Glossary

Agent Search: In agent search, a consumer is able to evaluate more available products side by side, as is the situation in simultaneous search. In the electronic markets simultaneous search is often called agent search, because of the internet tools that makes information comparing available, is called search agents. In online settings, a consumer can use various tools (for example: comparison sites, search agents or comparison agents) to collect information that is available on the internet on a particular product or service.


BargainFinder Experiment: In 1995, a shopbot named BargainFinder was launched by a group of researchers in then Andersen Consulting to test the reaction of consumers and online vendors. It received major media coverage and became one of the first shopbots that came into public attention.

Bargain-Oriented Shoppers: Buyers that search for the best existing offers, attempting to maximise the rapport between quality and price for the product/services they buy.

Bundled Comparison: A feature of comparison-shopping service that allows shoppers to compare price for multiple products as a whole offered by different online vendors

Channel Selection: The strategy online vendors employ to maximise their ROI on customer acquisition. For example, an online vendor could select only the most popular shopbot to list their product or select a few specialized shopbots to list their products.

Choice Overload: A scenario when a consumer is being overwhelmed and hesitating to make decisions when facing with too many choices.

Comparison-Shopping Market: The shopbot-mediated electronic commerce market consisting of online shoppers, online vendors and shopbots in which online shoppers are referred to online vendors by the comparison-shopping services.
Comparison-Shopping Services: The Web-based services that online shoppers use when they try to find product prices and other related information aggregated from multiple vendor sites.

Convenience-Oriented Consumers: Consumers who value convenience value more than price reductions and often prefer to pay a premium for shopping online rather than travelling to brick-and-mortar outlets. These consumers do not wish to negotiate with several sellers when shopping, because of the increased search effort.

Cost Per Click: A revenue model by comparison-shopping service providers that charge the online vendors for each customer it refers to the vendor. For example, online shoppers want to buy an iPod and searched shopping.com. Shopping.com provides a list of online vendors that offer the iPod model requested by the online shopper. The online shopper finds one vendor from the list and clicks through to the vendor site to buy the product. The vendor paid shopping.com for this referral based on the agreed rate regardless whether the purchase is complete or not.

Customer Satisfaction/dissatisfaction (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Customer_satisfaction): Is a measure of how satisfied a customer is with your products and services. Customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction is a predictor of the degree to which customer will remain loyal, repurchase products and services, and tell others (see also netpromoter) (http://www.netpromoter.com)

Data Feeding: A data retrieval technique that allow users to feed information into a shopbot database in a pre-defined format. Data feeding was widely used in popular shopbots.

Data Wrapping: A data retrieval technique that can be either automatically or manually created to identify information contained in a HTML web page and then transform them into a consistent format for further processing. Data wrapping technology was widely used in early shopbots.

E-Commerce: The process of buying and selling goods and/or services using the Internet.

Electronic Customer Relationship Management (eCRM): eCRM (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ECRM) is the use of the information technologies and the Internet to manage relationships with the customer. Examples of e-CRM include frequently asked questions (FAQ’s), chat, e-mail, mobile, sales force management, customer database.

Electronic Markets: Electronic market is the markets in the internet. The word Electronic market means the same as digital markets, internet markets, virtual markets or online markets.

E-Retailing (www.internetretailer.com): A storefront on the Internet (also known as Internet retailing). An e-retailer can be part of a chain of retail stores (e.g., Walmart* has 3500+ stores as well as a website) or the only access a consumer has to your business.

General Shopbots: Shopbots that provide price comparison information for products from multiple and unrelated product categories. For example, shopping.com provides price comparison for electronics, books, computers, furniture, toys, etc.

Hedonic Shopping Motivations: This term reflects the value found in the shopping experience itself independent of task-related activities. Hedonic motivations refer to experiential benefits and sacrifices, such as entertainment and escapism or social interaction. Individuals who focus on hedonic motivations prefer to be stimulated by internal gratifications such as emotions, entertainment and contact with other consumers rather than convenience or price reductions.
**Individualised Marketing:** A marketing strategy in which the firm adapts its commercial and promotional activities to the specific characteristics of individual customers.

**Information Search:** Consumers look for information of products with desired qualities and sellers offering these products at competitive prices in an attempt to decide what, when, and from whom to purchase. Consumer’s pre-purchase information search is an essential part of consumer decision making process (Bettman 1979; Bettman et al. 1990; Engel et al. 1990; Howard and Sheth 1969; Olhavsky 1985, Schmidt and Spreng 1996).

**Iterative Search:** An iterative search begins just as a sequential query to the product information. The query results are compared to each other, and then outputs or results are reported or at least noted. The difference in the sequential search is that after finding the outputs, a consumer will make the query again, and the process is then repeated. The possibility to return to price/product information that was previously searched, but not chosen, can be called iterative search. Iterative search allows back-and-forth movement as consumers compare product and service offerings.

**Mass Marketing:** A marketing strategy in which the firm attempts to attract one or more large customer segments with a standardised offer or products/services.

**M-Commerce Customer Perception of Convenience:** The ease of access to and use of the services offered by m-commerce service providers.

**M-Commerce Service Features:** Specific services provided by mobile commerce vendors. Examples include order placement, payment, security and privacy measures, inquiry, etc.

**M-Commerce:** Using mobile communication devices and the Internet to complete business transactions

**Megabrand:** A brand of products and or services that is widely known, recognised and bought by consumers, generating a large and constant amount of revenues.

**Mobile Comparison:** A feature of comparison-shopping service that allows a shopper to interact with shopbot via mobile devices

**Multi Attribute Utility Theory:** A decision-making theory that assume human beings can subjectively assign a weight to each attribute and calculate the utility of each choice by multiplying the weight and value of each attribute then adding them together. As a result, each alternative has a corresponding utility. Comparison and a decision can be made by choosing the alternative that has the highest utility.

**Multichannel:** Multichannel retailing/marketing is the use of different marketing channels to reach a customer. A multichannel retailer (http://www.mckinsey.com/practices/retail/knowledge/knowledge_multichannel.asp) might have stores, catalogs, an Internet site, kiosks, direct mail, e-mail access for the customer.

**Online Marketing Channel:** The way an online vendor reaching the customer. There are several ways an online vendor can reach the potential customer. They could launch a website and established a brand name like Amazon.com so customers could go to them directly. They could also list their product in popular auction sites like eBay.com or list them in comparison-shopping sites like shopping.com.

**Online Shopping:** Process consumers go through to purchase products or services over the Internet.
**Price-Oriented Shoppers:** Consumers who see price as an important cost component and compare prices between different alternatives before purchasing. Price is the most important choice criteria used by these consumers in deciding where to shop online. Price-oriented consumers constantly compare offers with those of competitors, changing the supplier when there is the least reduction in price for the products and services they need.

**Search Agent:** We define, the internet tools that make information comparing available, for consumers purchase decision, search agents. Search agents are made to help consumers to make purchase decision most efficiently. Search agents include information of product prices and product qualities in the same internet site. In search agent site, information is in comparable form.

**Search Behavior:** In recent years, there have been many studies into consumer search behavior in a digital environment (Chiang 2006, Jansen 2006, Johnson et al. 2004, Lauraeus-Niinivaara et al. 2007, 2008, Smith and Spreng 1996, Spink et al. 2005, Öörni 2002, 2003). When we are writing about search behavior, we mean the situation when Consumers are seeking, or looking for, information of products for decision making purposes. There are nearly 60 factors that have been found to influence the consumer pre-purchase information search behaviour (Schmidt and Spreng 1996; Srinivasan and Ratchford 1991).

**Search Engine:** Web application that gathers information from the web using different strategies (crawlers or spiders) and then performs the basic retrieval task, accepting a query, comparing a query with the records in a database, and producing a retrieval set as output. When we are writing about the tools in the internet, search engine is different than search agent. We define the internet tools that make information available for different purposes, search engines.

**Search Engine Marketing:** Form of Internet marketing that seeks to promote websites by increasing their visibility in search engine result pages.

**Search Patterns:** Search pattern means the shape of the consumer search process. In other words, search pattern is the search strategy consumer employed, when seeking for information for buying decision. Consumers employ different search patterns in their pre-purchase search. We identified three types of search patterns in our experiment: sequential, agent search, and iterative search.

**Sequential Search:** Sequential search occurs when a consumer consecutively visits or contacts sellers. Each visit is composed of an information gathering and a buying decision phase. The consumer familiarizes her/himself with the products available and decides whether to purchase a product or to visit the next store. The consumer can compare the products in various stores, yet s/he has to resort to her/his memory as a source of product information to evaluate those products not in the current store.

**Service Failure:** The failure of a business to meet the expectations of a customer.

**Service Recovery:** The identification of points of customer pain and be willing to address these issues to achieve customer satisfaction. The ability to recover after a service failure is important because customers are more loyal if a company has addressed a failure than if they never address the failure or never had the failure at all. (http://www.amazon.com/Knock-Your-Socks-Service-Recovery/dp/081447084X)

**SERVQUAL:** A theoretical model developed by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry which can be used to evaluate service quality.

**Shopbot:** The software agent powered the comparison-shopping service. Though there are variations in design and implementation for dif-
different services, the basic functions include data gathering, storage, and presentation. There are two main data retrieval methods: data wrapping and data feeding.

**Shopbots:** Web-based software agents that help online shoppers search price and related product information from multiple vendor sites.

**Shopping Agent:** Specialised software application that can be interactively used by customers to search for and compare Stores, Products/Services or Prices, on the basis of specific selection criteria.

**Simultaneous Search:** Product comparison could be more efficient, if the consumer were able to evaluate more available products side by side. This is the essence of simultaneous search. All information needed for the evaluation is readily available, and consumer has no need to resort to secondary information sources. Thus, there are only two phases in the consumer decision making process: information gathering and buying decision. In the electronic markets simultaneous search is often called agent search, because of the internet tools that makes information comparing available is called search agents. In offline circumstances, a consumer might collect a simultaneous search sample based on either internal information formed by experience of repeated purchases (internal search), or by, for example, acquainting her/himself with special issues of consumer journals that compare products the consumer is interested in (external search).

**Small Online Vendors:** Online vendors without an established brand name and mainly depend on third party technology to operate their online store.

**Specialized Shopbots:** Shopbots that provide price comparison information for products from one or a few related categories. For example, addall.com provides price comparison for books, CDs, and DVDs.

**The Least Effort Principle:** A decision-making theory that human beings always try to minimize their effort in decision-making as long as the decision quality meets the minimum criteria.

**Traffic Rank:** The number of hits a website receives in a specific time period. It is an indicator for the popularity of the site.

**Utilitarian Shopping Motivations:** This term reflects the task-related value of a shopping experience. In particular, they refer to time savings and the chance to avoid shopping tasks that Internet offers. Search engines allow consumers to achieve some utilitarian shopping orientation goals such as: convenience, time saving, variety seeking and price reductions.

**Variety-Seekers:** Consumers who like to compare among a wide range and assortment of products before purchasing. These consumers also like to find detailed information online.