

Master Thesis

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International Marketing
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Online Customer Experience Management
in the international Fashion Industry
on the example of New One by Schullin GmbH in the UK market

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Graz, 23rd June 2017

Declaration of Authenticity

I hereby certify that I have written the present thesis independently and without help from any third parties. I have not used any sources other than those which are clearly indicated and have duly provided details of the sources of both direct and indirect quotations. The present piece of work and parts thereof have to date not been presented to this or any other examination board in the same or similar form, nor have they been published. The present version is the same as the electronic version submitted.

23rd June, Graz

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Summary

Every customer contact at each customer touchpoint impacts the customer's experience in a positive or a negative way. Due to the internet and social media the number of these touchpoints reached a new peak. Simultaneously, there is a shift in consumer behaviour. Consumers are more connected than ever and actively build communities which are strongly influenced by opinion leaders who play an especially crucial role in the fashion industry.

Consequently, the provision of a seamless and consistent customer journey is essential in order to devote financial as well as personal resources to touchpoints preferably used by a company's target audience. This is especially crucial for companies like New One who want to intensify their business within the UK market, the most developed online retail market within Europe. Based on these facts, this master thesis deals with the elaboration of an online customer experience concept for New One with focus on the UK market.

The initial chapters of the following thesis illustrate characteristics of both e-commerce as well as the fashion industry. Thereby, current e-commerce trends, characteristics of an online fashion shopper as well as fashion shopping motives are highlighted before explaining the fundamentals of online customer experience management. Subsequently, all covered topics are theoretically combined in an online customer experience concept.

As a next step, a detailed situation analysis including an empirical study is executed to gain culture specific knowledge as well as information about the target group's online shopping habits and preferences. Results show that the target group has high expectations regarding usability standards and tends to impulsive shopping behaviour as well as variety seeking. Additionally, it shares rather masculine and individualistic values and is open to new technology. These findings lead to the elaboration of multiple key online customer journey constellations used within fashion industry.

Taking this information into account an online customer experience concept for New One with focus on the UK market is developed which defines the company's online customer experience strategy and recommended online customer experience actions.

Abstract

Jeder Berührungspunkt eines Kunden mit einem Unternehmen hat einen positiven oder negativen Einfluss auf dessen Gesamterlebnis. Durch das Internet und Social Media erreicht die Anzahl dieser Berührungspunkte einen neuen Höhepunkt. Gleichzeitig entwickelt sich das Konsumentenverhalten in Richtung aktiver Gemeinschaften, die vor allem in der Modebranche unter großem Einfluss von Meinungsführern stehen.

Infolgedessen ist es essentiell, die Customer Journey für Kunden so angenehm wie möglich zu gestalten und dabei finanzielle und personelle Ressourcen für Berührungspunkte einzusetzen, die vorzugsweise von der Zielgruppe genutzt werden. Diese Herausforderung gilt vor allem für Unternehmen wie New One, die ihre Aktivitäten in Großbritannien, dem bestentwickelten Online Handelsmarkt Europas, intensivieren möchten. Basierend auf diesen Fakten befasst sich diese Masterarbeit mit der Entwicklung eines Online Customer Experience Konzeptes für New One mit Fokus auf den britischen Markt.

Zu Beginn der folgenden Arbeit werden sowohl Charakteristika des E-Commerce als auch der Modebranche näher erläutert. Dabei werden aktuelle E-Commerce-Trends, Merkmale eines Online-Fashion Käufers sowie Kaufmotive beleuchtet, bevor die Grundlagen des Online Customer Experience Management erläutert werden. Anschließend werden alle Themenbereiche in einem Überblick über die Konzipierung eines Online Customer Experience Konzepts vereint.

Zu Beginn des praktischen Teils der Arbeit wird eine detaillierte Situationsanalyse mit einer empirischen Studie durchgeführt, um kulturspezifisches Wissen sowie Informationen über die Online-Einkaufsgewohnheiten und Präferenzen der Zielgruppe zu gewinnen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass die Zielgruppe hohe Erwartungen hinsichtlich Usability-Standards aufweist und zu Impulskäufen wie auch abwechslungsreichem Einkaufsverhalten neigt. Darüber hinaus teilt sie tendenziell eher maskuline und individualistische Werte und ist offen für neue Technologien. Diese Erkenntnisse führen zur Ausarbeitung mehrerer Haupt-Online-Customer-Journey-Konstellationen, die beim Online Kauf von Mode von der Zielgruppe verwendet werden.

Unter Berücksichtigung dieser Informationen wird ein Online Customer Experience Konzept für New One mit Fokus auf den britischen Markt entwickelt, das die Online Customer Experience Strategie des Unternehmens definiert und empfohlene Online Customer Experience Maßnahmen aufzeigt.

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1 Introduction

In the following chapter the initial situation is illustrated. Thereafter, the connected challenge is highlighted and the resulting company objectives and master thesis objectives are presented.

1.1. Initial Situation

Within the past years, the importance of online retail constantly expanded. According to the global perspective on retail study 2014, online retail increased by 18.1 % on average each year compared to other channels, which grow at an average of 1.4 % per year (cf. RetailMeNot 2014).

In Europe there can be identified three leading markets which are the UK, Germany and France. Thereby, the UK takes the leading role in the European market with an expected market share of 16.8 % in 2016 (cf. Centre for Retail Research 2016). This is due to the UK's market size, market growth, infrastructure and a high internet usage (cf. Hutchings/Best/Mahmuti 2013, p. 8).

82 % of the UK's population uses the internet regularly and 70 % of the UK's population own a smartphone. Furthermore, 82 % of the UK's internet users regularly shop online. Thereby, fashion and sporting goods are the most popular online shopping product categories followed by movies, music, books and magazines (cf. Ecommerce News Europe 2016).

Therefore, constant growth of online retail markets has also a strong impact on the fashion and jewellery industry. According to a study by McKinsey, at the moment online jewellery sales are only 4 to 5 % of the total market. This rate is expected to rapidly grow and to reach 10 % for fine jewellery and 15 % for fashion jewellery by 2020.

Furthermore, the annual global jewellery sales are expected to rise from € 148 billion in 2014 to € 250 billion by 2020. Thereby, the industry is confronted with several trends as well as a change in customer behaviour.

Firstly, there is a shift in geographic expansion. While jewellery retailers mainly operate on a local basis, they are now facing internationalisation.

Secondly, fine jewellery and fashion jewellery are crossing the border of being combined, since customers are inspired by the fashion industry where the combination of high fashion items and moderately priced fashion items is common practice. This is also emphasized by the trend of fast jewellery, as customers expect jewellery to follow the latest fashion trends (cf. Dauriz/Remy/Tochtermann 2014).

1.2. Challenge

Every customer contact at each customer touchpoint shapes a company's image in the customer's mind. Therefore, a brand's positioning should be implemented and present at all customer touchpoints (cf. Esch/Klaus 213). Due to the evolution of the internet and social media the number of these touchpoints reached a new peak (cf. Schüller 2016, 151).

Additionally, the way of consumer interaction changed. Customers no longer only want to be provided information, they want to interact with companies. Thereby, business's accessibility on various channels is crucial in order to be able to provide customers with personalized services (cf. Di Savoia 2015, p. 5).

In this new business world the impact of lead users, influencers and opinion leaders plays an important role and outshines company generated content (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 29 - 31).

Due to the high number of online shops customers are enabled to purchase items from companies all over the world and to easily compare their products and services. Additionally, they build communities and are able to communicate with other consumers and to exchange experiences (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 10f).

Since New One recognizes these market movements it already takes first actions into the direction of customer experience management by relaunching its web shop in 2017. This redesigned touchpoint focuses on clear differentiation to its competitors' web shops as well as enhanced usability for customers. Furthermore, the company will integrate a customer relationship tool to efficiently use customer data.

To further improve customer satisfaction as well as customer retention, New One additionally wants to integrate online customer experience management to actively address customer needs as well as to attract and to maintain customers in all customer life time cycle stages and at different customer touchpoints.

Since New One's main markets are limited, the company thereby wants to focus on international markets respectively the UK market. This decision is emphasised by the current market entry in this area and internal knowledge about this specific market. Furthermore, the company already operates an English version of its online shop, as well as English social media channels and provides English customer service. Hence, there are no language barriers for UK customers.

Through active customer experience management this market's potential can be efficiently utilized in an early penetration stage, by offering and optimizing suitable

touchpoints along the online customer journey. Therefore, a tailored online customer experience concept for the UK market is needed in order to guarantee an efficient market penetration and an efficient use of already existing resources and customer data.

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1. Company objectives

- New One's main objective is to achieve a turnover of 15 % of total online sales in the UK market which equals € 150.000,- by the end of 2018.
- New One aims at reaching an Online Net Promoter Score of 3.5 in the UK market by the end of 2017.

1.3.2. Master thesis objectives

- The primary goal of this thesis is to develop an online customer experience concept for New One focusing on the UK market.
- A sub goal is to analyse customer touchpoint requirements within the online customer journey in international fashion industry.

1.4. Frame of reference

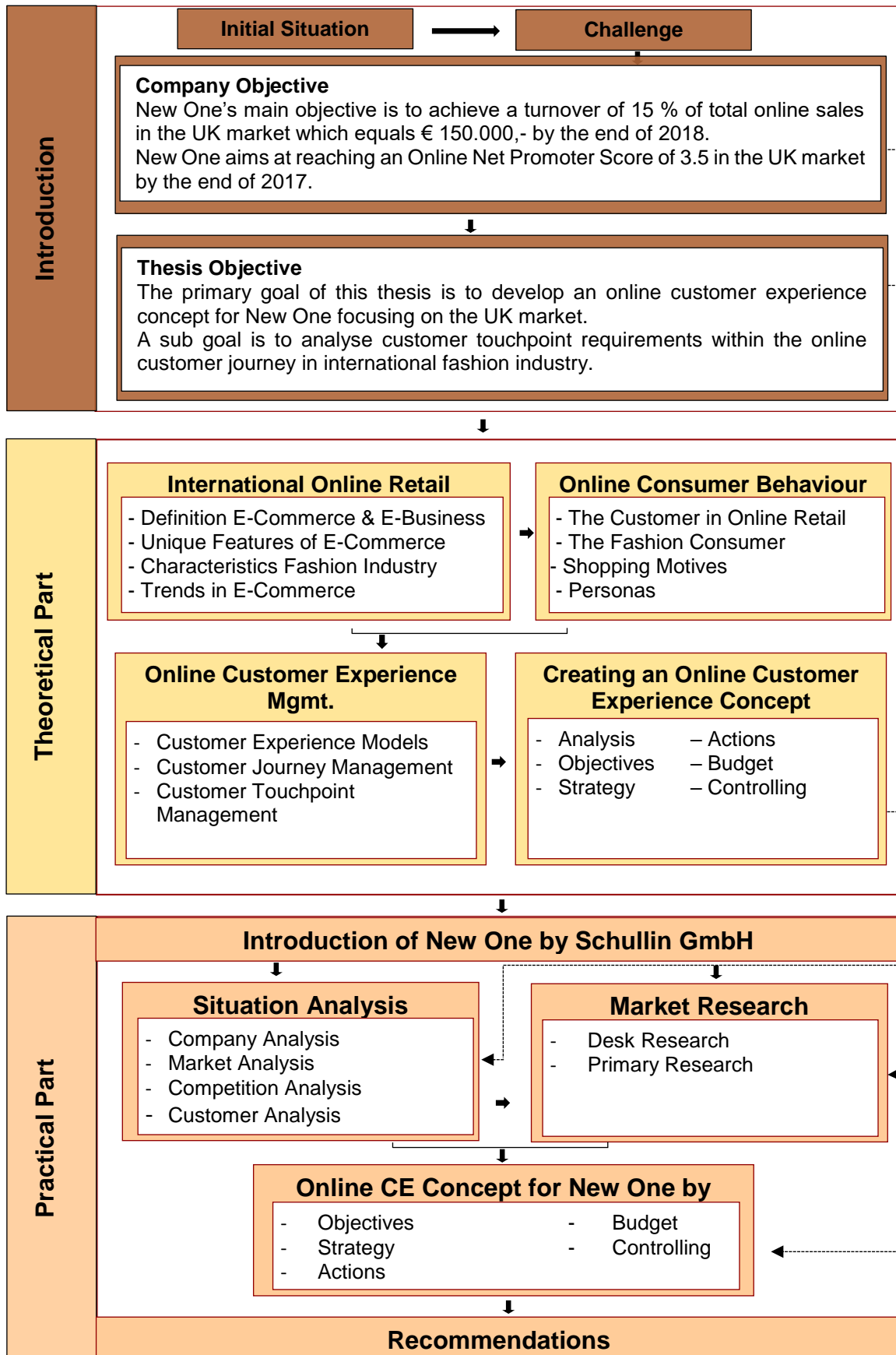


Figure 1: Frame of Reference (own presentation)

2 International Online Retail in Fashion Industry

In the beginning of this thesis the theoretical foundation for international online retail is laid and characteristics of the fashion industry are explained. Therefore, underlying terms are clarified, unique features of e-commerce are illustrated and the latest e-commerce trends are highlighted.

2.1 Definition of E-Business and E-Commerce

In literature the terms e-business and e-commerce are interpreted in various ways. While a number of authors declare them as interchangeable others clearly distinguish between different meanings of these terms. Therefore, definitions are given to clarify the terms' use within the following thesis.

Electronic business (e-business) is defined as initiation, arrangement and processing of electronic business processes to create additional value either for businesses, public institutions or private customers (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 2).

Thereby, e-business is divided into the fields of e-procurement, e-commerce and e-finance as illustrated in figure 2 (cf. McKenzie 2015, p. 1).

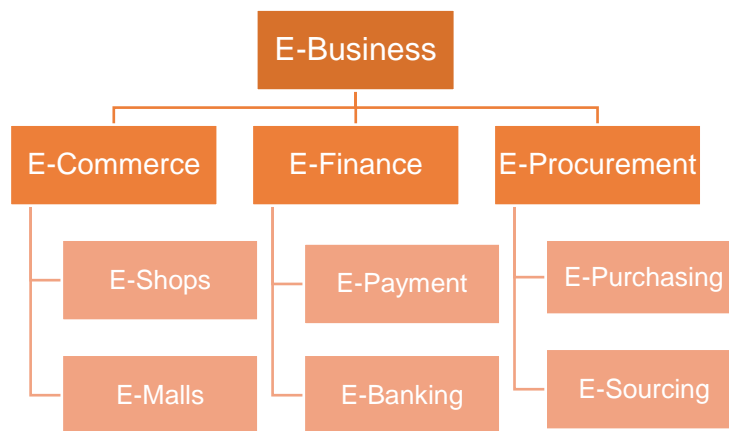


Figure 2: E-business (based on McKenzie 2015, p. 1)

E-Commerce

E-commerce is defined as any kind of business transactions (e.g. sales or purchases of goods and services) as well as electronically processed business processes (e.g. advertising, after-sales services), in which the parties operate electronically (via the internet or networks of mobile telephone providers) and are not in direct physical contact (cf. Gabler 2011). Thereby, it can be distinguished between businesses, consumers and governmental institutions as market

participants. This results in the e-commerce business areas of business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-consumer (C2C) business-to-business (B2B), government-to-business (G2B), government-to-consumer (G2C) and government-to-government (G2G) while this thesis will concentrate on the B2C sector and the sector of e-shops rather than e-malls (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 54f.).

E-Finance

E-finance includes electronic financial products and services, financial enterprises and markets within electronic payment and electronic banking processes (cf. McKenzie 2015, p. 1). Within this thesis e-finance refers to electronic payment processes when completing a purchase at an online shop.

E-Procurement

E-procurement refers to all electronically supported purchase relevant activities between suppliers and buyers worldwide (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 109). This includes strategic, operative as well as tactical aspects of the buying process (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 70). For that matter, e-procurement not only refers to the actual buying process but also to all determining factors as well as the electronic exchange of information (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 109). In the following thesis, the e-purchasing process of fashion customers will be illustrated using the concept of customer journey management.

2.2 Unique Features of E-Commerce Technology

Through e-commerce technology international market conditions underwent crucial transformations for both merchants and consumers (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 35). As a result, the offer of market information as for example information about choice or prices became more transparent. This fact enables consumers as well as retailers to compare different market offers in an easy way. At the same time, geographical boundaries more and more diminish. Furthermore, retailers are able to gain market power over consumers by collecting personal customer information and by using this information efficiently. The following eight unique features of e-commerce technology are used to further illustrate how e-commerce challenges traditional business thinking (cf. Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 52f.).

Ubiquity

Ubiquity means the end of geographical and temporary restrictions of commerce or in other words, the ability to shop whenever and wherever consumers want to shop (Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 53). Thereby, from a customer's point of view, transaction costs and cognitive costs are reduced through an increase of shopping comfort (cf. Tversky/Kahneman 1981, p. 457f.).

Global reach

Internet technology enables international trade without national or cultural boundaries. Consequently, businesses face a whole new perspective of trade and international expansion. On the one hand this fact bears opportunities as for example an increase of potential customers around the world but on the other hand it also bears risks as companies face a greater number of competition than in traditional trade (cf. Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 53).

Universal standards

The internet is built on universal technical standards that are equal around the world and therefore permit universal use across national borders. This fact allows users to search information on markets or business partners and to view them in a coherent, comparative environment. Furthermore, also price discovery is simpler, faster and more accurate and at the same time customer search costs decrease (cf. Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 53f.).

Richness

In traditional trade market actors have to decide between richness and reach of their communication activities since a message's richness decreases when its reach increases. Thereby, richness describes the quality, accuracy, timeliness and relevance of a message whereas reach refers to the number of people reached with a message. Through internet technology it is now possible to reach a great audience with high quality messages which is especially important when selling high price or complex products (cf. Evans/Wurster, 2000, p. 31).

Interactivity

Interactivity enables companies and consumers to communicate with each other and amongst each other through two-way communication. Unlike traditional

channels as for example telephone or television, this kind of communication is similar to face-to-face communication and is perceived even more personally through mobile devices (cf. Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 55).

Information density

The internet extends information density which is defined as the total amount and quality of information available. Through new technology, information becomes plentiful, less expensive and more accurate. This not only bears advantages from a customer's point of view as already discussed, but also from retailer's point of view as this enables businesses to work with generated customer data and to address different target groups with tailored offers (cf. Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 53f.).

Personalisation and customisation

Personalisation and customisation enable businesses to precisely adjust their communication strategy as well as their products and services to their target audience. Through personalisation companies are able to address their customers with their personal name and according to their interests and to their past purchases by using generated customer data. Additionally, customisation empowers businesses to tailor their products or services to their customers' needs and preferences by offering their target group the opportunity of product and service adaptation (cf. Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 56).

Social technology

Social media undertakes a growing role in communication and changed the way of interaction from the traditional one-to-many (e.g. tv spot) to many-to-many communication (e.g. user comments on social media). Thereby, consumers are permitted to share content with a worldwide community, to create new social networks and to strengthen existing ones. As social commerce will gain further importance in international online retail this matter will be illustrated in more detail in the course of this thesis (cf. Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 56f.).

2.3 Characteristics of the Fashion Industry

After illustrating unique features of e-commerce technology, characteristics of the fashion industry are described.

Fashion life cycle

The fashion life cycle is related to the product life cycle and illustrates the length of time a given look or style is popular. Thereby, the fashion life cycle can be clustered into the three phases **introduction** with the steps introduction and rise, **acceptance** with the steps rise and peak as well as **rejection** with the steps decline and obsolescence (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 306).

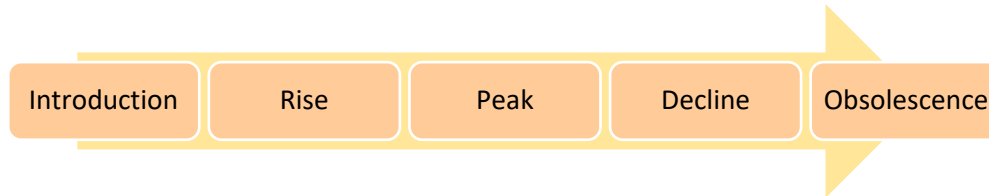


Figure 3: Fashion life cycle (based on Rath et al. 2015)

In the **introduction phase** a new style appears and is only noticed by a limited number of consumers (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 306). These consumers are characterized by a strong knowledge about fashion and are often perceived as opinion leaders (cf. Le Bon 2015, p. 13). Nevertheless, in this phase trends tend to be rejected by the wide public (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 306).

In the **rise phase** a style is growing in popularity as well as acceptance. This means that a larger number of consumers becomes aware of the trend and tends to adopt to it in order to follow popular opinion leaders (cf. Le Bon 2015, p. 13). Thereby, the trend is spread from designers and higher-end department stores to mainstream department stores (cf. Rath et al. 2015, 306).

In the **peak phase** a style is at the height of its acceptance and popularity (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 307). As a result, the trend is accepted by the majority of consumers. In this phase being fashionable means to conform to others (cf. Le Bon 2015, p. 13).

In the **decline phase**, the market is saturated and fashion conscious consumers already moved on to newer trends. At the same time, sales of trend related products declines (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 307f.).

The end of the fashion life cycle is marked by the **obsolescence phase**. Within this stage, consumers abandon a trend and start to look out for new trends (cf. Le Bon 2015, p. 13). As a result, sales decline. Nevertheless, there is a chance that obsolete styles will be revived in an updated version (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 308).

Seasonality

The fashion industry is strongly related to seasonal changes and trends. Therefore, the development of new products and the elimination of out seasoned products, also called planned obsolescence, is crucial. While the concept of planned obsolescence is criticised in other industries, it is widely accepted by customers in fashion industry (cf. Easey 2009, p. 4).

Therefore, companies within this sector create numerous collections each year to follow the latest trends. Due to a development towards fast fashion, the number of collections thereby rose within the past years (cf. Le Bon 2015, p. 71).

Fast fashion refers to the acceleration of the fashion life cycle. This development is emphasized by advanced technology as well as the possibility of instant global communication, which increases the acceleration of global fashion trends (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 308).

Design

Fashion involves a strong design component. Due to the seasonality in fashion industry companies are encouraged to continuously design new products that on the one hand conform to the latest trends that are demanded by fashion conscious consumers and on the other hand offer a high value of brand recognition (cf. Easey 2009, p. 5). At the same time, this strong relationship to design is reflected in the necessity of aesthetic touchpoint design (cf. Borowski 2015).

Forecasting and procurement

To be able to follow short product life cycles and to offer the latest trends forecasting plays a crucial role in fashion industry. It is the prerequisite for designing the right products, introducing them at the right time as well as to distribute them through the right channels while catching customers' attention (cf. Brannon/Diva 2015, p. 9f.).

Therefore, the term forecasting not only includes trends in fashion design but also changes in lifestyles as well as buying patterns. As a result, changes in fashion design, culture as well as the fashion market environment are analysed and combined to forecasts (cf. Brannon/Divita 2015, p. 9f.).

2.4 Trends in E-Commerce

Every stage of evolving web usage has changed consumer behaviour. The driver of the change is the respective technology and step by step, the internet conquers all places and devices of everyday life (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 18f.).

In e-commerce, digital time advantage is one of the key success factors. Hereby, the main focus is placed on achieving first mover advantages. To reach this benefit digitalisation calls for system innovation, total customer centrality, and a reduction in the value chain. In this process, being up to date is essential to be successful (cf. Heinemann 2015, p. 11f.).

Current e-commerce trends include omnichanneling, communication through chatbots, digital experience orientation and emotionalisation, personalisation as well as mobile and social commerce (cf. Seyfried 2016; Rehmann 2016; Steireif 2016; Kumar 2016).

Omnichanneling refers to the seamless combination of online and offline channels to provide customers with a positive customer experience at online as well as offline customer touchpoints (cf. Seyfried 2016). This trend is not further illustrated within this thesis as it does not contribute to the focus on online customer experience management.

Chatbots are computer programs that are able to interact with customers through text or voice. They are used to efficiently manage one-to-one conversations on a big scale. Nevertheless, the status quo of chatbots has to be perceived critically in connection to positive customer experience since this technology is not mature enough yet to deal with complicated customer requests and is therefore not explained in detail within this thesis (cf. Kumar 2016).

2.4.1 *Digital experience orientation and emotionalisation of online shops*

In e-commerce differentiation is essential for being successful. In the light of a general stimulus satiation, the importance of experience transfer in online shops will thereby increase significantly (cf. Rehmann 2016). Furthermore, experience oriented functions have a positive impact on customers' residence time as well as on customer retention (cf. Stenger 2013). Therefore, an online shop has to inspire customers and to be able to create experiences that bring lasting positive effects for the brand. Thereby, it is important to convey the same emotional message as in stationary trade (cf. Böker/Bomm 2014).

The design of an online shop is the central interface between a company respectively a brand and the customer and therefore plays a central role in the differentiation process as well as in an online shop conception process. At the moment, the majority of companies offers dry demand purchases instead of emotional experiences and differentiation. Therefore, it is important to focus on the customer's point of view rather than on the company's point of view. Companies tend to focus too much on the technical side of their online shop because they experience it through the website's back end instead of the customer viewed front end. Thereby, it is important to find a balance between usability and brand orchestration (cf. Böker/Bomm 2014). As the fashion industry is strongly connected to design, appealing web design is especially important within this sector (cf. Easey 2009, p. 5).

One possible step towards emotionalisation is the use of pictures and videos to tell a story. They are suitable to arouse positive emotions, for example, by showing what kind of experience a product allows or what kind of positive reactions can be triggered in a customer's surroundings. Furthermore, it is important to only provide users with content they are interested in (cf. Rehmann 2016).

The fashion industry tends to translate this trend to its sector by illustrating certain lifestyles in combination with opinion leaders used as testimonials since consumers tend to endorse their role models' style (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 138).

An increasing number of companies therefore places its focus on themed worlds and personalisation, which will be discussed in the following. (cf. Stenger 2014).

2.4.2 Personalization

Due to a high market penetration, increasing intensity of competition and increasingly occupied niche markets, the number of visitors to an e-commerce platform can no longer increase at the same pace as before (cf. Steireif 2016).

In order to increase success in e-commerce, the conversion rate has to be optimized. This optimization can be achieved by offering additional customer value, such as individualized product catalogues and individualized recommendations (cf. Steireif 2016).

This individualization can be realised by analysing a user's surfing behaviour. Based on the evaluation of navigation paths, product recommendations can be calculated and coordinated individually for each customer. In practice, a web shop is then able to recommend a customer who looked at textile bracelets in a price range of €15 to

€40 with additional textile bracelets within the same price range. These recommendations can be calculated automatically. The manual maintenance of up- and cross-selling items is thus completely eliminated (cf. Steireif 2016).

In addition to personalized product catalogues and recommendations, advertising is also individualized. Thereby, two forms of personalized ads can be distinguished. On the one hand retargeting ads remind customers of products they recently looked at in an online shop. These products are then presented repeatedly to the customer on third party websites (cf. Toppe 2015).

On the other hand, collaborative filters transfer a user's behaviour based on collected data to a user with similar online behaviour. This way, customers receive additional tips on products that correspond to their assigned cluster group by means of aggregated data. Thereby, customers no longer only see products they already looked at but discover new products according to their surfing behaviour, their social media profiles and those of their friends (cf. Toppe 2015). This function is especially crucial in fashion industry, since new trends and collections are introduced on a regular basis (cf. Easey 2009, p. 4).

Data for this analysis is collected via cookies, registration data, social networks as well as web server log data with identification via IP addresses. Additionally, external services as predictive analytics enable shop operators to track customers' purchase paths and their interests across multiple websites. By integrating such analytical tools into a web content management system, companies are able to use customer data to realise personalized distribution of content and to tailor shop content to the customer more and more precisely (cf. Toppe 2015).

2.4.3 Mobile-Commerce and Social-Commerce

Mobile devices tend to become user's primary source of internet and consumers become more and more reliant to their smart phones (cf. Kumar 2016, p. 20). Thereby, consumers expect to get exactly what they need in the moment they need it. Consequently, fast loading times are a must. Furthermore, companies need to take on the challenge of translating the desktop experience to a mobile experience. Thereby, responsive web design needs to be extended by mobile experience optimization (cf. Kumar 216, p.21).

Mobile devices act as universal interface for purchase preparation. They enable consumers to buy in a comfort condition for example impulse buying while sitting on a couch during a commercial break. For that matter, consumers expect a shop to

remember them. Moreover, they require the interchangeability of device as tablet, desktop or smartphones. This fact will even intensify with the option of mobile payment (cf. Kolbrück 2013).

Mobile-commerce mainly differs from traditional e-commerce in the areas of localization, accessibility and local independence (cf. Scholz 2010). For that matter, mobile commerce offers customers vital advantages as mobility, accessibility, context-sensitivity as well as identification (cf. Heinemann 2015, p. 133f.).

Due to these advantages, mobile commerce is expected to grow 300 times faster than traditional e-commerce. Furthermore, mobile commerce is strongly connected to social media. As social networks introduced buy buttons, social shoppers are spending more money online than ever before. Moreover, social driven retail sales and referral traffic increase at a faster pace than at any other online channel (cf. Kumar 2016, p. 20).

Social-commerce is characterized by an e-commerce process including social media platforms at any stage of the information or buying process (cf. Turban/Strauss/Lai 2016, p. 8). While there are already a lot of possibilities for consumers to buy online, social commerce enables them to connect with friends and peers. Thereby, it enables consumers to buy products and services their friends, colleagues or influences share online (cf. Samuel 2015).

3 Online Consumer Behaviour in Fashion Industry

In the following chapter, the influencing role of consumer behaviour on a customer's experience is illustrated. Therefore, different types of online consumers are described, the characteristics of fashion consumers are illustrated and the motives to shop online and to shop fashion are explained.

3.1 The customer in online retailing

According to the online customer development model, consumers who have access to the web run through different phases in their purchasing behaviour. Hence, they can be divided into homogenous buying groups illustrated in figure 3. This classification allows differentiated market penetration as well as tailored services and support for different target groups (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 100f.).

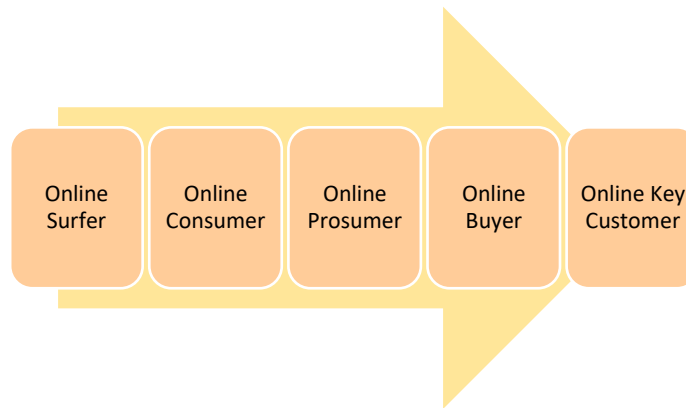


Figure 4: Online customer development model (based on Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 101)

Online Surfer

Online surfers surf the internet randomly as well as undirected and therefore visit a company's online channel without purchase intention (cf. Gräf, 1999, p. 146). This consumer group looks for information, wants to get to know a company and seeks for entertainment (cf. Szmigin/Piacentini 2015, p. 23). Furthermore, the online surfer is characterized by emotional movements which often means a quick change of websites and passive information observation. To attract this customer group, a company's website has to be easy to find (e.g. seo-optimized) or known to the user, which results in the marketing objective of increasing the brand awareness (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 102).

Online Consumer

If a company can manage to establish repeated as well as purposeful contact with a consumer, the online surfer develops into an online consumer (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 102).

The online consumer is not only attracted by the services offer, but also by an offer of dialogue. Additionally, online consumers are also interested in pricing and terms of delivery. The way of information as well as product presentation and the way a company engages in dialogues with its customers is essential to approach this consumer group (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 102f.).

The online consumer expresses its interest by actively seeking information which results in the marketing objective of increasing this consumer groups' retention time on a website to be able to arouse customer demand (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 103).

Online Prosumer

The term prosumer consist of the terms producer and consumer. This combination indicates that this consumer group acts as provider as well as demander which means that online prosumers need to be involved in the value chain and thereby demand tailored respectively adaptable products (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 103). This way, this consumer group actively contributes to a company's product range design. Furthermore, prosumers shares their experiences with additional consumers through user generated contents as for example product reviews and are therefore able to contribute to a company's image creation in both positive and negative ways (cf. Kreuzer 2016, p. 7). Consequently, the marketing objective regarding prosumers is to actively stimulate their interactivity to generate benefits on consumers' as well as companies' sides (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 104).

Online Buyer

The online buyer seeks profound information to establish a trustful relationship in order to execute a purchase decision. From businesses' point of view, this consumer group is valuable and dimedelicate at the same time, since a company's website is examined in all details by online buyers (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 104f.). A good product overview, intuitive navigation through the assortment and shopping cart, an easy check-out process as well as comprehensive service information and diverse payment options for that matter are basic services to earn consumers' trust (cf. Kolbrück 2013). At this stage, businesses need to not only strive for evolving an online prosumer into an online buyer but also to retain the online buyer as a loyal customer (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 104f.).

Online Key Customer

Online key customers are repetitive buyers and can be distinguished from online buyers by the frequency and regularity of their purchases. In this stage, users' information demand decreases and purchase decisions are made in a shorter expenditure of time. Therefore, customer relationship management plays an important role to remain these customers as loyal as well as regular customers. Thereby, customer loyalty programs and individual additional services are tools to further attract this consumer group and to even improve its loyalty (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 105f.).

3.2 Characteristics of the Fashion Consumer

Fashion consumers seek items that simultaneously make them stand out of the mass and fit in with the lifestyle they pursue (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 178). Therefore, consumers tend to buy fashion products which on the one hand express themselves and on the other hand show how they would like to be perceived by others. In other words, fashion customers tend to choose products which contribute to their self-concept (cf. Easey 2009, p. 83). The self-concept consist of three facets:

- Ideal-self: The person consumers would like to be
- Social-self: The way consumers think others perceive them
- Real or actual self: The person consumers really are (cf. Trommsdorff 2009, p. 153)

Furthermore, the self-concept includes the theory of a consistent desire to improve oneself in order to reach the ideal-self. Therefore, fashion and jewellery marketers tend to portrait an ideal picture within their promotional activities (Rath et al. 2015, p. 133).

The ideal-self is influenced by the lifestyle consumers pursue and reference groups they aim to belong to. Therefore, they follow unwritten rules about trends, styles as well as stores which are accepted by their reference group (cf. Easey 2009, p. 84). The level of influence is not distributed equally among society members. Especially within the introduction phase of a new trend influencers and early adopters play an important role and are perceived as highly influential. They are respected by others and are characterised by the knowledge about the latest trends as well as the consumption of the latest trends. Moreover, they are perceived as fashion reference among others and therefore hold a special position within their social environment (cf. Le Bonn 2015, p. 16). This is emphasized by the possibility of sharing information using instant global communication and especially social media (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 308).

In the e-commerce context, influencers and early adopters reflect characteristics of more than one customer development stage. In particular, they tend to reflect the online surfer stage, when searching the internet for new styles, the prosumer stage when shaping trends as well as online key customer stage when contributing to a brand's image through mouth-to-mouth recommendations (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 102-105).

In contrast, their followers, represented by the early and late majority, play an important role within the peak phase of the fashion life cycle when consumers as

well as their social environment adapt to trends initiated by influencers (cf. Le Bonn 2015, p. 16f.). These consumers reflect the characteristics of the development stage of online consumers, since they actively search information before following a trend and completing a purchase (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 102f.).

In this context, the concept of the multiple-selves needs to be mentioned, since consumers' needs for fashion goods vary depending on their role as for example in their work life or in their private life. Furthermore, their choice is influenced by their shopping motive as for example shopping fashion for themselves or looking for a suitable present (cf. Rath et al. 2015, p. 132f.).

3.3 Shopping Motives in Fashion Industry

Additionally to different lifestyles and development phases customers run through, shopping motives impact consumers' behaviour. In the following, general shopping motives are described to build a solid ground before specific shopping motives in fashion industry are illustrated. Thereby, only shopping motives relevant for online shopping are explained and additional online shopping motives are added.

The term motive is used to describe a long lasting, latent need, want or interest. Thereby, primary and secondary desires can be distinguished. Primary needs are inherent needs as hunger or thirst, whereas secondary motives evolve during a human's socialisation process (cf. Kroeber-Riel/Gröppel-Klein 2013, p. 181).

Consumers tend to be more aware of stimuli that are relevant to their needs and interests and to be less aware of stimuli that are irrelevant to those needs. This leads to a selective perception of environmental conditions. For that matter, marketers need to be aware of the perceived ideal attributes of a product category to divide the market into different segments. This way, products, services and communication activities can be efficiently targeted to the perceived needs of specific customer groups (cf. Schiffman/Kanuk 2004, p.171f.).

When it comes to purchase motives the terms buying and shopping can be clearly differentiated. While buying describes the fulfilment of everyday demand, shopping describes a recreational activity with a tendency towards experience and events (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, 16).

3.3.1 General shopping motives

In general shopping motives can be distinguished into personal and social motives as illustrated in table 1. (cf. Tauber 1972, p.46).

| Personal motives | Social motives |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role playing • Diversion • Self-gratification • Learning about new trends • Physical activity • Sensory stimulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social experience outside the home • Communication with others • Peer group attraction • Status and Authority • Pleasure of Bargaining |

Table 1: Shopping motives (based on Tauber 1972, p. 46)

Personal motives

Role playing: Many activities are related to traditional roles in society as the role of a mother, housewife or student. People who identify themselves with one of these roles are motivated to participate in the expected activity. An example this motive is grocery shopping as customary activity of the housewife (cf. Tauber 1972, p.4).

Diversion: Shopping tends to have recreational aspects and to help people to escape their everyday routine by strolling through a shopping mall, shopping streets or surfing through online shops (cf. Tauber 1972, p.47).

Self-gratification: Different emotional states tend to influence the reason people shop. For instance, people shop when they are bored to distract themselves, when they are lonely to participate in social contact or to treat themselves when they are depressed. Thereby, shopping is not motivated by the consumption of a product or service but by the shopping process itself (cf. Tauber 1972, p.47).

Learning about new trends: Consumers like to be informed about the latest trends in fashion, styling or innovation and learn about these factors when visiting a physical store or an online shop. Therefore, consumer groups often shop to be informed without an actual purchase intention. Nevertheless, this consumer segment is more prone to buy a product or service after gathering information about it (cf. Robertson 1971, p. 125).

Sensory stimulation: Product presentation as well as shop design play an influential role in the purchase decision making as well as in the decision for a specific store. Thereby, consumers unconsciously perceive the design and the feel of products, noises and scents (cf. Tauber 1972, p.47). In online shops consumers are not able to physically inspect products. Therefore, companies need to develop alternative tools as virtual dressing rooms to enable consumers to visualise products. Furthermore, return policies play a great role in the decision for a specific

online shop as companies enable consumers to physically inspect products and to return them if they do not meet their expectations (cf. Wolfinbarger/Gilly 2001, p.42).

Social motives

Communication with others having a similar interest: Common interests are stimulating communication as well as association between individuals. Hence, people like to engage in conversations about their interest with others. Thereby, sales personnel is perceived as specialists who are able to provide special information concerning products and services (cf. Tauber 1972, p.48). Consequently, it is important to offer chat opportunities to initiate consumer dialogues (cf. Meier/Stormer 2012, p. 102f.).

Peer group attraction: Shopping provides the opportunity to meet other individuals with equal interests. However, many shoppers may have limited interest in a product or service and only engage in the shopping process because of the desire to belong to a certain peer group or reference group. In these cases, individuals often gain knowledge about a product category and develop an interest in the product (cf. Tauber 1972, p.48).

Status and authority: Social factors as reference groups, family, social roles and statuses have an impact on a consumer's buying behaviour (cf. Modi/Jhulka 2012, p. 528). Thereby, product design, reliability, trust as well as social influence play a big role and at the same time emphasize brand loyalty (cf. Kansra 2014, p. 57).

Pleasure of bargaining: Bargaining appears to not only be a competition between sellers and buyers but also between buyers and buyers. Consequently, some consumer groups try to bargain to lower prices as other consumer groups bargain to feel superior to other customers who paid a higher price. This also resolves in the process of comparison shopping or special sales activities (cf. Tauber 1972, p.48).

Online shopping motives

Convenience: Online shopping increases customer's convenience through time savings, effort savings and accessibility (cf. Wolfinbarger/Gilly 2001, p.42). Thereby, from a customer's point of view, transaction costs and cognitive costs are reduced (cf. Tversky/Kahneman 1981, p. 457f.). Furthermore, buyers are empowered to shop without geographical and temporary restrictions from their homes, which function as comfortable and personalised environment (cf. Wolfinbarger/Gilly 2001 p. 42; Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 53).

Variety seeking: In online shops, consumers not only look for a great variety of products in terms of product features and design but also for products who meet special needs as for example a certain size in shoes (e.g. oversize). Finding for example this special size of shoes in an online shop also contributes to convenience as described in the previous paragraph because the customer is able to shop from home without going to a stationary shop that might be out of geographical reach for the customer (cf. Wolfinbarger/Gilly 2001 p. 43).

Information availability: The internet extends the total amount and quality of information available (cf. Laudon/Traver 2013, p. 53f). Consequently, it is important to increase an online shop's usability in order to make information detectable and to facilitate researching product features and prices compared to offline shopping (cf. Wolfinbarger/Gilly 2001 p. 44).

Control: Another motive for online shopping is an enhanced level of control. When shopping online consumers take their time to research a desired product or service as well as to compare alternatives without feeling social pressure to finish the transaction. Thereby, the absence of salespeople, spouses, friends, and strangers plays a big role and tends to be experienced positively, as the presence of others promotes the urge to buy certain products (cf. Wolfinbarger/Gilly 2001 p.45; Mahrtdt 2015, p. 17).

3.3.2 Shopping motives in international fashion industry

The fashion shopping process clearly differs from other product categories' shopping process. It is intended to bring distraction from everyday life and includes, in particular, fun and spontaneity (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p. 16). In the following, the eight main shopping motives in fashion industry are illustrated.

Actual demand: Clothing can be seen as fundamental physiological need as well as a product to fulfil social and ego needs when it comes to luxury fashion (cf. Foscht/Swoboda 2011 p. 56; Solomon 2013 p. 152). The shopping motive actual demand describes an immediate purchase intention. Thereby, an item is to be bought that is needed instantaneously (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p. 17).

Bargain hunting: This shopping motive especially appears in cases of sales, special offers or discounts. Items tend to be more attractive to fashion customers if they seem hard to come by or an offer is temporarily limited than an item that is available long term. Consequently, customers tend to be more motivated to go to

the PoS or to research in an online shop to compare prices and offers (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p. 17).

Shopping with friends and acquaintances: Individuals desire for social identity in order to determine their self-esteem. Social identity is based on the feeling of togetherness within a group which evolves through group conformable actions. Therefore, within cohesive reference groups, group members try to adjust to the overall group style while still remaining their individuality. If individual shopping companions adjust their attitude or even the choice of their styles to the majority of the group or follow the ideas and suggestions of opinion leaders, one also speaks of "social contagion" (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p.17).

Search for inspiration and trends: In this case consumers have an intrinsic interest in fashion. They are characterized as fashion-conscious and want to be perceived as fashion pioneers by detecting new trends. Thereby, hedonistic values and self-expression are the main focus (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p.17f.).

Must-haves and status symbols: As already mentioned, clothing can be seen as fundamental physiological need as well as a product to fulfil social and ego needs (cf. Foscht/Swoboda (2011) p. 56; Solomon (2013) p. 152). In the case of luxury brands consumers put more emphasis on clothing's social function, since the individual's personality and their own value propositions are expressed by the branded product (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p.18).

Reward purchases, comfort shopping, and shopping addiction: Reward purchases are recognised as reward for accomplishing subjective goals. In contrast to that, comfort shopping serves as a stimulus constellation, which is to provide a customer with immediate distraction and enjoyment. If this kind of impulsive and uncontrolled shopping becomes a constraint, it evolves to a so called shopping addiction (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p.18).

Monthly salary payment or bonuses: In this case, fashion purchases are waited until the regular recurring time of available funds (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p.18).

Solemn occasion or extraordinary events: Another shopping motive for fashion purchases are solemn occasions or extraordinary events as for instance family parties (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p.18).

Need for experience, recreation and fun: Shopping and the shopping process evolve to be more and more influenced by a feeling of comfort, the orchestration of products, the trial of different styles, surprises as well as being advised in an empathic as well as emotional way (cf. Mahrtdt 2015, p.18).

Gift shopping: Within the fashion industry, jewellery and thereby especially fashion jewellery is perceived as a suitable present for various occasions (cf. anon 2015, p. 62).

3.4 Personas

Personas are an effective tool to personate a company's target group after analysing their motives and behaviour as they combine the group's character trait, expectations and course of action (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 224-230).

They enable companies to set a clear focus on a target group's needs. Thereby, businesses have to decide which types of users are critical to the company. This also ensures that all employees involved in the customer experience creation process share the same vision of exactly whom they are creating the experience for. As a result, the number of internal misunderstanding incidents decreases (cf. Mulder 2007, p. 22-24).

Additionally, this clear focus ensures that key decisions, as for example decisions for certain features of a website, are made in an early creation phase which further improves the process's efficiency and saves costs (cf. Mulder 2007, p. 25).

Furthermore, personas encourage businesses to observe processes from a customer's point of view because responsible employees perceive them as "real persons", which facilitates emphasizing with the target audience (cf. Mulder 2007, p. 23).

The more precisely personas are described, the more effective they are as a design tool. The first step to achieve specific personas is to name them (cf. Cooper 2004, p. 151). Furthermore, demographic information as for example age, gender, place of residence, job, family status, income as well as hobbies are added to the description. Moreover, it is important to also include motives and goals as well as values and feelings (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 231f.). By doing so, the consumers' role within the society as fashion influencer or follower can be identified (cf. Le Bonn 2015, p. 16). The final step is to illustrate the buying behaviour of the persona and to identify its key customer journeys as well as key customer touchpoints (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 231f.).

4 Online Customer Experience Management

In the beginning of this chapter the terms user experience management and customer experience management are explained. Thereafter, three different

explanatory models are introduced before the online customer journey with exemplary touchpoints is explained and the tool customer journey mapping is introduced.

In literature there is a variety of different definitions of customer experience and user experience. While a number of authors declare the terms as interchangeable others clearly distinguish between different meanings of them. Within the framework of this work, the terms can be differentiated as follows.

User experience management

User experience management is defined as the management of all customer processes related to a certain product or touchpoint before, during and after the use of this product or touchpoint. Therefore, it puts a strong focus on improvements of subjective product experiences, perceived product quality, as well as usability and further development of products (cf. Robier 2016, p. 15f.).

Customer experience management

Customer experience refers to the internal and subjective response customers have to any direct or indirect contact with a company. Thereby, direct contact describes the course of purchase, the use of a product and additional services. Indirect contact on the other hand refers to unplanned encounters with representations of a company's products, services or brands. Examples of indirect content consequently are word-of-mouth recommendations or criticism, advertising, news reports or reviews (cf. Meyer/Schwager 2007).

Customer experience management covers the areas of touchpoint management, process management as well as experience management in coordination with corporate branding (cf. Robier 2016, p. 17f.). Thereby, the fundamental value proposition has to be recognizable in every feature (cf. Meyer/Schwager 2007).

Consequently, it puts a strong focus on creating strategic parameters for user experience actions, coordination of products, services and brands as well as the controlling process of all experience actions (cf. Robier 2016, p. 17f.).

While customer experience management includes a customer's end-to-end journey, digital or online customer experience management involves only processes experienced through a digital interface as for instance a computer, tablet or smartphone (cf. Borowski 2015).

4.1 Customer Experience Models

A customer's experience consists of a company's physical (product related) as well as emotional impression on the individual (cf. Shaw/Ivens 2002, p. 6). Therefore, in the following chapter the three explanatory models of customer experience dimensions, customer experience determinants and customer experience triggers are shortly explained.

4.1.1 Dimensions of Customer Experience

Customer experience can be divided into six dimensions as shown in figure 5 (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 13).

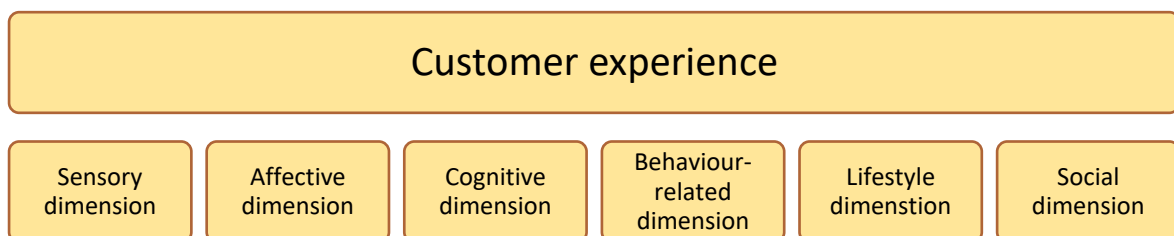


Figure 5: Dimensions of customer experience (based on Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 13)

The **sensory dimension** refers to the absorption of environmental stimuli by the means of sensory organs. It is able to develop a feeling of well-being as well as to arouse and to satisfy consumers by stimulating the consumers' senses (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting) through external stimuli (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 13).

The **emotional or affective dimension** triggers reactions such as emotions and moods. A relationship with the performance of a company, the service provider itself or the brand can give the customer a positive feeling. Consequently, the emotional dimension affects a customer's state of mood and emotion (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 13).

Cognitive processes are the mental information processing to mentally control and navigate behaviour (cf. Foscht/Swoboda 2011, p. 85). Consequently, the **cognitive experience dimension** aims at consumers' intellect and specifically addresses the consumers' thinking. When cognitive components are encountered, creativity, thought-provoking and problem-solving behaviour of customers are stimulated (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 13).

The **behaviour-related experience dimension** includes the mediation of physical experiences and interaction possibilities. It aims at changing the rational behaviour of consumers over the entire period of use and consumers' lifestyle changes (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 13).

Consumers with similar social and economic backgrounds tend to follow the same general consumption pattern (cf. Solomon 2013, p. 494). Therefore, the **lifestyle dimension** provides arguments to confirm the values and opinions of consumers (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 13). This dimension especially contributes to positive customer experience within the fashion industry, since consumers pursue a lifestyle exemplified by their aspired reference group (cf. Easey 2009, p. 84).

The **social dimension** or relational dimension focuses on the interaction with relevant social context. The possibility of interaction with other customers as well as a targeted contact and relationship management by a company can generate a sense of belonging to the customer (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 13).

4.1.2 Determinants of Customer Experience

According to Bruhn and Hadwich, a customer's experience is influenced by different influencing factors. These factors can be classified in the five groups of determinants as illustrated in figure 6 (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 18).

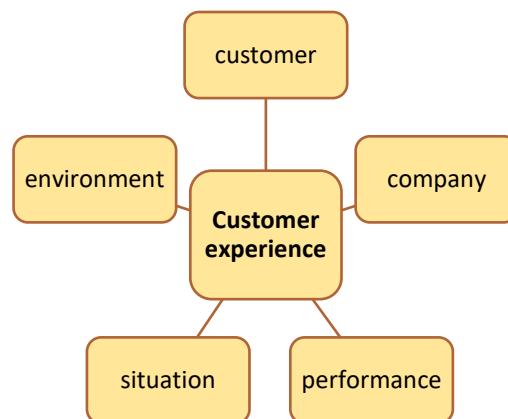


Figure 6: Determinants of customer experience (based on Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 18)

The **customer-related** determinants can be divided into intra- and interpersonal determinants. Intrapersonal determinants are closely related to an individual's personality traits as well as to demographic characteristics (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 18). The more positive the attitude and the higher the involvement of a customer towards a certain brand, the easier it is to satisfy the customer and the more positive

the perceived customer experience will be (cf. Solomon 2013, p. 172). Interpersonal determinants are influencing factors that act between several people. The awareness of customers to belong to a particular reference group and the possibility of interacting with other customers, e.g. through social media platforms within the framework of a brand association, are influencing factors which strengthen the sense of community and contribute to an increase in positive customer experience (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 18f.). This determinant can be associated with the three facets of the self-concept and therefore refers to the interpersonal influence of opinion leaders which play a leading role in fashion industry (cf. Easey 2009, p. 84). The **company-related** determinants include factors affecting employees of a company, the premises as well as the product and service offer which are all crucial in order to create positive customer experience (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 19). This process requires collaboration across different groups within a company that usually work independently and at different stages of the value creation. Thereby, the most commonly departments include marketing, product design, customer service, sales as well as retail partners (cf. Richardson 2010).

Performance-related determinants focus on the functionality and thus on the performance quality or performance characteristics. Factors influencing product or service diversity of a company are related to the uniqueness, quality and complexity of products and services (cf. Verhoef et al. 2009, p. 32). This determinant tends to be especially crucial within the fashion industry due to seasonal changes and the resulting constant need for the development of new designs (cf. Le Bon 2015, p. 71). High perceived quality as well as uniqueness of products or services will increase the perceived customer experience. Further performance-related determinants relate to the brand strength of the company. A company's brand contributes to the perceived product and service quality and therefore can be seen as a performance-related determinant in a transcendent sense (cf. Schiffman/Kanuk 2004, p. 244f.).

Situation-related determinants include time pressure, the presence of additional customers or reference groups as well as discount promotions. The surprising appearance of colleagues, friends, service staff or surprising discount promotions can lead to an increased positive customer experience, while a high level of time pressure can have a negative impact on customer experience (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 19).

As illustrated in the above, customer experience functions on different levels or in different dimensions. Therefore, not all influencing factors can be controlled by a company. These uncontrollable determinants are the so called **environment-related** factors. These determinants for instance include the influence of reference groups and shopping motives (cf. Verhoef et al. 2009, p. 32).

4.1.3 Customer Experience Drivers

According to Schmitt and Mangold customer experience is influenced by the following drivers illustrated in figure 7 (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 29).

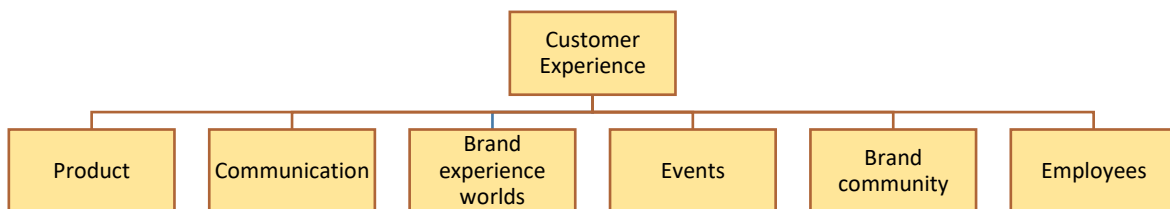


Figure 7: Customer experience triggers (based on Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 29)

These experience drivers are to be understood as tools for generating an integrated customer experience with the brand and are controllable for the company as well as relevant to customers (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 30).

Products and services themselves are perceived as experience drivers. Therefore, it is important to identify, analyse and optimize all touchpoints related to the product assortment. This is not only of high relevance to customers but also to companies because the product assortment underlies a high level of controllability (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 30f.).

Through classic **communication** companies aim at increasing their brand's awareness (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 31). Due to the fact that the amount of advertisements increased to an extent of information overflow, customers spend less awareness to these communicational actions (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 23f.). As a result, it is important to coordinate advertising messages with customer experience messages to reach customers. One way to achieve this target is storytelling (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 31).

Brand experience worlds are places where brands can be actively experienced. Therefore, these worlds have a strong impact on the overall customer experience. Besides shop designs and themed worlds on company websites, this also includes

physical locations where brands can be experienced multi sensual as for example in Disney World (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 32-34).

Events enable companies to increase interactions between customers and a brand and are therefore perceived as similar to brand experience worlds. Events can be individually organized or sponsored by companies (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 35).

Brand communities are voluntary customer groups with the aim of exchanging information about a brand and experiencing it together. This results in a very high level of customer integration within these groups. In this case, the company's controllability is limited due to the low level of influence opportunities (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 35). One example for brand communities are social media channels, where customers not only have the possibility to interact with each other but also to interact with the company itself (cf. Quesenberry 2016).

Due to the high interaction level with customers at different touchpoints, **employees** also influence the customer experience. This includes all employees who are in direct or indirect contact with customers. It is therefore crucial to consider the type of customer experience that is most important to the company when selecting and training employees (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 36).

Conclusion of customer experience model

Within the procedure of this work the determinants of customer experience are perceived as the most suitable model. This is due to the fact that it incorporates important influencing factors of the fashion industry. For example, the model includes consumer's intra- as well as interpersonal characteristics which can be associated with consumer's self-concept in the fashion industry. Furthermore, it encompasses situational as well as environmental factors which can be allied with the influence of reference groups and opinion leaders on fashion consumers. At the same time, this model considers the company itself as well as its performance as influence on the customer.

Nevertheless, it is suggested to expand this model with the additional determinant lifestyle described in the customer experience dimensions model since consumers' lifestyle has a strong influence on the behaviour of fashion customers.

4.2 Online Customer Journey Management

Customer journeys are becoming the central to the customer's experience of a brand. Therefore, the management of journeys is crucial and has to be perceived as important as product management (cf. Edelman/Singer 2015, p. 90).

The online customer journey includes all processes experienced through a digital interface as for instance a computer, tablet or smartphone. Examples for such processes are online research, online purchase or searching for online support (cf. Borowski 2015).

To simplify the customer journey it can be divided into several steps to either gain a holistic view of the entire process or to consider individual procedures in more detail (cf. Richardson 2010b). One way to realise this subdivision are the five steps of the decision making process illustrated in figure 8 (cf. Nessim/Wozniak 2001, p. 293).

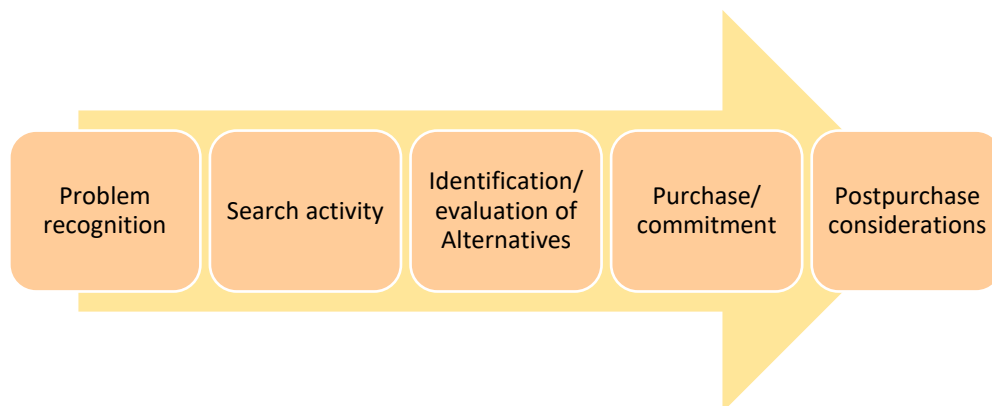


Figure 8: Decision making process (based on Nessim/Wozniak 2001, p. 293)

Another way to cluster customer journey phases is to divide it into the stages pre-purchase, purchase as well as post-purchase (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 173).

Within the framework of this thesis, customer journeys are clustered according to Schüller. This is due to the fact, that customer journeys within the fashion industry do not necessarily follow all five steps of the decision making process but continually undergo the stages pre-purchase, purchase as well as post-purchase.

Skilfully managing customer journeys implicates enhanced customer satisfaction, reduced churn and increased revenue. Furthermore, companies benefit internally through greater employee satisfaction and more effective interdepartmental cooperation (cf. Duncan/Jones/Rawson 2013).

In order to efficiently manage and to improve digital journey four principles can be followed.

4.2.1 Four principles of customer journey management

Consistency creates loyalty. Inconsistent digital experience creates confusion on the customer's side. Therefore, it is crucial to convey consistent information as well as consistent cooperate and product design throughout all touchpoints. As a result, consistent internal IT processes are essential in order to track all interactions from every touchpoint in order to combine the findings (cf. Borowski 2015). One way to reach this level of consistency is contextual interaction, the use of knowing at which step a customer is within a journey and acting according to it. An example for this contextual interaction is a retail website telling a customer the status of current orders as soon as he visits the website's homepage. Processes like this require a high level of automation in order to turn complex back-end operations into simple and engaging front-end experiences (cf. Edelman/Singer 2015, p. 94).

Opinion-gathering tools improve the digital customer experience. Bringing inconsistencies to a company's attention requires overcoming inhibitions and investment of time on the customer's side. Therefore, on the one hand it is important to actively address customers to measure how well online expectations are met (cf. Borowski 2015). On the other hand, it is important to analyse customers' online behaviour and to remember customer preferences. This allows real-time insights in a customer's online behaviour and enables companies to isolate moments when the company can influence the journey by optimizing the journey's next steps and tailoring them to a customer's individual needs (cf. Edelman/Singer 2015, p. 92f.).

Digital initiatives should complement existing customer journeys. Adding digital components to customer journeys that don't directly benefit the customer can make the experience more complicated and confusing instead of making it easier and more satisfying. Therefore, digital components should only be added when journeys already proceed online and when they simplify some aspect of the journey (cf. Borowski 2015). Thereby, contextual interaction as well as automation play a repeated important role (cf. Edelman/Singer 2015, p. 92-94).

Journey innovation keeps customers interested. Journey innovation refers to the ongoing experimentation and active analysis of customer needs, technologies and services in order to identify opportunities to extend the customer relationship. Thereby, the integration of additional service providers create expanded journeys that increase the journey's value and enhance its stickiness (cf. Edelman/Singer 2015, p. 94).

4.2.2 *Customer Journey Mapping*

Due to the fact that customer use multiple touchpoints within their customer journey, it is important to acknowledge customers' interaction history as well as predictable further steps. One way to represent a customer's journey with all its important touchpoints is customer journey mapping (cf. Myron 2014, p. 2).

A customer map is defined as a diagram that illustrates all steps customers take while engaging with a company, whether it be a product, a retail experience, a service or any combination of it (cf. Richardson 2010b).

Additionally to illustrating the single steps customers take during the customer journey, actions, motivations and questions of customers as well as barriers for customers can be analysed. Thereby, actions refer to actions a customer executes at each stage. Motivations include motivations to move on to the next stage within a customer journey as well as emotions at each stage. Questions describe customers' uncertainties and barriers refer to any issues that prevent a customer from moving on to the next stage (cf. Richardson 2010b). To gain this information, technological tracking systems of customer interactions and customer research in terms of in-depth interviews needs to be carried out (cf. Richardson 2010b; Myron 2016, p. 2).

How to create customer journey maps

When creating customer journey maps, the first step is to clearly define the journey's user group. Thereby, the creation of personas is an effective tool to personate a company's target group as further described in chapter 5.1.1 (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 175).

In the next step, customer activities are clustered to chronological phases in order to receive an overview of the holistic customer interaction. Thereby, single touchpoints can be broken down to different processes occurring at the touchpoint (cf. Duncan/Joes/Rawson 2013).

Thereafter, customer activities are graphically illustrated before touchpoints are evaluated. Thereby, so called love-points and pain-points respectively positive and negative customer experiences are described (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 175).

As a last step, activities to enhance the customer experience are formulated and implemented in the frame of the customer touchpoint management process described in chapter 4.3 (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 176).

Advantages of customer journey mapping

The advantages of customer journey mapping are a better understanding of the target group, identification of touchpoint issues, improved brand identity, personalized experience as well as a holistic and detailed view on the customer journey (cf. Di Savoia 2015, p. 10-13).

Better understanding of target group: By creating a customer journey map, companies perceive the customer journey from their customers' point of view. Thereby, businesses gain a better understanding of their target group and improvement potentials (cf. Richardson 2016).

Identification of touchpoint issues: By identifying time consuming and expensive business processes, procedures and activities, inefficiencies can be eliminated. This is crucial since one bad experience at any given touchpoint is able to cause customer churn (cf. Di Savoia 2015, p. 11).

Improvement of brand identity: Collaboratively working on a customer journey map ensures that all employees engaged in the process will have the same view on problems, aspirations and solutions and the best approach to fixing or achieving them (cf. Di Savoia 2015, p. 12).

Personalized experience: Customer journey mapping ensures that companies get a deeper understanding of their target audience and consequently establish a meaningful, relevant and easy customer experience (cf. Di Savoia 2015, p. 13).

Holistic and detailed view: Customer journey maps enable companies to evaluate the macro level, which means the collective experience of their business or service, as well as the micro level of the customer journey which means single touchpoints or the behaviour at a certain stage of the customer journey (cf. Richardson 2010b). One challenge of customer journey maps is that journeys are not linear and inconsistent. This means, that not all customers go through all steps during their end-to-end journey or repeat steps throughout different stages and not all customers use the same touchpoints. This intensifies the need of analytical software solutions as well as primary customer research (cf. Mahrtdt 2016, p. 11-13).

Conclusion

In conclusion it can be said that online customer journeys include all customer interactions at all customer touchpoints experienced through a digital device. Examples for such processes are online research, online purchase or searching for online support (cf. Borowski 2015).

These interactions tend to be non-linear and therefore do not necessarily follow the same steps (cf. Richardson 2010). Nevertheless, all customer journeys run through the stages pre-purchase, purchase as well as post-purchase. Within these phases, customers tend to use different touchpoints according to their involvement level as well as their previous interactions with a company (cf. Shiffman/Kanuk 2004, p. 549; Solomon 2013, p. 323). Therefore, it is crucial to convey consistent information as well as consistent cooperate and product design throughout all touchpoints (cf. Borowski 2015).

| Touchpoint | Customer Journey Phase | | |
|------------------|------------------------|----------|---------------|
| | Pre-Purchase | Purchase | Post-Purchase |
| Search Engines | X | | |
| Online Shops | X | X | X |
| Social Media | X | | X |
| Customer Service | X | X | X |

Table 2: Customer touchpoints within the customer journey (own presentation)

Table 2 shows examples of touchpoints used in different customer journey phases. These touchpoints are explained in more detail in chapter 4.3 Online Customer Touchpoint Management. Nevertheless these touchpoints tend to be used in these specific phases, these findings need to be verified by primary research.

4.3 Online Customer Touchpoint Management

Touchpoints are created wherever a (potential) customer comes into contact with a company and its employees at any customer journey stage. From a customer's point of view, touchpoints can be categorized into four different types: Influencing touchpoints, pre-purchase touchpoints, purchase touchpoints and after-purchase touchpoints. This classification is based on different purchase phases discussed earlier (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 156).

Influencing touchpoints refer to public reputation, word-of-mouth as well as recommendations. These touchpoints appear in the pre-sales as well as in the after-sales phase. In the pre-sales phase consumers gather opinions about a certain company, brand, product or service and share this information including their personal experience in the after-sales phase (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 156).

Pre-purchase touchpoints provide guidance during the decision preparation (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 156). Within the fashion industry, influencing as well as pre-purchase touchpoints used by both influencers as well as followers exert a crucial impact on consumers' decision making. This is due to the fact that consumers who desire to belong to a certain reference group strive for a particular lifestyle exemplified by their influencers (cf. Easey 2009, p. 84).

Purchase touchpoints are used within the purchase phase of the customer journey. Within e-commerce purchase touchpoints tend to refer to online shops as well as e-malls (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 55). The last type of touchpoints, the so called **after-purchase touchpoints**, appear during using a product and during the repurchase decision (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 156).

Customer touchpoint management is the coordination of all corporate processes to provide customers with a synchronized, outstanding, reliable and trustworthy experience at every point of interaction. While putting customers in the centre of attention, it is important to also focus on process efficiency (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 152-155).

Touchpoint management investigates customers' expectations, services they receive and how they react to certain services. Thereby, new potential touchpoints and relationship management points that are important for existing or potential customer groups can be found and then used through appropriate interaction. Moreover, existing touchpoints can be optimized and outdated touchpoints can be eliminated (cf. Schüller 2016, p. 155).

Customer touchpoint management can be divided into a four step process: as illustrated in figure 9 (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 154).

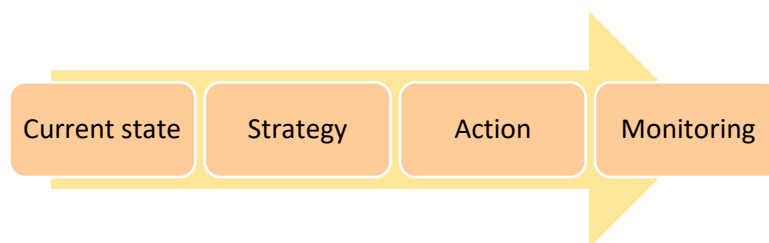


Figure 9: Customer touchpoint management (based on Schüller 2013, p. 154)

In the **analysing phase** of the customer touchpoint management process, customer-relevant touchpoints are identified and clustered to the already described touchpoint types by a cross-departmental team. In the second phase of the

analysing process, the current state of each touchpoint is documented from a customer's point of view (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 154f.).

Within the **strategy** development phase, the ideal state of touchpoints is defined and further proceedings are specified (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 180).

The next step is to plan the **operational implementation** of customer touchpoint management. Within this stage responsibilities, deadlines, budget as well as KPIs are defined. Thereby, it is important to focus on the most relevant touchpoints (defined in the first stage) and to involve employees in the process (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 210-213).

Finally, all actions taken are **monitored** and measured in order to further optimize processes. Within this process, online monitoring plays an important role since it provides companies with real time insights for market research (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 224-231).

After defining the term touchpoint and describing the customer touchpoint management process, in the following online customer touchpoints are illustrated.

Search engines

Search engines are computer programs that allow users to search databases and the internet for documents containing specified keywords (cf. Business Dictionary).

These programs tend to be used within the pre-purchase.

| Touchpoint | Customer Journey Phase | | |
|----------------|------------------------|----------|---------------|
| | Pre-Purchase | Purchase | Post-Purchase |
| Search Engines | X | | |

Table 3: Search engines within customer journey (own presentation)

The best known internet search engines are Google, Bing and Yandex, whereas Google represents a strong market leader position (cf. Alpar/Koczy/Metzen 2015, p. 1).

To guarantee relevant search results for consumers, search engines regularly screen all websites in the World Wide Web for certain keywords in order to rate their relevance (cf. Düweke/Rabsch 2011, p. 261-275). Therefore, to be perceived applicable to search engines, companies need to apply a communication mix of owned content, earned content as well as paid content (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 324f.).

Search engine optimization (SEO) includes all measures that contribute to better rankings on search engine result pages (cf. Lammenett 2012, p. 161f.). This includes the tasks of planning, optimizing and analysing the content used for its improved registration by respective search engines (cf. Alpar/Wojcik 2012, p. 389f.). Thereby, it can be distinguished between onpage-seo and offpage-seo as illustrated in figure 10 (cf. Alpar/Koczy/Metzen 2015, p. 13f.).

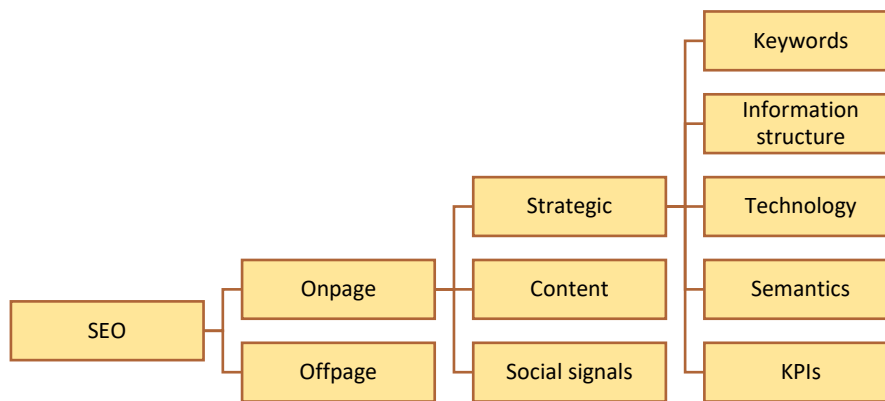


Figure 10: SEO (based on Alpar/Koczy/Metzen 2015, p.14)

Onpage-SEO can be divided into strategic SEO and content optimization. Strategic SEO involves the development of keyword strategies as well as information structure, the planning of technical SEO-requirements and semantics as well as the definition of KPIs to measure the company's SEO performance (cf. Alpar/Koczy/Metzen 2015, p. 14).

The second area of onpage-SEO is content optimization. Content in the sense of SEO is mainly perceived as written text, since it is readable not only for consumers but also for search engines. However, search engines also screen other content types as pictures and videos (cf. Alpar/Koczy/Metzen 2015, p. 14).

Offpage-SEO can be divided into two major activity fields: Link and social signals. Links refer to back links or external links, which are links on external websites and therefore cannot be controlled. These links guide users to the original website and are consequently perceived as recommendations by search engines (cf. Alpar/Koczy/Metzen 2015, p. 15).

Due to the growing role of social media, social signals' impact on search engine results will increase equally in the future. Social signals include traffic-streams, recommendations in social media channels as well as user behaviour regarding search results (cf. Alpar/Koczy/Metzen 2015, p. 15).

Online Shop and its special characteristics

Online shops are independent hardware and software systems that enable merchants to offer and to sell commercial goods via computer networks (cf. Zwißler 2002, p. 32). They tend to be used in all customer journey phases. In the pre-purchase phase, they are likely to be used to gather information, in the purchase phase they tend to be used to complete a purchase and within the post-purchase phase they are likely to be used for additional customer service as well as product evaluations.

| Touchpoint | Customer Journey Phase | | |
|--------------|------------------------|----------|---------------|
| | Pre-Purchase | Purchase | Post-Purchase |
| Online Shops | X | X | X |

Table 4: Online shops within the customer journey (own presentation)

Online shops differ in three main points from stationary trade. Firstly, sales assistants are not physically present to advise customers. Secondly, products are only present visually and thirdly, internal processes are influenced (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 217f.).

Multimedial product catalogues, high usability level purchasing processes and the connection of information, communication and transaction modules place high demands on e-shops. Comprehensive system requirements result from the general quality characteristics of online shops which are briefly described in the following (cf. Kollmann 2006, 175-180).

Usability describes an e-shop's operability with regards to product access, presentation, consultation, ordering process and customer integration (cf. Heinemann 2015, p. 92). Besides, usability is associated with a company's quality and therefore is critical for customers' acceptance. To operate an attractive online shop, companies have to meet different criteria in the fields of error tolerance, on-demand measurement, expectation, individualizability and controllability (cf. Markotten/Kaiser 2000, p. 532).

Accessibility indicates the extent to which an e-shop can be used without restrictions by all users. This also includes accessing the shop from different devices as computers as well as mobile devices and regardless of the operating system used (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 220).

Scalability refers to an e-shop's performance in terms of its resource requirements with a growing number of users, or with the simultaneous use of many users. Good scalability is achieved with a balanced load and resource expenditure ratio (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 220).

Extensibility indicates the extent to which it is possible to expand or adapt an existing shop system to meet changing needs (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 220).

Internationalisation refers to country specific adaptations of an e-shop. Thereby, the preparation of transaction information plays a crucial role, as language, currency, tax rates and terms of delivery differ from country to country (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 221).

The **security** of the platform, especially with regards to the transaction process, is a basic requirement and decisive for the trust of customers (cf. Markotten/Kaiser 2000, p. 532). Furthermore, the criteria of data protection, data integrity and data availability play an important role (cf. Turban et al. 2006, p. 462).

Additionally to these general requirements, also specific requirements concerning the desired functionality of an e-shop need to be considered. Thereby, product catalogues, product presentation, shopping carts, the order process as well as online payment possibilities play a central role (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 221).

The **online product catalogue** consists of an e-shop's product assortment including all important data regarding specification, material, price, etc. ... This data is often imported from the companies merchandise management system. Thereby, the transferability of the required data represents a basic requirement. Additionally to product presentation, online product catalogues enable users to search for information (cf. Silberer 2000, p. 37). Thereby, search along the product hierarchy, search for certain key-words or search within a limited search segment (e.g. price segment) can be distinguished (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 223).

The **online product presentation** is highly influenced by graphical aspects as text, navigation, graphics and sounds (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 225). Since the fashion industry involves a strong design component, customers place especially high standards on aesthetic product presentation within this business sector (cf. Easey 2009, p. 5). Therefore, the greatest challenge is to be aware of customers' expectations as well as requirements and to tailor the product presentation according to these requirements. They are likely to for instance include surfing the

shop without purchase intention, searching the shop for a specific product or searching for company information (cf. Silberer 2000, p. 37).

After selecting products from an online product catalogue customers put their choice into their online **shopping cart**. This service operates as intermediate and control storage. Products can be added or deleted as required, quantities can be changed, or additional detail information can be reviewed before the actual purchase process is completed. Additionally, gross and net prices, shipping costs and possible payment methods are displayed (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 226f.).

After the final selection of the preferred goods, it has to be as easy as possible to fulfil the **online order process** and to respectively reach the virtual cash desk. A common rule therefore states that a customer should be able to complete the order process in an e-shop by means of 3 clicks. Furthermore, it is important to inform customers about where they are within the ordering process and how many steps are ahead of them. Additionally, customer data can be saved with their approval in order to optimize the order process for the next purchase (cf. Zwißler 2002, p. 277f.). E-shops offer a variety of different **payment methods** as for instance credit card, Paypal, payment in advance or payment on account (cf. Bächle/Lehmann 2010, p. 100f.). When selecting online payment methods the ACID-qualities atomicity, consistency, isolation and durability have to be met. These requirements state that transactions have to be completed entirely or not at all to prevent partial payments during technical programs (atomicity), that payment information has to be the same for all participants (consistency), that payments within a payment system must not influence each other (isolation) and that in a case of technical problems payment information and virtual money must not be lost (durability) (cf. Kollmann 2013, p. 230).

Regarding **online product delivery** it can be distinguished between electronic products (e.g. software that can be downloaded) and physical products. Since order fulfilment is often outsourced to third parties, it is important to guarantee a consistent information flow (cf. Wirtz 2010, p. 369).

Social Media Channels

In the era of empowered customers it is important to meet a target group on any digital channel and to match growing expectations of immediate issue resolution with the least possible effort on the customer. Thereby, social media initiated a market disruption in customer service (cf. Sparkcentral 2016). This is emphasized

by low entry barriers as well as low costs and high usability of social media channels (cf. Kreutzer 2016, p. 117).

The term social media includes online media and technologies, which enable internet users to carry out information exchange online. It includes social networks and media sharing platforms as well as blogs, online forums and online communities (cf. Kreutzer 2016, p. 115). This information exchange is likely to take place within the pre-purchase phase to gather information as well as in the post-purchase phase to compose product recommendations.

| Touchpoint | Customer Journey Phase | | |
|--------------|------------------------|----------|---------------|
| | Pre-Purchase | Purchase | Post-Purchase |
| Social Media | X | | X |

Table 5: Social media channels within the customer journey (own presentation)

Social media must not be misunderstood as another pure sales, advertising or PR channel as it offers the opportunity to enter into dialogue with stakeholders and provide one-to-one services (cf. Kreutzer 2016, p. 116). Thereby, customers expect every channel to respond to different needs as for example marketing information or customer requests. As a result, it is important to establish cross-functional social media teams in order to meet customer expectations and to solve problems quickly (cf. Quesenberry 2016).

One great challenge of social media is to not only facilitate company customer interactions but also to promote social relationships between users on the same hierarchical level and social relationships to opinion leaders as well as to maintain this dialogue (cf. Pressman 2015, p. 66).

Another challenge is that social media allows real time communication and is at the same time not controllable, which can have a positive but also a negative impact on a company's reputation (cf. Kreutzer 2016, p. 115-118). Consequently, companies run the risk of published bad customer experience incidents going viral and giving the impression that this exception is the rule (cf. Pressman 2015, p. 66).

A tool to avoid bad customer experience incidents going viral is web monitoring. Web monitoring not only enables companies to discover if their performance is perceived positively or negatively, but also what kind of content engages and affects its target group (cf. Kreutzer 2016, p. 121f.).

In addition, companies can react by addressing specific issues and by trying to influence the direction of communication. This can be achieved by creating a corresponding page on social media channels as Facebook, Google+, Instagram or Pinterest as well as by maintaining a corporate blog (cf. Kreutzer 2016, p. 122). Thereby, it is important to choose social media platforms that are accepted and used by a company's target group (cf. Sparkcentral 2016).

Additionally to customer interaction, companies are enabled to give their target audience insights into their daily business and to meet them at an eye to eye level (cf. Chen, Hernandez, McCollough 2016, p. 18).

Furthermore, businesses have the opportunity to collaborate with opinion leaders. Thereby, influencers promote products and services on their social media channels and recommend them to their followers. Especially in the fashion and beauty industry influencers are perceived as trusted authorities as well as role models and becoming their own brand (cf. Strugatz 2016, p. 52).

Customer Service

Customer Service is responsible for first level direct customer support within a company. Thereby, this department provides customers with information about products and processes as for example the order process, answers customer requests and receives customer praise as well as complaints and provocations (cf. Stauss/Seidel 2014, p. 17). This touchpoint tends to be used within all stages within the customer journey.

| Touchpoint | Customer Journey Phase | | |
|------------------|------------------------|----------|---------------|
| | Pre-Purchase | Purchase | Post-Purchase |
| Customer Service | X | X | X |

Table 6: Customer service within the customer journey (own presentation)

Self-service technologies enable customers to solve low-complex issues by themselves (cf. Dixon et al. 2017, p. 112). Therefore, low complaint rates must not be mistaken for a high level of satisfaction (cf. Stauss/Seidel 2014, p. 2). While self-service reduces customer service costs for companies, it on the other hand results in almost only high-complex issues to solve for customer service employees (cf. Dixon et al. 2017, p. 112).

Complaining customers represent highly unsatisfied customers who endanger sales and contribution margin potentials (cf. Stauss/Seidel 2014, p. 15). At the same time, these customers expect quick and accurate information to solve their problem (cf. Sparkcentral 2016). Therefore, complaint management has to be seen as top management task in order to establish internal communication- and performance processes as a prerequisite for complaint management (cf. Stauss/Seidel p. 2f.).

When handling complaints, there is a natural human tendency to become defensive, to offer explanations instead of solutions and to focus on immediate cost-savings instead of a customer's life time value (cf. Rosen 2016, p. 13).

Therefore, customer service employees need to be well trained in order to meet both the customer's as well as the company's expectation. Nevertheless, employees also need to be empowered to solve customer problems on their own and without contacting supervisors (cf. Rosen 2016, p. 13).

Besides its positive effect on customer retention, complaint management also offers concrete information about churn reasons and a potential lack of quality or cumbersome processes (cf. Stauss/Seidel 2014, p. 15). Therefore, it is essential to monitor customer complaints in order to detect repeated issues and to realize improvement potentials by fixing these problems (cf. Rosen 2016, p. 13).

When handling customer complaints, it is important to solve them within the channel a customer used to contact a company. This due to the fact, that already unsatisfied customers face double dissatisfaction when they cannot reach a company or receive insufficient service (cf. Stauss/Seidel 2014 p. 12).

Therefore, software solutions that allow to combine customer information from all channels as for example e-mail, phone calls and social media messages are required in order to gain an overview about customers' previous interactions (cf. MacDonald 2012, p. 10).

5 Creating an online customer experience concept

The main task of online customer experience management is to create strategic parameters for user experience actions (cf. Robier 2016, p. 17f.). Therefore, the



Figure 11: Process steps (based on Meffert/Burmann/Kirchgeorg 2015, p. 220)

following chapter deals with the necessary steps to create an online customer experience concept illustrated in figure 11 (cf. Meffert/Burmann/Kirchgeorg 2015, p. 220).

5.1 Situation Analysis

Each marketing decision depends on a company's internal situation, its resources and core competencies as well as the external assessment of the market and the company's environment. The careful analysis of the market situation and the prognosis of key figures thus form the starting point of any strategic concept. (cf. Meffert/Burmann/Kirchgeorg 2015, p. 219). When creating an online customer experience concept particular emphasis on influencing determinants explained in chapter 4.1.2 has to be placed (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 18).

5.1.1 Internal Analysis

The internal analysis aims at investigating the current situation within a company (cf. Schawel/Billinger 2012, p. 250). Thereby, strengths and weaknesses which have a strategic impact on the company are disclosed. (cf. Jenster/Hussey 2001, p. 255).

During this phase, company as well as performance related determinants are investigated. A special focus is set on products and services as well as on their quality (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p.19). In the fashion industry, the evaluation of products and services tends to be especially challenging due to seasonal changes and the resulting constant need for the development of new designs (cf. Le Bon 2015, p. 71).

Furthermore, customer-relevant online touchpoints are identified and clustered to the touchpoint types illustrated in chapter 4.3. This process is to be supported by primary research in order to investigate key customer journeys. In the second phase of the analysing process, the current state of each online touchpoint is documented from the company's and the customer's point of view (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 154f.). Table 7, illustrates indicators used to assess the current state of online touchpoints.

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Search Engines | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Page rank○ Click rate of google adverts○ Leads through search engines |
|-----------------------|---|

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Online Shops | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conversion rate ○ Shopping cart abandonment rate ○ Site traffic ○ Unique visitors ○ Returning visitors ○ Time spent on site ○ Page views per visit |
| Social Media Channels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of subscribers/fans/followers ○ Number of interactions ○ Reach of shared content ○ Reactions to shared content ○ Response rate |
| Customer Service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Customer service email count ○ Customer service phone call count ○ Average resolution time ○ Concern classification |

Table 7: Contents of online touchpoints analysis (based on Hayes 2013, Facebook 2017)

5.1.2 External Analysis

The external analysis or opportunities/threats analysis investigates positive as well as negative developments in a company's environment. For international marketing concepts, this analysis aims at acquiring as much insights in the target market as possible. (cf. Schawel/Billinger 2012, p. 250). Thereby, a particular focus is set on customer related, situation related as well environmental determinants influencing customer experience (cf. Bruhn/Hadwich 2012, p. 18) Table 8 illustrates parameters used in each analysis.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| (Target) Market Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Market volume ○ Market share ○ Market development ○ Market potential ○ Trends |
| Customer Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Customer structure ○ Customer motives and expectations ○ Customers' buying behaviour ○ Customer's lifestyle ○ Spending power |
| Competition Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most important competitors ○ Products and services ○ Level of differentiation ○ Strategies and objectives |
| Environment Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legal and governmental regulations/changes ○ Intercultural factors ○ Economic factors ○ Technological factors |

Table 8: Contents of external analysis (based on Meffert/Burmann/Kirchgeorg 2015, p. 222)

Nevertheless, these factors cannot be directly influenced by the company, they still need to be considered for strategic decisions (cf. Meffert/Burmann/Kirchgeorg 2015, p. 220).

5.1.3 SWOT-Matrix

The findings of the external and internal analysis can be combined using a SWOT-Matrix. Thereby, external environments are confronted and compared to internal strengths and weaknesses. By doing so, central information for the definition of online customer experience objectives can be gained by identifying strengths to build on and weaknesses that must be improved in order to prevent potential threats (cf. Kreutzer 2016, p. 36).

5.2 Definition of Online Customer Experience Objectives

Online customer experience objectives form target specifications, which have to be reached by the selection of suitable strategies (cf. Meffert/Burmann/Kirchgeorg 2015, p. 219). The definition of online customer experience objectives is carried out in close coordination with the corporate objectives as well as marketing objectives and overall customer experience objectives (cf. Kreutzer 2014, p. 64).

Thereby, quantitative and qualitative targets can be distinguished. While quantitative objectives as for example turnover, sales figures, contribution margin and profit can be measured accurately and objectively, qualitative objectives as customer satisfaction, brand recognition and brand loyalty are evaluated more subjectively (cf. Eyer/Haussmann 2005, p. 31).

In general customer experience management follows three main goals: effectiveness, efficiency as well as emotional customer retention. **Effectiveness** aims at providing the right products, translated to the fashion industry this means to follow the latest as well as most significant trends. **Efficiency** strives for process simplification in order to facilitate customer interactions throughout the end-to-end customer journey. **Emotional customer retention** aims at increasing the customer lifetime value in order to increase the number of loyal customers as well as turnover (cf. Habicher 2015).

These superior targets can be broken down to subordinate targets for single online customer journey phases as well as for particular online touchpoints (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 180). Table 9 shows exemplary objectives according to these three main goals.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Effectiveness | Establishing touchpoints at three social media channels most used by the target group in the target market by the end of 2017. |
| | Leading 20 % of unique visitors to product information area. |
| Efficiency | Answering customer requests sent by e-mail within 24 hours. |
| | Enabling the customer to purchase a product within the online shop with three clicks by the end of 2017. |
| Emotional Customer Retention | Increasing turnover generated from repeated customers by 15 % to 60 % by the end of 2018. |
| | Reaching a net promoter score of 3.5 by the end of 2017. |

Table 9: Exemplary online customer experience objectives (based on Habicher 2015)

5.3 Development of Online Customer Experience Strategy

After defining online customer experience objectives the next step is to define a strategy to reach these goals (cf. Meffert/Burmann/Kirchgeorg 2015, p. 247). Due to the facts, that customer experience management covers an extended time frame and every customer touchpoint generates emotional as well as functional responses, companies need to define a clear scope that matches their corporate as well as marketing strategy (cf Klaus 2015, p. 23). Thereby, the strategic options which promise the best possible achievement of the defined objectives are to be selected as online customer experience strategies. (cf. Meffert/Burmann/Kirchgeorg 2015, p. 219).

To give an overview of the components of successful online customer experience strategies the models STOP and SATIS are chosen and illustrated in table 10. This is due to the fact that STOP establishes a strong relation to the company's corporate marketing strategy while SATIS puts its focus on online marketing related topics (cf. Chaffey/Smith 2013, p 554).

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Segments | Describes market selection criteria and which particular market segments are targeted online |
| Target markets | Gives a clear overview about the target market |
| Objectives | Objectives are not necessarily to be included into the strategy formulation. Nonetheless, it is crucial to ensure that all components of the strategy contribute to the successful |

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|----------------------------------|--|
| | accomplishment of previously defined online customer experience objectives. |
| Positioning | The most important step within the strategy development process is to define a clear online value proposition. Hereby, it is to be defined, how customers should perceive the company or brand and how the company differentiates oneself from its competitors (cf. Chaffey/Smith 2013, p 554). In customer experience management the experience platform is an important tool to translate the corporate positioning to an online customer experience positioning. The experience platform is a dynamic, multisensory and multidimensional representation of the intended customer experience. In addition, it illustrates the unique and experience-oriented customer benefits, the so-called experience promise. The customer-oriented experience platform is characterized by its implementation motive, which determines all future marketing and communication measures (cf. Schmitt/Mangold 2004, p. 44). |
| Sequence | When creating strategies priorities need to be set. After defining an online customer experience proposition the sequence of tasks is to be defined. This means for example to develop a credible web site before building awareness or trying to convert customers with social media or affiliate marketing programmes. |
| Acquisition vs. retention | Furthermore, companies need to be decided if the company wants to place emphasis on the acquisition of new customers or the extension of the customer lifetime value. |
| Tactical tools | The selection of tactical tools is driven by strategy. Thereby, it is important to select tools that are authentic and suit the corporate strategy as well as the online customer experience strategy. |
| Integration | Integration refers to the level of database integration that is necessary to facilitate different services as for example personalisation. |
| Social media | Social media is not only considered a tactical tool but also a strategic tool. This is due to the fact that it enables |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>companies to observe, analyse and interact with consumers. For instance, user generated content can be integrated into the development of new products.</p> |
|--|--|

Table 10: Components of an online strategy (based on Chaffey/Smith 2013, p. 554f.)

5.4 Definition of Customer Experience Actions

After developing an online customer experience strategy, actions need to be defined and implemented in order to reach predefined goals. Thereby, operative measures differ from strategic measures in means of significantly shorter time span as well as a higher level of detail (cf. Homburg 2015, p. 1199f.).

Furthermore, minimum service standards for each touchpoints are defined, service promises are formulated and employees need to be trained in regards of expertise and behaviour. Additionally, it is crucial to actively involve employees in the change process by creating operative measures within teams (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 211f.). Thereby, individual touchpoint requirements already described in chapter 4.3 need to be followed.

Thereafter, operative measures are prioritised within a plan of action. Touchpoints that contribute to positive online customer experience, long-term customer loyalty and maximise recommendation potential are of central importance. The significance of touchpoints thereby varies from company to company and needs to be defined individually and supported by primary research. Furthermore, so called “quick wins” or instantaneously successes regarding touchpoints that are perceived as defective are to be prioritized in order to further motivate employees (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 213).

5.5 Budget Preparation

The online customer experience budget represents the financial framework for the development of concrete customer experience activities (cf. Busch/Dögl/Unger 2008, p. 305f.). Therefore, it is necessary to define the amount of money that is spent on each touchpoint. To specify this amount, different approaches as for instance, percentage of turnover or profit, on the basis of available means or according to budget spending of competition, or budget preparation according to objectives and tasks are to be considered (cf. Becker 2013, p. 773f.).

5.6 Controlling

The purpose of controlling in online customer experience management is to provide management with relevant information in order to monitor activities as well as to support future decision making (cf. Ahlert/Große-Bölting/Heinemann 2009, p. 889). Online controlling is part of the overall marketing controlling and focuses on effective as well as efficient use of online measures. It is supported by the model of closed-loop of controlling as illustrated in figure 12 (cf. Kreutzer 2014, p. 78f.).



Figure 12: Closed loop of controlling (based on Kreutzer 2014, p. 78f.)

This model functions as feedback loop and aims at further optimising online customer experience actions. The first step is to compare the actual status with the desired outcome and to identify possible deviations. Thereby, indicators defined in chapter 5.1.1 need to be considered. As a next step, this deviations' reasons is analysed in order to define marketing activities to reach predefined goals (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 226f.).

Controlling online touchpoints requires less effort than monitoring traditional marketing measures, since the internet provides a great amount of informative data (cf. Kreutzer 2014, p. 80). On the one hand some online touchpoints provide their own kind of controlling interface on the other hand internet services as google alerts enable companies to subscribe to daily online reports about specific key-words (e.g. company name, brand name etc.) used on the internet (cf. Schüller 2013, p. 232). In addition, the following key performance indicators (KPIs) can be used to track the company's holistic performance independent from particular touchpoints.

- **Cost per Acquisition (CPA):** The CPA combines the cost of visitor acquisition with the conversion of the acquired customer

- **Return on Investment (ROI):** The return on investment is used to measure the profitability of any marketing activity
- **Customer Lifetime Value-based ROI:** This particular ROI is based on the entire lifetime value (and cost) associated with a customer. Therefore, acquisition costs, retention rates, claims as well as expenses are to be considered when evaluating this KPI (cf. Chaffey 2006, p. 368).

Furthermore, online customer surveys as website feedback tools or general survey platforms can be used to receive feedback as well as to measure customer satisfaction (cf. Chaffey/Smith 2013, p. 514f.).

6 Analysis of initial situation

In order to gain deep insights into the current situation of New One by Schullin GmbH (New One) in the UK market, the following chapter deals with internal as well as external environmental factors, which influence online customer experience.

In the course of this analysis the five customer experience determinants are taken into account. In the beginning, the determinant company is highlighted by introducing the company New One by Schullin GmbH. Its history as well as its way of expansion are illustrated. Furthermore, an overlook of its vision, product assortment as well as currently used online touchpoints is given in order to analyse the customer experience determinant performance.

Afterwards, the determinant environment is illustrated by a market analysis, as well as competition analysis to provide additional information for the creation of an online customer experience concept. To carry out this desk research, country statistics and reports, studies, interviews with employees of New One, company owned documents as well as internet sources will be used as information sources.

Furthermore, primary research is conducted to gain insights into the online shopping habits and preferences of New One's target group in the UK. Thereby, the conducted study considers the customer experience determinants customer as well as situation.

6.1 Presentation of New One

New One by Schullin GmbH (New One) is a jewellery retailer based in Graz, Austria. It was founded in 1998 and derived from the jeweller Schullin GmbH. The Schullin family has a long history in the jewellery business and operates in this sector since

1802. The company is run by the twins Nina Peneff-Schullin and Nicholas Schullin and currently employs 68 people.

Since the company's formation and the simultaneous opening of its first store in Graz, it expanded its business through three additional stores within Austria. In 2001 a first outlet was established in Vienna, followed by a further store in Salzburg in 2007 and a second outlet in Vienna in 2013. All stores are located in highly frequented inner city locations whereas the stores product assortment slightly varies.

The stores in Graz and Salzburg offer a mix of fashion jewellery and fine jewellery while the shops in Vienna offer a more differentiated product assortment. While one of these shops focuses on fashion jewellery the second store focusses on fine jewellery and exclusive pieces from selected designers.

Additionally to these four stores, the company launched its online shop in 2010 offering the entire product assortment. The shop was built by using the software OXID Shop and was expanded with a translated English version in 2013. Since the launch New One managed to grow on average 50 per cent each year.

In late 2017 the company will launch a new online shop based on the software Magento. Thereby, the company will adapt to the latest standard of responsive web shops and renew its design.

As the sales of the online shop constantly increases New One's distribution centre was relocated to Kalsdorf in 2016. Furthermore, it was decided to include the department customer service in this relocation since customer requests are often linked to distribution topics.

Through the translation of the online shop into English the company already took a first step towards internationalisation and currently serves customers within the EU. Nevertheless, the company's main markets remain Austria and Germany with 95 per cent of total turnover.

Product Assortment

Contrary to Schullin GmbH, the brand New One intends to represent jewellery in a modern and fashionable way. The product assortment consists of moderately priced fashion jewellery as well as exclusive fine jewellery. It is characterized by fast changing collections which are inspired by the latest fashion trends. Therefore, the entire product range changes approximately 3.5 times a year.

The company's product assortment can be divided into the product categories bracelets, bangles, necklaces, rings and earrings. In its web shop the company also offers the categories combiNATIONS and layers, which are meant to operate as inspiration platforms for its customers. The category combiNATIONS shows different ways of how to combine bracelets in a classy but modern way. In the category layers necklaces in different lengths are combined to create a layer look. The product designs are created by Nina Peneff-Schullin which is supported by her assistant and supplier's designer teams. Additionally, the company collaborates with designers from all over the world and offers selected pieces of their collections and in their name in its stores as well as in its online shop.

Future perspective

At its beginnings New One strongly benefited from Schullin GmbH's positive brand image. In the last 18 years the company managed to establish its own brand in a different target group and to continuously grow.

Therefore, long term objective of the company is to reach a market leader position within the fashion jewellery market in Austria and Germany. Moreover, it focuses on continuously further growth in other EU countries and the market entry to the US market in the future. Thereby, it puts an intensified focus on fulfilling customer needs by constantly adapting and optimizing customer touchpoints (cf. Schullin 2016).

6.2 Online touchpoints of New One in the United Kingdom

In the following an overview about New One's current online touchpoints and their role within the company is given to establish a base for the creation of an online customer experience concept.

Search engine marketing

Search engine marketing is a prerequisite to increase a company's visibility on search engines. Since Google holds a strong market leader position within this field, it has been decided to set a clear focus on this search engine.

After creating the company website according to Search Engine Optimization guidelines, New One mainly appoints its resources on on-page SEO respectively content optimization. Thereby, any kind of content (products, texts, pictures, videos) is created and uploaded according to SEO guidelines. However, at the moment the

focus of search engine optimization is set on the German version of the website since Austria and Germany are New One's main markets.

Additionally to on-page SEO New One operates in the field of Google advertising in its home market in order to increase brand awareness and to drive traffic to the company's online shop. This results in a page rank of 3 when searching for the term "Schmuck kaufen" in German compared to no visibility when searching for the term "buy jewellery" using the British version (www.google.co.uk) of Google.

Online public relations

In order to maximise favourable mentions by third parties New One collaborates with a number of different fashion magazines. Thereby, products are featured in inspiration sites, style guides or trend guides. At the moment the focus of online public relations is set on Austrian as well as German media as for example Woman, InTouch, Seitenblicke, Joy as well as Vogue and Elle.

Newsletter

Newsletter marketing has been proven to be an effective tool to directly address customers and to increase conversions for promoted products in New One's online shop. Customers have the possibility to subscribe to the newsletter when opening a customer account or by entering their e-mail address directly on New One's website.

Once a week a newsletter is sent to more than 50 000 subscribers via E-Mail and has an opening rate of approximately 20 %. This newsletter contains a mix of product pictures, fashion inspirations, quotes and relegates to the social media channels facebook, Instagram and pinterest. The used content is equal for all recipients and does not vary according to different preferences or geographical regions.

Although all products are linked to the German version of New One's online shop, the newsletter is perceived to be suitable for not German speaking customers since its content mostly contains pictures and thereby bypasses language barriers.

Display Marketing

Display marketing or banner marketing has been proven to be an efficient tool for New One. This is due to the fact that display marketing sets a high focus on performance due to the chance of optimizable CPT (cost per thousand) and the

ability to better measure performance banners. Furthermore, banners are optimised by real time bidding, behavioural targeting and retargeting.

Real time bidding refers to banners being published at the most suitable time and place for the campaign and therefore depends on detailed analyses. Behavioural targeting on the other hand aims at collecting customer data by tracking customer actions and browsing history in order to optimise published banners.

The third used way to increase banner performance is retargeting. Retargeting ads remind customers of products they recently looked at in an online shop, by being repeatedly presented to the customer on third party websites. Due to the use of cookies New One is able to retarget its visitors on other websites. Thereby, the company on the one hand uses dynamic retargeting to display the exact same products customers looked at and on the other hand classic retargeting to present standard banners.

Social Media

Social Media Marketing plays an important role for New One. Thereby, the company operates on the channels Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, twitter and also established a company owned blog. In the following a short presentation on the used channels is given.

Facebook is perceived as the most important social media channel for New One. This is due to the fact that the company reaches over 800 000 Facebook users per week, which is more than on any other platform. At the moment New One runs two different Facebook pages called New One and New One Jewellery. The first one is focused on the home markets Austria and Germany and counts more than 260 000 followers. Its content is entirely produced in house and consist of product introductions, bestseller promotion as well as lotteries. Thereby, a clear focus is set on arousing emotions by using pictures and emotional messages in German.

The company's second Facebook page concentrates on an international audience and counts approximately 48 000 followers. Identically to the German page strong emphasize is put on addressing potential customers on an emotional level through the use of pictures and meaningful messages in English.

From a customer's point of view Facebook is perceived as a possibility to interact with New One. Hence customers use the platform to give feedback as well as to ask for information and advice. The reaction rate on the company's German Facebook page accounts 100 % with a reaction time of under 10 hours. The reaction rate on

the company's international Facebook page on the other hand accounts 82 % with a reaction time of one day.

Instagram represents another important social media channel of New One. The company's Instagram account called new1shop was published in 2015 and since then managed to reach over 47 000 followers. This audience is dominated by Austrian fans (28.9 %) and German fans (26.40 %) compared to British followers (2.6 %).

The platform offers the possibility to communicate the brand image as well as to integrate content generated by opinion leaders as well as customers. This results in a content mix of in house produced fashion inspirations, collaborations with influencers as well as publishing user generated content. Thereby, followers are encouraged to post pictures of them wearing New One jewellery and using the hashtag #new1moment. Furthermore, users experience the opportunity to contact the company via comments or direct messages to give feedback or to ask for information. Nevertheless, these services are not utilised to same extend as on Facebook.

Additionally to Facebook and Instagram New One also operates on the platforms **twitter** (69 followers) and **Pinterest** (13 700 followers). Nevertheless, these channels are not pursued actively. For this matter customer interaction is low.

Furthermore, a **New One fashion blog** is integrated into the website. Similar to the platforms twitter and Pinterest this channel is not proactively maintained and therefore continuously loses followers.

Online shop

Currently, New One's website is available in the languages German and English and ships within the EU area. Shipping costs account for € 9.90 within the EU. For orders which exceed a value of € 200,- shipping costs are omitted.

The majority of all online sales is concluded on the same day, with most customers coming from social media channels as well as organic or paid search. Nevertheless, the majority of customers is more likely to convert at a second, predominantly direct, visit. Therefore, three of five conversions consist of at least two interactions and 55% of all users are returning. Furthermore, direct visits are characterized by a longer time period spent on the website and a lower order values.

The online shop is divided into the categories New In, New One Jewellery, Fine Jewellery, Selected Designers, combiNATIONS, Layer Looks, Sale, About Us and

Giftcard. As already highlighted in the company introduction, the categories combiNATIONS and Layer Looks function as inspiration sites for combined looks of bracelets and necklaces. Additionally, the named categories are complemented by seasonal collections as for example valentine's, mother's day or Christmas.

Products within all categories are introduced by presenting three product pictures, one picture of a model wearing the selected piece of jewellery and an additional picture of its packaging. Furthermore, products are described in a short text which informs about used materials and gives information about combination possibilities and current trends. This product description aims at arousing emotions as well as substituting advisory in store service. In addition, information about the product's size is given.

Products which are considered for a purchase can be saved by adding them to a personal wishlist. This wishlist is stored within the personal customer account for an indefinite time period and can also be sent to friends and family.

Customer Service

At the moment, New One's customer service is reachable by telephone and e-mail. While phone calls are answered immediately e-mails ought to be answered within 24 hours. Currently a vast majority of customer requests are filed by German speaking customers.

As already mentioned in the above, social media platforms are perceived as contact point for customer requests. Therefore, New One's social media team operates in close contact to the customer service team.

6.3 Market Analysis

Nevertheless the European jewellery market faces a lot of competition from non-jewellery products, Europe is a global leader in the design and development of jewellery. This is due to high standards in quality, craftsmanship as well as design. (cf. CBI Market intelligence 2015).

Within Europe, the United Kingdom accounts for 13.6% of the apparel, accessories and luxury goods market value. Its market value is estimated to reach a value of \$95,157.4 in 2017 which equates to a compound annual growth rate of 3%. Comparatively, the French and German markets are expected to grow with a compound annual growth rate of 1.6% and 1.7% over the same period to reach

respective values of \$ 80.8 billion and \$ 112.6 billion in 2017 (cf. MarketLine 2013, p. 2-7).

It has to be noticed that since 2013 market data is no longer reported due to confidential reasons. Therefore, there is the possibility that the given numbers do not reflect the exact reality. Nevertheless, it can be determined that the UK apparel market's average compound annual growth rate equalled 2.5% from 2008 to 2012 when Europe faced an economic crises. Taking these numbers into account, a high possibility of further positive market development after the economic crises can be assumed (cf. MarketLine 2013, p.8).

Another important factor for the UK's economic development is the current Brexit. On July 23th 51.9% of the UK's population voted for the British exit of the European Union. The necessary notification for the exit took place on 29 March 2017 and initiated a two years period of exit negotiations to redesign the economic relationship between the European Union and the UK. In order to minimize economic losses, the widest possible access to the European market is desirable for the UK. At this point of time, a clear forecast of the outcome of the withdrawal can not be made (Rilasciati 2017). Nevertheless, according to a recent study with 600 participating companies, one-third of European companies considers to cut their investments because of the uncertainty surrounding the British EU exit (cf. Handelsblatt 2017). This decline in investments can be perceived as chance for companies who choose to invest in the market at this point of time to build a solid customer base with declining market intensity.

Regarding online retail there can be identified three leading markets within Europe. These markets are the UK, Germany and France in which the UK takes the leading role with an expected market share of 16.8 % in 2016. (cf. Centre for Retail Research 2016) In 2014 the British spent 149 million Euros which is compared to Germany a three times higher spending according to the e-retail sales index. The leading product categories within the British online retail are fashion, technology and alcoholic beverages. Additionally to its high spending, the UK e-commerce market is the best developed e-commerce market within Europe. Therefore, it is important to serve this market on a highly professional level and high standards regarding technology and services (cf. Gründel-Sauer 2015).

6.4 Competition Analysis

As the international online retail market is characterized by its global reach the definition of direct competitors is a challenging task. Furthermore, not only jewellery retails need to be considered as competition since many fashion retailers extended their product range by offering accessories and an increasing number of fashion influencers designs their own jewellery collections to further expand their business. To receive an overview of the diversity of the competition New One's main competitor in its home market and two companies founded in the UK were chosen for the competition analysis.

When comparing New One's competitors regarding their strategic positions, its main competitor in its home market, Anna Inspiring Jewellery, needs to be particularly highlighted since the company targets the exact same group of customers as New One does. Furthermore, the company not only offers traditional retail stores within Austria but also international stores in Munich, Germany, New York, USA and most importantly one store in London, UK.

| Competitor | Assortment | Touchpoints | Strengths/Weaknesses |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Anna Inspiring Jewellery (www.annaij.com/en/) Based in Austria</p> | <p>Products: Anna Inspiring Jewellery offers genuine gold, rose gold and white gold as well as silver and rose gold plated sterling silver jewellery. Additionally to standardized designs the company offers the opportunity to individually design pieces of jewellery.</p> <p>Price range: The price range extends from middle price segment to high price segment due to the versatile product assortment.</p> <p>Target group: The target group is estimated to be mainly female, although a minor assortment for men is offered. Due to</p> | <p>Online Shop The company's online shop is operated in the three languages German, English and French. Its content consists of product presentations divided into different collections, a magazine and the already mentioned possibility to design individualized pieces of jewellery. Moreover, background information about the company can be found in the category ANNA'S WORLD.</p> <p>Facebook The company operates one main facebook fanpage and additional fanpages for each physical store. While the main facebook page counts 40,851 fans the British facebook page counts 10 fans at this moment. The content of the pages is very similar and mainly differs in the language.</p> <p>Instagram: 50,200 fans Content consist of product presentations in terms of product pictures, fashion pictures as well as collaborations with fashion</p> | <p>+ Possibility to personalize jewellery + Integration of Instagram account into online shop (shop our Instagram) + Integration of fashion influencers into the online shop (blogger stories) + Responsive web design + Clear communication of the brand image through all channels</p> <p>- Very small fan base on international social media channels - Shipping costs to other countries than Austria and Germany are not displayed</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | <p>playful designs and products in the middle price segment the target group is estimated to be women in the age range of 20 to 40 years.</p> <p>Availability: Anna Inspiring Jewellery operates through physical stores in Vienna, Munich, New York as well as London and ships within the EU area. The shipping costs to the UK depend on the exact region and have to be requested from customer service.</p> | <p>influencers. Furthermore, a strong emphasize is set on communicating the brand image through in store pictures and the involvement of employees, also called anna girls.</p> <p>Pinterest 1,235 followers</p> <p>Twitter 137 followers Used language English Last tweet in 2015</p> <p>Newsletter Customers are able to subscribe to a weekly newsletter for new arrivals. On special occasions product recommendations are added.</p> <p>Customer service Can be reached per telephone and E-Mail.</p> | <p>- No security certificate visible</p> |
| <p>Astley Clarke (www.astleyclarke.com) Based in the UK</p> | <p>Products Astley Clarke offers genuine gold, rose gold and white gold jewellery as well as sterling silver jewellery. The designs are enhanced with diamonds or precious gemstones</p> <p>Price range Middle to high price segment</p> <p>Target group Due to a higher price segment the target group is estimated to be women as well as men between 25 and 60 years with good financial background, Men are included in the target group since high price jewellery is a popular gift.</p> <p>Availability Astley Clarke's jewellery can be found in an own boutique in London, as well as at numerous stockists. Furthermore, the</p> | <p>Online Shop When first entering the online shop customers are asked to enter their country, language as well as currency. The online shop's content focuses on the presentation of products in different collections.</p> <p>Facebook 14,926 followers The content of the company's Facebook page mainly consists of product introductions and promotions.</p> <p>Instagram 22,100 followers Similar to Facebook the main focus is set on product presentation</p> <p>Pinterest 5,198 followers</p> <p>Twitter 10,000 followers The content of the company's twitter account equals the company's Facebook account</p> <p>Newsletter Customers are asked to subscribe to Astley Clarke's newsletter on the homepage of the website. Customers are asked for their preferences as well as their gender and automatically participate in a</p> | <p>+ Possibility to personalize jewellery + Visible currency can be changed for every country + Customers are actively asked for feedback. Feedback options are presented prominently on the website. + When signing up for the newsletter customers are asked for preferences regarding content as well as their gender to personalize their experience + Responsive web design + Gift guide available + professional appearance on the company blog through communication fashion competence.</p> <p>- no security certificate</p> |

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| | <p>company offers worldwide shipping. Thereby, the company offers free delivery on all orders over £75.- and free returns on all orders.</p> | <p>lottery when signing up for the newsletter.</p> <p>Customer Service Customer service can be reached via telephone or e-mail. Thereby, the company offers different e-mail addresses for fashion style or gift advices and additional customer requests.</p> <p>Blog On its blog the company integrates celebrities, styling advices as well as background information about the topic jewellery.</p> | <p>- low fan community on social media</p> |
| <p>Astrid & Miyu (www.astridandmiyu.com) Based in the UK</p> | <p>Products Astrid & Miyu mainly offers (gold plated) sterling silver and brass jewellery adorned with zirconia. The designs follow the same style as New One's products.</p> <p>Price range Lower price segment due to the fact of used materials.</p> <p>Target group Due to a lower price level and playful designs the estimated main target group is female and between 18 and 25 years old.</p> <p>Availability Astrid and Miyu's products are available in two traditional stores in London and additionally operate an online shop that ships worldwide. Orders and returns within the UK are free of shipping costs.</p> | <p>Online Shop The online shop is operated in English, currency can be changed to Euro as well as to US Dollar. Products are introduced using product as well as model photos. The introduction is endorsed by a product description which possesses emotional language and style competency.</p> <p>Facebook 12,514 followers The content mainly consists of product presentation as well as style and trend inspiration and also includes fashion bloggers.</p> <p>Instagram 36,600 followers The content mainly consist of model pictures which aim at arousing the feeling of a certain lifestyle by strongly reminding of a fashion blogger's Instagram page.</p> <p>Pinterest 571 followers The content contains fashion as well as lifestyle topics combined with model pictures staging the company's products.</p> <p>Twitter 10,700 followers The used content is very similar to the content used on facebook and puts a clear focus on the integration of fashion influencers.</p> <p>Newsletter Customers are able to subscribe to the company's newsletter and receive a -10% voucher after the registration.</p> | <p>+ good integration of Instagram on the website (shop our Instagram and inspiration sites) + active promotion of an affiliate programme to find fashion bloggers who fit the brand +loyalty programme which is explained in detail on the website + security certificate</p> <p>-no customer service hotline - small product assortment with low differentiation</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | Customer Service The company can be reached by e-mail. | |
|--|--|--|--|

7 Customer Analysis

In order to gain further knowledge about New One's target group in the UK market cultural differences are highlighted before primary research is conducted to gain insights about the target audience's habits and preferences when shopping fashion items online.

7.1 Cultural differences

At the beginning of the customer analysis cultural insights are given to establish deeper understanding of the British culture and its values. Although there exist a number of cultural models to compare and analyse differences and similarities between societies, Hofstede's six cultural dimensions are chosen since they remain the most influential cultural model of its kind (Griffin/Pustay 2015, p. 127).

To gain better understanding and comparability to New One's home market, figure 13 illustrates Hofstede's six dimensions in comparison to Austria.

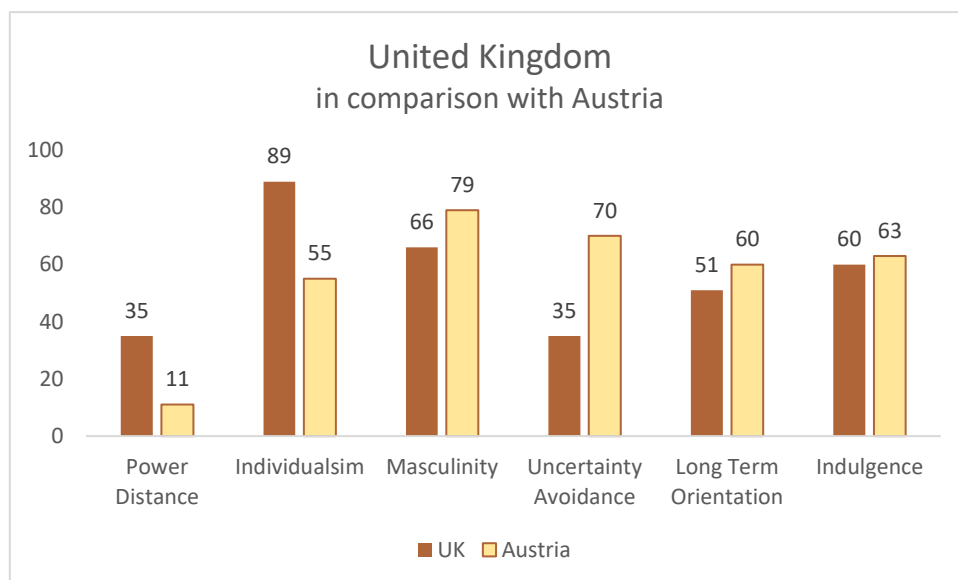


Figure 13: Hofstede's six dimensions comparison UK and Austria (based on Hofstede 2017)

Power Distance describes the attitude of a culture towards inequalities of power within a society. With a score of 35 the UK holds a low rank within this dimension. This fact indicates that the British believe that inequalities amongst people should be minimized (cf. Hofstede 2017).

At the same time, the UK has one of the highest scores (89) in the dimension of **individualism** within all countries investigated. Individualism refers to whether people's self-image is defined by individualistic or collectivistic values (cf. Hofstede 2017). Regarding the fashion industry this fact signifies a high tendency towards the pursuit of unique styles and self-expression through fashion.

A high score within the dimension **masculinity** (66) indicates that the society is driven by rather male values as competition, achievement and success than by rather female values as caring for others and quality of life. In contrast to the general assumption of the British modesty Hofstede's research shows that the UK values contribute to a rather success driven and masculine culture (cf. Hofstede 2017).

The fourth dimension **uncertainty avoidance** describes the degree to which members in a society feel uncomfortable within uncertainty and ambiguity. A low score of 35 implies that the British are open minded and comfortable with emerging and changing environments. The combination with high score in individualism results in a strong innovation orientation (cf. Hofstede 2017). In terms of the fashion industry it can be assumed that this low score in uncertainty avoidance accounts for short fashion lifetime circles and a tendency to fast fashion. Furthermore, a low level of uncertainty avoidance allows the assumption of a tendency towards high affinity regarding new technology and therefore the importance of state of the art online shops to fulfil customer requirements.

The dimension **long term orientation** portrays the extent to which societies prioritise time-honoured traditions and norms in comparison to encouraging innovation and reforms. With a score of 51 no tendency can be determined for the UK culture (cf. Hofstede 2017).

The sixth dimension **indulgence** refers to the extent to which a society tends to enjoy life in comparison to suppress gratifications. With a high score of 69 the UK culture is characterized by putting emphasis on recreation and a tendency to spontaneously fulfilling wishes and desires by spontaneous consumption (cf. Hofstede). These facts reflect characteristics of an online surfer visiting an online shop without purchase intention in order to find recreation and therefore highlights the importance of innovative and entertaining web design.

7.2 Primary research

In order to gain further knowledge about the online shopping behaviour and preferences of New One's target group in the UK market primary market research

is carried out. With this market research, a comprehensive image of the UK market is created in order to consider all relevant information to design an online customer experience concept for this specific target group.

7.2.1 Research objective

The overall research objective is to gain information about the target group's online and fashion shopping motives as well as to identify online customer touchpoints used in different customer journey phases in order to identify online key customer journeys.

Consequently, the target group analysis focuses on online shopping and fashion/jewellery shopping behaviour of New One's target group in the UK market. Therefore, the primary market research is divided into the subsequent areas and has to answer following questions.

General information

- Do UK consumers consider themselves as online shoppers?
- What are the online shopping motives of UK consumers?
- How often do UK consumers shop online?
- Are UK consumers open for variety in online shops or do they preferably shop at their most trusted online shop?
- To which extend do UK consumers want to be involved in the value creation process?
- What are the shopping motives of UK consumers when shopping jewellery?

Pre purchase

- Which online touchpoints are most important to consumers when searching inspiration and information about the latest fashion trends?
- Which social media channels do consumers preferably use?
- Which content do they wish for on social media?

Purchase

- What kind of information do UK consumers research when they visit an online shop with purchase intention?
- What content do UK consumers expect in a fashion online shop in general?
- How likely are UK consumers to contact a company?

- What are their service performance expectations when contacting a company?

Post Purchase

- Are UK customers likely to give product feedback?
- On which channel are UK consumers likely to give feedback?

7.2.2 Method

In general, two kinds of market research can be distinguished. Qualitative market research investigates detailed behaviours, attitudes and their cause with the aim of uncovering previously unknown issues or to receive new ideas. Therefore, a small sample size is used. Quantitative market research on the other hand investigates overall buying behaviour with the objective of detecting statistically significant user trends. Thereby, a greater sample size is used (cf. Mulder 2007, p. 36f)

To create an online customer experience concept for New One by Schullin GmbH, **quantitative market research** has been chosen as the most suitable alternative. This is due to the fact, that no previous market research within this field has been conducted and a holistic overview about online habits of a great sample size is needed in order to create a suitable online customer experience concept.

Quantitative market research includes representative surveys, observations as well as experimental tests. Surveys can be conducted oral, written, via telephone, computer-assisted as well as online (cf. Berekoven/Werner 2009, p. 93).

For the following market research an online questionnaire is used. This is due to the fact that online surveys provide a fast, cost-efficient and interactive way to interview test persons without geographically boundaries (cf. Berekoven/Werner 2009, p. 107). The survey is limited to a time commitment of 5 to 7 minutes.

7.2.3 Sample

The first step to define a sample is to define an underlying population (cf. Kuß 2012, p. 60). The population for this research has been outlined as follows.

| Requisite | Population |
|--------------------|------------|
| UK citizens | 64,430,000 |
| Female UK citizens | 32,374,000 |
| Age | |

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| 20-24 year old | 2,200,000 |
| 25-29 year old | 2,200,000 |
| 30-34 year old | 2,006,000 |
| 35-39 year old | 2,100,000 |
| Female UK internet users | |
| 20-24 year old | 2,182,000 |
| 25-29 year old | 2,180,000 |
| 30-34 year old | 1,989,000 |
| 35-39 year old | 2,080,000 |
| Sum | 8,431,000 |

Table 11: Population UK (based on index mundi 2016; Office of National Statistics 2016)

Generally, only relatively small subgroups of the total quantity are included in surveys. This means that a small sample is used instead of a total survey of several million people. (cf. Kuß 2012, p. 61).

In general, random and non-random sampling can be distinguished. The key requirement for random samples is that each element of the population has the same probability of getting into the sample (cf. Kuß 2012, p. 66). Thereby, a high number of participants increases the likelihood that the results will match the accuracy of a complete survey (cf. Berekoven/Werner 2009, p. 46). Non-random samples are created by using single-level or multi-level processes as for example quota processes. Thereby, the population is divided into representative groups by using predefined attributes before one of these groups is chosen to be the sample (cf. Kuß 2012, p. 66)

For the following primary research random sampling is chosen as appropriate method. This is due to the fact, that every woman within the predefined population is qualified to represent a potential UK customer.

Through promotional social media activities a sample size of 8,431 users (0,1% of population) is addressed. Due to the low estimated participation rate of approximately 2%, 200 responses are estimated.

7.3 Field work

The online questionnaire was created using the online survey service Umfrage Online. Before the online questionnaire was distributed to the UK target group, pre-tests had been conducted. Thereafter, participants were acquired using social media as well as using the online platform call for participants.

Thereafter, the collected data from the quantitative research was analysed using the statistical analysis tool SPSS in order to manage the large amount of data.

7.4 Results and interpretation

The findings of the primary market research are divided into general findings, as well as online consumer behaviour regarding the purchase of jewellery in terms of habits and preferences during the pre-purchase, purchase as well as post-purchase phase. Therefore, results from 211 female respondents who participated in the study are taken into account.

7.4.1 General findings

At the beginning, it can be found out that a vast majority (91.9%) of all participants consider themselves an online shopper. The three most important reasons for shopping online are convenience (85.6%), time saving (71.6%) as well as product variety (68.6%) followed by information availability (27.3%).

Only 8.06% of all participants do not consider themselves an online shopper. The most prominent reason for British consumers not to shop online is the fact that products cannot be looked at physically (87.5%) followed by inconvenient return policies (50%) as well as long shipping times (37.5%) and security concerns (12.5%).

Furthermore, it can be found out that the majority of participants (89.6%) uses their mobile phone within the pre-purchase phase to find inspiration, while only 33.67% of purchases are completed mobile and half of online purchases are finalised using a laptop or pc (50%) as illustrated in figure 14.

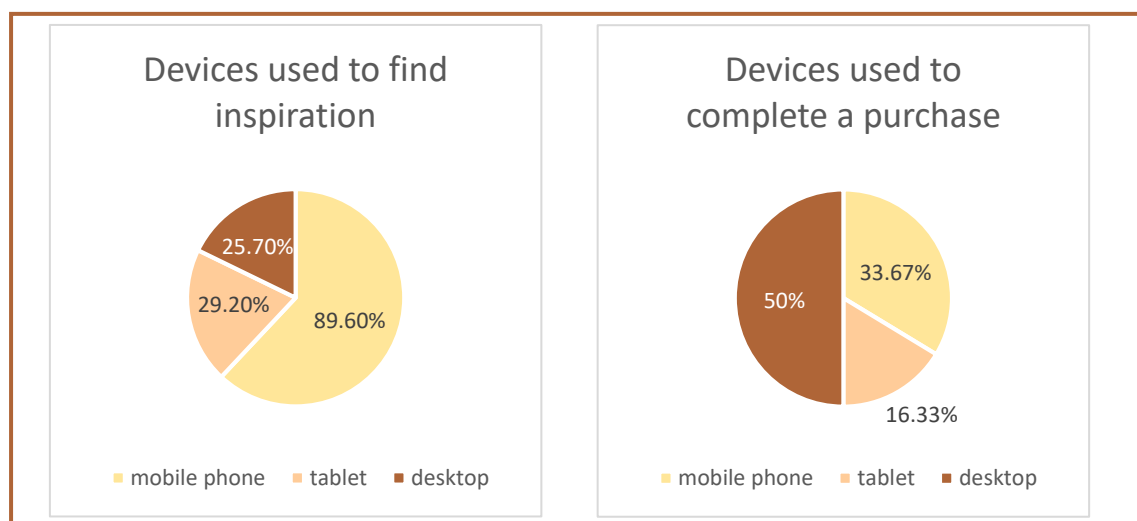


Figure 14: Use of devices through the customer journey (own presentation)

When it comes to jewellery shopping motives participants (strongly) agreed to the four most common reasons of buying a present for a loved one (80.88%), impulse purchases (76.47%) as well as the attendance of a special event (74.02%) and the desire to reward oneself (69.61%).

On the other hand, participants (strongly) disagreed with the jewellery shopping motives of wanting to belong to a group (85.78%), recreation (72.55%) as well as encouragement when they feel sad (66.18%) as illustrated in figure 15.

These findings strongly correlate with Hofstede’s cultural study which outlines a strong tendency towards individualism, a tendency to sharing rather masculine values as achievement and success as well as a tendency to spontaneously fulfilling wishes (cf. Hofstede 2017).

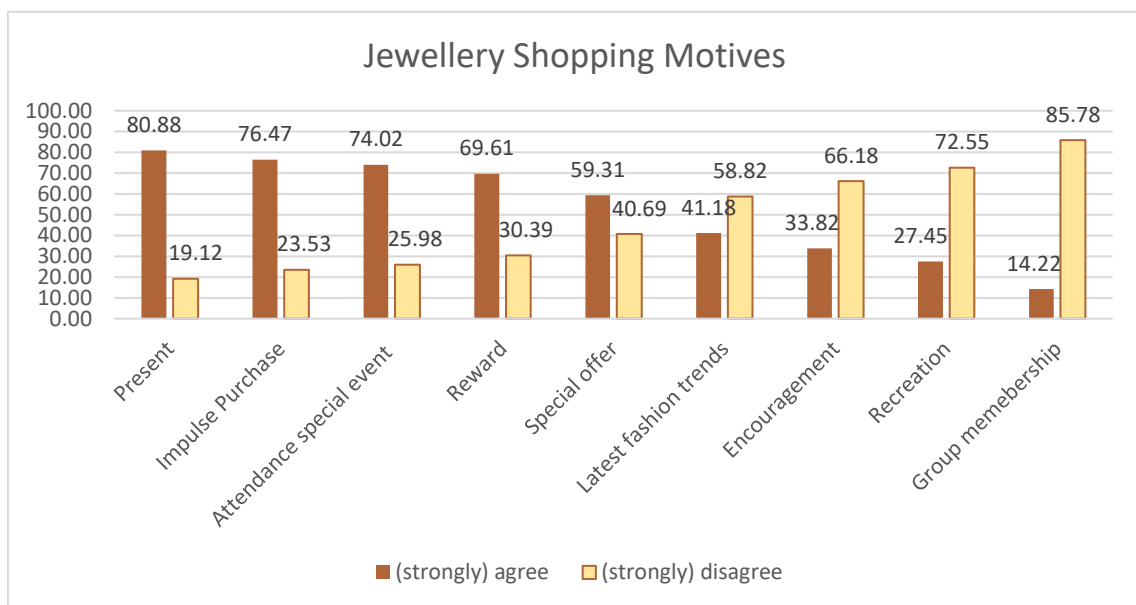


Figure 15: Jewellery shopping motives (own presentation)

Another aspect that contributes to Hofstede’s study is that 73.53% of all participants consider themselves fashion conscious and 68.63% of all participants stated that they are informed about the latest fashion trends.

Furthermore, there can be seen a clear tendency towards variety seeking since a vast majority (82.5%) of all participants stated that they prefer to shop jewellery at a number of different shops. Moreover, there is a small tendency towards standardized jewellery (57.28%) in comparison to individualized jewellery (42.72%).

7.4.2 Pre-Purchase

In order to identify key online customer touchpoints the importance of common online customer touchpoints in fashion industry during the inspiration phase was investigated. The investigated touchpoints are the social media channels Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest and twitter as well as fashion blogs, online fashion magazines, company websites, newsletters as well as online search engines.

As highlighted in figure 16 the two social media channels Instagram (64.30%) and Pinterest (55%) were rated as (very) important by participants who indicate to be informed about the latest fashion trends. The further most desired types of content on social media channels of fashion companies are information about special offers (72.4%) and new arrivals (65.5%) as well as fashion inspiration (64.00%). The on the other hand least interesting topic for New One's target group in the UK market are behind the scenes information about the company (32%).

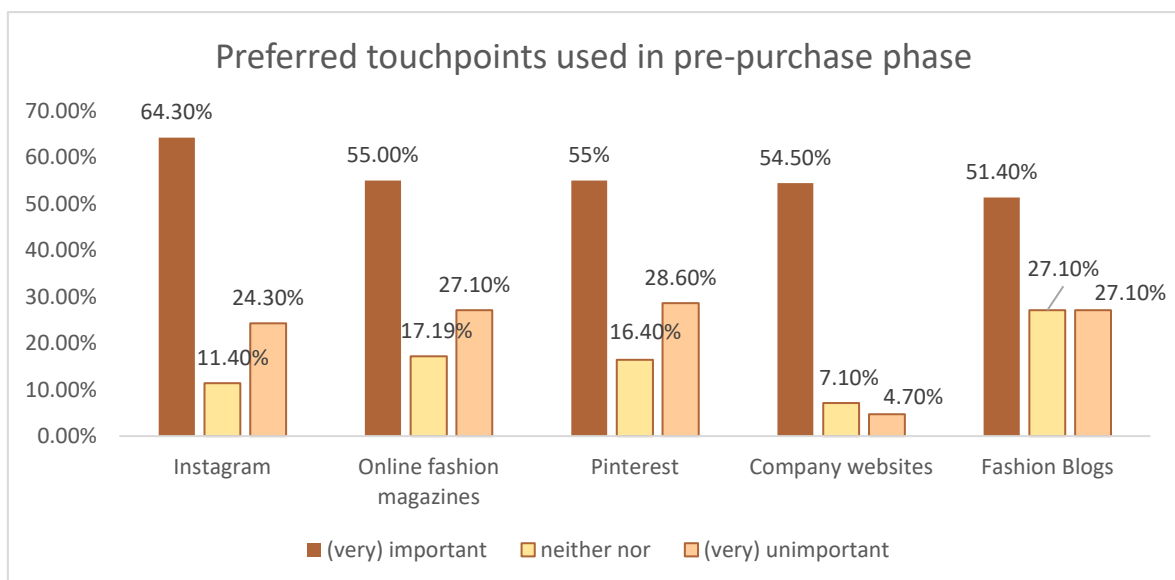


Figure 16: Preferred online touchpoints used in pre-purchase phase (own presentation)

Additionally to social media channels online fashion magazines (55%), company websites (54.5%) as well as online fashion blogs (51.4%) are considered to be (very) important when looking for inspiration online as illustrated in figure 16.

The most often mentioned online fashion magazines are Vogue, Grazia, Elle as well as Cosmopolitan whereas there cannot be found a tendency towards main influencing fashion bloggers. Nevertheless, examples for admired fashion bloggers are the blond salad, style bubble as well as styleheroine.

The touchpoints considered to be least important when looking for inspiration online and are therefore rated (very) unimportant are twitter (82.10%) as well as YouTube (65.70%).

7.4.3 Purchase

The most important online touchpoint within the purchase phase is a company's website respectively its online shop. In order to develop an understanding of the expectations regarding an online shop of New One's target group in the UK, participants were asked questions regarding quality criteria of an online shop as well as desired content.

Since evaluation criteria are strongly connected to subjective expectations as well as previous experiences with a company's website as well as with websites of a company's competition there has been a wide disparity in the range of rankings. However, following tendency towards the most important evaluation criteria can be determined.



Table 12: Importance of a fashion online shop's evaluation criteria (own presentation)

The tendency to rank functional evaluation criteria highly leads to the assumption of high usability requirements of New One's target group in the UK as underlying prerequisite of completing a purchase. This assumption is supported by the fact that the UK are the most developed online retail market within Europe and standards regarding online shops are set high.

Besides product presentations 73% of participants would like to find product guides within a fashion online shop. Examples for product guides are style guides or gift guides. Furthermore, 69.4% wish for information about special offers and 58.7%

would like to be provided with product reviews from other users as illustrated in figure 17.

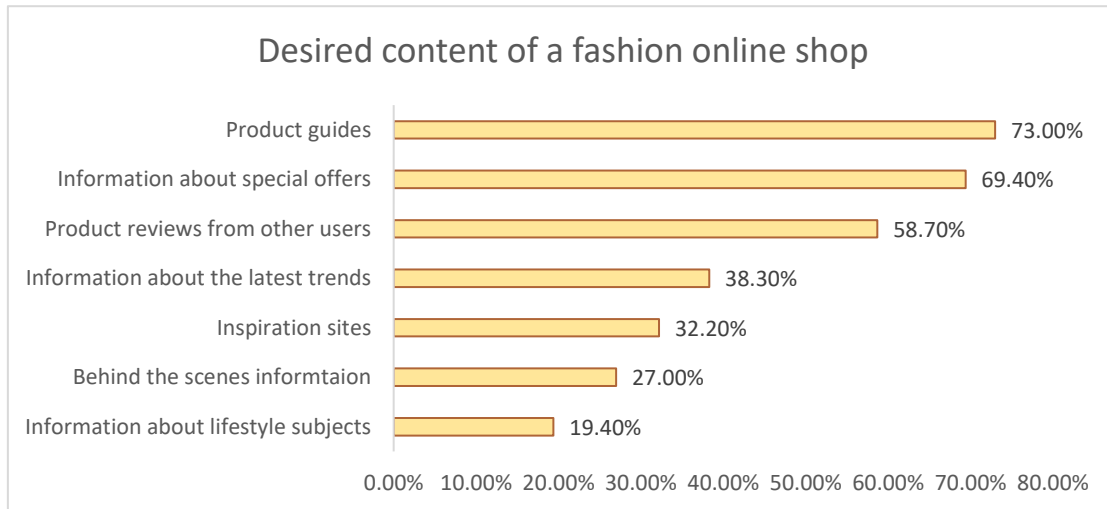


Figure 17: Desired content for fashion online shops (own presentation)

Before purchasing a fashion item online 94.00% of questioned participants indicated to research the item's price, followed by product reviews (68.2%), shipping conditions (63.20%) and return policy (51.20%) whereas only a minority researches used materials (41.30%), terms of payment (32.80%) or safety certificates (6.50%). If required information is not findable on a retailer's website 24.88% of participants are (very) likely to contact a company to receive disclosure whereas 75.12% are (very) unlikely to start a dialogue.

In the case of contacting a company to receive further information the majority of participants (59.7%) prefers to send an e-mail whereas 20.9% would like to use a live chat on the website, 13.9% would contact the company via telephone and 5.5% would preferably send a message on Facebook.

In order to be able to establish internal evaluation criteria, participants were additionally asked to specify an expected response time for their chosen communication channel as well as to provide information about what is most important to them when contacting a company.

Expected response times strongly vary from touchpoint to touchpoint. Therefore, table 13 gives a short overview about preferred communication channels as well as the most referred to expected response times.

| Touchpoint | Preference | Expected response time |
|------------|------------|--|
| E-Mail | 59.7% | Under a day (41.7%) |
| Life chat | 20.9% | Under five minutes (52.38%) |
| Telephone | 13.9% | Under five minutes (35.7%) |
| Facebook | 5.5% | Under half an hour (27.2%) Under half a day (27.2%) |

Table 13: Preferred touchpoints and expected response times (own presentation)

In the next step participants were asked to rank the following quality criteria for an interaction with customer service according to their importance (1=most important, 5= is least important). It has to be mentioned that the preferences of these criteria are influenced by additional factors as used communication channel, reason for interaction as well as subjective feelings. For this matter, there has been a wide disparity in the range of rankings. However, following tendency towards the most important evaluation criteria can be determined.

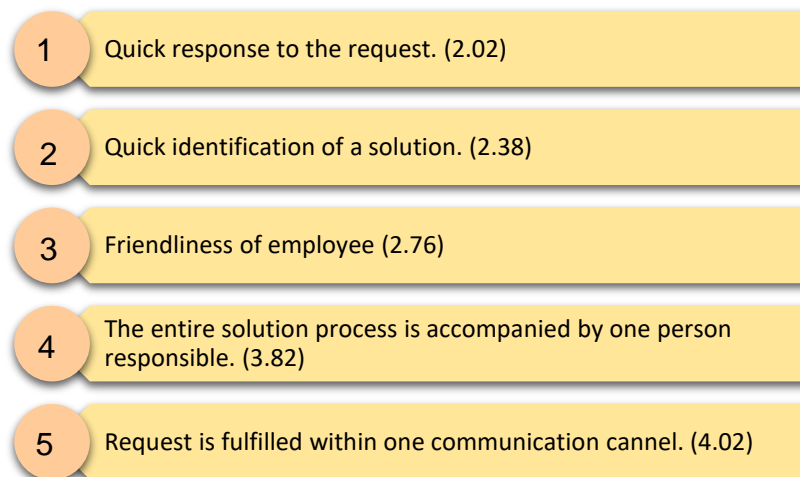


Figure 18: Quality criteria on fashion online shops (own presentation)

The ranking exhibits a tendency towards a high importance of short response times as well as the quick identification of a solution. In this context, it has to be mentioned that the term quick is perceived subjectively and is influenced by facts as the choice of communication channel as well as previous experiences.

Additionally, the sequence shows a tendency towards a higher importance of interpersonal interaction in comparison to the importance of consistent use of one communication channel.

7.4.4 Post-Purchase

After purchasing a fashion item, 37.25% of questioned participants are (very) likely to write a product review about a product they are satisfied with where on the other hand 50.51% of questioned participants are (very) likely to write a product review about an item they are unsatisfied with.

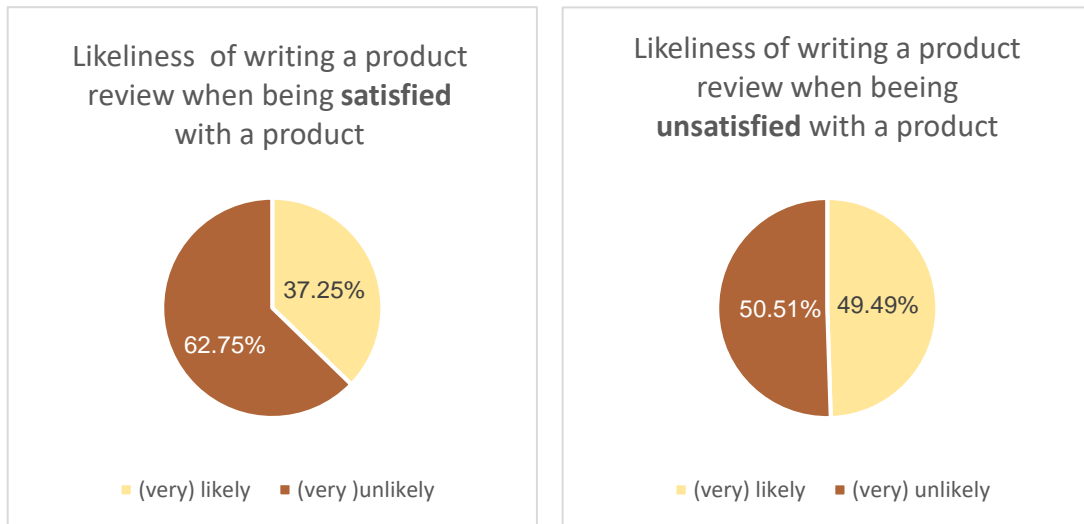


Figure 19: UK consumer's likeliness to write product reviews (own presentation)

In contrast, 76.02% of questioned attendees are (very) likely to directly contact a company when they are unsatisfied with a purchased product. Thereby, a majority of 78.06% would preferably contact a company via e-mail followed by 14.3% who would complain via telephone, 5.6% who would send a message on Facebook and 2% who would preferably use a life chat on the website.

Additionally, 27.55% of all participant indicated that they are (very) likely to post a picture of a fashion item they are satisfied with on social media.

7.5 Conclusion and limitations of the research

In conclusion it can be said that New One's target group in the UK is very familiar with the process of online shopping since 91.9% of all test persons consider themselves an online shopper and 60.73% of participants shop online as frequent as once a month. Thereby, strong emphasis is put on high usability standards as prerequisite to complete a purchase which is highlighted by the tendency to rank functional online shop evaluation criteria as most important.

The combination of a high tendency towards variety seeking (82.5%), a low degree of uncertainty avoidance and the tendency to impulsive shopping behaviour

(76.45%) strongly reflect characteristics of an online surfer and the need for SEO, entertaining web design as well as fast changing product design to revive customer's attention and interest.

These characteristics are also reflected in using multiple online touchpoints when seeking inspiration as well as information. This results in a plurality of possible customer journeys whereas the most indicated touchpoints used result in the key customer journey constellations illustrated in table 14.

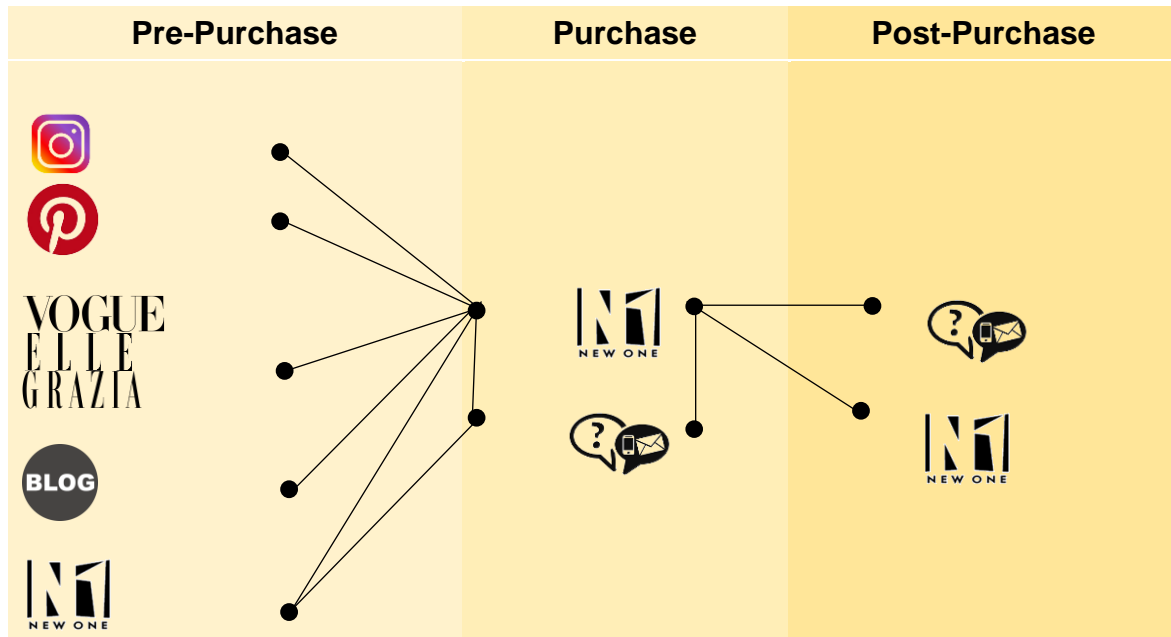


Table 14: Key customer journey constellations (own presentation)

The initial point of a customer journey strongly depends on the shopping motive of the customer. Recording to this study, the most prominent jewellery shopping motives of participants are the search for a present (80.88%), impulse shopping (76.47%) as well as shopping jewellery before attending a special event (74.0%). After developing a purchase intention participants are most likely to collect information about prices (94%), product reviews (68.2%) as well as shipping conditions (63.2%). If required information cannot be found the majority (75.12%) of test persons is (very) unlikely to start a dialogue with a company to receive missing information. Therefore, the provision of information perceived as important is a crucial point in converting an online consumer into an online prosumer.

This evolution process presents a major challenge since a tendency towards not wanting to be involved in the value creation process to a high extend is visible throughout the customer journey. This is reflected by the unlikeliness to contact a company when seeking information, a tendency towards standardized product

design as well as the unlikeliness of creating product reviews and the unlikeliness of sharing product related content online.

The aim of this research was to gain a holistic overview about the target group's online and fashion shopping motives as well as to identify online customer touchpoints used in different customer journey phases. Due to the fact, that no previous market research within this field has been conducted this research represents a first step towards gaining insights into customer habits and preferences when shopping online. To acquire detailed insights into specific requirements for single online touchpoints further research has to be carried out.

8 Creation of an online customer experience concept for New One by Schullin GmbH with focus on the UK market

Within this chapter the online customer experience concept for New One with focus on the UK market is elaborated based on findings in literature, results of the situation analysis as well as gained knowledge of primary market research's results.

8.1 Initial situation

Based on the key findings of the extensive analysis of the initial situation an integrated SWOT catalogue is elaborated in cooperation with company representatives in a brainstorming session. This analysis is developed as a summarising and visualisation tool to build a solid base for the online customer experience concept.

First, environmental developments are defined before being combined with New One's strengths and weaknesses in this field of action. Additionally, possible causes of internal strengths and weaknesses have been analysed. Depending on whether an external development meets an internal strength or weakness, an opportunity or a threat can be detected. Furthermore, the extent to which an environmental development meets a strength or a weakness is expressed by using indicators from one (low impact) to three (high impact).

The following SWOT analysis features ten environmental developments. Three of these environmental developments are confronted with internal strengths and therefore lead to opportunities for the company whereas seven of them are confronted with an internal weakness and therefore lead to a threat for the company.

SWOT ANALYSIS FOR NEW ONE IN THE UK MARKET

| Environmental development ... | ... meets an internal strength or weakness ... | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| | + | - | Strength/Weakness | Causes | + | - | Opportunities/Threats | Objectives |
| Growing international competition through fashion retailers and fashion influencers | | 1 | Ability to compete on an international level. | Little awareness of New One in the target group in the UK and lack of knowledge to compete on an international level due to the fact that the company only focused on its home market in the past. | | 2 | Low degree of competitiveness in the UK. | Defining a clear USP for New One in the UK market to differentiate the company from its competitors and thereafter raising brand awareness. |
| UK consumer's high willingness to shop online. | 2 | | Providing a state of the art online shop in the end of 2017. | Launch of a redesigned online shop to meet customer experience requirements. | 2 | | Building customer loyalty might be easier when actively targeting the UK market with a state of the art online shop. | Drive traffic from the UK to the redesigned online shop in order to establish long lasting customer relationships. |
| Demand for fast changing jewellery collections | 3 | | Constantly changing collections | New products are uploaded to the online shop every week to provide customers with new designs related to the latest fashion trends in order to keep customers interested. | 3 | | Meeting customer requirements regarding trendy product design. | Integrating regional trends and feedback of UK customers in new collections |
| Importance of SEO due to a high degree of impulse shopping. | | 3 | Bad ranking of New One when using the British version of Google. | Neither SEO nor SEA activities are conducted for the UK market. | | 3 | Insufficient visibility on Google. | Establish search engine marketing for the UK market in order to become competitive. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| The social media channel Pinterest is perceived as (very) important by 55% of questioned participants. | | 2 | Only a low degree of active utilization of the social media channel Pinterest | The company puts a strong focus on the social media channels Facebook and Instagram. | | 2 | To neglect the opportunity to drive traffic to New One's online shop through Pinterest. | Active utilization of the potential of the social media channel Pinterest. |
| Fashion magazines are perceived as (very) important by 55% of questioned participants. | | 2 | No cooperation with British fashion magazines. | The company put a strong focus on fashion magazines within the home markets Austria and Germany. | | 2 | To neglect the opportunity to drive traffic to New One's online shop through fashion magazines. | Active cooperation with British fashion magazines. |
| Fashion blogs are perceived as (very) important by 51.4% of questioned participants. | | 2 | No cooperation with British fashion bloggers. | The company put a strong focus on fashion bloggers located within the home markets Austria and Germany to target the target audience in the home market. | | 2 | To neglect the opportunity to drive traffic to New One's online shop through blog posts of admired British fashion bloggers. | Active cooperation with British fashion bloggers. |
| According to primary market research the strongest jewellery shopping motive is to buy a present for a loved one. | 1 | | Use of this message in external communication. | New One applies this message in its product descriptions as well as in promotional messages. | | 2 | Increasing conversion rate through arousing emotions. | Extension of the topic presents to additional online customer touchpoints. |
| 73% of questioned participants wish for product guides within a fashion online shop. | | 2 | New One does not provide product guides. | Do to shortage of internal resources the maintenance of product guides is not possible at the moment. | | 2 | Loss of potential customers do to decision difficulties. | Implementation of product guides with low maintenance effort into the online shop. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| 58% of questioned participants like to read product reviews of other users before making a purchase decision. | | 3 | New One does not provide product reviews within its online shop. | New One offers the possibility to rate its entire service on the external platform trustedshops.de | | | Loss of potential customers due to trust issues. | Implementation of product reviews into the online shop. |
| <p>Legend: (+) = Strength Opportunity (-) = Weakness/Threat 1 = low impact, 2 = average impact, 3 = high impact</p> | | | | | | | | |

Table 15: SWOT analysis (own presentation)

8.2 Online customer experience objective

After taking into account internal as well as external influencing factors within the situation analysis, online customer experience objectives are defined in coordination with New One's main company targets as well as the main master thesis targets.

New One's main objective is to achieve a turnover of 15 % of total online sales in the UK market which equals € 150.000,- by the end of 2018. Furthermore, the company aims at reaching an Online Net Promoter Score of 3.5 in the UK market by the end of 2017.

Derived from these company objectives, the master thesis aims of creating an online customer experience concept for New One with focus on the UK market and the sub goal of analysing customer touchpoint requirements within the online customer journey in international fashion industry are concluded.

To ensure the achievement of these targets the main online customer experience target of implementing New One's online value proposition into all online customer touchpoints used by the company is defined. Additionally, this target is complemented by the following three sub goals which lay the foundation for the overall online customer experience objective accomplishment.

8.2.1 Objective 1: Improve search engine rank

Search engine marketing is a prerequisite to increase a company's visibility on search engines. At the moment, New One only engages in this type of marketing in its home markets Austria and Germany. Therefore, the company's website cannot be found within the first 10 result sites on the British version of Google (www.google.co.uk) when searching for the term "buy jewellery".

The facts that British consumers according to primary research tend towards variety seeking, a low degree of uncertainty avoidance and the tendency to impulsive shopping behaviour further highlight the need for SEO in order to increase visibility for potential customers.

This objective can be measured by the company's page rank on the most important search engine Google as well as by measuring the extent of traffic to the online shop derived from the British version of Google.

8.2.2 Objective 2: Increase commitment to online touchpoints perceived as important by UK target group

This objective is consciously formulated in a holistic view and therefore does not only focus on one precise online touchpoint. A prerequisite to establishing an effective online customer experience concept for New One is to increase the company's commitment to online touchpoints preferably used by the target group. As discovered within primary research, online touchpoints which are of high importance within the pre-purchase phase are the social media channels Instagram and Pinterest as well as online fashion magazines, online fashion blogs and company websites.

As already highlighted within the SWOT analysis New One does not actively operate on the social media platform Pinterest, does not cooperate with British online fashion magazines and does not collaborate with British fashion bloggers at the moment. In this context, it is especially crucial to devote internal resources to these touchpoints in order to be able to efficiently address the target group and to drive traffic to the company's online shop.

This objective can be measured by the ratio of new followers on Pinterest, the ratio of interaction on Pinterest, as well as the ration of new website visitors in contrast to total website visitors.

8.2.3 Objective 3: Enhance online shop with features required by target group

Additionally to driving traffic to New One's online shop the company should focus on already existing website visitors with high potential in terms of online shopping. Thereby, emphasis should be put on contents desired by the target audience. According to conducted primary market research required features are product guides, information about special offers, product reviews from other users as well as information about the latest trends and inspiration sites. As already illustrated in the SWOT analysis, New One does not provide product guides, product reviews and specific information about the latest trends within its online shop.

Therefore, the company should consider to enhance its online shop with additional features as well as to further expand its activities regarding already existing features that are preferably used by the target group.

This objective can be measured by the ratio of residence time on already existing landing pages in comparison to current residence time. Furthermore, the number of visits as well as the residence time on new landing pages can be measured.

8.3 Online customer experience strategy

To guarantee the achievement of New One's main online customer experience objective, external developments as well as internal strengths and weaknesses need to be considered. Due to the facts, that customer experience management covers an extended time frame and every online customer touchpoint generates emotional as well as functional responses, it is crucial to define a clear customer experience strategy scope for New One that matches the company's corporate as well as marketing strategy. In order to develop a holistic online customer experience strategy the dimensions of an online marketing strategy STOP and SATIS explained in chapter 5.3 are used as a framework before defining New One's online customer experience strategy for the UK market.

8.3.1 Segments and Target Markets

With this concept New One aims at building a solid base for "actively" penetrating the UK market since until now the company's focus was solely put on its home markets Austria and Germany.

Therefore, the geographical target market of this concept is the UK market. This is due to the fact that New One already operates an English version of its online shop as well as an English Facebook page and holds knowledge of this market within the company due to internal resources.

As already described in the customer analysis, New One's main target group consist of females within the age range of 20 to 40 years. Nevertheless, in this context, it has to be mentioned that women and men within other age groups are not to be neglected either. This is especially due to the fact that jewellery is perceived as suitable present.

Another prerequisite for the company's target audience is high affinity to online shopping. According to the market analysis the UK is the leading and most developed online retail market within Europe. This fact is additionally supported by primary market research where 91.9% of questioned participants stated to consider themselves an online shopper and 60.73% of participants indicated to shop online as frequent as once a month.

Due to the facts that the UK is the most developed online retail market within Europe and customers are experienced in online shopping, it is important to serve this market on a highly professional level and high standards regarding technology and services.

8.3.2 Positioning

The definition of a clear online value proposition is the most important step within the development process of an online customer experience concept. Thereby, it is to be defined, how customers should perceive the company and how the company differentiates oneself from its competitors.

New One's concept is based on selling high quality fashion jewellery as well as lower price level genuine jewellery. According to the managing directors, there is no competitor who is able to compete on this price performance ratio although its main competitor targets the exact same target audience with a similar product range and similar product design. These similarities in target groups as well as product assortment lead to a missing clearly defined position in the home market. Therefore, an underlying brand position has to be defined before elaborating an online customer experience position.

New One is characterised by fast changing collections. Apart from basic pieces the whole product assortment changes approximately 3.5 times a year and new products are added on a weekly basis. Furthermore, product designs are strongly influenced by the latest fashion trends.

In addition, New One places strong emphasis on the combination of different pieces of jewellery. This is supported by the online shop category combiNATIONS, which shows exemplary combination possibilities of bracelets, and the online shop category Layer Looks, which shows exemplary combination possibilities of necklaces. Furthermore, the mixture of multiple rings is promoted. When giving examples of combination possibilities the company furthermore promotes the mixture of fashion jewellery and genuine jewellery which is an innovative approach within the industry. Thereby, the opportunity to emphasise one's individual look by combining different pieces of jewellery is strongly highlighted.

This results in the position of a jewellery retailer who is able to offer its customers high quality fashion as well as genuine jewellery to moderate prices that not only underlines the latest fashion trends but also supports the target group in emphasising its individual look. By doing so the company underlines its fashion and trend competency and differentiates oneself from its competition by highlighting the uniqueness of combination possibilities rather than prioritizing single products.

Translated to an online customer experience position the online value proposition results in an online jewellery retailer that supports its customers to further develop their individual style by combining up to date pieces of high quality fashion as well

as genuine jewellery. By doing so the company broadcasts its fashion competency throughout the entire online customer journey and provides a seamless and complementary online customer experience at all online touchpoints used.

Based on this online value proposition the following positioning statement is elaborated and needs to be implemented into all online channels used in order to provide users with a seamless online customer experience.

New One provides its customers with fashion as well as genuine jewellery that provides its customers the opportunity to emphasise their personal look by combining different pieces of jewellery in an individual way.

8.3.3 Online customer experience sequences

When creating strategies priorities need to be set. Therefore a sequence of tasks is defined. Within the first sequence focus is set on enhancing the company's online shop with features required by target group in order to broadcast the online customer value proposition and to establish initial point for additional online customer experience activities.

Subsequently, the online customer experience objective of improving New One's search result rank on Google since search engine visibility is a prerequisite for successful online retailing.

Within the third sequence, strong emphasis is put on increasing the company's commitment to online touchpoints preferably used by the target group. More precisely, this sequence will focus on enhancing the company's appearance at already operated touchpoints as well as establishing the company's appearance within touchpoints not used at the moment.

8.3.4 Acquisition vs. retention

As the UK customer base only makes up a small fraction of the company's entire clientele emphasis is put on the acquisition of a solid customer base within this market as a first step. Nevertheless, the underlying objective of enhancing online customer experience contributes to the extension of the customer lifetime value and is perceived as an important part of New One's long term online customer experience strategy.

8.3.5 Tactical tools

The selection of tactical online customer experience tools including social media is driven by the online customer experience strategy. Therefore, this selection and implementation possibilities of online customer experience actions will be explained in the following chapter in more detail.

After taking into account these influencing factors, New One's online customer experience strategy for the UK market can be concluded as follows. In order to implement New One's online value proposition into all online customer touchpoints used throughout the online customer journey the company's key differentiator of promoting combination possibilities rather than single products plays a crucial role. Consequently, this key differentiator needs to be highlighted at every online customer touchpoint in order to provide a seamless and complementary online customer experience.

Thereby, it is essential to address customers at their preferred online customer touchpoints and to use state of the art technology since UK customers are very experienced in online shopping as the UK is the most developed online retail market within Europe.

8.4 Online Customer experience activities

In order to translate the defined online customer experience strategy to specific online touchpoints, online customer experience activities for New One need to be defined. The definition of these actions is subdivided into the already defined three sequences which are strongly related to accomplishing defined online customer experience objectives.

8.4.1 Enhance online shop with features required by target group

As discovered in primary research a fashion company's online shop is a key online touchpoint throughout all online customer journey phases. As a result, strong emphasis needs to be put on the enhancement of this online touchpoint in order to fulfil customer requirements and to enhance online customer experience.

Thereby, it is recommended to focus on contents desired by the target audience. According to conducted primary market research required features are product guides, information about special offers as well as product reviews from other users.

As already illustrated in the SWOT analysis, New One does not provide product guides and product reviews within its online shop. However, the company provides information about special offers in its Sale section.

Information about special offers

New One promotes current special discounts and promotional activities as free shipping on the homepage of its online shop. Additionally, discounted products can be found in the online shop's sale section. This category contains sale products and is limited to product presentation.

To provide customers with additional information about special offers lotteries conducted on social media need to be presented within the online shop as well.

Furthermore, it is recommended to also include the entire range of social media channels used into the promotion of special offers and lotteries to provide consistent information across all online customer touchpoints.

In order to also communicate New One's online value proposition through this action it needs to be considered to design special offers based on the combination of different kinds of jewellery. An exemplary promotional activity is to promote a combiNATION or Layer Look of the month at special pricing conditions. This action would not only further promote the company's key differentiator but also contribute to a diversified offer.

Product guides

It has been identified that product guides are the most desired online shop feature besides product presentation. As this tool is perceived to be characterised by a high level of maintenance effort a strong focus needs to be put on minimizing this effort. To provide suitable content for a potential product guide, the most popular jewellery shopping motives are taken into account. These motives are to present a loved one with jewellery, to buy jewellery before attending a special event as well as to reward oneself. Furthermore, the desire for information about the latest trends is considered.

The selected motive most appropriate for the creation of an online product guide is to present a loved one with jewellery. This decision is influenced by the fact that the target group is characterised by a high level of individuality as well as fashion consciousness. These tendencies allow the assumption that product guides

functioning as decision guidance are not accepted when shopping jewellery for oneself.

A further influencing factor of this decision is the highly subjective range of special occasions. Therefore, coverage of multiple special occasions is not possible within one single product guide. Nevertheless, this motive can be considered as content of inspiration sites.

When creating the present guide seasonal as well as omnipresent occasions, different price levels as well as different jewellery types need to be considered. Furthermore, a strong focus needs to be put on compilation of unique presents by combining different pieces of jewellery.

Product reviews

Another online shop feature desired by the majority of market research participants are product reviews from other users as they are taken into account before finalising a purchase decision.

In this context it has to be mentioned that the wish for product reviews is in conflict with the target group's low tendency to write product reviews after purchasing a fashion item. As a result, incentives for the creation of product reviews need to be considered when implementing this feature into New One's online shop.

As appealing web design plays an especially crucial role within fashion industry particular emphasis needs to be placed on the feature's design as it should function as decision making support but should not distract from product presentations.

8.4.2 Improve search engine rank

Furthermore, it is recommended to improve New Ones search engine rank. This is due to the fact that according to the cultural as well as primary study UK consumer tend to impulsive shopping behaviour and thereby reflect characteristics of an online surfer. Since online surfers are characterized by erratic surfing behaviour as well as surfing the internet randomly, high visibility is a crucial prerequisite to be found on the internet.

As already described within the online touchpoint analysis, New One holds knowledge as well as capabilities within the field search engine optimization as this activity is carried out in its home market. Therefore, it is recommended to apply this existing knowledge to the UK market. Furthermore, it needs to be considered to buy a local domain for the United Kingdom and to implement it technically into the company's online shop in order to further increase visibility as well as credibility.

8.4.3 Increase commitment to online touchpoints perceived as important by UK target group

A prerequisite to establishing an effective online customer experience concept for New One is to meet the target group at its preferably used online touchpoints and to meet their requirements regarding single platforms.

As discovered within primary research, online customer touchpoints which are of high importance within the pre-purchase phase are the social media channels Instagram and Pinterest as well as online fashion magazines, online fashion blogs and company websites. Online customer touchpoints most used within the purchase as well as post-purchase customer journey phase are a company's website as well as customer service.

As already highlighted within the SWOT analysis New One does not actively operate on the social media platform Pinterest, does not cooperate with British online fashion magazines and does not collaborate with British fashion bloggers at the moment.

Therefore, it is especially crucial to devote internal resources to these online customer touchpoints in order to be able to efficiently address the target group and to drive traffic to the company's online shop.

However, in this context it has to be mentioned that additional online customer touchpoints are not to be excluded from the company's online touchpoint portfolio. This especially applies to the social media platform Facebook which is perceived to be the best performing promotion platform for the company although UK consumers are not likely to actively use the social media channel as inspiration source.

Instagram

Instagram is perceived as the most important online touchpoint by the target group when looking for inspiration and as second most important social media platform by New One. As the company already actively uses this social media channel it offers a content mix of in house produced fashion inspirations, collaborations with influencers as well as published user generated content. To obtain user generated content, followers are encouraged to post pictures of them wearing New One jewellery and using the hashtag #new1moment.

At the moment, the focus of content distribution lies within traditional postings on the platform as well as occasionally promotional activities. Instagram stories are not used until this point of time.

The focus of these activities lies within providing fashion inspiration as well as informing about new arrivals as well as fashion trends. Thereby, the company already covers the majority of requested content fields. Nevertheless, additional information about special offers need to be considered in order to further improve online customer experience within this online touchpoint. Additionally, the promotion of different combination possibilities can be supported by further promoting the already used hashtag #combiNATION.

Furthermore, it needs to be considered to include Instagram stories into the communication mix since the target group is characterised by a high affinity towards up-to-date media use.

Pinterest

Another important online touchpoint within the pre-purchase phase is the social media platform Pinterest. New One already established a company profile within this platform and accounts approximately 13,700 followers.

At the moment, different inspiration boards are created using in house produced product pictures as well as repined fashion inspirations and inspirational quotes.

In order to offer added value it needs to be considered to increase the amount of activities within this platform and to use additional features as rich product pins to increase profitability.

Online fashion magazines

As already illustrated within the SWOT analysis New One concentrates its internal resources for online public relations on its home markets Austria and Germany and cooperates with local fashion magazines in means of promotional placements as well as earned placements within style sections and style guides.

In order to raise awareness in the UK it needs to be considered to expand the company's activities within this field to British online fashion magazines. Recommended fashion magazines are Vougue, Elle as well as Grazia since the company already collaborated with these magazines in its home markets and these journals were repeatedly mentioned by participants within primary research.

Fashion Blogs

As opinion leaders play a leading role within fashion industry and fashion blogs are perceived to be an important inspiration source within the pre-purchase phase it

needs to be considered to expand collaborations with fashion bloggers to regional fashion bloggers in the UK.

When choosing an appropriate fashion blog, basic requirements as number of followers and the rate of interaction need to be taken into account. Furthermore, it is particularly important that chosen fashion bloggers fit to New One's brand positioning and image that is intended to be communicated in this market.

To build profitable collaborations step by step, collaborations with a small number of fashion bloggers are intended as a first step. Thereby, the target group's reaction to different fashion bloggers and different types of content can be tested before concentrating on the most profitable collaboration types and partners.

Thereafter, more extensive collaborations as the design of a fashion blogger inspired jewellery collection can be put into practice.

8.5 Online Customer Experience Budget

After defining online customer experience activities in the next step the budget for these measures needs to be set accurately. Therefore, the method of budget preparation according to objectives and tasks is decided to be the most appropriate method as the achievement of online customer experience objectives is in focus.

The following table illustrates a budgeting plan for online customer experience measures in the UK for New One. In this context, it has to be mentioned that estimated costs are calculated in Euros since all measures are coordinated in the company's headquarters in Austria.

| Planned Measure | Calculation Base | Budget Costs (for 12 months in €) |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Product guide | Technical development and implementation 25 hours from external specialists at an hourly rate of €65.-, content creation and maintenance 3 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25.- | € 5,525 |
| Information about special offers | 2 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25.- (administration) | € 2,600 |
| Product reviews | Technical development and implementation 45 hours from external specialists at an hourly rate of €65.-, promotional activities €2,500, maintenance 2 hours per week at an hourly rate of € 25.- (administration) | € 8,025 |

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| SEO and SEA | Technical analysis €1,000, SEA google.co.uk €150.- text ads every two weeks, weekly shopping ads €50.-, weekly remarketing banners €50.- | € 9,950 |
| Instagram - Content - Advertising | Content creation: 4 hours per week at an hourly rate of € 25.- ads: € 50 per day, 2 days in sequence every two weeks | € 7,800 |
| Pinterest | Content creation: 4 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25.-, ads: €50 per day 3 days in sequence every 3 weeks | € 7,750 |
| Online fashion magazine | €3,500 per advertisement, 6 placements | € 21,000 |
| Cooperation with local fashion bloggers | Costs for one campaign comprise products and fee for the blogger and equal € 3,500; cooperation with 3 bloggers + 8 hours per campaign at an estimated hourly rate of € 25 (administration) | € 10,650 |
| Increase in workload | Administrative increase of workload, 5 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25,- | € 6,500 |
| Project management | Approximately 5 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25 (administration) | € 6,500 |
| Total | | € 86,300 |

Table 16: Online customer experience budget for New One for the UK market (own presentation)

The specified budget plan includes all online customer experience measures planned for the time frame of one year. The total amount of estimated costs equals € 86,300. In this context, it has to be mentioned that this budget plan has to be perceived as an estimation of costs as the exact extent of activities for each online customer touchpoint needs to be specified in more detail before the implementation of single activities.

When taking into account the ratio of New One's target turnover of € 150,000 in the UK market and the estimated costs of € 86,300, it has to be stated that it can be assumed that all online customer experience actions taken additionally influence business in the home markets as well as in additional international markets in a positive way. This is on the one hand due to the fact that online services are used without geographical boundaries. On the other hand, this assumption is emphasised by the fact that the UK market is perceived to be the most developed online retail market within Europe with high technical standards as well as high customer expectations and the adaption to these standards further enhances positive online customer experience across borders.

8.6 Online customer experience controlling

Within the following chapter key performance indicators to control the implemented measures are identified. The use of controlling measures is a crucial success factor for the implementation of an online customer experience concept since controlling measures support the achievement of strategic objectives by identifying possible disparities that need to be corrected.

New One's main objective is to achieve a turnover of € 150.000,- in the UK market by the end of 2018. The achievement of this goal can be measured by the number of new UK customers and sales figures. Additionally the online shop traffic generated by several online customer touchpoints is an indicator if the measures operate efficiently.

Furthermore, following key performance indicators for single actions can be taken into account to control the successful implementation of the online customer experience concept.

| Planned measure | Key Performance indicator |
|---|--|
| Product guide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of users - Stickiness rate - Sales figures of promoted items |
| Information about special offers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of landing page visitors - Number of customers using the special offer |
| Product reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of product reviews - Effect of product reviews on sales figures |
| SEO and SEA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organic page rank - Traffic generated from google.co.uk - Cost per Click |
| Instagram | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of British followers - Traffic generated through Instagram - Conversions gained from Instagram |
| Pinterest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of British followers - Increase of Re-pins - Traffic generated through Pinterest - Conversions gained from Pinterest |
| Online fashion magazine | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of direct sessions on newone-shop.com - Increase of sales figures |
| Cooperation with local fashion bloggers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of direct sessions on newone-shop.com - Increase of sales figures |

Table 17: KPIs for New One's online cx concept for the UK market (own presentation)

8.7 Recommendations

Based on the elaborated tactical measures and estimated costs, the following chapter deals with the prioritising of the suggested measures and should build a solid base for decisions regarding the achievement of New One's online customer experience objectives for the UK market. Therefore, the criteria importance to target group, internal resource requirements, financial requirements as well as contribution to goal achievement have been taken into account. By choosing these criteria, external as well as internal factors are considered. The weighting process was carried out in cooperation with the company and is illustrated in following table.

| this criteria is ... | than | | | | Total | Weight |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| | Importance to target group | Internal resource requirements | Financial requirements | Contribution to goal achievement | | |
| Importance to target group | | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 29% |
| Internal resource requirements | 1 | | 3 | 1 | 5 | 21% |
| Financial requirements | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 4 | 17% |
| Contribution to goal achievement | 2 | 3 | 3 | | 8 | 33% |
| Total | | | | | 24 | 100% |

Table 18: Pairwise comparison of criteria (own presentation)

After weighting crucial decision influencing criteria, suggested online customer experience activities are evaluated using a cost-benefit analysis. A recommended order was presented to New One and adapted according to their input. The following table illustrates the evaluation process as well as the final ranking of online customer experience measures according to their priority.

| Criteria | Weight | M1 | | M2 | | M3 | | M4 | | M5 | | M6 | | M7 | | M8 | |
|----------------------------------|--------|------------------------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|
| | | Evaluation | Σ | Evaluation | Σ | Evaluation | Σ | Evaluation | Σ | Evaluation | Σ | Evaluation | Σ | Evaluation | Σ | Evaluation | Σ |
| Importance to target group | 29% | 5 | 1.46 | 4 | 1.17 | 4 | 1.17 | 4 | 1.17 | 5 | 1.46 | 4 | 1.17 | 4 | 1.17 | 3 | 0.88 |
| Internal resource requirements | 21% | 3 | 0.63 | 4 | 0.83 | 4 | 0.83 | 2 | 0.42 | 3 | 0.63 | 2 | 0.42 | 3 | 0.63 | 4 | 0.83 |
| Financial requirements | 17% | 5 | 0.83 | 5 | 0.83 | 3 | 0.50 | 2 | 0.33 | 3 | 0.50 | 2 | 0.33 | 1 | 0.17 | 2 | 0.33 |
| Contribution to goal achievement | 33% | 4 | 1.33 | 4 | 1.33 | 3 | 1.00 | 4 | 1.33 | 4 | 1.33 | 4 | 1.33 | 2 | 0.67 | 4 | 1.33 |
| | 100% | 4.25 | | 4.17 | | 3.50 | | 3.25 | | 3.92 | | 3.25 | | 2.63 | | 3.38 | |
| Ranking | | 1 | | 2 | | 4 | | 6 | | 3 | | 6 | | 7 | | 5 | |
| M1: Product guide | | M5: Instagram | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| M2: Info special offers | | M6: Pinterest | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| M3: Product reviews | | M7: Online fashion magazines | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| M4: SEO & SEA | | M8: Online fashion bloggers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 19: Cost-Benefit Analysis (own presentation)

As it can be seen from the above table three measures within the top four recommended activities refer to the enhancement of New One's online shop. This ranking reflects the necessity of transforming New One's online shop to a strong online customer experience base as initial point for additional online customer experience activities.

The, according to the cost-benefit analysis, first measure recommended to put into practice is an online product guide to find the perfect present for a loved one. This is due to the fact that this measure combines a highly desired online shop feature and the strongest jewellery shopping motive of the target group while demanding a relatively low degree of financial resources. Additionally to implementing a present guide into the online shop, promotional activities across all online customer touchpoints are recommended in order to provide users with a consistent online customer experience throughout their online customer journey.

The second measure that is suggested to be put into practice is the information about special offers, special discounts as well as lotteries on the company's website. Since this activity only requires a low degree of financial as well as internal resources it can be perceived as a quick win for the company that strongly contributes to accomplishing customer experience objectives.

The third online shop feature recommended to implement are product reviews as they are strongly required by the target group. As already mentioned in the above, this desired feature is in conflict with the target group's low tendency to write product reviews after purchasing a fashion item. As a result, incentives for the creation of product reviews need to be considered when implementing this feature into New One's online shop.

Further enhancing activities on Instagram contributes to the online customer experience objective of increasing the company commitment to online customer touchpoints preferably used by the target group since this touchpoint is perceived to be the most important inspiration source for the target group. Therefore, it is recommended to implement additional features as Instagram Stories into New One's social media activities as content is produced in-house and therefore only internal resources need to be devoted.

Before establishing collaborations with local fashion bloggers it is recommended to carry out further primary research in order to be able to detect fashion bloggers most appropriate for the accomplishment of New One's online customer experience objectives. Further criteria that need to be taken into account are the number of followers, the degree of interaction as well as the image fit to the company's position in the UK market.

The need for further market research also applies to activities regarding the social media platform Pinterest. As the company currently only devotes limited internal resources to the platform customer requirements have not been investigated up to this moment. Therefore, additional primary research is necessary in order to be able to meet customer requirements and thereby enhance online customer experience. As already mentioned within chapter 8.4.2 New One holds internal knowledge as well as capabilities regarding search engine optimization as well as search engine advertising. Although search engine optimization as well as search engine advertising play a crucial role within the target achievement process, the implementation of these measures is not prioritised due to high financial resource requirements.

Due to the fact that the contribution of cooperation with online fashion magazines to the achievement of objectives is elusive and the degree of required financial resources is perceived high, this measure is ranked to have the lowest priority. Nevertheless, further market research before realising collaborations is recommended in order to ensure to reach the target group in the most effective way.

As recommended activities have a strong impact on a number of internal processes and require high financial resources in comparison to the company's main goal it is suggested to concentrate on the four main online customer experience actions within the first year of implementation. These four main online customer experience actions are namely the development of an online present guide for New One's online shop, the implementation of information about special offers as well as product recommendations into the online shop as well as intensified activities on Instagram. By putting a focus on these measures, the company's online shop is transformed into a strong online customer experience base and the use of an already familiar social media platform is further professionalized. Thereby, internal processes can be transformed step by step and additional actions can be implemented subsequently.

Furthermore, the concentration on these prioritized measures has a lowering impact on required financial resources and leads to the following cost estimation for the first implementation phase.

| Planned Measure | Calculation Base | Budget Costs (for 12 months in €) |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Product guide | Technical development and implementation 25 hours from external specialists at an hourly rate of €65.-, content creation and maintenance 3 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25.- | € 5,525 |
| Information about special offers | 2 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25.- (administration) | € 2,600 |
| Product reviews | Technical development and implementation 45 hours from external specialists at an hourly rate of €65.-, promotional activities €2,500, maintenance 2 hours per week at an hourly rate of € 25.- (administration) | € 8,025 |
| Instagram - Content - Advertising | Content creation: 4 hours per week at an hourly rate of € 25.- ads: € 50 per day, 2 days in sequence every two weeks | € 7,800 |
| Increase in workload | Administrative increase of workload, 3 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25,- | € 3,900 |
| Project management | Approximately 3 hours per week at an hourly rate of €25 (administration) | € 3,900 |
| Total | | € 31,750 |

Table 20: Cost estimation for recommended online customer experience actions (own presentation)

As can be seen from the above table, estimated cost for primarily recommended online customer experience actions equal € 31,750. These estimated cost include the preparation, implementation as well as maintenance of the four prioritized online customer experience measures.

Above the implementation of different online customer experience actions, it is recommended to appoint an online customer experience project manager responsible of overseeing the implementation process. Furthermore, it is recommended to actively include all employees affected by the implementation into the change process to increase their acceptance as well as commitment to this project.

9 Conclusion

Every customer contact at each customer touchpoint shapes a company's image in the customer's mind and consequently influences the customer's overall experience. Due to the internet and social media the number of these touchpoints reached a new peak. Additionally, there is a shift in consumer behaviour. Consumers are more connected than ever and actively build communities which are strongly influenced by opinion leaders who play an especially crucial role in the fashion industry. Due to the fact that New One aims at further intensifying its market activities within the most developed online retail market within Europe, the selection of the most appropriate online customer touchpoints and the optimisation of the online customer journey are essential in order to provide the target group with a positive online customer experience.

Besides an initial theoretical overview, an extensive situation analysis including an empirical study has been conducted to build a solid base for the creation of an online customer experience concept. Thereby, a target group analysis concerning cultural peculiarities, online and fashion shopping motives, online customer touchpoints used within the online customer journey and online touchpoint requirements were investigated. Results have shown that the target group is experienced in online shopping and has high expectations regarding usability standards. Additionally, it shares rather masculine as well as individualistic values and is open to new technology. Furthermore, it has been discovered that the target audience tends to impulsive shopping behaviour and variety seeking. This reflects in the use of multiple online touchpoints when seeking fashion inspiration online.

These findings lead to the elaboration of multiple online key customer journey constellations and the discovery of online customer touchpoints used in each online customer journey phase rather than one holistic online key customer journey.

In order to implement New One’s online value proposition into all online customer touchpoints used throughout the online customer journey, online customer experience actions are defined. Taking the cost-utility ration into consideration, it is recommended to primarily focus on further enhancing the company’s online shop to build a strong online customer experience base as well as to further refine activities on the already used social media platform Instagram as a first step.

In order to gain a holistic overview of the developed online customer experience concept, the following figure summarises the most essential aspects.

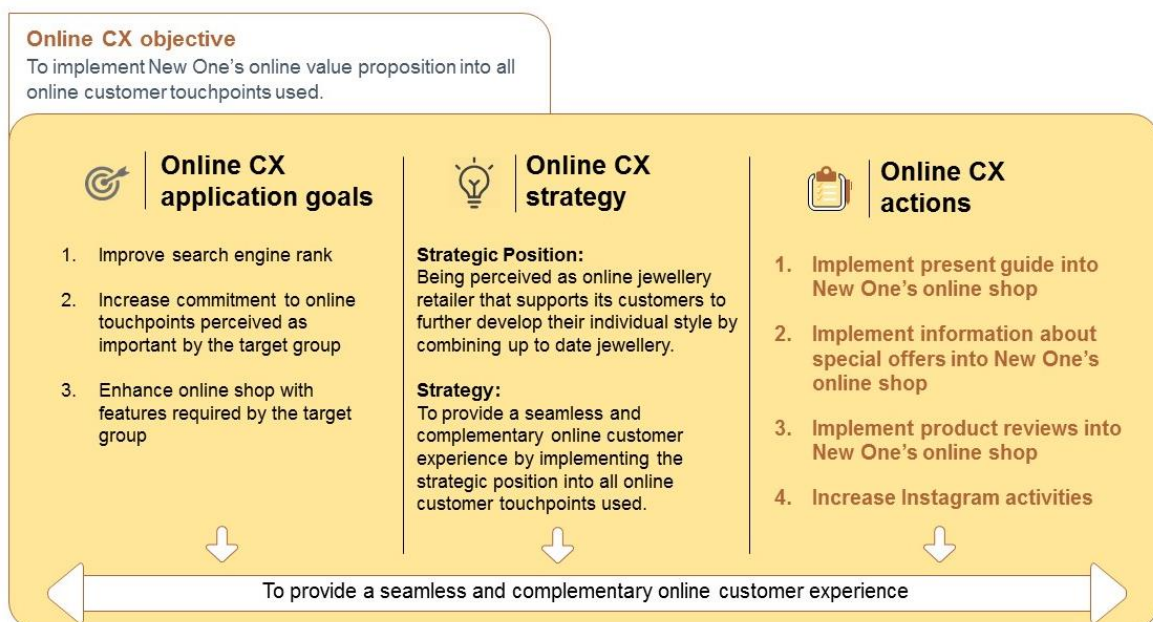


Figure 20: Online customer experience concept for New One (own presentation)

After implementing illustrated actions, it is recommended to additionally employ further online customer experience measures to emphasise a seamless online customer experience across channels. Advised further steps include an influencer marketing campaign in collaboration with local fashion bloggers, the intensified development of the company’s Pinterest appearance, the use of SEO and SEA as well as intensified online public relations actions within the UK. For further purposes it is additionally suggested to review all recommended activities in terms of their performance.

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Appendix

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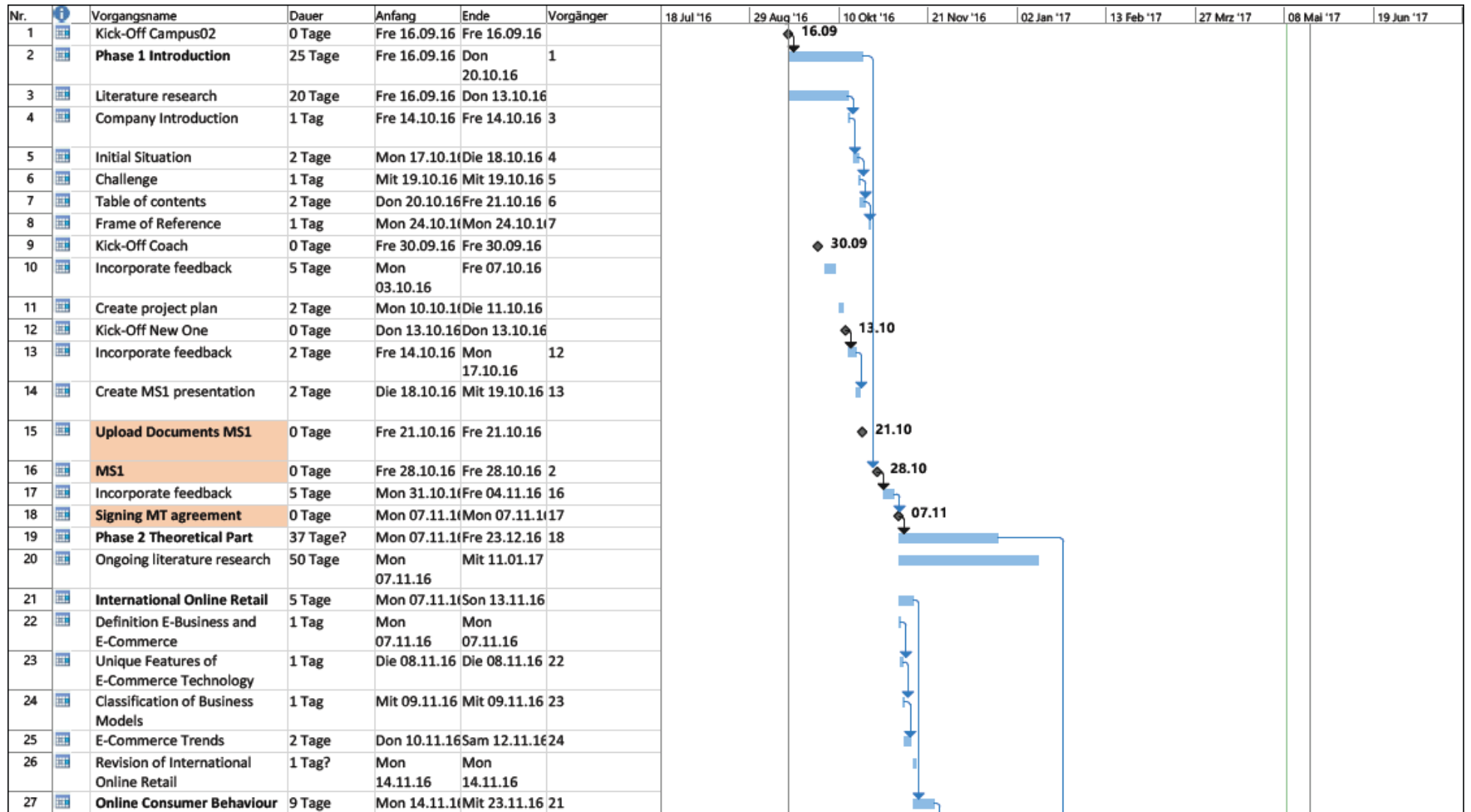
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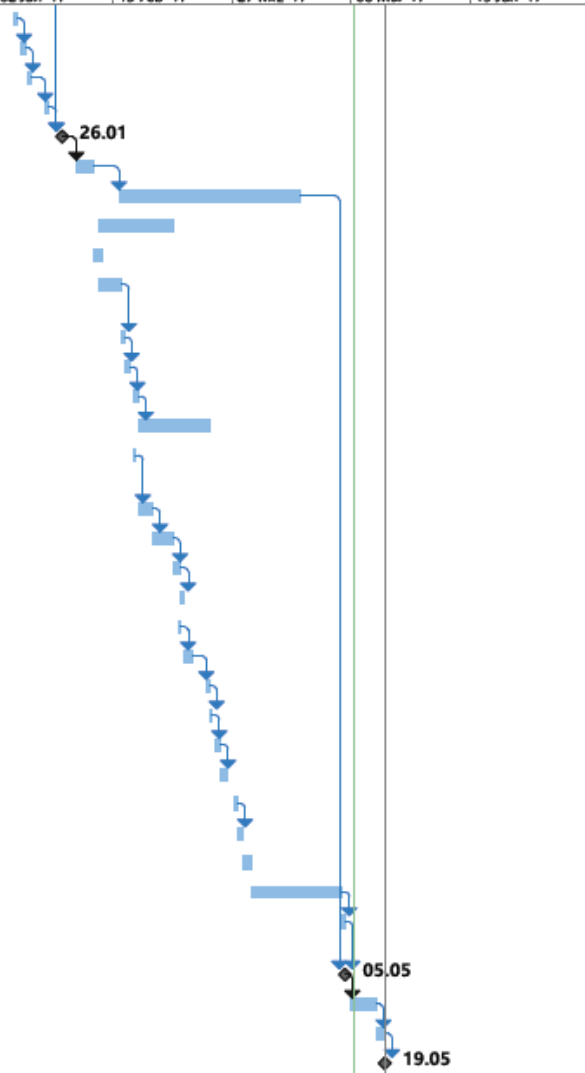
1 Project schedule

The following project schedule provides a holistic overview about all steps taken in order to successfully complete the master thesis in hand. It is structured into the phases introduction, theoretical part and practical part. The bars within the chart imply the expected duration of each task while the diamond shaped symbols indicate important milestones.



| Nr. | Vorgangsname | Dauer | Anfang | Ende | Vorgänger | 18 Jul '16 | 29 Aug '16 | 10 Okt '16 | 21 Nov '16 | 02 Jan '17 | 13 Feb '17 | 27 Mrz '17 | 08 Mai '17 | 19 Jun '17 |
|-----|--|---------|--------------|--------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 28 | The customer in online retail | 1 Tag | Die 15.11.16 | Die 15.11.16 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | Shopping Motives in Fashion Industry | 3 Tage | Mit 16.11.16 | Fre 18.11.16 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30 | Decision Making Process | 2 Tage | Sam 19.11.16 | Mon 21.11.16 | 29 | | | | | | | | | |
| 31 | Review Chapter | 2 Tage | Die 22.11.16 | Mit 23.11.16 | 30 | | | | | | | | | |
| 32 | Online Customer Experience Management | 9 Tage | Fre 25.11.16 | Die 06.12.16 | 27 | | | | | | | | | |
| 33 | Online Customer Experience Management | 2 Tage | Mon 14.11.16 | Die 15.11.16 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 34 | Customer Experience Models | 2 Tage? | Fre 25.11.16 | Mon 28.11.16 | 33 | | | | | | | | | |
| 35 | Online Customer Journey Management | 3 Tage? | Die 29.11.16 | Don 01.12.16 | 34 | | | | | | | | | |
| 36 | Online Customer Touchpoint Management | 2 Tage? | Fre 02.12.16 | Son 04.12.16 | 35 | | | | | | | | | |
| 37 | Review Chapter | 3 Tage? | Mon 05.12.16 | Mit 07.12.16 | 36 | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | Creating an Online CX Concept | 8 Tage? | Mit 07.12.16 | Son 18.12.16 | 32 | | | | | | | | | |
| 39 | Analysis | 1 Tag? | Mit 07.12.16 | Mit 07.12.16 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 40 | External Analysis | 2 Tage? | Don 08.12.16 | Sam 10.12.16 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 41 | Internal Analysis | 1 Tag? | Mon 12.12.16 | Mon 12.12.16 | 40 | | | | | | | | | |
| 42 | Objectives | 1 Tag? | Die 13.12.16 | Die 13.12.16 | 41 | | | | | | | | | |
| 43 | Strategy | 1 Tag? | Mit 14.12.16 | Mit 14.12.16 | 42 | | | | | | | | | |
| 44 | Actions | 1 Tag? | Don 15.12.16 | Don 15.12.16 | 43 | | | | | | | | | |
| 45 | Budget Preparation | 1 Tag? | Fre 16.12.16 | Fre 16.12.16 | 44 | | | | | | | | | |
| 46 | Controlling | 1 Tag? | Mon 19.12.16 | Mon 19.12.16 | 45 | | | | | | | | | |
| 47 | Review Chapter | 1 Tag? | Fre 16.12.16 | Son 18.12.16 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | Review Theoretical Part | 5 Tage? | Mon 19.12.16 | Fre 23.12.16 | 47 | | | | | | | | | |
| 49 | Theoretical Part done | 0 Tage | Fre 23.12.16 | Fre 23.12.16 | 48 | | | | | | | | | |
| 50 | Research Design | 5 Tage? | Mon 02.01.17 | Sam 07.01.17 | 49 | | | | | | | | | |
| 51 | Desk Research | 1 Tag? | Fre 02.12.16 | Fre 02.12.16 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 52 | Primary Research | 4 Tage? | Die 03.01.17 | Sam 07.01.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 53 | Research Question | 2 Tage? | Die 03.01.17 | Mit 04.01.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 54 | Research Method | 2 Tage? | Don 05.01.17 | Fre 06.01.17 | 53 | | | | | | | | | |
| 55 | Research Sample | 1 Tag? | Mon 09.01.17 | Mon 09.01.17 | 54 | | | | | | | | | |
| 56 | Review Chapter | 1 Tag? | Die 10.01.17 | Die 10.01.17 | 55 | | | | | | | | | |

| Nr. | Vorgangsname | Dauer | Anfang | Ende | Vorgänger | 18 Jul '16 | 29 Aug '16 | 10 Okt '16 | 21 Nov '16 | 02 Jan '17 | 13 Feb '17 | 27 Mrz '17 | 08 Mai '17 | 19 Jun '17 |
|-----|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------|--------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 57 | Consultation Coach | 1 Tag? | Mon 09.01.17 | Mon 09.01.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 58 | Incorporate feedback | 2 Tage? | Mit 11.01.17 | Don 12.01.17 | 57 | | | | | | | | | |
| 59 | Create MS2 presentation | 1 Tag? | Sam 14.01.17 | Sam 14.01.17 | 58 | | | | | | | | | |
| 60 | Hand in MS2 documents | 1 Tag? | Fre 20.01.17 | Fre 20.01.17 | 59 | | | | | | | | | |
| 61 | MS2 | 0 Tage | Don 26.01.17 | Don 26.01.17 | 60;19 | | | | | | | | | |
| 62 | Incorporate feedback | 5 Tage? | Die 31.01.17 | Son 05.02.17 | 61 | | | | | | | | | |
| 63 | Practical Part | 54 Tage? | Mit 15.02.17 | Mit 19.04.17 | 62 | | | | | | | | | |
| 64 | Situation Analysis | 21 Tage? | Mit 08.02.17 | Son 05.03.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 65 | Desk Research | 3 Tage? | Mon 06.02.17 | Mit 08.02.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 66 | Development of Questionnaire | 6 Tage? | Mit 08.02.17 | Mit 15.02.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 67 | Feedback Coach | 1 Tag? | Don 16.02.17 | Don 16.02.17 | 66 | | | | | | | | | |
| 68 | Finishing Questionnaire | 2 Tage? | Fre 17.02.17 | Sam 18.02.17 | 67 | | | | | | | | | |
| 69 | Conduct Pretest | 2 Tage? | Mon 20.02.17 | Die 21.02.17 | 68 | | | | | | | | | |
| 70 | Adjustments | 22 Tage? | Mit 22.02.17 | Sam 18.03.17 | 69 | | | | | | | | | |
| 71 | Creating Social Media Campaign | 1 Tag? | Mon 20.02.17 | Mon 20.02.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 72 | Field Phase | 4 Tage? | Mit 22.02.17 | Son 26.02.17 | 71 | | | | | | | | | |
| 73 | Analysis and Interpretation | 6 Tage? | Mon 27.02.17 | Son 05.03.17 | 72 | | | | | | | | | |
| 74 | Review Primary Research | 3 Tage? | Mon 06.03.17 | Mit 08.03.17 | 73 | | | | | | | | | |
| 75 | Start Conception Phase | 1 Tag? | Don 09.03.17 | Don 09.03.17 | 74 | | | | | | | | | |
| 76 | Definition of CE Objective | 1 Tag? | Mit 08.03.17 | Mit 08.03.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 77 | Definition of CE Strategy | 2 Tage? | Fre 10.03.17 | Son 12.03.17 | 76 | | | | | | | | | |
| 78 | Budget Preparation | 1 Tag? | Sam 18.03.17 | Sam 18.03.17 | 77 | | | | | | | | | |
| 79 | Controlling | 1 Tag? | Son 19.03.17 | Son 19.03.17 | 78 | | | | | | | | | |
| 80 | Recommendations | 2 Tage? | Die 21.03.17 | Mit 22.03.17 | 79 | | | | | | | | | |
| 81 | Review chapter | 2 Tage? | Don 23.03.17 | Fre 24.03.17 | 80 | | | | | | | | | |
| 82 | Feedback Coach | 1 Tag? | Die 28.03.17 | Die 28.03.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 83 | Incorporate Feedback | 2 Tage? | Mit 29.03.17 | Don 30.03.17 | 82 | | | | | | | | | |
| 84 | Review entire Thesis | 2 Tage? | Fre 31.03.17 | Son 02.04.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 85 | Create MS3 presentation | 24 Tage? | Mon 03.04.17 | Don 04.05.17 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 86 | Hand in MS3 documents & presentation | 1 Tag? | Fre 05.05.17 | Fre 05.05.17 | 85 | | | | | | | | | |
| 87 | MS3 | 0 Tage | Fre 05.05.17 | Fre 05.05.17 | 86;63 | | | | | | | | | |
| 88 | Incorporate feedback | 7 Tage? | Mon 08.05.17 | Die 16.05.17 | 87 | | | | | | | | | |
| 89 | Review entire Thesis | 3 Tage? | Mit 17.05.17 | Fre 19.05.17 | 88 | | | | | | | | | |
| 90 | Hand in Master Thesis | 0 Tage | Fre 19.05.17 | Fre 19.05.17 | 89 | | | | | | | | | |



2 Online questionnaire for the primary market research

Hi there,

You are a fashion-interested woman between 20 and 40 years old and located in the UK? Then you're completely right here!

This online survey aims at gaining insights into the online shopping behaviour of female UK citizens when shopping clothes and jewellery and is conducted in the frame of a master thesis.

You will be asked to answer a number of short questions about your online shopping habits and preferences. This will take no longer than approximately 5 to 7 minutes. Your responses will be kept completely confidential and cannot be linked to you at any time. Thank you for taking the time and contributing to the success of my master thesis!

1. Do you consider yourself an online shopper? (one answer possible)

- yes no

1.1. Why do you like to shop online?

(only asked if previous question was answered with yes) (multiple answers possible)

- Time saving
 Convenience
 Product variety
 Information availability
 Others: _____

1.2. Why do you not like to shop online?

(only asked if previous question was answered with no) (multiple answers possible)

- Security concerns
 Long shipping times
 Inconvenient return policies
 Products cannot be looked at physically
 Others: _____

2. How often do you shop online? (one answer possible)

- once a week
 once a month
 once in half a year
 once in a year

3. Do you rather prefer to shop jewellery at one specific online shop or to shop at a number of different online shops? (one answer possible)

- I prefer to shop jewellery at one specific online shop.
 I prefer to shop jewellery at a number of different online shops.

4. Do you prefer to buy standardized jewellery or do you like to individualize designs? (one answer possible)

- I prefer standardized jewellery.
 I prefer individualized jewellery.

5. Please rate the following statements.

I tend to shop jewellery when ...

... I want to reward myself. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

... I feel sad to cheer me up. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

... I take a break and want to relax. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

... I look for inspiration or trends and come across something I like. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

... I want to follow the latest fashion trends. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

... I am going to attend a special event. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

... I want to wear the same accessories as my friends. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

... I am looking for a present for a loved one. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

... There is a special offer. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

I consider myself fashion conscious. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

I am informed about the latest fashion trends. (one answer possible)

- strongly agree agree disagree strongly disagree

6. How important are the following touchpoints for you when looking for jewellery online?

(only asked if participant chose strongly agree/agree in previous question) (multiple answers possible)

| | Very important | Important | Neither important nor unimportant | unimportant | Very unimportant |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Facebook | | | | | |
| Instagram | | | | | |
| Fashion Blogs | | | | | |
| YouTube | | | | | |
| Online fashion magazines | | | | | |
| Pinterest | | | | | |
| Twitter | | | | | |
| Company websites | | | | | |
| Newsletter | | | | | |
| Online search engines | | | | | |

6.1. Which online search engines do you use? (only asked if participant chose online search engine in the previous question) (multiple answers possible)

- Google
- Yahoo
- Bing
- Others: _____

6.2. Which fashion blogs do you follow to find inspiration?

(only asked if participant chose fashion blogs in previous question) (open question)

6.3. Which online magazines do you look at to find inspiration? (only asked if participant chose fashion blogs in previous question) (open question)

7. Which social media channels do you use? (multiple answers possible)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> Snapchat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pinterest | <input type="checkbox"/> None |
| <input type="checkbox"/> YouTube | |

7.1. What kind of content would you like to find on a social media channel of a fashion and jewellery company? (multiple answers possible)

- Information about the latest trends
- Information about lifestyle subjects
- Fashion inspirations
- Information about special offers
- Behind the scenes information about the company
- Product reviews from other users
- Others: _____

8. Do you follow fashion bloggers on social media? (one answer possible)

- yes no

8.1. Please name the fashion blogger you admire the most. (only asked if previous question was answered with yes) (open question)

9. What kind of device do you use when you want to find inspiration?

(multiple answers possible)

- Mobile phone
- Tablet
- Laptop
- Desktop

10. What kind of information do you research before purchasing fashion items online?

(multiple answers possible)

- Price
- Used materials
- Terms of payment
- Shipping conditions
- Return policy
- Product reviews
- Safety certificates
- Others: _____

11. How likely are you to contact a company if you cannot find required information?

(one answer possible)

- very likely likely unlikely very unlikely

11.1. On which channel would you preferably contact a company?

(only asked if participant answered previous question with very likely/likely) (one answer possible)

- Via e-mail
 Via telephone
 Via live chat on the website
 Via Facebook
 Others: _____

11.2. Which response time do you expect when using this channel?

(one answer possible)

- Under 5 minutes
 Under 10 minutes
 Under half an hour
 Under one hour
 Under half a day
 Under one day
 Under one week

12. What is most important to you when contacting a company?

(Please rank the following choices.)

- Quick response to your request
 Quick identification of a solution
 Friendliness of employee
 Others: _____

13. What is most important to you in a fashion online shop? (Please rank the following choices.)

- Easy navigation
 Plain check out process
 Appealing product presentation
 Information about terms shipping and payment
 Information about the latest fashion trends
 Fashion inspirations
 Others: _____

14. What kind of content would you like to find at a fashion online shop besides products?

(multiple answers possible)

- Inspiration sites
 Information about the latest trends
 Information about lifestyle subjects
 Information about special offers
 Product guides (style guide, present guide ...)
 Behind the scenes information about the company

- Product reviews from other users
- Others: _____

15. Which device do you preferably use when shopping online? (one answer possible)

- Mobile phone
- Tablet
- Laptop
- Desktop

16. How likely would you be to contact a company if you are not satisfied with their product?

(one answer possible)

- very likely
- likely
- unlikely
- very unlikely

16.1. On which channel would you preferably contact a company? (only asked if participant chose very likely/likely in previous question) (one answer possible)

- Via e-mail
- Via telephone
- Via live chat on the website
- Via Facebook
- Others: _____

17. How likely would you be to write a product review if you are satisfied with a purchased fashion item? (one answer possible)

- very likely
- likely
- unlikely
- very unlikely

18. How likely would you be to share a photo of a fashion item you are satisfied with on social media? (one answer possible)

- very likely
- likely
- unlikely
- very unlikely

19. How likely would you be to write a product review if you are unsatisfied with a purchased fashion item?

(one answer possible)

- very likely
- likely
- unlikely
- very unlikely

Gender:

- female
- male

Age:

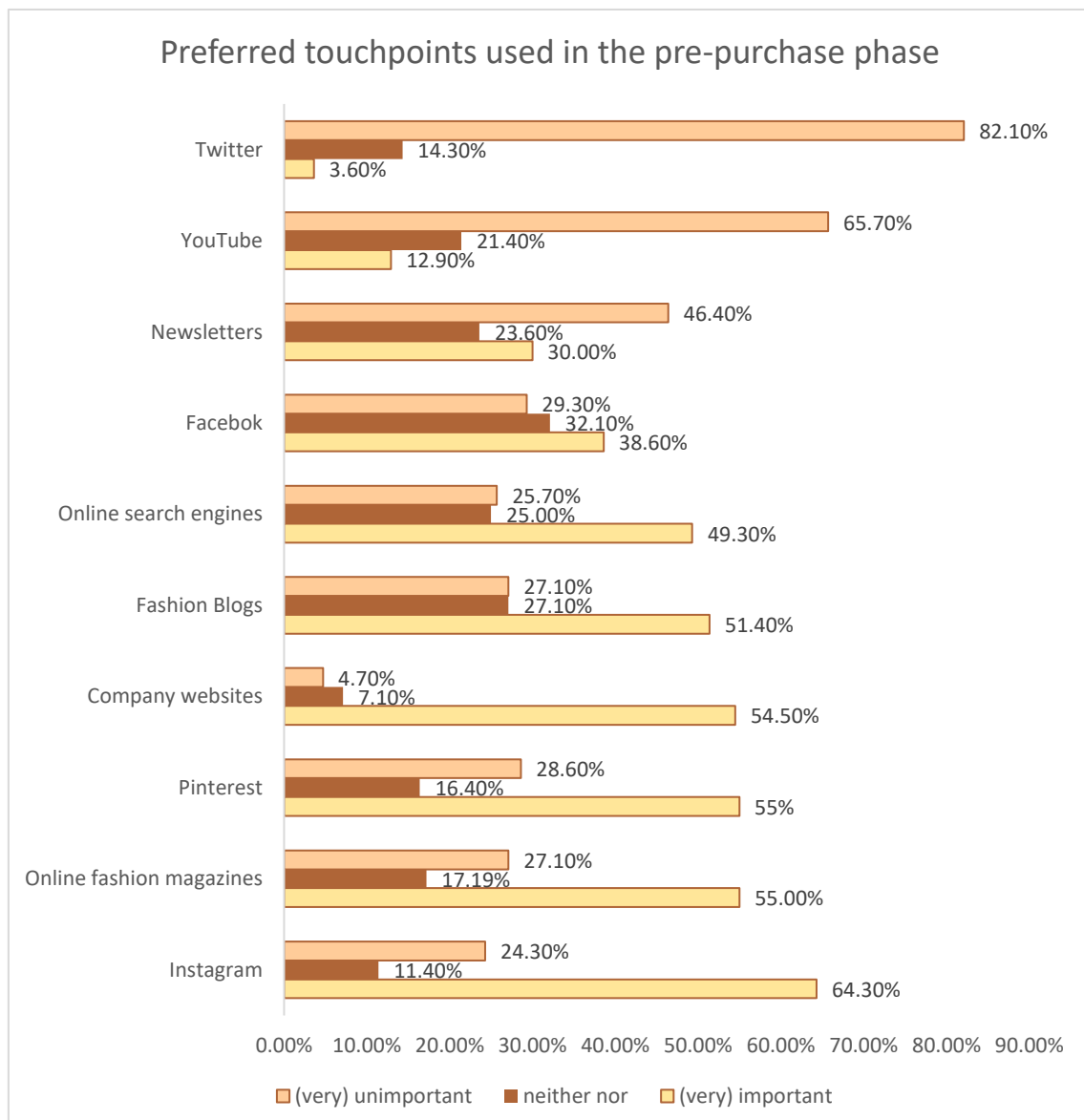
- 18 to 24 years old
- 25 to 29 years old
- 30 to 35 years old
- 36 to 39 years old
- 40 to 45 years old

3 Additional results of the primary market research

The following chapter provides additional results of the primary market research to gain further insights for the implementation of the online customer experience concept in the practical part of this thesis.

Preferred touchpoints used in the pre-purchase phase

The following figure gives a detailed overview about the importance of touchpoints used within the pre-purchase phase. Instagram is perceived to be (very) important by 64.30% of questioned participants, followed by online fashion magazines (55%) Pinterest (55%) and company websites (54.5%). Twitter on the other hand is perceived to be (very) unimportant by 82.10% of questioned participants followed by YouTube (65.7%) and Newsletters (46.4%).



A-figure 1: Preferred touchpoints used in the pre-purchase phase (own presentation)

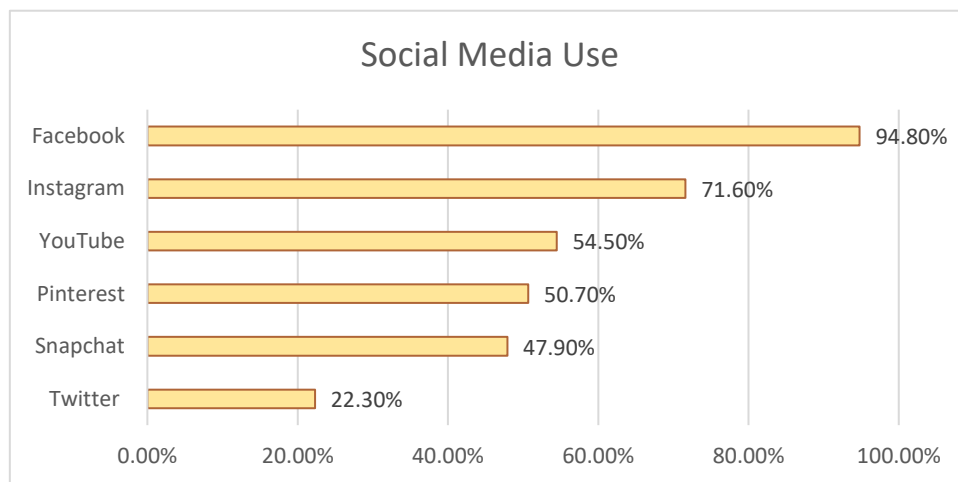
In this context it has to be mentioned that also the ration between the answers (very) important, neither nor important and (very) unimportant has to be considered.

Online Search Engines

Results show that 100% of participants asked preferably use the online search Google. Consequently, search engine optimisation as well as search engine advertising activities within the UK are recommended to be solely focused on this online search engine.

Social Media

The following figure gives an overview about social media channels used by the target group. As one can see, Facebook (94.8%) is the most used social media channel of the questioned participants followed by Instagram (71.6%) and YouTube (54.5%). These facts accord with New One's perception of Facebook as an important online customer touchpoint and lead to the recommendation of not neglecting this social media channel although questioned participants do not show a high tendency towards actively using Facebook to find inspiration.



A-figure 2: Social Media Use (own presentation)

Online Fashion magazines

In the following a list of named online fashion magazines used to find fashion inspiration is illustrated, in order to provide New One with an indicator towards favoured online fashion magazines.



A-figure 3: Online Fashion Magazines (own presentation)

Online Fashion Bloggers

In the following a list of named online fashion bloggers followed by participants is illustrated, in order to provide New One with an indicator towards favoured online fashion bloggers. Nevertheless, fashion bloggers need to be evaluated regarding additional criteria as image fit and number of followers.

- Totes
- Style Bubble
- Mila
- Frugalitiy
- Liv Purvis
- Wish wish wish
- Dariadaria
- Styleheroine
- Paloma Wool
- Lioness
- Lydia Elise Millen
- Fleur de Force
- Tanya Burr
- The satorialist
- Lucy Williams
- Coco's tea party
- Pixiwoo
- We are twinset
- Fashion Toast
- The blond salad
- The curvey roamer
- The gentle woman
- Rockmystyleblog
- Jadeim
- Jewelsoflondon
- Kateslife
- Lovedailydose
- Selective Potentia