

## STUDY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR FOR A DURABLE PRODUCT : AN EXPLORATORY STUDY FOR LAPTOP

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Consumer behavior has changed dramatically in the past decade. Today, consumer can order online many customized products ranging from sneakers to computers. Many have replaced their daily newspapers with customized, online editions of these media and are increasingly receiving information from online sources. Students choosing a university no longer rely on information from mailed catalogs; instead, they have online access to all the pertinent information about the university's courses and professors and, in some cases, can visit, virtually, actual classes. People looks to sell their old computers or grandma's antique credenza no longer need to advertise in the local newspaper or rely on a pricy auction house; instead, they can sell these items via in different portals. Consumers who want out-of-print books no longer have to visit out- of- way stores with hundred of poorly organized dusty shelves, and those who wish to purchase a book published in another country no longer have to call foreign publishers or deal with the bureaucratic manner of overseas shipping; instead they visit Amazon.com or different other portals where they can easily locate and places orders for the books they seek. TV viewers can now avoid advertising commercials by using the skip features of their digital video recorders and order on-demand previously shown TV program as well moves. All of these new ways of selling goods and services became available to consumers during the past fifteen years and are the results of digital technologies. And they also have another thing in common. They exist even today because they reflect an understanding of consumer needs and consumer behavior.

The term consumer behavior is defined as the behavior that consumers display in searching, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of

products and services that they expect will satisfy their need. Consumer behavior focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, efforts) on consumption-related items. That includes what they buy, why they buy it, when they buy it, where they buy it, how often they buy it, how often they used it, how they evaluate if after the purchase, the impact of such evaluations on future purchases, and how they dispose of it.

Clearly, as individuals, we are all unique. However, one of the most important constants among all of us, despite our difference, is that, above all, we are consumers. We use or consume on a regular basis food, clothing, shelter, transportation, education, equipment, vacations, necessities, luxuries, service, and even ideas. As consumer, we play vital role in the economy – local, national, inter-national. The purchase decision we make affect the demand for basic raw materials, for transportation, for production, for banking: they affect the employment of workers and the deployment of resources, the success of some industries and the failure of others. In order to successes in any business, and especially in today's dynamic and rapidly evolving marketplace, they think, how they work, how they spend their leisure time. They need to understand the personal and group influences that affect consumer decisions and how these decisions are made. And, in these days of ever-widening media, choices, they need to not only identify their target audience, but they need to know where and how to reach them.

The term consumer behavior describes two different kinds of consuming entities: the personal consumer and the organizational consumer. The personal consumer buys goods and services for his or her own use, for the use of household, or a gift for a friend. In each of these contexts, the products are brought for final use by individuals, who are referred

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to as end users or ultimate consumers. The second category of consumer the organizational consumer includes profit and not for profit business, government agencies (local, state, and national), and institutions (e.g. schools, hospital, and prisons), all of which must buy products, equipment, and services in order to run their organization. Despite the importance of both categories of consumer individuals and organization – this paper will focus on the individual’s consumer, who purchase for his or her own personal use or for household use. End – use consumptions is perhaps the most pervasive of all types of consumer behavior, for it involves every individual, of every age and background, in the role of either buyer or user, or both.

Every day, new products enter the marketplace and exiting products are improved. Research evidence has shown that preference, price value perception and need fulfillment are the primary drivers for consumer purchase interest. Products concept with high liking may or may not compel consumers to buy. However, while liking, price value perception and need fulfillment are the primary drivers of consumer acquire and display material possessions for the purpose of feeling differentiated from other people and, thus, are targeted with a variety of marketing stimuli that attempt to enhance self-perceptions of uniqueness. The adoption of new products or services in the market is related to consumer innovativeness. Consumer innovativeness is the predisposition to buy new and different products and brands rather than remain with previous choices and consumption patterns, which differentiate them from other members of their social system. The present paper attempts to identify which are the criteria for purchasing particular brand of Laptop? How to build competitive strategy to differentiate the brand in the mind of consumer?

It’s impossible for an average computer literate person to cope with the ever-changing computer lingo, which makes the task of selecting a machine that could rightly fit the needs quite an impossible task. Faced with such a situation, in most cases people tend to get everything they could think, “They don’t want to miss out on something useful”. This is simply an impulse buying behavior and it does not solve the problem of getting the best deal, but it could actually make the situation complicated.

In most cases people seek help from sales agents, salesmen and store managers, off course they know

the technology but in majority of the cases “the quality of advice you get is indirectly proportional to the commission the salesperson is about to make”. Sometimes one can discuss needs with people they know and most importantly people they trust. There is always someone around of someone they know who could give the right advice. Just before selecting a computer, here are some of the few questions which ask us likes what are the reasons for me buying a laptop? , What is my budget? , Where can I buy one? (If you choose to buy online, there is a chance of saving some bucks but you might have to wait for the delivery) Once one made the purchase decision one should start collecting some basic information on the various models and features offered by different brands. The objectives of this paper are:

1. Which are the criteria for purchasing particular brand of Laptop?
2. How to build competitive strategy to differentiate the brand in the mind of consumer?

### **Literature Review**

There is an abundant literature that has studied durable goods markets, but has mostly ignored the role of experience. Recent developments have focused on the firms’ decision of making the good obsolete, either through the choice of durability (Waldman, 1996; Hendel and Lizzeri, 1999a) or the introduction of new products (Fudenberg and Tirole, 1998; Lee and Lee 1998). Another important contribution has been the incorporation of adverse selection in a model of durable goods (Hendel and Lizzeri, 1999b, Johnson and Waldman, 2003). A survey by Waldman (2003) provides a synthesis of the evolution of the microeconomics of durable goods.

In turn, there is a large literature on experience goods that has centered on the firms’ strategies to overcome the asymmetric information problem by signaling high quality or by building a reputation (Klein and Leer, 1981; Shapiro, 1982; Riordan, 1986; Milgrom and Roberts, 1986). More recently, there is a renewed interest on the consumer experimentation problem and its relationship with oligopolistic competition (e.g. Bergemann and Valimaki, 1996, 1997, 2002).

Perception of the product is more important than the product itself and product perceptions manifest themselves in brands. Some brands tend to have a very strong influence in the marketplace and that is the

reason they have been considered as one of the most important elements of a firm's marketing strategy. The present study is an attempt to provide insights, through research, as to how consumers perceive Laptops market. At a time when customer have far many choices than they can even remember and each company trying hard to create a niche for itself in the market, it is only the magic word of 'brand' which acts a retreat for any company from all the other me to competitors. That is the reason why a brand is considered as one of the most important assets for a company in the consumer market. Brand has been around for centuries as a means to distinguish goods of one producer from those of another. Defining a brand is actually creating a certain amount of awareness, reputation, prominence etc. in the marketplace. Brand is something that resides in the minds of consumers. A brand is a perception and perhaps an idiosyncrasy of consumers. To brand a product, it is necessary to introduces consumers to who the product is by giving it a name and why it should be purchased. If consumer recognize a brand and have some knowledge about it, then they do not have to engage in a lot of additional thought or processing of information to make a product decision. Although competitors may easily duplicate manufacturing processes and product designs, they cannot easily match lasting impressions in the minds of customers and organization from years of marketing activity and product experiences. Consumer behavior was a relatively new field of study in the mid to late 1960s. Because it had no history or body of research of its own, marketing theorists borrowed heavily from concepts developed in other scientific disciplines, such as psychology (the study of the individual), sociology (the study of group), social psychology (study of how an individual operates in groups) anthropology (influence of society on the individual) and economics to form the basis of this new marketing discipline. Many early theories concerning consumer behavior were based on economic theory, on the notion that individual act rationally to maximize their benefits (satisfaction) in the purchase of goods and services. Later research discovered that consumer that consumer are just as likely to purchase impulsively and to be influenced not only by family, and friends by advertisers and role models, but also by mood, situation, and emotions, All of these factors combine to form a comprehensive model of consumer behavior that reflects both cognitive and emotional aspects of consumer decision making.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Type of Research:**

The study was exploratory, to examine the decision making process of customer for selecting the brand of laptop which is mainly on primary data collected from Ahmedabad, Baroda Nadiad and Anand. To select the fair responses different group of customer were selected. The data was collected from specialized electronic store, dealer store and other mall that are offering laptop brands.

**Sample size :** Samples of 100 customers from retail outlet were interviewed.

**Sampling technique:** The purposive convenience sampling method was followed for drawing the sample for the study.

### **Research Tools used:**

The data were collected through a structured questionnaire developed for the purpose of the study. The questionnaire contained closed end questions and multiple-choice questions.

- ◆ The method of contact would be personal at different retail outlet of laptop
- ◆ A total of 100 responses were collected
- ◆ Sample size-The sample would consist of approximately 100

### **Data analysis :**

Item total correlation was first carried out to eliminate insignificant items. None of the items showed insignificant correlation. The data was then subjected to factor analysis using Principal component Method with Varimax Rotation to identify the factors affecting the selection of public life insurance product.

### **Results and Discussion:**

The consumer behavior for laptop is depending on many variables. With the help of factor analysis, for the better understating the researcher has identified sixteen variables, which effect the decision making of laptop brand. The significant outcomes of this research is that there is heavy disease of commodiation is prevailing in the marketing. Customer clearly believes that there is no impact of hardware configuration in the selection of laptop brand, even though majority of the laptop brand are focusing on hardware configuration in their advertising.

**Table1: Showing variables under each factor with their respective loads**

Sr No	Factor	Variables	Factor Load
1	Screen Size	Subnote (< 13")	0.78
		Standard Laptop (13" to 15")	0.62
		Desktop replacement (>15")	0.44
2	Features	Budgets	0.72
		Netbook	0.65
		Rugged	0.55
		Tablet PC	0.29
3	Price	Rs 31,000 to 40,000	0.77
		Less than Rs 30,000	0.68
		Rs 41,000 to 50,000	0.53
		More than Rs 50,000	0.25
4	Uses	1-3 hr	0.70
		Less than 1 hr	0.55
		4-6 hr	0.42
		More than 6 hr	0.22
5	Type of Application	All	0.72
		Working on office package	0.62
		Playing games, music etc	0.52
		Surfing on internet	0.49
		Commercial Trading	0.33
6	Service quality	Assurance by the service provider	0.75
		Service at the desktop	0.66
		Higher premium price with additional benefit	0.38
		Empathy	0.22
7	Mobility	Synchronization	0.78
		Immediacy	0.57
		Connectivity	0.55
8	Attributes	Color / look / style	0.77
		Size	0.70
		Technical features	0.61
		Battery back up	0.55
		Power consumption	0.48
		Noise	0.44
		Bio – identity	0.36
9	Security	Breach of privacy laws	0.77
		Theft	0.52
		Cost of stolen business or personal data	0.44
		Credit card fraud	-0.36

10	Brand preference	Hp (Compaq)	0.80
		Dell	0.72
		IBM ( lenova)	0.61
		Toshiba	0.54
		HCL	0.44
		Gateway	0.26
		Others	0.18
11	Style	Business people	0.77
		Executive	0.61
		Collegian	0.65
		Others	0.33
12	Objective of Laptop purchase	Synchronization	0.77
		Owing oneself (self dependant)	0.72
		Creating the desire	0.66
		Mobility	0.58
		Feel good factor	0.46
		Spontaneously	0.41
		Support of technology	0.29
13	Sources of information	Through friend, relatives members of consumer panel	0.78
		On line search	0.68
		Magazines, Newspaper etc	0.55
		Dealer, Stores etc	0.47
		Malls	0.36
14	Modes of Purchasing	Through authorized dealers	0.72
		Through company dealers	0.66
		Through on line	0.55
		Through electronic malls	0.46
15	Brand switching	Service quality	0.66
		Brand conscious	0.82
		Clarity of information	0.55
		Other factors	0.44
16	Form of post purchase services	Product repairment	0.77
		Product replacement	0.61
		Full payment back	0.44
		Other way out	0.35

**Table 2: Showing factor load with their total loads and percentage variance**

Sr No	Factor	Factor Load	Variance
1	Brand preference	9.80	21.8
2	Attributes	3.22	7.4
2	Objective of Laptop objective	2.34	4.9
3	Price	1.91	4.2
4	Type of Application	1.59	3.6
5	Screen Size	1.55	3.4
6	Uses	1.42	3.1
7	Service quality	1.35	3.0
8	Mobility	1.26	2.8
9	Features	1.21	2.6
10	Security	1.14	2.4
11	Style	1.11	2.3
12	Sources of information	1.09	2.2
13	Modes of Purchasing	1.05	2.1
14	Brand switching	1.04	1.9
15	Form of post purchase services	1.01	1.7

**1. Screen Size**

This is clearly linked with the type of customer, and becomes the bases of segmentation. The customer indicates the purpose by selecting the screen size. The factor consisted of three variables namely Subnote (<13”) 0.78, Standard Laptop (13” to 15”) 0.62, and Desktop replacement (> 15”) 0.44. Standard laptop is widely preferred by business executives.

**2. Features**

The factor consisted of four variables namely Budget 0.72, Netbook 0.65, Rugged 0.55 and Tablet PC 0.29. Mainly marketers divide the market on the bases of their uses and money that customer wants to invest in laptop. The customer prefers Budget and Netbook mainly because the companies are offering maximum models in these two types.

**3. Price**

The computer hardware and software is very fastest growing industry, so as new technology introduced the companies try to leverage on it so it is directly linked with the price. Other wise other technology is being common in all brands and price does not make crucial role in the decision making in the selection of brand. The factor consisted of four variable namely Rs 31000 to 40000 0.77, Less than Rs 30,000 0.68, Rs 41,000 to 50,000 0.53 and More than Rs 50,000 0.25. The huge memory, fast processor and extra ordinary features which are not commonly utilized by majority of customer, so the customer required feathers and average features are available between 30 to 40 K which are most common rang of customers.

**4. Uses**

The majority of laptop users are selecting because of uses like mobility and synchronization. The very heavy users are mainly relying on desktop rather than laptop, the average users are selecting laptop. Again the uses do not affect the selection of brand of laptop but a heavy user considers the features like battery backup. The factor consisted four variables namely Rs 1-3 hr 0.70, Less than 1 hr 0.55, 4-6 hr 0.42 and More than 6 hr 0.22.

**5. Type of Application**

The customer purchases the laptop for the replacement of their desktop so they are just adding the mobility and spontaneous action in their routine computer work. So majority of respondents selected multiple function rather than specific functions. The factor consisted five variable namely All (Multiple application) 0.72, Working on office package 0.62, Playing games, music etc 0.52, Surfing on internet 0.49 and Commercial Trading 0.33

**6. Service Quality**

Mainly the customer who are already used or having experience with other brand might affect decision-making regarding brands. The factor consists four variable namely Assurance by the service provider 0.75, Service at the desktop 0.66, higher premium price with additional benefit 0.38 and Empathy 0.22

**7. Mobility**

The Mobility is the influence for purchasing the laptop, because with help of Synchronization in the form of laptop can solve the problem of transfer of data from the different computers. Synchronization helps to keep data in structure and systematic manner at one computer; As a result it becomes good mobility for the person to carries out different tasks at different time in different location. The factor consists three variables namely Synchronization 0.78, Immediacy 0.57 and Connectivity 0.55.

**8. Attributes**

The preference for the laptop consists of different factors, but still preference depends upon larger extent on color/style /look for any prospective buyer. One should not forget that utility of laptop does not exist in one place; it is in the form of mobility, which keeps people carrying the laptop to different place. As a result at end of the day, it is been seen by large number of people and draw the opinion of its color/style/look. Henceforth, color/style/look catch up its own relevance as a variable for purchasing of laptop. The factor consists seven variables Color/look/Style 0.77, Size 0.70, Technical features 0.61, Battery back up 0.55, Power Consumption 0.48, Noise 0.44 and Bio identity 0.36.

**9. Security**

Being expensive, common and portable, laptops are prized targets for theft. The cost of the stolen

business or personal data and of the resulting problems (identity theft, credit card fraud, breach of privacy laws) can be valued several times more than the stolen laptop itself. Moreover, the price play its own role but one believes is that price of the laptop is less sensible than the loss of personal data and information for the one who owns the laptop. The factor consists of two variables Theft 0.52 and loss of Data 0.77.

**10. Brand Preference**

This factor consists of a brand name, which is the most important variable for the customer in a decision making process. The brand identifies the source or maker of a product and allows customers to assign responsibility for its performance to a particular manufacture. Customers evaluate the identical product differently depending on how it is branded. They learn about brands through past experiences with the product and its marketing program, finding out which brands satisfy their needs and which do not. Henceforth the brands perform valuable functions for the firms. The factor consisted seven variable Hp (Compaq) 0.80, Dell 0.72, IBM (Lenovo) 0.61, Toshiba 0.54, HCL 0.44, Gateway 0.26 and others 0.18.

**11. Style**

The factor style is not constant but it is variable and dynamic. Even though it is less relevance but having good impact on the customer. The style comes through different source by looking the different personalities like Business people, Executive, Collegian and others. The said much impact falls on style of Business people who used to carry the laptop. Ever changing market and dynamic change of style and fashion, style of business people still ruling the heart and mind of prospective customers. The factor consisted four variable Business people 0.77, Executive 0.6, Collegian 0.65 and others 0.33.

**12. Objective of Laptop Purchase**

The factor objective is crucial factor for deciding the laptop after the Brand Preference and Attributes. The objectivity speaks about core necessity of requirement and volume of space in the mind of the customer for purchasing the laptop. There are number of deciding variable for objectivity factor, but the synchronization is leading than any other variable like owing oneself, creating the desire, mobility etc. The objectivity keeps the customer to access more and

more information before approaching to purchase the commodity. The factor consisted seven variable Synchronization 0.77, Owing oneself (Self dependant) 0.72, Creating the desire 0.66, Mobility 0.58, Feel good factor 0.46, spontaneously 0.41 and Support of technology 0.29.

**13. Sources of Information**

Today, it is not that difficult to get the information for purchasing any commodity because the whole world is global village. But only things is that how to reduce time, energy and money for searching the information. Out of various medium which is now available, on – line search is preferred one, because just by click and drag technology, one can easily access the information by sitting at any corner of the world. It helps to eliminate cost, save the time, reduce the energy to access the information. The research further helps to prove that on - line access is better option than other available mode for getting information. The factor consisted five variables through friend, relative’s members of consumer panel 0.78, on - line search 0.68, Magazines, Newspaper etc 0.55, Dealers, Stores etc 0.47, and Malls 0.36.

**14. Modes of Purchasing**

In Indian market, the word trust is crucial form to make any deal or purchase especially such as electronic product like laptop. The trust comes through physical presence, more choice at the same time, past experience, fair price, quality of information, no malpractice, better service etc. But looking all this attributes which is mention before hand, people preference still rest on purchasing through authorized dealer where they can attain the sense of trust and aftermath. In this circumstance of commodation of laptops, the impression of authorized dealer, which leave the customer the fair amount of space in the mind to purchase the laptop. The factor consisted four variables through authorized dealers 0.72, through company dealers 0.66, through on line 0.55 and through electronic malls 0.46.

**15. Brand Switching**

The factor Brand switching is common phenomena on the part of customer and trouble shooting for the marketer. Every marketer tries to retain the customer for his or her loyalty towards the brand. No doubt, customer is brand conscious and always anticipates the assertive outcomes from the buying of product. As a result, marketer should

concentrate of building the brand image among the people, which produces the positive outcome in term of sales and immeasurable value in the form of brand that occupies the space in the mind of the customer. The factor consisted four variable Service qualities 0.66, Brand conscious 0.82, clarity of information 0.55, and other factor, 0.44.

**16. Form of Post Purchase services**

This factor marketer pays less attention than any other factors, even though it has own importance. When customer decided to purchase the electronic commodity like laptop, he/she always searches for the service after the sales. Many times it had happened that customer prefer far distant place to purchase the product by ignoring the nearest one, because of the genuine service after sales from previous one. It is an area where marketer has scope to improve the service. The variable like product repairment is leading factor than others. The factor consisted of four variables, Product repairment 0.77, Product replacement 0.61, full payment back 0.44 and other way out 0.35.

**Conclusion Remarks and Extension:**

The findings of this paper is clearly indication that the decision making process of consumer for laptop is clearly based on their brand perception. The companies are mainly focusing on hardware specification where customer relying mainly on other factor as indicated above. The significant outcomes of this research is that there is heavy disease of commodiation is prevailing in the marketing. Customer clearly believes that there is no impact of hardware configuration in the selection of laptop brand, even though majority of the laptop brand are focusing on hardware configuration in their advertising. The researcher endorses the finding that the brand has very strong influence in the market place particularly for the laptop market. The marketer should prepare all marketing offer by keeping brand building activities in the centre. The customer have far many choices than they can even remember and each company trying hard to create a niche for itself in the market, it is only the magic word of ‘brand’ which acts a retreat for any company from all the other me to competitors.

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