



IMPACT OF ONLINE REVIEWS AND RATINGS ON BUYING BEHAVIOR.

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary times, the people are connected in a way they were never before, because of the development of www(World Wide Web) or what is simply called as internet. There is one more factor which has contributed to the increased connectivity among people and that is Smartphone. People carry a small gadget, with which they are free to browse anything, read a book, watch a movie, listen to a song or rate and review any product or service whenever and wherever they want to. This has only augmented the use and popularity of internet and the development of e commerce.

Before the beginning of 21st century people mostly used to get information from advertisements available on TV radio or in print media. However, due to the increased reach of internet people create their own content about anything be it a brand, product, place or a service and therefore supplement the information already available to them from the traditional modes of promotion which is commonly known as electronic word of mouth marketing. The information, in the form of product reviews, is generally factual and based on true experiences of the reviewers with the product, it plays a significant role in creating a positive or negative brand image in the minds of prospective customers.

Once a customer is reviewing a product it acts as beacon light for the information seekers whether to buy or not to buy the product. A fact is that these reviews are mostly done by the real users of the product, which are not paid by the company. Hence, making these reviews more reliable trustworthy and an important element in word of mouth marketing with widest possible reach and at almost no extra cost.

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