Improving Product Display of E-commerce Website through Aesthetics, Attractiveness and Interactivity

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Abstract - In the development process of online stores, the attributes of the product view are very important. The fundamental problem that motivated this study is to find the factors that determine consumer acceptance of virtual stores especially related with the product display. Through an experimental study, the features of zappos.com, victoriassecret.com and adidas.com have been analyzed with respect to aesthetics, attractiveness and interactivity. We present a theoretical framework that highlights the relative importance of these attributes of display to attract customers. Results of this research are expected to provide a basis for better design and display of product at the online store. The results recommend improved guidelines for product display on e-commerce website. We present, from our experience and conclude with suggestions for design and evaluation of product display at the online store.

Keywords: E-commerce, online catalogue, aesthetics, attractiveness, interactivity.

1 Introduction

Vast advancement of Internet and its mushrooming growth has forced companies to utilize it as a medium to sell their products. Companies are no longer prohibited from doing business for the reason that they are located in different parts of the world. They started having online existence by having online store. A good virtual store should allow customer to see product image, browse the catalogue and select products interactively with ease.

Despite the growing attention given to e-commerce website usability, little is understood as to what are the factors contribute to user decision to buy online product. We need to be aware of the attributes of the product image and the site interface [2] so that user will have better picture of online product.

We argue that well designed e-commerce website interface [2] with aesthetics, attractiveness and interactivity being the main factors in the design can improve user satisfaction thus persuade them to purchase the product. We come up with those three elements as a design rules for evaluating product display usability of the e-commerce site. We intend to identify what are the factors that determine consumer acceptance [4] on product display and use of virtual stores. We present a theoretical framework that highlights the relative importance of aesthetics, attractiveness and interactivity qualities of online product display that may determine the user decision while shopping online [13].

This paper is motivated by three problems. First, how general e-commerce website usability guidelines can be improved focusing on product display design. Second, how design guidelines can be derived. Third, is it aesthetics, attractiveness and interactivity are the contributing factors towards user decision.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows. In the next section, we present a brief review of the literature. Section 3 discusses the method that we used to gather comments from users. Analysis of the result are addressed in Section 4, including a discussion on three e-commerce website tested. We conclude with a discussion of contributing factors towards user satisfaction on e-commerce website and future work.

2 Background and Hypothesis

Since the nature of web is perceptual, the users intend to see as much details as possible of a particular product [11]. Online shoppers try to make sure that the image of online products such as clothes resembles its concrete appearance. They might try to ‘touch’ it virtually. However, it is difficult to represent online product so that customer can really feel the product textures [20].

Fang and Salvendy [3] list several design rules focusing on product information of e-commerce website. This include the description of products should be accurate, consistent and comprehensive. Precise and full view of the product should be provided [11]. Another guideline by Van Duyne et al. [19] stated that e-commerce website must allow customers to view details about the products. Website designers should also try to incorporate a clearer product details.

The aforementioned publications regarding e-commerce website usability have the following shortcomings about their guidelines. Fang and Salvendy’s [3] work is not focusing on product display. The study by Van Duyne et al. [19]