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FEATURES OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR WHEN BUYING SOCIALLY IMPORTANT GOODS

Abstract. The place of a person in a particular society is largely defined by what and how they purchase. This process is easily perceived by the reference group. Social group determines the motivation of a young person when they buy some kinds of goods. In this regard, a problem of social audience management through specific consumption and purchase models arises.

The aim of the present study is modeling the purchasing process of goods that have a certain social status on the youth market: mobile phones (smartphones) and fitness bracelet (trackers). The object of study is the young audience; the subjects are the motives and determinants of consumer behavior during decision-making, and the principles of demand formation.

Students of the Economics Faculty of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN), Moscow, conducted the study of consumer behavior in April-May 2018. In-depth interviews and questionnaires were used as methods of research.

The following models of the consumer behavior processes were used: Stimulus-Organism-Response Model of Decision Making, the Foote, Cone and Belding Model, the Howard-Sheth model, and O'Shaughnessy studies.

The results of the modeling process are the basis for creating marketing communication with consumers on a commercial basis and may be of interest to manufacturers and sellers of this type of products in Russia.

Key words: consumers, reference groups, goods, young social group.

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Әлеуметтік маңызды тауарларды сатып алу кезіндегі тұтынушылық мінез-құлық ерекшеліктері

Аңдатпа. Адамның белгілі бір қоғамдағы орны көбінесе ол нені және қалай сатып алатындығына байланысты. Бұл процесті анықтамалық топ оңай қабылдайды. Әлеуметтік топ жастардың белгілі бір тауар түрлерін сатып алуға деген ынтасын анықтайды. Осыған байланысты белгілі бір тұтыну және сатып алу үлгілері арқылы әлеуметтік аудиторияны басқару мәселесі туындайды.

Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты жастар нарығында белгілі бір әлеуметтік мәртебесі бар тауарларды сатып алу процесін модельдеу: ұялы телефондар (смартфондар) және фитнес білезіктер (трекерлер). Зерттеу нысаны – жас аудитория; субъектілер шешім қабылдау кезіндегі тұтынушылық мінез-құлықтың себептері мен айқындаушысы, сонымен қатар сұраныстың қалыптасу принциптері болып табылады.

Ресей халықтар достығы университетінің экономика факультетінің студенттері 2018 жылдың сәуір-мамыр айларында тұтынушылардың мінез-құлқына зерттеу жүргізді. Зерттеу әдістері ретінде сұхбат және сауалнамалар пайдаланылды.

Тұтынушы мінез-құлқының процестерінің келесі модельдері қолданылды: дененің реакциясын ынталандыратын шешім қабылдау моделі, Фут, Кон және Белдинг моделдері, Говард-Шет моделі және О'Шоннесидің зерттеулері.

Модельдеу процесінің нәтижелері коммерциялық негізде тұтынушылармен маркетингтік байланыс құру үшін негіз болып табылады және Ресейде осы тауар түрінің өндірушілері мен сатушылары үшін қызығушылық тудыруы мүмкін.

Түйін сөздер: тұтынушылар, анықтамалық топтар, тауарлар, жас әлеуметтік топ.

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Особенности потребительского поведения при покупке социально важных товаров

Аннотация. Место человека в определенном обществе во многом определяется тем, что и как он покупает. Этот процесс легко воспринимается референтной группой. Социальная группа определяет мотивацию молодых людей при покупке некоторых видов товаров. В связи с этим возникает проблема управления социальной аудиторией через конкретные модели потребления и покупки.

Целью настоящего исследования является моделирование процесса покупки товаров, имеющих определенный социальный статус на молодежном рынке: мобильные телефоны (смартфоны) и фитнес-браслеты (трекеры). Объект исследования – молодая аудитория; субъектами являются мотивы и детерминанты поведения потребителей при принятии решений, а также принципы формирования спроса.

Студенты экономического факультета Российского университета дружбы народов (РУДН, Москва) провели исследование потребительского поведения в апреле-мае 2018 года. В качестве методов исследования были использованы интервью и вопросники.

Использовались следующие модели процессов потребительского поведения: модель принятия решений, стимулирующая реакцию организма, модель принятия решений, модель Фута, Кона и Белдинга, модель Говарда-Шета и исследования О'Шонесси.

Результаты процесса моделирования являются основой для создания маркетинговой коммуникации с потребителями на коммерческой основе и могут представлять интерес для производителей и продавцов данного вида продукции в России.

Ключевые слова: потребители, референтные группы, товар, молодая социальная группа.

Introduction

In today's business environment, companies face increased competition, especially on the multinational level. Market leaders try to create their own consumer, explaining them how to dress and what to eat and drink in order not to be a loser. The tendency of introducing ideological processes into the model of consumer behavior is fast developing. The Coca-Cola Company sells a way of life, a way of seeing the world which you can join using the advertised products. The main approach in this case is introducing the advertised product to the community for further transformation in accordance with the values of the American culture the advantages of which are not even questioned. This can be achieved by making an element of American culture – the advertised drink – an integral part of the daily life of the recipient. The result is a blending of American culture with the culture of the community where the advertising campaign is conducted, with the continued dominance of American culture¹. How much is this experience reflected in the purchase of other

products, and, in a wider sense, to what extent can the product become an attribute a certain way of life and of the social community? How can this factor be used to promote Russian products?

The place of a person in a particular society is largely defined by what and how they purchase. This process is easily perceived by the reference group. Social group determines the motivation of a young person when they buy some kinds of goods. In this regard, a problem of social audience management through specific consumption and purchase models arises.

A wide range of models are used to evaluate processes related to consumer behavior. The black-box model (more popular and more common) is based on external stimulus-response, meaning something triggers the consumer to make buying decisions that are influenced by many factors, including marketing messages, sampling, product availability, promotions, and price. When influenced by the personal-variable model, consumers make decisions based on internal factors².

¹ Analysis of the influence of culture and subculture on consumer behavior. Retrieved from https://studwood.ru/1857063/marketing/vliyanie_amerikanskih_tsennostey_primere_kompanii_coca_cola

² What Is Consumer Behavior in Marketing? – Factors, Model & Definition. Business Courses. Study.com. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-consumer-behavior-in-marketing-factors-model-definition.html>

Methodology

The aim of the present study is modeling the purchasing process of goods that have a certain social status on the youth market: mobile phones (smartphones) and fitness bracelet (trackers). The choice of these products is dictated by their popularity in the youth (student) environment. The object of study is the young audience; the subjects are the motives and determinants of consumer behavior during decision-making, and the principles of demand formation. The results of the modeling process are the basis for creating marketing communication with consumers on a commercial basis and may be of interest to manufacturers and sellers (for example, Chinese) of this type of products in Russia.

The study of consumer behavior was conducted in 2018 by students of the Economics Faculty of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN, Moscow). Methods of research: content-analysis of scientific literature, in-depth interviews and questionnaires. The study sample was formed among the young people from Moscow and the region. The status of respondents was students and working people under 30 years of age; the number of respondents was 256 people.

The theoretical basis for the field study comprised several most practical models of consumer behavior. Consumer behavior is a complex process and a significant amount of research has been devoted to it. The most frequently used model is 'stimulus-reaction' – the cognitive approach to consumer behavior. The 'stimulus-reaction' model considers the reaction of buyers to certain stimuli: internal or external. All these get into the 'black box' of the buyer, where they induce (or do not induce) a person to act, choosing the brand, the dealer, the time of purchase, and the purchase amount. The task of marketing research is to find out how the reaction to various stimuli occurs and which of them trigger the buyer's response, i.e. purchase (Jisana, 2014).

Another interesting model of consumer behavior is the model of Foote, Coon and Belding or the 'Involvement Matrix'. The model considers (in addition to the cognitive component in the decision making process) the aspect of the complexity of the buying process for a person. That is, there is some complication of the process, namely, the buying process is considered as: routine, hedonism, training or emotionality, depending on how important the purchase is (Tumashevich, 2012). Based on this model, four strategies for advertising planning are considered, by combining high or low involve-

ment with decision-making methods (based on the thought process, logic and feelings) (Ghafelehbash et al., 2011).

The buyer behavior theory of Howard-Sheth also develops a cognitive consumer study and focuses on how to choose brands. The authors of the theory distinguish certain elements of the purchasing decision-making process, consider changes that occurred over a given period of time as a result of the circular nature of human actions, and also show how the combination of the various components of the decision-making process affects the processing and retrieval of information (Stankevich, 2017). This model assumes three levels of decision-making: comprehensive problem solution; limited problem solution and habitual reaction.

Also highly important is the desire of a person to seek information about the product. In this regard, the 'Information Processing Model' by J. Bettman should be considered. The model assumes the description of processing information about a product or service. The reasoning is based on the fact that the consumer has limited opportunities for searching and processing information. Bettman emphasizes that instead of the complex alternatives, the consumer chooses simple strategies when deciding on a purchase (Baskov, 2011). The key positions that should be taken into account by marketers when using this model are the ratio of the value of the purchase to the difficulty of finding information about the product of interest; the degree of involvement and awareness of the buyer; and simplicity and availability of information about the product/service.

The following models of the consumer behavior processes were used: Stimulus-Organism-Response Model of Decision Making, the *Foote, Cone and Belding Model*, the Howard-Sheth model, and O'Shaughnessy research on competitive marketing (O'Shaughnessy, 2014).

Results and discussion

The classic definition of management is 'influencing an object to gain a certain result'. Consumer market leaders and strong and significant brands influence their target groups and educate them, alluring them to specific behavior type. How strong are some brands' and their products action force on the youth market in the Russian Federation? This research is devoted to revealing consumer behavior models when choosing, purchasing and using certain products.

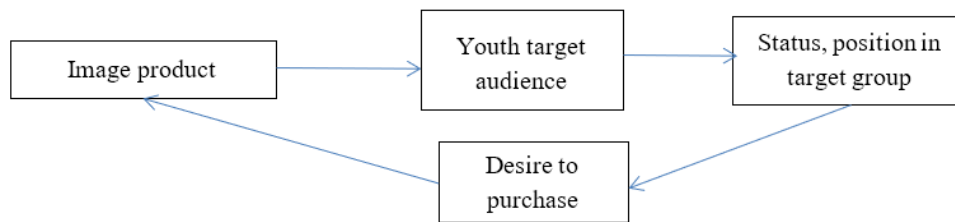


Figure 1 – Hypothesis of consumer's behavior when buying image product.
Source: results of the previous research, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, 2018

The choice of the research subject is explained by the form of product use: mobile phones (smartphones) and fitness-bracelets are visible to surrounding people. The aim of this research lies in defining what is actually important for the young people when purchasing a smartphone: simply a good ratio of price/quality or rather the prestige of the smartphone brand; that is, whether the cognitive or affective component is a priority. The identification of this aspect will give direction to the formation of the direction of communication with the client.

Working hypothesis

Figure 1 depicts a hypothesis of consumer behavior when purchasing an image product. It is assumed that the purchase is frequently made to achieve a certain status in the person's reference group. The motives that form the need in a smartphone are personal. As of stimuli, those are likely to be the desired optimal product characteristics which to a large degree influence consumer's final decision. It will be made only based on the match of the specific smartphone with the desired characteristics for personal fulfillment in the given moment of time. A young person expresses themselves through the product. As said above, smartphones and fitness-trackers were chosen to represent the products that influence young people's status in their group. Consciously, in this research the authors do not focus on the brands, as their position is well known.

The analysis of smartphones use

The main goals of this research are:

- To reveal the perception of smartphones;
- To define the inner motives that form the need;
- To define the desired optimal characteristics;
- To define the stimuli which influence the algorithm and form the perception of smartphones.

At the first stage, a qualitative study was conducted with the help of in-depth interview, the scenario of which was the following sequence:

1) Usage:

- Do you use a mobile phone?

- Is your phone a smartphone?
- How did you get the smartphone?
- Why do you use your smartphone?
- What is the first thing you do when you take your phone in your hands?

2) Attitude:

- How do you feel when using a smartphone?
- Do you think a smartphone reflects a person's social status or not?
- Can you express your personality with the help of your smartphone?
- Is a smartphone a nice gift?
- Is a smartphone an indispensable attribute for maintaining a lifestyle 'in step with the times'?
- Can you imagine your life without a smartphone?
- What do you associate with the word 'smartphone'?

3) Questions about purchasing decision:

- What is the reason for acquiring a smartphone?
- What can influence the decision to purchase?
- Your friend has a new phone, what are you thinking about at this moment?
- What motivate other people to change their phones?

4) Questions about the choice:

- How do you choose a smartphone?
- What information sources do you use to choose a smartphone?
- How long do you choose a smartphone?
- What criteria are the most important for you when buying a smartphone?
- In your opinion, what characteristic do people wish to find in their smartphone?
- Do you consider people who only use an iPhone adequate?

5) About the purchase:

- How does the purchase go? (Where do you purchase a smartphone?)
- When exactly do you buy smartphones? (an occasion, a season, dates and events, time of purchase, etc.)

– How do you feel about smartphone as a gift? (It is important for you to know in advance about what kind of smartphone your gift will be?)

– Coming to the store and looking at other people, what do you think their thoughts are?

6) Maintenance:

– How often do you use your smartphone?

– How often do you change your smartphone?

Below are the results of in-depth interviews.

1) Using mobile phones. All the respondents use mobile phones.

2) Using smartphones. Most of the respondents use smartphones, in general, for social networking and as a photo camera. A smartphone becomes an indispensable attribute; no one can imagine life without it. The phone is no longer a device, but an assistant.

3) The reasons for buying smartphones. More often, people make the purchase themselves, and sometimes receive smartphones as gifts. Even if it's a gift, it happens on 'pre-order' – "a girl can nag her boyfriend for a month about what she really wants".

4) Stereotypes and associations:

– The more expensive the phone, the cooler you are.

– Division of people according to the 'Lovemark'.

– The constant rivalry between Android and Apple.

– Brand means quality and status.

5) Reflection of a person's social status through the acquisition of a smartphone. The majority of respondents believe that smartphones are able to reflect the social status of a person, since the price range is very wide, and rich people have more expensive and high-quality smartphones. Most respondents also believe that smartphones help express individuality.

6) Reasons for buying a smartphone. Most respondents purchase smartphones for personal use, and most often do not need a special reason for this, since they consider it a necessity. Also, buying a smartphone can be timed to certain events (holiday, black Friday, etc.). Some respondents purchase smartphones as gifts (for their girlfriends, daughters, etc.). The frequency of buys can be affected by discounts, the appearance of new models, and also due to the fact your acquaintance bought a better phone than yours. Most respondents do not need a special reason to use a smartphone and often use it every minute (communication, weather, time, etc.). Regardless of the frequency of use, all the respondents carry a smartphone with them

everywhere and constantly and cannot imagine their life without this gadget.

7) Nature of the decision-making process to purchase a smartphone. The decision-making process is relatively complex and time-consuming, taking from a day to a week. In the case of a preliminary choice, the decision is relatively fast. As a source of information, the consumer usually uses Internet forums; the following data are required: technical characteristics of the brand, warranty and information about the manufacturer; all these are highly important for consumers.

8) Choice complexity and time spent on choosing a smartphone. For most respondents, choosing a smartphone is not too difficult. Often, they go to the store, assuming which smartphones they want to purchase. The selection process takes place before going to the store and lasts from a day to a week.

9) Factors that consumers are guided by when choosing a smartphone. Almost all the respondents are guided by the choice of the majority. As parameters the consumer considers when comparing alternatives, the following (in descending order of importance) can be noted: technical characteristics, price, and brand. The brand is an important factor determining the choice, and also which model is most common – some people want to stand out and thus choose something unusual, others are looking for a similar phone, but a little cheaper, to have something to brag about.

10) Place and time of buying a smartphone. Some respondents consider the place of purchase of little importance, although in fact they all purchase smartphones in special mobile communication stores. One third of respondents purchase smartphones in online stores. The time of purchase is irrelevant.

11) People and factors affecting the choice and purchase of a smartphone. Some respondents prefer to consult someone, and mostly it's their friend or partner, very rarely the shop assistant. As factors influencing the purchase, respondents usually name the absence of a smartphone – breakage, loss, etc.

12) Features of purchasing a smartphone as a gift. Most respondents believe that acquiring smartphones as a gift is a risky business: everyone selects smartphones based on their needs and preferences and may be disappointed with the model. If smartphones are purchased as gifts, then the model is approved in advance.

Over 200 people were interviewed: young men and women aged 18-27, high school students, students of Moscow higher education institutions and working young people. Practically all of them

own a smartphone – 98% of respondents. The most frequently used mobile apps are: social networking apps – 68%, Instagram – 66% and Internet browsing apps – 60%. These answers confirm the importance of social groups among young people (Figure 2).

The majority of respondents claimed that the smartphone does not represent a person’s status (!) – 73%. The most popular opinion is that a smartphone price for a successful businessman equals to 40-60 thousand RUR (700-1000 EUR); this price represents high social status for young people. However, the average purchasing price (demand) was around 3000 RUR (45 EUR).

It is interesting to know the opinion of respondents regarding brand acceptance for a certain consumer segment. Respondents were offered the following set: Samsung, Apple, Nokia, Vertu, Lenovo, Huawei, Meizu, and Sony. The main preferences are shown in Table 1. When comparing the desired prices for smartphones and the preferable brands, discrepancy between real purchase and preferable brands is clearly visible. Modern Samsung and Apple smartphones cannot cost 45 EUR – they are at least 5 times more expensive. Young people dreams of expensive and currently unaffordable smartphones’ brands.

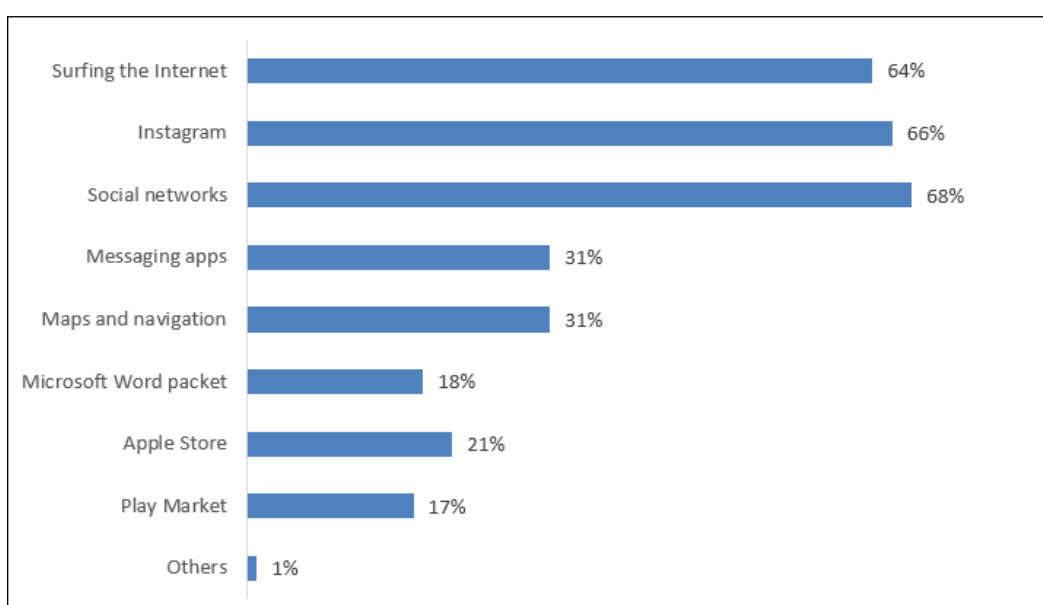


Figure 2 – The most frequently used applications in smartphones
Source: results of the field research, Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia, 2018

Table 1 – Brands preferences

Target audience	Main preferences
Schoolchildren	Samsung, Apple
Students	Apple
Retired	Nokia
Workers	Samsung, Apple, Nokia
Office workers	Apple
Servicemen	Samsung
B businessmen	Apple
Housewives	Samsung, Apple
Source: results of the in-depth interview, Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia, 2018	

Looking at the responses regarding the satisfaction with smartphones (which is almost at 70%) we can conclude that the desire to replace the mobile phone is associated with the status of possession of certain brand.

It is necessary to note that various surveys of the young generation show a hidden problem of ‘being untrue’ in their statements. Respondents often unconsciously overestimate their capabilities and consumption patterns.

Based on the questionnaires and focus group data, a scheme of purchasing a smartphone by young people was developed. Figure 3 provides a model of smartphone purchasing.

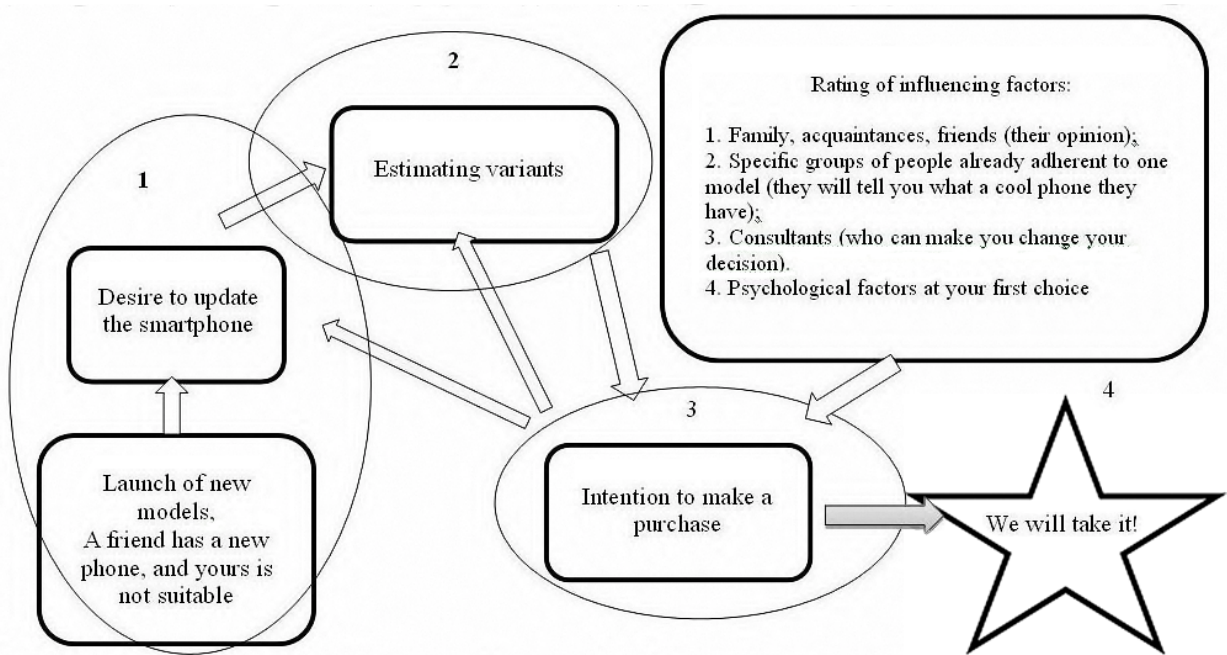


Figure 3 – The scheme of consumer behavior when making a purchase
 Source: results of a field survey, Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia, 2018

The whole process consists of 4 stages: stimuli to purchase, estimation of variants, intention to make a purchase and factors influencing the purchase. Position 1 shows the stimuli to make the purchase decision. Researches showed there were 3 stimuli to purchasing a new phone:

An introduction of a new smartphone model that is able to attract the attention of the target group (which people own);

Not being satisfied by the current phone, frustration;

Mobile phone being broken.

Among the main stimuli for the purchase, the first two (the dominating) are emotional, the third one is rational. The first stimulus is directly linked to the target group behavior to which the customer belongs or wants to belong.

The reference group was then asked to express their opinion about what influences their choice of smartphone (Position 2). The mentioned features are the following: quality, price, distinctiveness, availability, characteristics, after-sales service. Note that the answers ‘quality’ and ‘characteristics’ are separate factors. Quality is not so much associated with actual characteristics, but with something more. Here, one can talk about the extended quality which does not include just a rational ‘set of characteris-

tics’. The emotional component is sometimes able to outweigh the rationality in the buying process³.

Discussion of smartphone research results

Product characteristics meeting the customers’ expectations is not always enough to be the reason to purchase. The research revealed that a large number of respondents are influenced by other factors not related to the qualities of the smartphone itself. The most curious is Stage 4. The intention to purchase has appeared, but the final decision is not formed – it is almost always formed under the pressure of the external factors that determine the final choice.

These factors are:

The opinion of close and familiar people (reference group) who have learned of the desire to purchase a smartphone and feel the need to express an opinion. They consider it is necessary to share their own vision and to give advice.

Consultant’s opinion in the store. Surprisingly, respondents noted that these consultants rarely tell the truth, being interested in their ‘own goals in terms of what they have to sell’. Very seldom it is

³ Why It’s Important To Understand The Customer’s Buying Behaviour(2016). Retrieved from <https://blog.oxford-collegeofmarketing.com/2014/11/27/why-its-important-to-understand-the-customers-buying-behaviour/>

possible to meet honest managers who actually want to help.

Psychological factors that are influenced by the assessed reliability of the vendor, trust towards the brand and tactile sensations.

Taking into account the fact that the target audience are people aged 18 to 27, for promotional needs it is possible create communities and web pages where consumers could share the characteristics of the phone they found out about. Moreover, on these web pages it would be possible to upload photos and videos made with this specific phone model, to propose possible usage methods and to offer promotions providing the consumers with information on the given phone.

Besides, there is an idea to use several promoters who in a very crowded place would approach people and ask to take a photo of them via this phone. At this moment, the first contact with the potential consumer with this product will occur, and some will be interested in it. It is important that the search for information is simple and accessible to the consumer, since it will allow the potential buyer to make a decision on purchase faster (Spenner, 2017).

The basic principles of smartphone promotion can be formulated as: pleasant-to-use, preferably 'like the one my friend uses'. A smartphone is associated with a 'successful businessman' status, which creates a certain reference group.

Study of fitness trackers usage

The second product that was researched to reveal its status when purchased is the fitness tracker. Unlike a smartphone, it is a less popular gadget, but its popularity is growing. A considerable number of young people are engaged in sports and want to keep their whole body toned. Being sporty has become fashionable. Can a fitness tracker become one of the attributes of a sporty person?

The modern positioning of the fitness tracker can be expressed as follows: the fitness tracker is a convenient and functional device which saves your time and helps you stay in shape, tracks your health and improves the physical state of your body. All the data about your physical activity is compiled and systematized in one application in the form of clear statistics. With this device it is pleasant to do sports, to wake up in the morning and aspire to new achievements. The following hypotheses were tested:

- People engaged in some sports do not pay enough attention to such an accessory as a fitness tracker;
- Fitness tracker can be useful in everyday life;

- Fitness bracelet is known to a wide audience;
- Basically, people learn about the fitness bracelet from friends and acquaintances;
- Fitness bracelet is a more attractive accessory than its competitors;
- Emotional response from fitness trackers is missing or minimal;
- Fitness trackers are part of fashion;
- Visual component is one of the most important purchasing criteria;
- Purchase decision is made under the influence of friends and relatives;
- A small percentage of consumers reach a purchase.

The interview includes four main topics – the basic questions related to the respondents' hobbies, for example whether they do sports, which type, how often, etc. The behavioral questions were related to the consumers' knowledge of such product as a fitness-bracelet and their awareness of its functionality. The emotional aspect reflecting the inner response of consumers, how important fashion and the appearance of goods are. The behavioral aspect reflecting the willingness and customers' ability to buy goods was also reflected.

Based on in-depth interviews it can be concluded that such device as a fitness-bracelet is known to a wide audience, but only a small number of consumers actually purchase it. Mainly, these are people who do sports quite frequently or purchase the fitness-bracelet as a gift. The consumers most often learn about the fitness tracker via an acquaintance. The emotional component in such product as fitness tracker is not that important, however, visual design is one of the main selection criteria.

The second stage of the research – the survey – was conducted on the Internet and involved over 200 respondents between ages 18 and 27. The questions were based on the Howard-Sheth model and in-depth interviews. Initially the awareness of the researched product was defined. As can be seen in Figure 4, almost 90% of respondents heard about the fitness-tracker one way or another.

Most people learn about the fitness-tracker from friends and acquaintances (80%) and via the Internet (20%). There is an emotional response from the fitness-tracker. To the question "Can a fitness bracelet bring emotions?", over 60% have answered positively: it can be pleasant to the eye, create a sense of style, provide self-confidence and improve the sporty attitude. A negative answer was given by less than 40%.

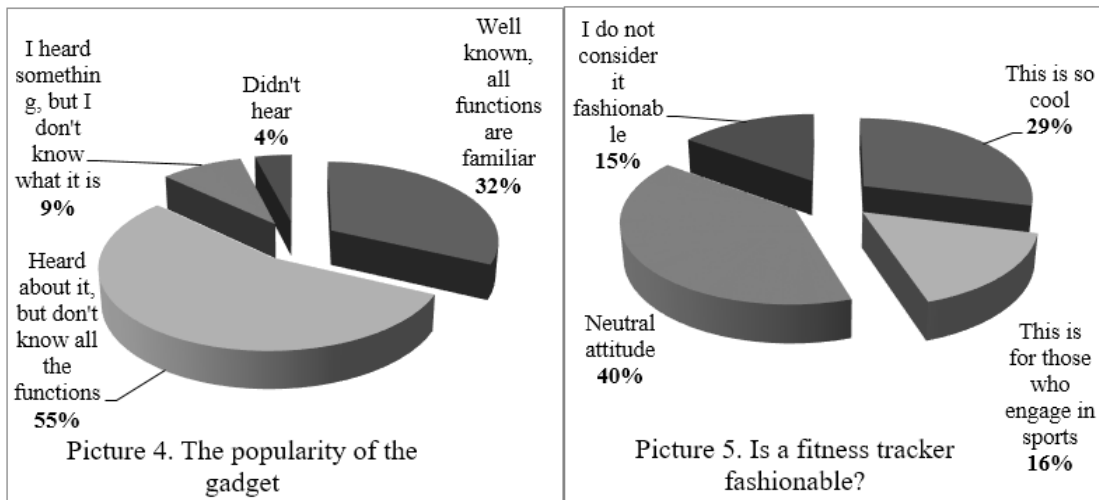


Figure 4

Source: results of field research, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, 2018

The visual component is an important criterion when selecting a product; this was considered by 35% of the respondents, although 40% pay attention to the functionality of the product. Price does not demonstrate a large significance.

Fitness-bracelets are a part of the young fashion. Only 30% consider fitness trackers a part of fashion

appropriate not only at the gym but also in everyday life (only when doing sports – 16%). A neutral attitude was expressed by 40%, and 15% do not consider it fashionable. Therefore, it is necessary to create fashion trends with the inclusion of a fitness tracker and invest more emotional components in the brand.

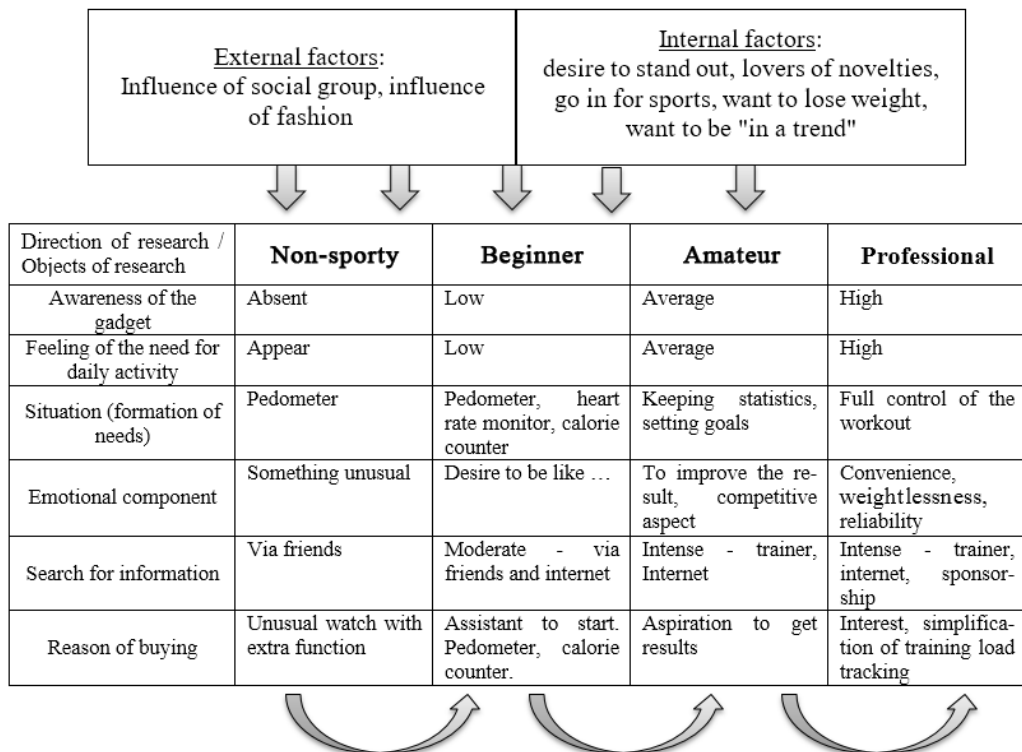


Figure 5 – Model of purchasing process

Source: results of a field survey, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, 2018

One of the main problems emerged from the survey. Fitness bracelet is perceived as a classic accessory, which complicates its promotion. Of the proposed product forms (wrist accessories), the classic wristwatch was most often chosen, since it is more attractive and familiar. The second and third place was shared by smart watches and usual bracelets. The fourth place was taken by a fitness bracelet. This shows a strong adherence to the classics and the fact that fitness bracelets still occupy a small share of the market of wrist accessories and are not perceived as 'independent' gadgets.

With the help of a quantitative survey, the following hypotheses were confirmed: "A fitness bracelet is known to a wide audience", "A fitness tracker can be useful in everyday life", "Basically, one learns about a fitness bracelet from friends and acquaintances" and "Visual component is one of the most important criteria for choosing", nevertheless only about a third of those surveyed consider accessories a part of modern fashion. Despite the fact that the bracelet is known to a large

audience, the number of people willing to buy it or receive it as a gift is considerably low, and among the respondents interested in buying, the bracelet from the low and below average price segment is usually chosen.

Discussion of fitness trackers research results

The final model of the behavior of the consumer fitness trackers is presented in Figure 5. Analyzing the research data, it can be concluded that the fitness tracker is a typical product 'for the group'. As a result of the research, four groups of consumers were identified: non-sporty, beginners, amateurs, professionals. All these consumers are influenced by social groups and fashion for a "sporty" look. The initial motive for buying is the desire to stand out, to own something unusual to attract attention. A significant reason for buying is the desire to lose weight. In addition, the fitness tracker is a little known product with a significant emotional component.

Table 2 – Promotion of a fitness bracelet for 4 groups

Target group	Activities	Objective	Communication structure	The problem to be solved
Non-sporty	1. Cooperation with clothing stores. Offering the bracelet as an imagesupplement.	Make a fitness bracelet part of fashion. Create the need to wear it in everyday life	Shop assistants offer a fitness bracelet as an imagesupplement. In the case of buying a bracelet, the customer receives a discount in the store.	Strengthen the perception of the fitness bracelet as an integral part of the image. Increasecustomerbase. Emphasizetheimage of activity.
Beginners	1. 'Bring a ticket to the gym and get a 10% discount on the bracelet'. 2. Toorganizethesaleoffitnessbraceletsingyms.	Create the link of perception of sports to a fitness bracelet	Communication is carried out directly in the store when choosing and buying goods	The bracelet is not perceived as a separate device, but goes in tandem with fitness and sports, a stable perception is formed
Amateurs	1. 'Bring a friend – get a 10% discount'.	Attractmoreconsumers	Communication is carried out directly in the store when choosing and buying goods	The bracelet is not perceived as a separate device, but goes in tandem with fitness and sports, a stable perception is formed
Professionals	1. Offer sponsorship to a male and a female runner.	Increase brand loyalty among professionals	Communication with potential consumers goes through 'word of mouth'	Distrust is eliminated. A loyal group of sportsmen appears which will be referential for beginners.

Source: results of a field survey, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, 2018

Having a fitness tracker also helps move from one segment to another (as shown in Figure 6). Such transition strengthens and develops social groups, making them more motivated and united.

Speaking about the promotion program, its main goal is to create the need for the 'non-sporty' to make a bracelet part of fashion and of everyday life. It is necessary to create the desire to use the

bracelet more often and to explain its importance and usefulness. In Table 2, for each selected group measures were developed to promote the fitness bracelet, taking into account the possible motives for the purchase.

Conclusion

Consumer behaviour is an integral part of our daily lives. The psychological and social processes involved in buying and consuming goods and services form the subject matter of this text. As leading experts in the field of consumer behavior pay attention, the objective positivist approach to studying cause and effect in consumer behaviour (as in any other kind of behaviour), will be combined with the interpretivist emphasis on trying to understand the emotional, non-rational aspects of the process (Statt, 2013). This study showed these trends. In this research a link between the purchase and the buyer's affiliation to a certain reference group was established. Conventionally, these groups can be named 'a successful businessman' and 'sporty'; each has their own symbols and motivation. The research does not state that *only* smartphones are the symbol of a 'successful businessman', and fitness-tracker a symbol of a 'sporty' person. However, the correlation between the product and social status is defined.

The motives that form the need for smartphones have both personal and group-based nature. As of stimuli, the most common is the desired optimal characteristics which largely influence the customer's final decision which will be made only based on the compliance between a specific smartphone and the desired characteristics (in order to feel fulfilled, a successful person). The majority of respondents believe that smartphones are able to reflect one's social status, as the price range is very

wide, and successful people possess smartphones of certain brands. Most respondents also believe that smartphones help express individuality.

A fitness-tracker is an item that can also carry a certain 'element of the group'. This is a slightly different group believing that "a sound mind lives in a healthy body". Based on in-depth research, it can be concluded that such device as a fitness-tracker is known to a wide audience, but it is purchased by people with clear motivation associated with the external effect produced on others. The fitness-tracker is considered a good gift. The emotional part in this product is not important; however, visual design is one of the main selection criteria. Purchasing a tracker is not always a rational choice. Fitness tracker on a person's wrist is a symbol of mobility, health and pursuit of success.

The study of symbols in the life of different cultures is a highly interesting and fascinating process. A person's behavior speaks much more than words, yet people can be interpreted not only by words and actions, but also by what and how they buy. A purchase of a smartphone, a car or a book can provide a lot of information about a person. The ability to 'decipher' and, if possible, to structure a principle of choosing a particular product is an interesting and important task not only for commercial needs, but also for the social sphere.

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