (e.g., unpleasant smells, distracting sounds). Behnam (2017) pointed out previous studies confirmed that peer-to-peer communications have a substantial impact, nearly 70%, on all of the buying decisions (Angelis et al., 2012, Balter, 2008) across different industries. For instance, WOM has shown to affect consumer's purchasing decision in variety of industries and domains including: financial services (Sweeney et al., 2014), energy providers (Wangenheim and Bayón, 2004), entertainment and movie (Brown and Reingen, 1987), tourism (Confente, 2014, Lim and Chung, 2011), cloths and appliances (Richins, 1983), personal computer, camera, stereo, video recorder, and car (Price and Feick, 1984). Similarly, eWOM has shown to have a large impact on consumer's decision across different fields like video games (Zhu and Zhang, 2010), airlines, telephone companies, resorts, movies, restaurants, stocks and, the like (Floyd et al., 2014). On the other hand, WOM communication displays more prevalence due to a) a natural and longer history, b) an independence from a computer, and c) an inherent cost-efficiency (Berger 2014).

WOM is recognised as an influential source of information impacting consumer's product choice and purchase decision (Dichter, 1966, Sweeney et al., 2014). Various researchers indicated that WOM communication has a substantial impact on, nearly 70%, all of the buying decisions (Angelis et al., 2012, Balter, 2008). Different studies indicated that WOM is seven times as effective as newspapers and magazines, four times as effective as personal selling, and twice as effective as radio advertising in influencing consumers' behaviour (Brown and Reingen, 1987, Cheung and Thadani, 2012). Given the substantial role of WOM on consumer's decision, the emergence of the internet has led consumers' communication to extend from offline WOM to eWOM (Porter, 2017). The next section will discuss the definition and importance of eWOM communication.

2.2. Electronic word of mouth

With changes in technology and the emergence of the internet, consumers' communication behaviours have been extended in the domain of computer mediated communication. Marketing has transformed toward a digitized marketplace (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). In the past, traditional marketing focused on selling a firm's goods to a mass audience or targeted consumers, while maneuvering to secure the best terms with its supplier or distributor. Companies assumed that they would normally keep their current customers and spent a good deal of effort to acquire new customers. Moreover, due to the explosion of the Internet, WOM has now become a —mainstream subfield within marketing on the academic side (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). Even though there is clear evidence that 75% of word-of-

mouth communications still occur offline and face-to-face (Berger 2014; Kotler and Keller 2012; Vranica, 2010), the most recent stream of research has largely focused on online word of mouth (Porter, 2017). As a result of ICT, today consumers from all over the world can leave comments that other users can use to easily obtain information about goods and services. Both active and passive consumers use this information medium (eWOM). Individuals who share their opinions with others online are active consumers; those who simply search for information in the comments or opinions posted by other customers are passive consumers (Wang and Fesenmaier, 2004).

Today's new form of online WOM communication is known as electronic word-of-mouth or eWOM (Yang, 2017). This form of communication has taken on special importance with the emergence of online platforms, which have made it one of the most influential information sources on the Web (Abubakar and Ilkan, 2016), for instance, in the tourism industry (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). As a result of technological advances, these new means of communication have led to changes in consumer behavior (Cantallops and Salvi, 2014; Gómez-Suárez et al., 2017), because of the influence they enable consumers to exert on each other (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012) by allowing them to obtain or share information about companies, products, or brands (Gómez-Suárez et al., 2017). One of the most comprehensive conceptions of eWOM was proposed by Litvin et al. (2008), who described it as all informal communication via the Internet addressed to consumers and related to the use or characteristics of goods or services or the sellers thereof. The advantage of this tool is that it is available to all consumers, who can use online platforms to share their opinions and reviews with other users. Where once consumers trusted WOM from friends and family, today they look to online comments (eWOM) for information about a product or service (Nieto et al., 2014) (Nuria, 2017). Specifically, the acceptance of the electronic word of mouth information has an impact on purchase intention through attitudes towards behavior, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, as well as perceived risk factors. In fact, consumers are facing many risks in online shopping. That is the risk of personal information being disclosed, making them afraid to make online purchases. Therefore, perceived risk factors affect E-WOM and consumer purchase intention. According to the information acceptance model, the acceptance of a certain information is governed by the "quality" and "reliability" of the message (Tú, 2022). Today's new form of online WOM communication is known as electronic word-of-mouth or eWOM (Yang, 2017). This form of communication has taken on special importance with the emergence of online platforms, which have made it one of the most influential information sources on the Web (Abubakar and Ilkan, 2016), for instance, in the tourism industry (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). As a result of technological advances, these new means of communication have led to changes in consumer behavior (Cantallops and Salvi, 2014; Gómez-Suárez et al., 2017), because of the influence they enable consumers to exert on each other (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012) by allowing them to obtain or share information about companies, products, or brands (Gómez-Suárez et al., 2017).

Similarly, Stauss (2000, p.243) conceptualised this communication as when "customers report/interact about consumption-relevant circumstances on the Internet". Accordingly, various researchers employed WOM conceptual foundation to theorize the communication that takes place on internet as Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) (Goldsmith and Horowitz, 2006, Park and Kim, 2008, Tham et al., 2013). Researchers found eWOM conceptually similar in various ways to WOM (Tham et al., 2013). For instance, both forms involve (i) informal (e.g., Litvin et al., 2008) (ii) evaluation of goods and services (e.g., Chu and Kim, 2011, Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004) (iii) between consumers (e.g., Chan and Ngai, 2011). Furthermore, they both involve consumers gaining information that helps to select between product alternatives (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). Like offline WOM, research showed that consumers' communications on the internet have higher credibility to consumers than other sources of information

(Chiu et al., 2014). Electronic word of mouth also provides companies with an advantage over traditional WOM insofar as it allows them both to try to understand what factors motivate consumers to post their opinions online and to gauge the impact of those comments on other people (Cantalops and Salvi, 2014). However, consumers' use of technology to share opinions about products or services (eWOM) can be a liability for companies, as it can become a factor they do not control (Yang, 2017). To counteract this, businesses are seeking to gain greater control of customers' online reviews by creating virtual spaces on their own websites, where consumers can leave comments and share their opinions about the business's products and services (Vallejo et al., 2015). By way of example, in the field of tourism, companies are starting to understand that ICT-enabled media influence tourists' purchasing behavior (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). Understandably, companies view both types of recommendations – WOM and eWOM – as a new opportunity to listen to customers' needs and adjust how they promote their products or services to better meet them, thereby increasing their return. A negative or positive attitude toward the product or service will influence customers' future purchase intentions by allowing them to compare the product or service's actual performance with their expectations (Yang, 2017). Despite these presumed similarities, eWOM is not just an online version of WOM. Rather, eWOM and traditional WOM also have a number of substantial differences (Behnam, 2017).

2.3. Compare WOM and EWOM

The differences between WOM and eWOM show that traditional WOM is (i) typically spoken and includes non-verbal communication (e.g., body language, facial expressions) (e.g., Huang et al., 2008, Wang, 2011) and takes place among (ii) friends, family, and acquaintances in small face-to-face or telephone settings (Blackwell et al., 2006). In contrast, eWOM is predominantly (i) text based with images in some instances (e.g., Park and Lee, 2009, Yap et al., 2013) that occurs on the (ii) internet sites like email, blogs or micro-blogs (e.g., twitter), discussion forums (e.g., zapak), review websites (e.g., TripAdvisor) and, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) by both unknown and known contributors (Cheung and Thadani, 2012, Goldsmith and Horowitz, 2006, Floyd et al., 2014, Hennig-Thurau and Walsh, 2003, Litvin et al., 2008). In detail, unlike WOM that predominantly occurs between friends and acquaintances, eWOM could occur between both friends and strangers (Hennig-Thurau and Walsh, 2003). Hennig-Thurau and Walsh (2003, p. 51) argued that in eWOM, "consumers are able to obtain information related to goods and services not only from friends, acquaintances, and colleagues, by means of personal communication, but also from a myriad of other people, otherwise unknown to them, who have had experience with the relevant products" (Behnam, 2017). ShabbirHusain and Varshney (2022) revealed that negativity bias impacted consumer judgement formation to such an extent that positive valence from higher credibility source (WOM) is over-powered by negative reviews from lesser trusted source (eWOM). Further, a negative valence review from higher credibility source (WOM) may not be countered even in presence of consensus of positive valence review coming from a higher number of positive eWOM. In contrast, other studies (e.g., Hussain et al., 2017) have argued that consumers use eWOM more to reduce risk when decision-making. Likewise, eWOM tends to be more credible when the consumer using it has previous experience (Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). Besides, message privacy is another feature that sets the two media apart, since with traditional WOM information is shared through private, real-time, face-to-face dialogs and conversations. In contrast, information shared through eWOM is not private and can sometimes be seen by anonymous people who do not know each other. Furthermore, reviews can be viewed at various points in time (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). Indeed, because eWOM reviews are written, consumers and companies can check them at any time; this stands in contrast to traditional WOM, where once the message has reached the receiver, it tends to disappear. Another salient difference between the two media is the speed of diffusion

of the message; eWOM statements spread much faster than WOM statements because of where they are published, i.e., on the Internet (Gupta and Harris, 2010). Online platforms for sharing information (social media, websites, blogs, etc.) are what set eWOM apart from traditional WOM (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). First, they make the reviews accessible to more consumers (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Sotiriadis and Van Zyl, 2013). Second, because they are written, they persist over time (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Cheung and Thadani, 2012) (Nuria, 2017).

Therefore, to summarize the difference between WOM and eWOM, Nuria (2017) has made the following comparison table:

| | WOM | EWOM |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Credibility | The receiver of the information knows the communicator (positive influence on credibility) | Anonymity between the communicator and the receiver of the information (negative influence on credibility) |
| Privacy | The conversation is private, interpersonal (via dialogs), and conducted in real time | The shared information is not private and, because it is written down, can sometimes be viewed by anyone and at any time |
| Diffusion speed | Messages spread slowly. Users must be present when the information is being shared | Messages are conveyed more quickly between users and, via the Internet, can be conveyed at any time |
| Accessibility | Less accessible | Easily accessible |

Source: Nuria Huete-Alcocer (2017)

3. Methods

The study used descriptive statistical methods, comparing, contrasting, sampling by convenient ballot distribution, the number of questionnaires sent out was 170, the number of votes collected was 157. The survey period was conducted for 45 days from May 2023 to mid-June 2023. The subjects conducting the survey were former students, students, friends of the team. The sample structure is as follows:

Table 1: Age

| | | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| 18-23 (A1) | 24-30 (A2) | 31-35 (A3) |
| 50 samples | 53 samples | 54 samples |

Table 2: Gender

| | |
|------------|-------------|
| Male (G1) | Female (G2) |
| 52 samples | 125 samples |

Table 3: Career

| | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Students (C1) | Offices (C2) | Employees (waiter, freelance...) (C3) |
| 60 samples | 70 samples | 27 samples |

Table 4: Income/per month

| | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3 million VND - 5 million VND (I1) | 5 million VND - 8 million VND (I2) | 8 million VND - 15 million VND (I3) |
| 70 samples | 51 samples | 36 samples |

With the above sample collection results, the authors made comparisons between groups about: Times for using internet and shopping, Commonly used e-commerce platform, Where to get information before deciding to buy, Factors affecting purchases in physical store, Factors affecting purchases in virtual store, Comment after bought and used goods. Thereby, we see the influence of WOM and eWOM in purchasing decision. Further, for convenience in the research process, the authors coded the groups in the following order: Age includes 3 groups: A1, A2, A3; Gender includes 2 groups: G1, G2; Career includes 3 groups: C1, C2, C3; Income includes 3 groups: I1, I2, I3.

4. Results

After collecting the questionnaire, performing descriptive statistics, the authors found that there was a difference in each group, between groups about: Times for using internet and shopping, Commonly used e-commerce platform, Where to get information before deciding to buy, Factors affecting purchases in physical store, Factors affecting purchases in virtual store, Comment after bought and used goods. The specific results of the study are as follows:

4.1. Comparison times using internet, social network and E-commerce in one week

To find out the role of WOM and eWOM in purchasing decisions, the authors first analyzed the time spent using the internet, the numbers of shopping

Table 5: Times for using internet and shopping

| | Age | | | Gender | | Career | | | Income | | |
|--|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| | A1 | A2 | A3 | G1 | G2 | C1 | C2 | C3 | I1 | I2 | I3 |
| Times for using internet/day | 5 hours | 7 hours | 7 hours | 4 hours | 5 hours | 5 hours | 7 hours | 7 hours | 5 hours | 7 hours | 7 hours |
| Times watching selling livestream on internet/week | 12 times | 7 times | 4 times | 5 times | 7 times | 15 times | 6 times | 5 times | 10 times | 5 times | 5 times |
| Times shopping online/week | 5 times | 8 times | 6 times | 3 times | 6 times | 7 times | 9 times | 6 times | 6 times | 8 times | 8 times |
| Times shopping from market/week | 2 times | 5 times | 5 times | 2 times | 5 times | 3 times | 5 times | 5 times | 2 times | 5 times | 6 times |

Source: Authors

Statistical results from Table 5 show that:

+ Times for using internet/day: there are differences between different groups in terms of internet usage time. Older age group (A2, A3) have more time to use the internet than younger age group (A1), possibly because this age group uses the internet daily as a communication tool and handle the job. The survey results from the career and income variables have also shown this. Besides, the difference in gender also leads to the difference in internet usage in a day.

+ Times watching selling livestream on internet/week: But in contrast to the daily use of the internet, the younger age group (A1) spends more time watching online sales than the working group with a stable income. The results from employment and income variables also support this.

+ Times shopping online/week: From using a lot of time for work, groups A2, C2 have the most online purchases, similarly with young age groups (A1) with low income, online purchases are also less.

+ Times shopping from market/week: Similar to the results of online shopping, the group of young people who are students, have unstable income (freelance) will have fewer times to go to the market than other groups.

Thus, depending on age, occupation, income, the number of times using the internet as well as the number of purchases are completely different.

Table 6: Commonly used e-commerce platform

| | Age | | | Gender | | Career | | | Income | | |
|---------------|------|------|------|--------|------|--------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| | A1 | A2 | A3 | G1 | G2 | C1 | C2 | C3 | I1 | I2 | I3 |
| Facebook shop | 23% | 31% | 35% | 33% | 35% | 38% | 30% | 35% | 25% | 27% | 34% |
| Zalo | 4% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 5% | 3% | 5% | 3% | 3% |
| Tiktok shop | 34% | 14% | 4% | 28% | 27% | 22% | 18% | 10% | 28% | 9% | 8% |
| Shopee | 15% | 23% | 30% | 18% | 25% | 14% | 22% | 32% | 26% | 28% | 30% |
| Lazada | 9% | 11% | 15% | 11% | 8% | 12% | 14% | 11% | 6% | 19% | 12% |
| Tiki | 8% | 11% | 13% | 4% | 2% | 9% | 7% | 6% | 6% | 7% | 7% |
| Sendo | 7% | 8% | 3% | 5% | 1% | 3% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 7% | 6% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Source: Authors

From the results of Table 6, it can be seen that: current customers all use e-commerce trading platforms. In which, Facebook shop, Tiktok shop, Shopee are the most used e-commerce platforms. Especially, for those of you who are students, those with low income, Tiktok shop is used the most. Perhaps compared to other commerce platforms, Tiktok has a huge customer base that has been accumulated over many years when sharing short 60-second clips. Therefore, to compete with Tiktok, Shopee, Facebook, Zalo has recently launched Zalo video to attract users.

4.2. Comparison between buying decision in physical store (PS) and virtual store (VS)

Table 7: Where to get information before deciding to buy

| | Age | | | Gender | | Career | | | Income | | |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|--------|------|--------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| | A1 | A2 | A3 | G1 | G2 | C1 | C2 | C3 | I1 | I2 | I3 |
| Only get information from WOM | 28% | 37% | 42% | 46% | 39% | 26% | 32% | 40% | 27% | 37% | 40% |
| Only get information from eWOM | 62% | 55% | 24% | 38% | 31% | 59% | 45% | 32% | 50% | 32% | 25% |
| Both forms above | 10% | 8% | 34% | 26% | 30% | 25% | 23% | 38% | 23% | 31% | 35% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Source: Authors

Table 5 shows that there is a difference in the number of times of online shopping and from traditional markets, Table 6 shows commonly used e-commerce platforms. Therefore, Table 7 provides information from WOM and eWOM before deciding to buy goods.

+ Only get information from WOM: Group with high age (A3), male (G1), people who are working in office or freelance work (C2, C3), group with good to high income (I2, I3) before buying often listen to opinions from friends and relatives. Information from WOM helps them to be more confident when making purchasing decisions.

+ Only get information from eWOM: The group has a young age (A1), their profession is a student (C1), and they have a lot of time to use the internet, so they often read online comments to decide to buy

goods online. But a surprising thing is that groups A2, C2 they have the most time to use the internet due to the nature of their work, they also read information from eWOM to make purchasing decisions. Correspondingly, the high-income group (I3) is the group that pays the least attention to eWOM. However, a surprise is that men pay more attention to eWOM than women.

+ Both forms above: Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, consumers' buying habits have changed, e-commerce platforms have had the opportunity to develop strongly in the past four years. But when life returns to normal, consumers focus on buying both forms, so they are ready to receive information from WOM and eWOM. The groups of high age (A3), female (G2), self-employed (C3), high income (I3) tend to consider information from both sources before making a purchase. Here, there is a note for businesses, for the C3 group, who are freelancers, they often buy goods according to convenient habits, so they are often affected by the information of both WOM and eWOM. In contrast, the high-income group (I3) is less affected by eWOM, they still trust the recommendations of friends, colleagues and relatives.

Therefore, from the results of Table 7, the authors continue to explore the buying decision factors from physical and virtual stores.

Table 8: Factors affecting purchases in PS

| | Age | | | Gender | | Career | | | Income | | |
|---|------|------|------|--------|------|--------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| | A1 | A2 | A3 | G1 | G2 | C1 | C2 | C3 | I1 | I2 | I3 |
| Believe in WOM | 20% | 25% | 30% | 40% | 42% | 22% | 26% | 28% | 37% | 29% | 34% |
| Good service (Promotion, home delivery, warranty policy) | 28% | 33% | 30% | 22% | 10% | 28% | 34% | 31% | 24% | 29% | 30% |
| Good price | 40% | 24% | 10% | 8% | 41% | 31% | 19% | 30% | 32% | 21% | 6% |
| Directly see and feel the quality of goods | 6% | 8% | 10% | 12% | 4% | 9% | 11% | 4% | 5% | 8% | 20% |
| Quality of goods | 6% | 10% | 20% | 13% | 3% | 10% | 10% | 7% | 5% | 13% | 10% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Source: Authors

In general, the elderly group (A2, A3), female (G2), low-income group (I1), high-income group (I3), groups who have little time to watch or read internet advertisements (C2, C3) often believe in WOM. For the purchasing decision factors at PS, the group of young age (A1), students (C1), unstable occupation (C3), low income (I1) pay attention to price, while groups with high incomes and stable occupations do not pay much attention to prices, even the criteria of goods quality are not paid much attention by groups. Therefore, the factor that attracts customers the most is service, for groups with higher income, the service factor is decisive.

Similar to the results of Table 8, in Table 9 service factors are always focused on by the groups. In addition, the group has a young age, low income, unstable occupation or is students who often use Facebook, Tiktok believe in eWOM, online advertising images and focus on the cheap prices of goods on the e-commerce platform, which are cheaper than in traditional stores.

Table 9: Factors affecting purchases in VS

| | Age | | | Gender | | Career | | | Income | | |
|---|------|------|------|--------|------|--------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| | A1 | A2 | A3 | G1 | G2 | C1 | C2 | C3 | I1 | I2 | I3 |
| Belive in eWOM | 24% | 20% | 15% | 28% | 28% | 32% | 20% | 23% | 24% | 22% | 20% |
| Good service (Promotion, home delivery, warranty policy) | 26% | 28% | 30% | 21% | 24% | 7% | 22% | 25% | 27% | 25% | 33% |
| Cheap price than PS | 23% | 18% | 25% | 21% | 21% | 24% | 23% | 25% | 30% | 25% | 10% |
| Belive in online marketing, pictures, clip and online feedback | 20% | 16% | 12% | 14% | 17% | 30% | 21% | 15% | 11% | 14% | 13% |
| Quality of goods | 7% | 18% | 18% | 16% | 10% | 7% | 24% | 12% | 8% | 14% | 24% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Source: Authors

Comparing the results of Tables 8 and 9, we see that WOM and eWOM both have an impact on purchasing decisions. If young people and office workers are the most affected by eWOM, those with freelance work, the elderly, high income are affected by WOM the most. But one thing worth noting here is that older people use technology and accept online marketing, buying online to access goods at cheap prices and better services. In particular, the survey results show that both customers affected by WOM and eWOM focus on service factors. This means that customers, whether in cyberspace or in real life, are increasingly demanding between advertising and reality. Therefore, the honesty of the goods suppliers must always come first.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

In the current context, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, consumption habits have changed, more and more customers are switching part of their shopping from in-person to online. Thus, we are witnessing fierce competition in online and in-person advertising. Every day, tens of millions of advertising clips are released on platforms such as Zalo, Facebook, Tiktok...etc as well as the methodical investment of physical stores in advertising and services to attract customers. With the above survey results, we see that not any age, gender, occupation, income depends only on WOM or eWOM to make purchasing decisions. All surveyed subjects use two channels at the same time to listen, compare and make decisions, not only those with higher incomes, they pay less attention to price, even groups like office workers. In particular, the comparison of service quality from the physical stores and online stores themselves is one of the important factors for purchasing decisions.

From there, the authors make the following recommendations for businesses, online and offline businesses:

Firstly, besides the use of advertising techniques such as comments, images, clips, using KOLs, the most important thing is that the advertising is close to reality, the quality of the goods is still a factor for customers evaluate the reputation of the store.

Second, businesses need to understand that if it costs enough, they should maintain two stores at the same time, a virtual store and a physical store.

Second, businesses need to understand that if it costs enough, they should maintain two stores at the same time, a virtual store and a physical store. For many sites that only specialize in uploading images without real goods, they are increasingly not attracting the attention of customers. The research team watched 15 sales livestreams on Facebook, 10 sales livestreams on Tiktok showed that in order to have

good comments, the implementation team must have a script and have a large enough volume of goods to sell to customers.

Third, businesses that want to attract customers need to focus on ethical issues in business, advertising does not go too far from reality. Businesses that want to have good comments on the internet and in fact to attract customers must have a diverse and attractive marketing strategy, and better and better marketing techniques. In particular, the quality of goods, prices and especially services are always improved.

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