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Why Consumers Like Sharing on the Internet?

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines internet sharing behavior. Sharing is a kind of reciprocal prosocial behavior, which can help consumers to cooperate with each other and reduce the transaction costs during the consumption process. With the innovation and development of Internet technology, and also with more and more consumers participating in product or service and production with their increasing ability, it becomes much more convenient to share on the Internet. Therefore, as an instinct behavior of human beings, sharing is an old and hot topic in consumption field, which has a valuable theoretical and practical meaning, especially in internet marketing field. In this study we examine the antecedents and outcome of internet sharing behavior, we put forward our hypothesis and research model and then we draw some conclusions and recommendations.

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1 Introduction

Recent hotbed of sharing activity and discussions involves the internet. Sharing with others online includes open-source code writing; sharing information on Internet bulletin boards (BBS) and chat rooms; publishing blogs (Weblogs), vlogs (video logs), and Web sites; contributing to collaborative online games; helping to create or improve entries in online encyclopedias like Wikipedia; participating in P2P (peer-to-peer) file sharing^[12]; maintaining leisters; and responding to e-mail requests. Sharing has been the norm since the scientific revolution in the "open science" model of rapid disclosure and dissemination of new inventions and discoveries^[10].

Sharing is a kind of reciprocal prosocial behavior, which can help consumers to cooperate with each other and reduce the transaction costs during the consumption process. Sharing is a public behavior, which is a powerful tool to combine consumers together and establish stable sensation and bonds among them. Sharing is also a ritual to participate in a group together, and then gradually form friendship and build real social bonds based on trust between each other. With the innovation and development of Internet technology, and also with more and more consumers participating in product or service and production with their increasing ability, it becomes much more convenient to share on the Internet, which can radiate to a wider area and gain a larger synergy effect.

Therefore, as an instinct behavior of human beings, sharing is an old and hot topic in consumption field, which has a valuable theoretical and practical meaning especially in Internet marketing field. It is predicted that internet sharing behavior will continue to catch on with consumers and marketers. This paper, firstly, indicate an overview of the value and internet sharing behavior. Secondly,

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we put forward our hypothesis and research model and lastly draw some conclusions and limitations.

2 Internet Sharing Behavior Overview

Internet provides consumers not only with the tangible convenience, but it is a new spirit of sharing. In 1991, a Finnish student provided a free software movement which is a vital product with results and technical support - a free operating system kernel Linux. Firstly, it is completely free to publish in the Internet, and consumers can download and freely use and copy. Its source code is completely open, and any consumer can freely understand and modify to fit their own special needs.

It is a prominent feature of modern marketing to consumers through the product/service development and design, consumers, and enterprises together to create value, which makes the relationship between businesses and consumers closer. Consumer participation in value co-creation process is often accompanied by other consumers to "share" behavior, with this synergistic effect to further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the consumer value co-creation. Sharing behavior among consumers will enhance appreciation and sincerity among each other. Consumers will achieve better emotional experience through the sharing behavior, and to capture useful consumer information, and promote exchange and interaction between the consumers, and the leading force in the companies in jointly creating greater social and economic value.

3 Theoretical Frameworks

We develop the conceptual framework on the basis of the extant internet sharing behavior research. We reviewed gradually and then merged to generate the final model. Ego-centric variable and altruistic variable are the basic drives of Internet sharing behavior, theoretically deduce and empirically test the incidents and outcomes between consumer's Internet sharing willingness and consumer's Internet sharing behavior.

3.1 Antecedents of internet sharing willingness

3.1.1 Egoism

Egoism has a long history of ancient Greece Protagoras that "man is the measure of all things" proposition, and Pericles "is the first important" idea that has been included as a self-centered point of view of Democritus, the main motivation of the person's social life based on the principle of self-serving view. Those who make use of these online resources are a part of Internet sharing regardless of whether they make similar contributions themselves. Some see such sharing as the burgeoning of a new age of altruism brought about by the magic of cyberspace, while others suggest that such acts is largely egoistic. The altruistic explanation is closer to the original democratizing ethos of the personal computer^[4] and the view of computer hackers as heroic champions bringing power to the people. Thus, a key issue in such sharing is the extent to which it is altruistic and the extent to which we may be entering a new age of altruism. The most basic drivers of the willingness of consumers to share in the network are reflected in the self-serving motivation and the desire to communicate with others. Because of the virtual nature of cyberspace, the characteristics of openness, the expectations of this social interaction, and self-image in this interactive process, are depicted as possible. Networks can make it possible to hide some or all of the true identity of their own free choice of the image presented to others through interpersonal re-shape of self-difference with the real-world of self-selection and self-fashioning. Therefore, we obtained the following hypothesis:

H1: Egoism will positively influence consumer internet sharing willingness.

3.1.2 Altruism

Coyne considered possible motives for giving away our possessions and productions on the Internet. One is "cheap altruism". Although we give away the digital equivalent of a song, computer program, photograph, or text file, we still have it. In other words, it is a way of keeping while giving. However, this does not explain why someone would contribute at all rather than act as a free rider. There are, however, some things that we can share or give away without losing them such as a song, a joke, a story, things we put up on our Web sites, or music files shared on the Web. Even with earlier information goods like books, journals, and videos, it is possible to make copies that can be shared freely. Unlike some other works of art, these copies are virtually indistinguishable from the originals. With the advent of the Internet and e-mail, some have suggested that consumerism is being replaced by a hi-tech gift economy. Benkler sees sharing as "nonreciprocal pro-social behavior"^[4]. Belk defines sharing as "the act and process of distributing what is ours to others for their use and/or the act and process of receiving or taking something from others for our use."^[2] Therefore, we obtained the following hypothesis:

H2: Altruism will positively influence consumer internet sharing willingness.

3.1.3 Internet Sharing Willingness (ISW)

Peter & Olson proposed that consumer behavior will link consumers to their own future behavior of a statement^[19], the will is the subjective probability of the individual to engage in specific actions, the will of the consumer behavior is the behavioral outcomes appear before the decision on behavior interpretation of the process. For purposes of this study, Bock, & Kim pointed out that sharing willingness personally believe that they will engage in the extent of knowledge sharing behavior,^[7] which can be defined as a subjective probability. Therefore, we obtained the following hypothesis:

H3: Consumer internet sharing willingness will positively influence internet sharing behavior.

3.2 Outcome of internet sharing behavior (ISB)

3.2.1 Self-expression

Self-expression includes attention (attention-getting), the expression of ideas (offering opinions), the expression of emotion (expression of emotion), a statement of power, catharsis (catharsis). Therefore, we obtained the following hypothesis:

H4: Internet sharing behavior will positively influence self-expression.

3.2.2 Social communication link

From social communication link we know that interactive, offline activities, social interaction and consumer-generated factors linked behaviors. Internet sharing emphasizes that individual is not isolated, but connected to each other and to the way people self-organize groups, such as fully interactive content and applications together will bring more users to interact and produce rich content, and the site services using value and attractiveness were significantly increased. WEB 2.0 is consistent with the social, interactive and open characteristics. Therefore, we obtained the following hypothesis:

H5: Internet sharing behavior will positively influence social communication link.

3.2.3 Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory suggests that individual through social classification, identify with their groups, and produce internal and external groups known as group preference bias. To achieve or maintain an individual through positive social identity (social identity) to improve self-esteem, positive self-esteem comes from outside, including groups and related groups favorable comparison. Social identity is threatened when an individual will use a variety of strategies to improve self-esteem. Individuals interested in their own groups too, consider themselves better than other groups of groups, and seek positive social identity and self-esteem to appreciate the differences between groups, between groups are likely to lead to prejudice and inter group conflict.

3.2.4 Cognitive social identity

Cognitive social identity is the social dimension of driving, other people's recognition, and enhancement of personal image and sense of belonging to an organized group. Therefore, we obtained the following hypothesis:

H6: Internet sharing behavior will positively influence cognitive social identity.

According to the hypothesis, a model is drawn as per Figure 1.

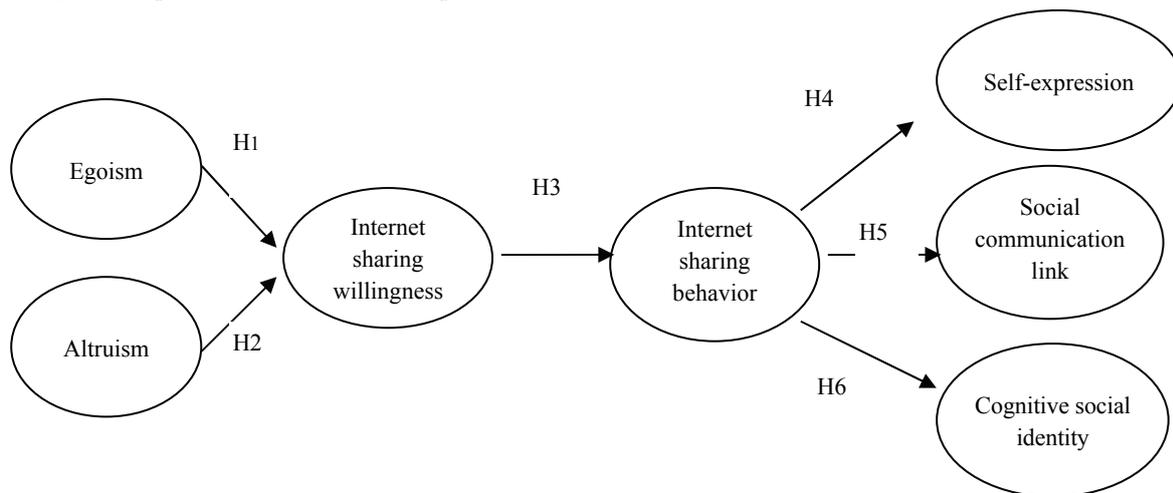


Figure 1 Internet sharing behavior model

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

A total of 350 questionnaires were returned, where 301 were valid. Score conversion is used prior to analysis, firstly through reverse scoring items, then using the maximum expected (ME) method to handle missing values, followed by SPSS11.5 statistical software, and the use of official survey data of the sample calculated for each variable dimension Cronbach α coefficient.

4.1 Theoretical contributions

Scholars to cultural anthropology, social psychology, as represented by the qualitative study of maternal love, within the family resources, social resources and the sharing of the emotional aspects of prototype [22],[16],[2]. This study attends to explain why consumer is actively in internet sharing. We found that egoism and altruism are the psychological motivations of the consumer network sharing willingness. Self-expression, social communication link and cognitive social identity are outcomes of internet sharing behavior.

4.2 Managerial implications

Managers should firstly create value together with consumers by sharing reciprocal pro-social behavior. It is a powerful tool to establish stable emotional and links between consumers and one of the important foundation for consumers to work together to create

consumer value. Secondly, network sharing behavior of consumers to increase Web site hits, which makes the network based on page views, can rally to carry out more extensive advertising campaign.

4.3 Limitations and directions for future research

Future research possibilities are broad in scope. It would be highly relevant and substantial to identify key metrics that would be most useful to practitioners for decision making. The first psychological, network sharing is a very complex process, relatively speaking, lead to consumer network to share the psychological mechanism of self-serving motives, and altruistic motives measurement. At the same time scale on the network share requires further examination. Given the theme of this study internet sharing behavior, we conducted a questionnaire distribution and collection through the network, with questions on the quality of the network samples, and require the need to use more samples online or offline for reinsertion.

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On shared resources: The sharing economy is actually our business model—we don't own any of our own manufacturing, we effectively share facilities. We contract manufacture with partner companies who make products for others, often competitors. We do all of our own formulations but we share equipment and facilities. It's an interesting mindset of millennials and new consumers, of not necessarily needing to own their own thing—everyone on the block doesn't have to have their own snow blower or lawn mower, so why don't we pool together and share it and reduce over-consumption in the world? There's a really different mentality there—less consumerism, less materialism and more of a community building approach. How Internet changed Business. Before the introductions of the internet, consumers would have to walk into a store to get the product or service they want. Today, however, you only need to go to an E-commerce store, scroll through the selection of goods, get reviews from previous customers, and purchase what you like. Before the internet era, you had to wait for a major business document to be delivered via the post office, and meetings always meant going for a face-to-face date with a prospect. Today, it only takes less than a second to send and receive an email and meetings can be done via Skype regardless of the physical location of your prospect. Click to share on Twitter (Opens in new window). Click to share on Facebook (Opens in new window). Like this When it comes to social media sharing, psychology plays an important role. Let's take a look at five main explanations for why we share. Let's take a look at five main explanations for this. Social media content is taking over the internet—literally. Twitter's audience grew 29% year-over-year to a staggering 187 million users, sending out over 500 million tweets per day. On YouTube, users upload 400 hours of content every minute. Facebook boasts 2.8 billion monthly active users who spend nearly twenty hours per month on the site. In a short time, the internet has been transformed by social media, and social media has begun to transform society. As always, psychology is interested in finding answers to questions of why we behave Internet is a nice medium to connect with the entire World. People use it as a medium to connect with other people, sharing files, entertainment. People browse internet for information. They love to browse various search engines like Google, Yahoo to know about any necessary information. Also people love browsing websites like Wikipedia which is a complete encyclopedia on internet. Social networking. Social networking is an essential medium to communicate with friend and family members. The involvement of consumers with the topic of the website and the flow they experience during their visit are the most important determinants of the hierarchy of effects. These findings underline the importance of targeted traffic generation. Instead of attracting 'large numbers' of consumers to a site, managers should focus on attracting the 'right' visitors. *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing* (2003) 11, 350-361; doi:10.1057/palgrave.jt.5740090. These technological inventions on one hand ease the life on the other hand they make people work like machines. Online shopping is one such technological boon to the people who are time scarce. This paper tries to find out the consumer's perception about online shopping in the city of Ahmedabad.