Chapter 7
Omni Channel Fashion Shopping

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ABSTRACT
This chapter gives insight into consumers’ online and offline fashion shopping behavior, consumers’ omni-channel usage during the shopping process, and consumer fashion shopper segments. Based on a literature review, omni-channel shopping behavior during the shopping process was operationalized. Subsequently, an online survey was developed to collect information of 2124 consumers living in the catchment areas of five regional Dutch shopping centers in 2013. Results of the analyses confirm previous findings and contribute additional evidence that suggests relations between consumers’ omni-channel shopping behavior during the shopping process and socio-demographics and psychographics. Furthermore, results show that channel usage in the previous phase of the shopping process has a major influence on the channel usage in the following phases of the shopping process. By using the TwoStep clustering technique, six fashion shopper segments are found and described, with one of them a clear omni-channel shopper segment. The results provide information for retailers to know the type of consumers they reach through various channels to offer the right information, on the right channel, during the various phases of the shopping process.

INTRODUCTION
Consumers increasingly use a range of technologies in their lives, also affecting the way they shop (Oh, Teo & Sambamurthy, 2012). The number of purchase and orientation channels (such as magazines, advertisement leaflets/catalogues, the shop, family or friends, website/web shop, social media, and applications on mobile devices) in innovative retail environments has increased.
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(Kumar, 2010). Consumers, nowadays, have many opportunities to orientate, gain information and buy products; they can shop at any time and at any location. Consumers also increasingly use a range of online and offline channels at the same time, so called omni channel usage. Consequently, consumers are well informed through all these channels and are therefore more critical while making purchase decisions.

Many retailers have expanded their shopping channels, offline and online, to better serve their customers and to increase sales (Benediktus, Brady & Dark, 2008; Verhoef, Neslin & Vroomen, 2007). More and more existing retailers are developing a multichannel retailing strategy for serving shoppers across all channels (Seck & Philippe, 2011). For retailers it is important to offer consumers the right mix of information sources during the different phases of the shopping process (stimulation, information search, purchase, delivery and after sales service; e.g., Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 2001).

In recent years, an increasing number of studies has focused on online shopping behavior (e.g., Javadi, Dolatabadi, Nourbakhsh, Poursaeedi & Asadollahi, 2012; Verhoef, et al., 2007; Kim & Eastin, 2011; Jepsen, 2007). Online shopping behavior has changed consumers’ decision making process. It is a challenge to understand the behavior of consumers in an environment where consumers can shop anytime and anywhere. Thereby, it is important to understand the characteristics of consumer segments, in order to target and position online and offline channels well, to be able to reach new customers and serve current customers (Konuș, Verhoef & Neslin, 2008; Wallace, Giese & Johnson, 2004).

Some studies focused on multi-channel and cross channel shopping behavior (Konuș et al., 2008; Neslin et al., 2006; Verhoef, et al., 2007). Multi-channel shopping is shopping on different channels at the same time, for instance in the brick and mortar shop and online on a website. Within multi-channel shopping every channel has its own strategy. In cross channel shopping there is one strategy for all channels and consumers use different channels. Omni channel shopping is seen as an advanced form of cross channel shopping. Consumers use several channels during the buying process, both online and offline. In addition, consumers switch easily and continuously between these channels and they experience all channels together as one complete channel.

Moreover, new media and mobile devices have influenced shopping behavior. The new shopper is always online; has fast access to information; compares and evaluates prices actively; uses several channels, online as well as offline to search, shop and buy; shares his/her product experience through social media, and at last the new shopper has high expectations for meeting his/her needs and wants, anytime and anywhere (Keller, 2010).

At the moment, European retailers and consumers experience tough times due to the financial crises. Consumers have less confidence in the economy; as a result they are more conscious about their purchases. In addition to the dropped consumer confidence, the retail market is saturated because of the continuous expansion in the last decades, leading to an increased competition between retailers (NRW, 2011). Consumers previously came automatically to the shops, but those days are over. Nowadays, consumers need to be attracted to shops. Hence, information about consumers is needed to attract new consumers, and to increase involvement and loyalty. Eventually, this should result in more profit for the retailer.

A method to study consumers and their buying behavior is consumer segmentation (Gilboa, 2009). Consumer segmentation is the process of dividing a heterogeneous market into groups of customers which have nearly the same characteristics, wishes, needs, buying habits or reactions on marketing activities. Consumer segmentation assumes that consumers exhibit heterogeneity in product preferences and buying habits (Dibb, 1998). Through segmentation, retailers can determine the most interesting customer groups to focus
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