Customer Buying Behaviour in International E-commerce through Empirical E-shop Data

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Abstract: The article deals with customer e-loyalty. The main objective of the research was to investigate customer buying behaviour, hence customer e-loyalty in e-commerce, and the implications of this for e-shops. Specifically, it concerns how customers behave at e-shops, how often they buy from the e-shops and what kind of revenue they bring to the e-shops. First, the theoretical background of the research is presented, based on some studies. The theoretical discussion proceeds from the broader context of loyalty. The core of the theory is e-loyalty. Secondary research and its results are then characterized. The subject of the research is the analysis of empirical e-shop data related to the manifestations of behavioural e-loyalty. Indicators informing about the proportion of loyal customers on the main variables of interest, concerning the total number of all customers, the number of visits to the e-shop, the number of transactions and the sales volume, were evaluated. Also, the subject of the research is a company operating e-shops in selected countries and its customers. The research covers a total of 13,418 customers. The results obtained contradict the claims of some authors that e-loyalty is one of the key factors for the success of e-shops and that e-loyal customers generate a substantial part of the volume of purchases and sales.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is not easy to build long-term relationships with customers in today’s highly competitive market. Doubts about customer loyalty are common, yet companies are striving to strengthen it. What does the situation look like in the emerging e-commerce industry? Leaders in the online environment believe that companies need loyal customers for economic reasons because acquiring new customers online is not cheap. Few repeated purchases threaten firms’ profit goals, so firms are trying to improve the creative potential of the Web and offer some value to their customers. Even the best e-commerce model design may not work well if there are no loyalty rules and monitoring.

The authors of this article intend to explore customer e-loyalty. The paper aims to present ongoing research results related to selected areas of customer relationship management, specifically e-commerce loyalty. The article first presents a brief theoretical discussion and the current state of knowledge of the studied issue. Then, the methodology of the empirical research and its results are characterized. Secondary research is devoted to customer behaviour in e-commerce. The subject of the research is a company operating e-shops in selected countries and its customers, as well as the analysis of data concerning the manifestations of behavioural loyalty.

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2. CURRENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE

Marketing is dynamically evolving from transactional to relationship marketing. The emergence of the concept of relationship marketing is influenced by the ever-increasing competition and struggle for customers and market saturation (Lošťáková et al., 2017). Associated with relationship marketing is marketing 4.0 and 5.0 (Kotler, 2016, Kartajaya and Setiawan, 2021). A characteristic feature of Marketing 4.0 is in particular the digitalization of marketing activities and the transition to the online environment. Marketing 5.0 combines technology and the humanization of sales and emphasizes predictive, contextual, and agile marketing focused on profitability.

The move to the online environment has meant the emergence of e-commerce and the associated e-loyalty. This market is rapidly developing and growing. The COVID 19 pandemic has contributed to this. Customer relationship management (CRM) is of key importance in relationship marketing and is an integral part of strategic decision making and practical application of various relationship marketing activities (Lošťáková et al., 2017). Loyalty is often associated with the length of the customer relationship, which is the goal of customer relationship management, and the customer value proposition, which conditions the customer’s value to the firm (Kumar and Rainartz, 2016). Customer loyalty and its impact on business success has been studied by many Czech and foreign authors over the years (e.g. Aaker, 1991; Reichheld, 1996; Pelsmacker, Geuens, and Bergh, 2003; Lošťáková et al., 2009; Keller, 2013; Blechař, 2015; Kotler and Keller, 2016; Roberts, 2019).

The concept of e-loyalty has also been the focus of many studies by academics and practitioners (Zeithaml et al., 2002; Valvi and Fragkos, 2012). E-loyalty is built on the same principles as loyalty in an offline environment (Learn and Lin, 2003). After all, customer behaviour in the online environment is slightly different. Customers in the online environment in the comfort of their homes are saving time (Andrews and Currim, 2004). In the online environment, there is higher availability of information about goods and firms, and there is more flexibility to compare (Degeratu, Rangaswamy, and Wu 2000; Alba, Lynch, Weitz, Janiszewski, and Wood, 1997). In addition, the choice of goods from all over the world and the possibility of switching from one vendor to another is also appealing (Brynjolfsson, Hu, & Simester, 2011; Yen, 2011; Burnham, Frels, & Mahajan, 2003; Gommans, Krishnan, & Schefföld, 2001). However, it is important to have confidence in its complete respectability, otherwise, the customer chooses another vendor (Reichheld and Schefter, 2000).

There are many definitions of e-loyalty. The definition of e-loyalty is based on the definition of offline loyalty, with the difference that it is loyalty to a specific online retailer (Grondin 2003; Toufaily, Ricard, & Perrien, 2013).

Like loyalty in the offline environment, e-loyalty includes behavioural and attitudinal aspects. Thus, it is not only about repeated purchases, although monitoring them is very important and can indicate the loyalty situation in the firm. It is also about the emotional relationship, preference over other sellers and resistance to competitors’ marketing activities, as reported for example by Toufaily, Ricard and Perrien, 2013) in their definition of e-loyalty.

E-loyalty has several dimensions, its building already starts in the pre-purchase phase, then in the purchase and post-purchase phase (Toufaily, Ricard, and Perrien, 2013). This process is influenced by factors such as expectations, service quality and satisfaction (Zeithaml et al 2002; Valvi and Fragkos, 2012).
Part of the metrics used in online marketing is the measurement of loyalty in the online environment. These metrics mainly focus on the success of a website in attracting potential customers and increasing market share. These measurements track the contribution of reliable information on sales revenue, e-commerce and customer actions (Laudon and Traver, 2021).

The consequences of e-loyalty are both behavioural and attitudinal. Behavioural loyalty is manifested by a customer’s repeated purchases (purchase frequency). However, it does not provide a comprehensive view of brand or business loyalty (Esmaeilpour, 2015). Attitudinal loyalty is assessed according to the level of relationship and emotional attachment of the customer to the company or brand (Oliver, 1999). Esmaeilpour (2015) talks about emotional attachment to the brand and the company. Roberts (2019) points out that loyalty will decline if firms do not create this emotional bond (Reichheld and Schefter, 2000).

The importance of e-loyalty can be assessed from the theoretical point of view of the authors or from the practical point of view of a particular company and e-shop. The authors’ view differs. Similar to loyalty in offline environments, e-loyalty is also considered a key factor with a direct impact on a firm’s business performance (Reichheld 2001, Day 2000; Srinivasan, Anderson, and Ponnavolu 2002; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Malhotra, 2002; Yun, 2007; Valvi and Fragkos, 2012; Toufaily, Ricard, and Perrien, 2013). However, some authors also see some risks in building e-loyalty. Without knowledge of customers’ needs, firms may rather discourage customers with their activities (Fournier, Dobscha, and Mick, 1998). The view of e-shops is also likely to differ, but no comprehensive academic study has yet been conducted to examine it in more detail. An important aspect is the costs that a firm has to spend on building e-loyalty and whether these are spent efficiently (loyalty programs). Rigby, Reichheld, and Schefter (2002) state that some e-shops are not knowledgeable enough in e-loyalty building and thus their efforts may negatively affect the e-shop’s profits.

3. METHODS

The main objective of the research was to investigate customer buying behaviour, hence customer e-loyalty in e-commerce, and the implications of this for e-shops. Thus, the subject of the research is customer buying behaviour in e-commerce focused on behavioural loyalty. Specifically, it concerns how customers behave at e-shops, how often they buy from the e-shops and what kind of revenue they bring to the e-shops. Since repeated purchase behaviour is considered one of the key consequences of customer (behavioural) loyalty (Valvi a Fragkos; 2012, Toufaily et al., 2013), customers who have purchased 2 or more times are considered loyal in the research.

The subject of the research is a company that operates e-shops in various foreign markets. The company operates in the Czech, Polish, German, English and Slovak markets in the online environment. The offer of the researched firm includes a specialized assortment. It offers paintings of its motives or motives ordered by the customer.

Based on the current state of knowledge, the following research questions were formulated:
1) What is the buying behaviour of customers?
2) What impact do repeat customers have on e-shop results?

Different methods can be used to investigate customer behaviour, describe and explain it; for example, Valvi and Fragkos (2012) or Toufaily et al. (2013) based their conclusions on literature
research. Srinivasan et al. (2002) or Yun and Good (2007), on the other hand, analysed data obtained by interviewing real customers of selected e-shops. To maximize the relevance of the research, the authors chose to analyse secondary empirical data that describe the customers’ behaviour in the e-shop and all the actions taken by the customers. This is because, according to several authors, this type of data provides the most accurate description of reality (Ehrenberg, 1995, Brynjolfsson et al.; 2011, Sharp et al., 2019). Other authors have also argued that real benefits for academia and practice are only achieved when research solves real problems for firms using data on real customer behaviour (Berkowitz et al., 1978, Brennan, 2004, Nyilasy and Reid, 2007, Sharp et al., 2019).

In order to meet the objective, research was conducted on secondary data on customer shopping behaviour at selected e-shops. This data is from Google Analytics, which collects data on customer shopping behaviour at e-shops. The research will be based on empirical data that describes the real customer behaviour on the selected e-shops between 2019 and 2020. Primarily chosen loyalty characteristics are the average number of purchases and the average order value (Keng and Ehrenberg, 1984; Wrigley and Dunn, 1984; Graham et al. 2017). Then, also conversion rate (ratio of number of purchases and total visits), average time per visit and bounce rate (share of visits without any action on the web) will be taken into account in the data analysis since these variables were included in obtained data set. To further elucidate the impact of repeated shopping on e-commerce results, a correlation analysis will be used to express the relationship between purchase frequency and average order value, conversion rate, time on site and bounce rate.

4. DATA AND RESULTS

In total, the behaviour of 13 416 customers was analysed, who made 54 837 visits, 14 933 transactions and generated 14 701 426 CZK in sales. All e-shops operate on the same e-commerce platform and use the Google Analytics tool to track customer behaviour, from which the data was extracted.

Overall results include the number of customers, number of visits, number of purchases and sales volume. Customer buying behaviour is described by the average number of transactions per user, the average order value, as well as the conversion rate, the average time spent on the site and the immediate abandonment rate.

Except for one e-shop (705 customers), all the lower units registered 1,000 customers (1,299 to 5,628), with total visits ranging from 2,736 to 21,582, transactions ranging from 750 to 6,065, and total sales ranging from CZK 602,138 to CZK 7,123,024. The highest total values for all variables were measured for the Czech e-shop, while the lowest values were measured for the German e-shop (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Customers</th>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>Purchases</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>APF</th>
<th>APV (CZK)</th>
<th>T. p. visit(s)</th>
<th>BR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>5628</td>
<td>21582</td>
<td>6065</td>
<td>7123024</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>2736</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>602138</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>1299</td>
<td>4848</td>
<td>1496</td>
<td>1317733</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>3850</td>
<td>17076</td>
<td>4479</td>
<td>3716367</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>8595</td>
<td>2143</td>
<td>1942164</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>13416</td>
<td>54837</td>
<td>14933</td>
<td>14701426</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own processing
As far as customer purchasing behaviour is concerned (Table 1), the values for all e-shops are very similar. The average number of purchases is 1.11, where the highest value of 1.16 was measured for the Polish e-shop and the lowest value (1.06) for the German one. The average order value is 986 CZK, with the highest APV (1,170 CZK) registered by the CZ e-shop and the lowest (805) by the German e-shop. However, the predictive value of this variable may be biased by the price level of individual e-shops, yet the average values differ only minimally from the overall average. The average CR is 54%, with PL and SK e-shops recording the lowest values (50%) and CZ and EN e-shops the highest values (58%), but even here the differences are only in units of percentage points. The average time spent on the website was 574 seconds, with the maximum (637 seconds) recorded by the CZ e-shop and the minimum (434 seconds) by the DE e-shop. BR reached an average value of 21%, the highest value was achieved by DE e-shop (28%) and the lowest (19%) by CZ e-shop, but even here the differences between individual e-shops, and thus the deviations from the average, are almost negligible. Therefore, the results show that the purchasing behaviour of customers across countries is very similar, but most importantly, the average customer does not purchase more than once and for every purchase there are 2 visits to the e-shop.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Customers</th>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>Purchases</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>APF</th>
<th>APV (CZK)</th>
<th>T. p. visit(s)</th>
<th>BR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>2987</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>947446</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>1201</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>62571</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>1140</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>320608</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>3519</td>
<td>1128</td>
<td>934442</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>345554</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>1190</td>
<td>9933</td>
<td>2707</td>
<td>2610621</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>959</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own processing

Repeat buyers (Table 2) make up on average only 9% of the customer base, with the highest proportion for EN and PL e-shops (13%) and the lowest for DE e-shop (5%), so 3 out of 5 e-shops have less than 10% of repeat buyers. The average share of visits, purchases and sales of repeat customers is 18%. EN (24%) and PL (25%) e-shops recorded the highest share of repeat customer transactions, while for the others this value ranged from 11% to 17%. The situation is almost identical in terms of sales, where the share of repeat customers in total sales is almost the same as in the case of transaction volume.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Customers</th>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>Purchases</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>APF</th>
<th>APV (CZK)</th>
<th>T. p. visit(s)</th>
<th>BR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>212%</td>
<td>103%</td>
<td>103%</td>
<td>111%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>149%</td>
<td>215%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>122%</td>
<td>191%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>119%</td>
<td>118%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>143%</td>
<td>194%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>108%</td>
<td>102%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>105%</td>
<td>214%</td>
<td>107%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>132%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>117%</td>
<td>204%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>111%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own processing

The AVP of repeat shoppers is lower than the overall average, and a closer look reveals that customers who have shopped twice on average spend a slightly lower amount than customers who have shopped only once (Table 3), which contradicts the general claim that repeat shoppers spend more. The proportion of customers who bought twice is 7% on average across markets,
accounting for 11% of visits, 13% of transactions and 12.9% of sales. Customers who have purchased 3 or more times make up a tiny fraction of the total (Table 4). Except CR, which averages 63% for repeat customers (53% for single-purchase customers), the other values describing purchase behaviour for single-purchase customers versus repeat customers are nearly identical.

Table 4. Values of customer divided by number of purchases (all e-shops)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. Purchases</th>
<th>Customers</th>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>Purchases</th>
<th>Revenue (CZK)</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>APV</th>
<th>T. p. visit (s)</th>
<th>BR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12226</td>
<td>44904</td>
<td>12226</td>
<td>12090842</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>989</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>982</td>
<td>6053</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>1890140</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>1171</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>404786</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1084</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>154445</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>1073</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>52410</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>1165</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38247</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>1062</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5598</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8912</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9956</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9960</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36132</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2258</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>13416</td>
<td>54837</td>
<td>14933</td>
<td>14701426</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own processing

The effect of the e-loyalty paradigm of repeated purchases on e-shopping performance and customer buying behaviour is almost negligible for the selected e-shops. To confirm this finding, the effect of the number of transactions on the selected variables was tested using correlation (Table 5).

Table 5. Correlation of number of purchases and selected variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-0.008622071</td>
<td>0.057577288</td>
<td>-0.005634232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own processing

The selected variables include AVP, CR, average time spent on site and BR. No correlation was found for any of the variables, with the highest correlation value (0.058) recorded for the number of transactions and CR.

5. DISCUSSION

One of the most important findings is the fact that on average more than 90% of customers made only one purchase during the period under review, and these customers account for 80% of total purchases and sales. This implies that returning customers are far from constituting a significant share of turnover, which is contrary to the claims of authors who attach key importance to customer loyalty (Reichheld et al, 2000, Day, 2000, Srinivasan et al, 2002, Zeithaml, 2002, Yun and Good, 2007, Valvi and Fragkos, 2012, Toufaily et al., 2013). Other authors who, while not considering loyalty as an intrinsic factor in e-commerce success, nevertheless attribute a significant role to it in generating sales state that returning customers account for approximately 35 to 45% of e-commerce revenue (Yun and Good, 2007). However, for selected e-shops, these figures are approximately half that, averaging 20%. Thus, customer retention yields only a minimal volume of purchases and sales, and e-shops depend on the continuous acquisition of new customers, which is in line with studies by Romaniuk (2011) or Romaniuk.
and Sharp (2015). This can be a problem if firms hit the limits of market consumption in a given product category. At the same time, potential retention activities may run up against the average purchase frequency of a given product category of customers, which, if around 1, may indicate that retention efforts will lead to reduced profitability due to cost growth without adequate revenue (Bennett and Graham, 2010). Thus, if we do not know this value, we cannot reliably decide whether and to what extent to pursue customer retention. On average, customers make 2 visits per transaction, which can be interpreted as suggesting that e-stores should focus on remarketing campaigns primarily targeting customers who have visited the e-store once and encourage these to purchase. Up to 20% of customers will leave the e-shop without any action (BR) and these are thus a lost cost if the e-shop does not engage with them further. It is also interesting to note that customer buying behaviour, i.e. conversion rate (CR), average purchase frequency (APF), time on site, bounce rate (BR) and average order value (APV) are very similar across markets. This fact makes it easier for e-tailers to plan their marketing activities, as they can apply similar actions across countries in terms of customer buying behaviour and possibly also plan marketing activities when entering a new market based on this data. When dividing the customers by the number of purchases and subsequent correlation analysis, it was found that the number of transactions does not affect any of the values describing customer purchasing behaviour. Thus, when loyalty is viewed through the paradigm of purchase frequency, it has not been shown to affect customer purchase behaviour. It is also worth noting that the APV of customers who purchased 2 and 3 times is even smaller than the APV of customers who purchased only once, which contradicts the claim of Reichheld and Shefter, (2000) that returning customers spend more money on average. Thus, overall, based on the research results, it can be argued that customer loyalty is not significant for the selected e-stores. In fact, if each customer purchased only once, the e-shops would lose only 20% of their total purchases and sales.

6. CONCLUSION

The key findings of the research as well as the possible managerial implications are as follows 1) 90% of customers make only one purchase 2) customer purchasing behaviour expressed in terms of average order value, conversion rate, time on site and immediate abandonment rate is not related to the number of purchases 3) repeat shoppers account on average for 20% of e-shop sales 4) repeat shoppers spend less on average, but the difference is negligible 5) the number of purchases and customer buying behaviour expressed by these variables are not correlated 6) customers who buy more than twice account for only 1.5% of the total number of customers and 5% of the total volume of purchases and sales 7) customer buying behaviour is very similar across countries. Thus, the general conclusion that customer loyalty, or its behavioural aspects, have only a very weak influence on e-shop performance is contrary to the claims of many authors dealing with the issue. However, it is very important to mention the factors limiting generalization of the conclusions drawn from the research to the e-commerce market. The research analysed e-shops of one brand offering only one product category over 2 years. Thus, the total volume and telling value of the data is not sufficient for generalization. Also, the capacity and situation of the market are not known, so it is not possible to estimate the growth potential of the e-shops, as we do not know the volume of consumption of the product category or the amount or activity of competitors. The marketing activities of the e-shops and their costs are also unknown, so it is not possible to assess the profitability of individual customers or the e-shop as a whole. Thus, the implementation of research that eliminates these limitations can inspire further work by authors dealing with the issue.
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REFERENCES


