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CUSTOMER TENDENCY TOWARDS ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING DURING THE LOCKDOWN

DS COMMENTS

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<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</u>

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<u>OBJECTIVES</u>

1.   To identify the concept of online grocery shopping in lock down period.
2.   To identify the delivery problems in online shopping.
3.   To identify the payment issues in online shopping.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.   The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 outbreak as a global Pandemic. At this time, the retail space as we know it had to completely evolve. Without warning and choice, brands and retailers have had to adapt to a pandemic that no one saw coming. As a direct result of Covid-19, many non-essential physical stores have been forced to close until further notice. Stores that have remained open have suffered from reduced/rationed stock and social distancing requirements. These actions have resulted in consumers changing their shopping behaviors, which in many cases has resulted in more transactions moving online in Sri Lanka.

2.   One trend that is set to stay is in e-commerce, particularly within grocery stores. Lockdown has sparked a rush of online grocers we've never heard before – and it seems the online experience has persuaded consumers. Sri Lanka's grocery e-commerce market is now tipping to rise by 60% this year as the coronavirus has motivated whole new customer segments into the online grocery industry, already a booming sector with 29% growth last year. The pattern is also sustaining; the key driver of growth in this year's record-breaking '618' case at kapruka.com has been food, with revenues almost doubling.

3.   Although general retail has been building momentum online for several years, grocery has been a bit of a laggard, barely accounting for more than 15% of the overall market in food. Historically, the biggest obstacle to online shopping has been faith – over 50% of consumers do not trust online shipping to choose the freshest and best products. This has been a catch-22 situation for retailers for years: consumers do not trust online grocery quality because they haven't tried it, but they will not try online grocery because they don't trust the price.

4.   Retailers may be delighted they've won new customers online, but the hard work of keeping them is now coming. Technology plays a major role in our day to day life. We are discussing

CHAPTER 2

IMPORTANCE OF ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING

5.   For whatever excuse, the change from traditional stores to e-commerce is accelerated by people compelled to sit at home during lockout. Online shopping has now surged in many countries as customers shun brick and mortar shops. For an example Italy saw 101 percent growth in online delivery in March 2020, compared to the same period in the previous year. A significant factor is the viability of online shopping. C.ustomers often make sure the knowledge on the packaging they use on their products is provided by the shop they have bought from. The ecological influence of online shopping is of interest to them. But with retail constraints now in place as a result of Covid-19stuff like social distance, locked change rooms, rigorous cleaning practices, quarantining items, the failure of numerous consumers to successively touch the same thing browsing oriented experiential spaces may be at stake.

6.   As the pandemic unfolds, we have focus online shopping to bring stuff to our doors, contact free and easy, food, books, beauty products, inflatable children. These items differ from important to not quite essential: in April, online shoppers stranded at home in Canada scooped up canned quail eggs, sitar strings, and children's trampolines. We all know from panic buying and hoarding that the stress of the pandemic will crack our minds and morph our shopping habits. Owing to the rapid adoption of e-commerce and a huge leap in retailers delivering internet shopping out of need, the online shopping world has not only changed. Approximately 30% of firms market digitally, but Covid-19 pushed even more distributors to explore e-commerce as a way of survival. But it's a need that's still achieved from the convenience of our own homes, and easier   to do nowadays, as internet shopping, door-side distribution or click-and-collect have been embraced by more supermarkets and retailers. Surely, this pandemic crisis will pass soon, and by that time all will be in order.

7.   But it won't be easy for individuals, companies, and markets to calm down this time. As the damages suffered by the recession are never satisfying and are never forgiven. Both those working in the social care industry are trying their best to save mankind. So too as online business players stepped together to offer seamless distribution of medical and household facilities, so that we can battle the crisis together.

8.   This crisis has undeniably come up with a lifetime lesson that has affected every aspect of natural life. Therefore, internet ads and customer shopping habits are no exception. The best advice technique to adjust or succeed in this challenging period is to adapt to evolving customer demands as the need for the hour is not the comfort or

affordability of luxury products at the particular price point, but everyone unitedly participates and battles for the passing of this level.

CHAPTER 3

CURRENT USE OF ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING DURING LOCKDOWN

EXPANSION OF ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING SYSTEM IN SRI LANKA

9.   Online grocers are supermarkets or grocery stores using online ordering, delivery, and maintenance by using the internet. Another way this called e-commerce service. Internet shopping has become a worldwide pattern and a necessary piece of numerous individuals' lives. The two merchants and clients have recognized it to be exceptionally helpful, as it gives the advantage of requesting things to one's doorstep and running an online business store at home. Internet shopping has moved past just a method for shopping to turn into a way of life and individuals around the globe have grasped it, generalizing it as E-trade. Online business brings a large group of favorable circumstances like decreasing operational expenses from a business perspective and offers a healthy encounter to clients through efficient, limits, month-to-month offers, for example, Black Friday, wide scope of items to look over, and some more. Then again, internet shopping has encouraged people and business people to begin a self-business from the solace of their homes. Numerous individuals are turning towards web-based selling as it offers their very own virtual shop where they can show their merchandise that is open 24 x7 x 365 days.

CURRENT SITUATION

10.   In this Covid-19 pandemic situation online grocery shopping system in Sri Lanka has done a perfect job. There are a lot of online grocery shops now available in Sri Lanka. Kapruka.lk, Cargills, Keels super, Daraz, Lanka Sathosa, Arpico, Laugfs Supermarket are the institutions that perform the main role in the online grocery shopping industry in Sri Lanka.

11.   In the chase for these basics while adhering to stay-at-home orders, individuals have gone to web-based shopping, accelerating the adoption rate of grocery delivery services. Void basic food item retires, both physical and digital, have become an image of how COVID-19 has had extensive effects on networks and flexibly chains the world over. Products that once appeared to be bountiful – bathroom tissue, cleaning supplies, water, milk, meat – immediately got hard to track down. Having no choice than to fall back on web-based shopping during the lockdown time frame, the general population started to move on to the computerized stage like never previously. Buys in the FMCG class have multiplied in March 2020 and are required to develop from 20% to 70 percent. As an example, online grocery shopping has distributed important items also. As an example, face covers, hand sanitizers, and clinical careful covers. This online shopping industry will help to maintain the difficult situation of this COVID- 19 of this era.

LEADING COMPANIES IN THE FIELD

CARGILLS

12.	Like many other businesses, Cargills was compelled to adapt. While it has a wide network of supermarkets across the island which were in fact operational during this lockdown time, there were no customers to be served due to the imposed lockdown.

13.	Almost overnight, the Cargills Rewards website was transformed to a new system for customers to order their groceries. It was a simple solution that leveraged its supply chain to help facilitate hyper-local delivery for customers within a 5km radius of its outlets.

14.	Furthermore, container trucks carrying well displayed groceries were dispatched to neighborhoods; pioneering Asia's first mobile supermarket, 'Cargills 2 Home'. This ingenuity was driven by the top brass, who too feel the pulse of their stakeholders, and so brought the supermarket experience to the customer's home.

KEELLS

15.	Keells is at the forefront of setting these trends and driving retail's new normal in Sri Lanka. With 109 modern trade outlets across the country, it is the supermarket business of listed John Keells Holdings. It has more than 345 distinct private labels apart from over 7,000 third party labels on its shelves. The business reported Rs55 billion in revenue for the year ending March 2020. With modern retail penetration below 20% in Sri Lanka, the lowest in the region, Keells has tremendous growth opportunities. COVID-19 is likely to have hastened some of those.

16.	Keells hired courier services and private lastmile delivery firms to fulfil orders on time. "The biggest bottleneck was the online platform because it was not developed to handle such high online demands. We quickly moved to a cloud-based server. This allowed a significantly higher number of consumers to place orders," Aravinda said. This was an important breakthrough because now many people could get their essentials. At the end of trading each day, the tech division of Keells Supermarkets together with John Keells IT worked throughout the night tweaking the online platform.

17.	The tech team worked to get the system live by 6 am the next day; this went on every day for almost a month.

DARAZ

18.	Having no option than to resort to online shopping during the lockdown period, the public began to shift on to the digital platform more than ever before. Out of the total online shoppers in Sri Lanka, 85% claim to have shopped on Daraz with 94% using the Daraz online shopping Mobile App, which is present on both the popular

mobile OS platforms. Daraz mobile application is considered to be the best Android online shopping mobile app and also the best Apple iOS online shopping mobile app especially in Sri Lanka. The shoppers fall into 3 broad categories with diverse shopping behavior. The 'young online shoppers' within the age of 18 to 24 years are Recreational shoppers who enjoy shopping for the latest trends. They are tech savvy, loyal to brands, and less price conscious. The 'well informed shopper' consists of the age category 25 – 30 years, whose decisions are affected by quality and reliability. Though brand loyalty is present, this category also looks for the best deals and flash sales, with a majority shopping for personal and home items. Those within the age group of 31 to 35 years make the 'settled adult shoppers' who shop according to the needs and stay within their budget. They are quality conscious, less experimental and expect fast delivery.

CHAPTER 4

PROCESS OF ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING DURING LOCKDOWN

Figure 2.1   -   Online Shopping Process

INTRODUCTION

19.   There are many different types of e-commerce websites, however, the two most common ones are:

    a. **Business-to-Consumer (B2C)** - typically designed for selling goods and services to consumers.

    b. **Business-to-Business (B2B)** - used to build strategic relationships with other businesses, and to ease the supply and procurement processes that characterize trade among those organizations.

20.   Depending on how you chose to work with your online store administration and product content, you will define your user roles and groups, and give them access rights to the different parts.

SHOPPING PROCESS

21.   A "typical" B2C shopping workflow requires a variety of connections between a website user and any external mechanism that is incorporated. The shopping workflow can be fully automated depending on how the device is set up, so it needs little manual attention. However, if necessary, a purchase order from the Orders system can always be tracked, obtained, and managed manually example of a B2C style of shopping workflow and the activities and tasks involved are listed below.

Figure 2.2   -   Shopping Flow Example
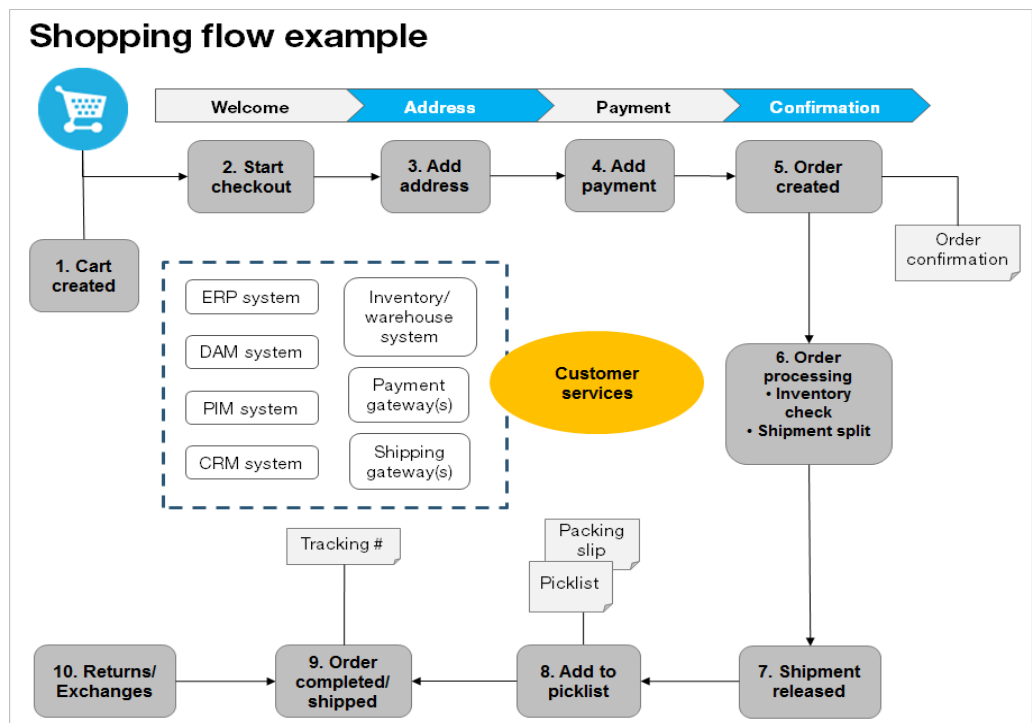
a.   **Cart Created.**   In this case, to shop, a customer does not need to register on the web. The order process immediately begins as soon as a product is chosen by the visitor and attached to a shopping cart. A cart (basket) is produced and placed in the system and can be seen under 'Carts' in the Orders column. If the checkout process is not performed by the user, the cart will stay in the system for a specified period. The cart will be "remembered" until the user returns to the website, and made available for continued shopping. The machine will carry out an inventory and price search at this early point, to look for availability in the warehouse, as well as discounts for chosen items in the cart. If and when the consumer returns to the cart at a later time, this will be changed.

b.   **Start Checkout.**   When the customer decides to complete the purchase and chose to "proceed to checkout", the first step of the checkout procedure is initiated.

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c.   Add Address.   The mailing and billing address information is applied along with the desired delivery method (First Class / Express etc) in the second phase of the checkout process. Address information can be entered by an "anonymous" customer manually, or automatically if the customer is logging in and has a registered address information user profile. The device can also be set up so that orders can be divided into various sections and addresses.

d.   Add Payment.   In step three of the checkout procedure, the payment is added to the "purchase order to be". The system will calculate the total sum including the purchase amount and the shipping fee. In this step, the customer selects a payment method, for instance by credit card or PayPal. The payment will be registered and verified. This may happen instantly or after a certain specified time, depending on how the payment process is set up and the type of e-commerce solution (B2C or B2B). In this step, it is also possible to split payments, if the system is configured for this.

e.   Order Created.   Usually, the actual purchase order is created in the system when the payment is settled. In the last checkout step, a purchase order number is created, the customer confirms the purchase, and an order confirmation is sent to the customer. The shopping cart is now converted to a purchase order which is visible with the status "In Progress" under "Purchase Orders" in Orders.

f.   Order Processing.   When the order is created the order processing starts. This consists of steps to check the warehouse and inventory status for the products in the order, and for creating the actual shipment. Depending on the inventory status for the products, the order may be split into more than one shipment.

g.   Shipment Released.   when the shipment is verified, it will be released. The purchase order will now appear in Orders, under "Shipping/Receiving" and "Released for Shipping".

h.   Add To Pick List.   This step involves the addition of the shipping items to a picklist. The picklist is the list that the warehouse will use to create the physical shipping of the products in the order. This step will also produce a packing slip, which is the paper slip that will be attached to the physical package to be shipped.

i.   Order Completed / Shipped.   When the picklists with the different orders and their respective packing slips have been created, the order will be set to complete. In the system, this involves the creation of a shipment validation number which is associated with the tracking number. The tracking

number can be entered manually or automatically if such integration exists. The tracking number connects the physical package with the shipping provider for the delivery and is used for tracking the package on its way to the delivery address. The purchase order will now appear in Orders under "Purchase Orders" again, with the status "Completed".

j. **Return / Exchange.** Only completed orders can be subject to returns/exchanges. Depending on how the system is set up, returns can be created automatically or manually. Creating a return usually involves replacing a delivered product with another one in exchange, and/or a payment refund. When the return is created it will appear in Orders under "Shipping/Receiving" and "Returns". Order status can be for instance "Awaiting Exchange". If the return involves the replacement of a new product, the shipping procedure will be initiated again. The return may also involve receiving a faulty product, in which case a receiving procedure is initiated involving the acknowledgment of a receiving receipt for the returned product.

k. **Integration With External Systems**

EPiServer Commerce is a flexible platform built for integration with other business systems needed in an e-commerce environment. These systems are typically integrated with various parts of the shopping workflow, for exchange of data with EPiServer Commerce.

Examples of such external systems:

(1) **Financial system** - for instance invoice management, payment refunds, and sales reporting.

(2) **CRM (Customer Relationship Management)** - for management of customer profiles and contact information.

(3) **ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning)** - central system for managing pricing, warehouses/inventories, customers and similar.

(4) **PIM (Product Information Management)** - for managing product details for output to different online and print channels.

(5) **DAM (Digital Asset Management)** - for managing various types of product related assets such as images and videos.

(6) **Payment gateways** - the setup of different payment solutions for instance credit cards and PayPal.

(7) **Shipping gateways** - the management of shipping providers and exchange of tracking information.

(8) **Inventory/warehouse system** - exchange of inventory information in connected warehouses.

(9) **Customer services** - exchange of for instance order status information.

CHAPTER 5

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE SHOPPING

22.   As the coronavirus outbreak continues to limit the number of shopping people around the world can do, more and more customers are turning to e-commerce as a solution to get the items they need and want but that's turning out to be both a blessing and a curse for some online businesses. Groceries play an essential role in our lives. It goes without saying that during the coronavirus pandemic, the grocery industry went through lots of ups and downs. The epidemic changed the way we used to get our groceries before the epidemic. The industry adopted the conditions very positively. The whole sector moved online. Gone are the days when we used to stand in long lines for our groceries; now getting our groceries is just a matter of few clicks. There are many benefits to online grocery shopping:

a.   Buy more, with ease.   One of the problems with buying groceries via grocery stores is that you can't buy too many groceries, as it creates issues in transporting the materials. But if you buy groceries online, you are relieved from the stress of carrying the load to your home. Groceries will reach your home directly, and so, you save time. which means that your variety of goods is limited. Not so with an online store. Plus, if you don't see what you want in one store online, you can simply move on to the next one – you've got the power to do that.

b.   No pressure shopping

Generally, in physical stores, the sales representatives try to influence the buyers to buy the product. There can be some kind of pressure, whereas the customers are not pressurized in any way in online stores.

c.   Comparisons

Companies display the whole range of products offered by them to attract customers with different tastes and needs. This enables the buyers to choose from a variety of models after comparing the finish, features and price of the products on display, Sometimes, price comparisons are also available online.

d.   Get more discounts.   There are plenty of discounts available if you are thinking of buying your groceries online. You can also browse online

coupon codes through which you can get things at a less price. Also, you can use online-only discounts, which is not possible with the offline mode.

e.   **Forget parking and fuel costs.**   By buying your groceries online, you get to save fuel, and also you don't have to worry about parking your car at the store.

f.   **Buy anytime.**   Online shopping means that there is no time constraint for purchasing stuff. You can order anytime and from anywhere. It is instrumental if you are away from your home and your children or parents need some things, but they can't go out. With online shopping, a person logs onto the Internet visits to the store's website, and chooses the items she desires. The items are held in a virtual shopping cart until she is ready to make her purchase. The shopper can remain in her pajamas as she does her shopping, and the process can be conducted in the wee hours of the morning or late into the night. Online stores never close – they're open 24 hours a day. The mall is open on 365 x 24 x 7. So, time does not act as a barrier, wherever the vendor and buyers are.

g.   **Freshness and quality assured**

The last thing that a grocery store wants is dissatisfied customers complaining about having received poor quality goods. This makes a lot of extra and unnecessary work for their customer complaints department. It is therefore good practice for them to only send the freshest produce out on the home delivery orders. A reputable store will give a guarantee that if you are not happy with your delivery then they will give you a refund.

h.   **Less time wasted walking up and down aisles.**   Unless you have got a Fitbit goal you're trying to meet, nothing is more frustrating than getting all the way down to the produce aisle – before realizing you forgot to get milk way back in the dairy aisle. Or when the cashier is ringing you out and you remember you never grabbed eggs. Customers do not have to stand in queues in cash counters to pay for the products that have been purchased by them. They can shop from their home or work place and do not have to spend time traveling. The customers can also look for the products that are required by them by entering the key words or using search engines. When you're shopping online, you don't have to worry about making such mistakes. Instead of wasting several minutes, it just takes a couple of clicks to make sure the contents of your cart are perfect.

i.   **Keep track of how much you're spending.**   Another great advantage of shopping online, in general, is that the total cost of your cart is easily visible at all times. It's easy to go over budget when you're buying dozens of different items at once, especially when math is not your strong suit. Impulse

purchases are just too tempting in the store and can be a big add to cost. Or, if you are hitting the stores with kids, they can often sneak in a few packages of this and that when you are not looking.

j. **You can get your order delivered.** Getting your order delivered can make online grocery shopping even easier. You don't even have to leave the house if you don't want to. You will have to pay a delivery fee, but sometimes certain circumstances justify the cost. So, it's nice to have the option when you need it. Online consumers can track the order status and delivery status tracking of shipping is also available.

k. **Help local procedures**

Supermarkets tend to have centralized warehouses and distribution systems. They buy from large-scale farms and factories that can deliver lower per-unit costs. Demand for locally produced food is growing and so some grocery stores are changing their policies to include small producers. There is a cost to this, and some consumers are unwilling or unable to pay more for their food. E-shopping has the potential to help local producers, but how does one define *local*? Some people say it should be no more than 30 miles from the point of retail sale, while others consider *local* to include any farm or factory within an entire state area

DISADVANTAGES OF ONLINE SHOPPING

23.   More and more people are shopping online every day so online shopping is increasing every day, people prefer online shopping over offline shopping, because of the ease and convenience it offers, availability of a wide variety of products on a single platform, and also due to offers and discounts. While online shopping has many advantages, it has also got its drawbacks. The Internet has been praised again and again for the ease it provides people who want to buy and sell things online. Online shopping has also been widely been criticized for being very insecure. Even with the latest encryption algorithm implemented, hackers still manage to find a way to steal your data. Yes, shopping online is very simple and straightforward, not to mention tempting, but it also gets people into lots of trouble especially those who are not aware of the disadvantages of online shopping. This is why it's advised that you familiarize yourself with online stores and how they protect their data. So let's move to some disadvantages of online shopping.

a. **Frauds in online shopping.** Fraud in online shopping is the biggest disadvantage of online shopping. Many people are attracted by great offers which seem too good to be true. Fake online shopping portals display some great products on the website and attract customers to buy the product. Usually, websites which sell fake products instead of the genuine article, do

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not accept cash on delivery and request customers to make an online payment. But, in the end, customers will either receive the fake product or they will not receive the product at all. There are many cases of cybercrime where customers' debit or credit card details are misused to make fraudulent transactions. In some of the cases, thieves and hackers stole customer details and make some cyber-attack innocent people.

b.   **<u>Delay in the delivery.</u>**   In the case of offline shopping, you can receive the product then and there. But this does not happen in online shopping. Even though it hardly takes 10-15 minutes to buy the product online, by the time it reaches your hands, it would be more than 4-5 days. During big sales, e-commerce portals may take too long to deliver the product. When ordering the perishable items that we should keep it in mind the delay of delivery.

c.   **<u>You can't touch the product.</u>**   The sad part of online shopping is, you cannot touch the product and feel how it is. You can just see the image and read the description. In some of the cases, some products should check and use, as an example when you are purchasing perfume or something like that you are not able to feel the smell. Online shopping is not suitable for people who wish to buy the product only after trying it or by touching it. It makes a limitation on you that regarding it, it is better to order some specific brand, as well if you're not familiar with the product you're not able to order that product. When dealing with the garment items customers expect items not with the order the material and sizes can differ. A customer has to buy a product without seeing actually how it looks like. Customers may click and buy some product that is not really required by them. The electronic images of a product are sometimes misleading. The color, appearance in real may not match with the electronic images.

d.   **<u>You cannot bargain.</u>**   Consumers are good at bargaining. You can bargain only in the case of offline shopping, not in the case of online shopping. In online shopping, you get cashback, discounts, and coupons, but this is not the same as bargaining. Trust me if one is good at bargaining, he can save a lot of money during offline shopping.

e.   **<u>Hidden costs and shipping charges.</u>**   When you first see the product on a portal, it generally looks cheaper. But when you proceed with the payment, the extra charges like shipping charges, tax, and packing charges are added. These charges will make the product expensive vis-a-vis the local store. Some portals offer free shipping if you shop more than a certain amount. Sometimes just to avail of free shipping, you end up shopping more than your requirement. In the cases of vessel insurance

charges also included with the product, the most of extra costs are not included in offline shopping.

f. **Lack of interaction.** In the case of offline shopping, sales assistants shower personal attention on customers and give complete details on the product. If you have any queries, you can ask right there. But, this does not happen in the case of online shopping. All you can do is see the picture and read the description. Some portals allow shoppers to check customer reviews. The traditional shopping exercise provides lot of fun in the form of show-room atmosphere, smart sales attendants, scent and sounds that cannot be experienced through a website. Indians generally enjoy shopping. Consumers look forward to it as an opportunity to go out and shop.

g. **Returning the product.** There is an option to return the product if you do not like it. But again, it is a big headache. The return policy differs from one company to another. When consumers purchasing electronic items customers cannot check whether is it in the good condition. In the case of some online shopping portals, customers have to bear the cost of returning the product. If you return the product, you will not be paid the shipping charges which you had paid earlier. If you are shopping for cosmetics like lipstick, they can't be returned.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

24.   Over the years, technology has made great strides in creating a superior online shopping experience for shoppers and will continue to do so for years to come. People have predicted that internet shopping would replace instore shopping with the exponential rise of goods and brands. While this has been the case in some fields, in marketplaces where the customer is more relaxed viewing and handling the commodity being purchased there is room for brick and mortar shops. The availability of online shopping, however, has generated a more educated consumer who can shop around with relative ease without spending a large amount of time. In return, online shopping has opened doors for many small retailers who, if they had to incur the high cost of owning a brick and mortar store, would never be in business.

25.   After having a detailed study on Online Shopping one can see a great change in the behavior of people in many manners like their attitude, buying pattern. In earlier times people use to do manual shopping but now as time changed people are becoming busy and due to which technology has brought a new revolution that is Online Shopping. Online shopping, which is already growing, will expand even more, as customers invest less in public time. And the general retail industry will, of course, continue to move dollars online. Retail, which had been on a growth streak for a decade, is expected to experience the first downturn since the recession

26.   Although the local online shopping market has been primarily based on consumer electronics so far, new markets such as clothes, healthcare, and grocery are emerging. For small enterprises, which are leapfrogging the internet and going new with 'internet-first' models, social media are also quickly proving to be a strong distribution tool the 6.2 million active social media user bases in Sri Lanka and the increasing number of internet users and mobile broadband connections mean that companies are growing.

27.   Technology has made significant progress over the years to provide consumers a better online shopping experience and will continue to do so for years to come. With the rapid growth of products and brands, people have speculated that online shopping will overtake in-store shopping. While this has been the case in some areas, there is still demand for brick-and-mortar stores in market areas where the consumer feels more comfortable seeing and touching the product being bought. However, the availability of online shopping has produced a more educated consumer that can shop around with relative ease without having to spend a large amount of time. In exchange, online shopping has opened up doors to many small retailers that would never be in business if they had to incur the high cost of owning a brick-and-mortar store. At the end, it has been a win-win situation for both consumer and sellers.

28.   Although the research discussed so far indicates a strong conceptual interest in shopping online, the findings also point to some consumer concerns. In particular, the researches indicate that consumers were concerned about on-time delivery, the quality of

produce, and the limited selection and variety of goods on the site. It was revealed that after registering, shoppers did not order in the same session since they did not have the time or did not find their favorite brands. Consumers simply stopped shopping online because of repeated bad experiences, including not being able to find their favorite products.

29.   Online security and privacy are also of concern to consumers. In particular, security issues generally revolve around the transfer of personal and financial information (for example, addresses, telephone numbers, credit card numbers, etc.) over the Internet. Another privacy concern relates to the use of online consumer demographic and taste-related data. Online stores gather this information and can use it to target costumers or sell to marketing firms for marketing analysis. However, this generally occurs without asking the consumer if they would like to option out of this data collection.

30.   There's been a major shift by consumers to shopping online over the last 10 years, and the trend has accelerated with the recent pandemic lockdowns. Customers value convenience over price, and are willing to pay extra for home delivery. Ordering online has become a quick and easy way to shop. Click-and-collect food orders, and secure refrigerated lockers are the shopping channels of the future.

31.   COVID-19 has had an impact on our shopping habits. Before coronavirus, only about 7% of people in Western countries did their food shopping online. When the virus struck, for a short period stores were expected to deliver to more than 90% of homes. A shortage of delivery staff and vehicles caused service levels to fall, but the situation has now improved. More people are shopping instore once more, and stores have recruited more drivers and pickers. So the reliability and availability of home delivery slots is almost back to normal

32.   The first downturn since the recession is expected to be experienced by retail. Retail has been on a growth streak for a decade. We hope that things start to fall into place for this industry once the effect of COVID-19 declines.

33.   There's little doubt that online shopping is a growing trend. The convenience of being able to shop from home 24/7 is a no-brainer for me. However some people will always be worried about the quality and freshness of the food to be delivered. Whether online grocery shopping is a good or a bad thing is a value judgement, and a personal decision. Only you can decide whether the benefit of ordering via the internet is worth more to you than any potential downsides of shopping this way

CHAPTER 7

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