

EDITORIAL

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Introduction to special collection: collaborating with technology to sell fashion

Ho Jung Choo*

*Correspondence:
chooho@snu.ac.kr
Professor, Department
of Textiles, Merchandising
& Fashion Design, College
of Human Ecology, Seoul
National University, 1
Gwanak-ro, Gwanak-gu,
Seoul 08826, Korea

In the last several years, the world has witnessed tremendous changes in selling goods and services. The fashionable goods and services including clothing and accessories, from non-branded street items to high-fashion luxuries, are the first-tier category that retailers utilize to test new and risky technologies in delivering values and products to their consumers.

This special collection aims to advance the knowledge related to changing retail experiences of consumers due to current technological development applied to fashion businesses. Most of these technologies are new to the world, especially the fashion retail industry. In this respect, investigating how these technology-enhanced retail services would affect consumers and retailers who interact with each other through fashion is meaningful. In this special collection, four interesting studies are introduced. Each study investigated a new retail context, including video blog (v-log commerce), virtual reality (VR) store, social commerce, and paid mobile media service (pMMS), supported by technological advancement.

Reflecting the increasing popularity of video as a fashion selling medium, Choi and Lee investigated the v-log commerce. Video (V) commerce itself is not new concept as it is similar with TV commercials and home shopping. V-commerce targeting generation Z has been armored by mobile and social network technology. Retailers adopt the concept and offer diverse types of video services, such as live commerce, v-log commerce, and “See Now Buy Now” service. Recently, MatchesFashion.com successfully experimented with applying V-commerce to sell luxury products.

The research article by Choi and Lee, “Effects of fashion vlogger attributes on product attitude and content sharing,” reports an empirical study based on quasi-experimental design. The authors proposed that attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness are critical v-logger attributes that affect viewers’ attitudes and behavioral intention and empirically confirmed their propositions. They also considered emotional bonding between a v-logger and viewers and product presentation styles as important moderating factors in explaining the effect of the said attributes. Interestingly, the importance of attractiveness of v-logger is low among viewers with a strong emotional bonding. As the authors themselves emphasized, v-loggers and viewers’ relationship must be a key to the success of V-commerce.

Reality technologies, such as VR, augmented reality, and mixed reality, have been adopted by innovative retailers into different operation steps to provide new experience

to their customers. Specifically, VR has been successfully used for customization services (miadidas, NikeiD), fun and entertaining experience (Walmart VR Dragon, Loccitane), and online VR stores (Hyundai VR store). Jang, Hur, and Choo's article, "How to evoke consumer approach intention toward VR stores/ sequential mediation through telepresence and experiential value," introduced VR as a fashion selling technology. The authors explored consumer experiences in VR store with fully immersive head-mounted displays (HMD). This study proposed that two VR features, namely, vividness and interactivity, positively influence the approach intention of customers through telepresence and experiential shopping value. The contribution of this work originates from the recognition of the mediating role of experiential value perceived from the VR commercial environment. In VR shopping context, consumers' perceiving telepresence can be a necessary condition to reach approach behavioral intention but guarantees no positive behavioral intention without perception of experiential shopping value.

Numerous online service providers search for new profit-making business models. Social network services, such as Instagram and Facebook, launched commercial services, and a media platform YouTube introduced YouTube Red, which charges monthly subscription fees to access video contents without intervening advertisements. Although no fundamental differences exist in terms of contents and service attributes in these paid services compared with the previous free services, consumers will perceive a gap as the new service involves financial cost. For a considerable period, consumers were used to using social networks for free. Thus, consumers are likely to find paid service and social commerce as unfamiliar new situation. Two types of mobile based commerce, that is, paid media service and social commerce, are introduced in this special collection. Two studies employed technology acceptance model (TAM) to predict consumers' acceptance of these services.

The article by Cho and Son, "The effect of social connectedness on consumer adoption of social commerce in apparel shopping" investigated the effect of social connectedness in predicting acceptance of social commerce. By analyzing survey data collected from young adult social media users in the US, the authors reported the critical role of social connectedness. Social connectedness features a significant effect on three key TAM variables, namely, ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment, with the strongest effect on ease of use perception. This result coincides with Choi and Lee's findings. Social bonding is important to facilitate commerce through social networks.

Youn and Lee proposed introduced a revised TAM to explain consumers' acceptance of pMMS in their article, "Proposing value-based Technology Acceptance Model: Testing on paid mobile media service." This value-based TAM incorporates values and risks consumers have perceived through their general experiences with free mobile services. Based on an online survey of US consumers, the authors reported that social and functional values and technological risk perception affect perceived ease of use, whereas usefulness perception is determined by ease of use, emotional value, functional value, and price risk.

FATE Special collection, "Collaborating with technology to sell fashion," introduces the above studies that explored new retail contexts selling fashion goods and services. For the academicians, challenges arise in meeting the real time changes of fast-moving industries while maintaining the academic rigor and theoretical frame. As we say,

fashion is all about changes and newness. As a researcher who focus on fashion, we must explain the ever-changing industry factors and their effects on consumer. I congratulate the four teams of researchers who have recognized and explained the advancement of retail technologies and consumer responses. At the same time, I propose continued attention and research efforts of colleagues to be concentrated on this important issue of technological advancement in the fashion retail area.

Authors' contributions

The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Competing interests

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