

The Influential Mechanisms of Live-Streaming Hosts on Consumer Behavior

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Abstract:

In recent years, with the rise of e-commerce live streaming, hosts promoting products have played a crucial role in connecting consumers with products and influencing consumer behavior intentions. This paper reviews the current state and trends in research on how these hosts affect consumer behavior intentions, exploring how their personal characteristics, interaction patterns, and discourse strategies impact consumer purchasing decisions. Through analysis from both quantitative and qualitative research perspectives, it reveals the influence mechanisms of these hosts in modern e-commerce environments. Additionally, it discusses the pivotal role of interactive information in e-commerce live streaming, including its ability to enhance purchase desire, enrich entertainment experiences, and improve consumer shopping experiences. While existing studies provide valuable insights, there are still research gaps, particularly in-depth studies on the influence of hosts in specific domains. The findings of this review are significant for understanding the central role of hosts in e-commerce live streaming and their impact on consumer behavior, providing a theoretical foundation and support for future research and practice.

Keywords: E-commerce Live Streaming; Consumer Behavior; Host Influence; Interactive Information.

1. Introduction

With the rapid advancement of internet technology, live-streaming e-commerce has emerged as a burgeoning shopping method, profoundly altering consumer shopping habits at an unprecedented pace. From influencers like “Lipstick King” Li Jiaqi to the rising stars in the e-commerce industry like Dong Yuhui, live-streaming hosts play a pivotal role as the core of this new shopping paradigm. They not only promote products but also assume multiple roles as information disseminators, social interactors, and entertainment content creators. Their influence and professional capabilities directly impact consumer purchasing decisions. Therefore, a thorough understanding of how livestream hosts influence consumer behavioral intentions has become increasingly important.

This paper aims to review current research on the characteristics of livestream hosts and their impact on consumer behavior, analyzing how live-streaming hosts influence

consumer purchasing processes at various stages and the crucial role of interactive information in live e-commerce. Additionally, the paper categorizes existing research into quantitative and qualitative studies. Quantitative studies focus on constructing scales to evaluate and analyze the personal traits (such as appearance, voice, and charisma) and behavioral characteristics (such as interactive and entertainment behaviors) of livestream hosts. Qualitative studies, on the other hand, delve into discourse strategies, interaction modes, and trends towards ritualized spectacle. Regarding the mechanisms through which live-streaming hosts influence consumer behavior, studies typically employ linear models and nonlinear recursive models. The former includes research using linear models like the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), while the latter primarily applies consumer decision-making process models to analyze the dynamic effects of livestream hosts on consumer decision-making. Furthermore, the paper

highlights the critical role of interactive information in live e-commerce, categorizing related research into quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis. Quantitative analysis primarily evaluates the timeliness, accuracy, and relevance of interactive information through designed scales, while qualitative analysis employs theories such as the ritual chain theory and media context theory to explore the manifestation of interactive information across various contexts and its impact on consumer behavior.

2. Characteristics of Live-Streaming E-Commerce Hosts

In the live-streaming e-commerce model, hosts who promote products play a crucial role as bridges between consumers and products. They function not only as sales promoters but also as information disseminators, social interactors, and creators of entertainment content. Current research on live-streaming e-commerce hosts is primarily categorized into quantitative and qualitative studies.

Quantitative studies focus on constructing scales to measure the characteristics and influence of live-streaming e-commerce hosts. At the level of personal characteristics, existing research predominantly examines the physical appearance, voice, and personal charisma of hosts [1]. Professionalism encompasses the host's expertise in product knowledge and industry background, particularly notable in verticals such as technology and cosmetics where deep consumer trust in knowledgeable hosts is crucial. For instance, studies assess whether hosts effectively present product features and address technical queries [2]. Influence characteristics gauge the host's impact on social media and live-streaming platforms through metrics such as follower counts, interaction rates, and audience feedback. Behavioral characteristics, another facet of quantitative research, focus on the interactive and entertainment behaviors of hosts. Interaction behavior studies the strength and quality of host interactions with viewers during live streams, including responsiveness to audience comments and questions [3]. Entertainment behavior examines how hosts employ humor and amusement to enhance consumer perception of enjoyment.

Qualitative research, meanwhile, concentrates on the interaction modes and discourse symbol construction mechanisms employed by live-streaming hosts. Studies of interaction modes draw on theories such as ritual chain theory and media context theory to analyze how hosts leverage multidimensional scenarios – comprising live-streaming platforms, barrage comments, and platform

algorithms – to craft compelling virtual presences that transform live-streaming efficacy into commercial success [4]. Studies on discourse symbol construction mechanisms, exemplified by knowledge-oriented hosts like those in Dongfang Zhenxuan, investigate how these hosts construct discourse and symbols to shape their personas and commercial effectiveness [5].

3. Influence Mechanisms of Live-Streaming E-commerce Hosts on Consumer Behavior

3.1 General Influence Mechanism

In examining the mechanisms through which live-streaming hosts influence consumer behavior, academia has shifted from linear models typified by the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to nonlinear, cyclical models centered on the consumer decision-making process. This decision-making process model encompasses stages such as Need Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision, and Post-Purchase Behavior [6]. The influence of live-streaming e-commerce hosts on consumers throughout these stages is dynamic and iterative.

During the Need Recognition stage, hosts predict and induce potential consumer needs through product introductions and recommendations [7]. In the Purchase Decision stage, hosts directly stimulate consumer purchase intentions by offering limited-time discounts, special promotions, or purchasing combinations, thereby encouraging consumers to make decisions before the live stream concludes [8]. In the Post-Purchase Behavior stage, hosts' online service remedies significantly influence the reconstruction of consumer purchase intentions [9].

Scholars have conducted empirical studies exploring how different factors related to live-streaming e-commerce hosts influence consumer behavior, covering aspects such as influence, social impact, authority, information dissemination, emotional connection, and shopping experience [10]. Earlier research focused on how hosts establish emotional connections with audiences through personal charisma and emotionalized promotions, analyzing how these connections affect audience brand loyalty and purchasing behavior [11]. In recent years, with the further development of live-streaming e-commerce, more studies have begun examining how hosts enhance consumer shopping experiences through real-time interaction, prompt feedback, and emotional resonance [12].

Specific research findings and methodologies may vary depending on researchers' backgrounds and study focuses. Nevertheless, recent empirical studies generally aim to delve deeper into understanding the roles and mechanisms of live-streaming hosts in the e-commerce environment.

3.2 The Specific Impact of Interactive Information on Purchase Intentions

Interactive information plays a crucial role as a bridge between consumers and products within the live-streaming e-commerce environment, exerting significant influence. It not only conveys detailed product information but also enhances social connections and enriches entertainment experiences. Current research on interactive information in live-streaming e-commerce can be broadly categorized into quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis.

Qualitative studies employ theories such as the Interactive Ritual Chain Theory and Media Context Theory to explore the performance of interactive information in various contexts within live-streaming e-commerce. Research indicates that live-streaming platforms, barrage comments, and platform algorithm rules collectively construct a multi-dimensional interactive environment. This environment shapes unique consumer scenes of value, thereby converting interactive benefits into commercial gains. By examining the linguistic and symbolic construction within communication, researchers further clarify the critical role of these factors in influencing consumer intentions and behaviors [13, 14].

Quantitative studies, on the other hand, focus on designing scales to assess the timeliness, accuracy, and relevance of interactive information, investigating how such information influences consumer purchase intentions and the underlying mechanisms. High-quality interactive communication significantly enhances customer motivation. Timely and accurate barrage information increases consumer engagement and trust levels, thereby driving purchase decisions. Empirical studies demonstrate that consumer purchase decisions are significantly influenced by the frequency and depth of interactive information. Frequent and in-depth interactions markedly increase consumer trust and purchase intentions [2, 15, 16].

In live-streaming e-commerce, interactive information affects consumer behavioral intentions in multiple ways. Firstly, it impacts consumer trust perceptions. Enhanced trust significantly boosts customer purchase desires. For example, providing detailed and relevant product data enhances consumer purchase confidence, thereby promoting purchase motivation [2]. Secondly, it enhances consumer

entertainment experiences. By offering highly interactive and quality information, consumer entertainment experiences are bolstered, thereby driving purchase decisions. For instance, humorous exchanges and compelling content enhance viewer experience, thereby increasing their purchase desires [1]. Thirdly, it ensures data accuracy. High-quality information deepens customer understanding of products, reducing uncertainties and risks in purchase decisions [2]. Studies indicate that product-related barrage content significantly enhances consumer purchase desires, while content related to hosts may have negative effects [14]. Lastly, environmental factors influence consumer emotions and decision-making processes. An effective live-streaming environment enhances viewer satisfaction and interactivity, thereby strengthening their purchase intentions [13].

In summary, through enhancing perceived trust and entertainment, interactive information in live-streaming e-commerce effectively boosts consumer purchase intentions and repeat purchase intentions. These studies not only provide a theoretical basis for businesses to improve live-streaming strategies but also offer practical data support for e-commerce platforms aiming to enhance user experiences and drive sales growth.

4. Conclusion

Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, this paper reveals the significant impact of hosts on consumer behavior intentions in e-commerce live-streaming. By reviewing current research, it finds that hosts play a critical role in modern e-commerce environments, where their personal characteristics, interaction behaviors, and discourse strategies notably influence consumer purchasing decisions. Additionally, interactive information plays a crucial role in enhancing trust, enriching entertainment experiences, and improving shopping experiences. However, despite valuable insights, there are research gaps and limitations. Current studies often focus on popular platforms or product categories, with limited research on specific domains where hosts influence. Moreover, small sample sizes and inadequate data collection methods may affect the universality and reliability of conclusions.

Future research should expand its scope to cover more platforms and product categories, further exploring specific mechanisms through which hosts influence consumer behavior in different industry contexts, and how interactive information can efficiently enhance consumer shopping experiences and satisfaction. Increasing sample sizes

and adopting more scientific data collection and analysis methods will enhance the breadth and depth of research. This review aims to provide new research perspectives for academia while offering theoretical guidance and scientific recommendations for e-commerce platforms and hosts' practical operations.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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