AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Online shopping is one of the fastest growing forms of shopping with sales reaching $141.4 billion in 2004 (Shop.org, 2005). With the tremendous growth of online retailing, and the prevalence of impulse buying today, this study’s purpose was to investigate the internal and external factors of impulse buying in an online setting. Internally looking at what triggers the consumer to buy impulsively, and externally looking at what external trigger cues on retail websites encourage impulse buying.

A revised model of the Consumption Impulse Formation Enactment Model was used in this study in the context of online shopping. Based on this model, it was hypothesized that impulse buying tendency, affective and cognitive states, and normative evaluations affect impulse buying decisions. It was also hypothesized that different types of external stimuli present on a website affect the level of impulse purchase made.
This study consisted of three phases. In phase one, five focus group interviews were conducted to determine what external cues exist on apparel retailer websites that trigger impulse buying behavior, and found four categories of cues used to create a coding guide of external impulse trigger cues of a website. In phase two, a content analysis of the top 99 online apparel websites was conducted to support the content validity of the focus group information, and assess current retailers in terms of the amount of external cues present on their websites. A correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship between the web retailer’s financial performance, and the amount of external stimuli present on their websites that trigger impulse buying. In phase three, an experiment was conducted with a web survey format to determine whether different types of external impulse trigger cues affect the level of impulse purchase made. Five conditions of mock apparel web pages were created, each representing a different type of external impulse trigger cue (sales, promotions, ideas, and suggestions), with the fifth as a control web page. Participants were presented with a hypothetical buying scenario adopted from Rook and Fisher (1995) in which they had to make a purchase decision for a girl named Mary, varying in the level of impulsiveness. Impulse buying tendency (Rook & Fisher, 1995), affective and cognitive state (Verplanken & Herabaldi, 2001), and normative evaluation (Rook & Fisher, 1995) were measured with previously developed reliable scales.

ANOVA was performed and found no significant differences among the types of external impulse trigger cues; $F(299) = 1.59, p > 0.177$. A correlation analysis was conducted and revealed a positive correlation between impulse buying tendency scores and past impulse buying behavior; $r = 0.394, n = 300, p < 0.00001$. A positive correlation
was also found between affective state and past impulse buying behavior; \( r = 0.154, n = 300, p < 0.01 \) A negative correlation was found between cognitive state and past impulse buying behavior; \( r = -0.169, n = 300, p < 0.05 \). And last, a significant positive correlation was found between normative evaluation and impulse purchase decisions, \( r = 0.14, n = 300, p < 0.05 \).

This study identified key external stimuli present on retailers’ websites that trigger impulse buying behavior, which no research has looked at previously. A reliable coding guide of impulse trigger cues was also developed from this study. The positive correlation found between retailers’ web performance and the amount of cues present on their websites, suggest that as the amount of external impulse trigger cues increase on websites, so too do web sales. The findings from this study also suggest that internal factors of impulse buying influence impulse buying behavior in an online setting as it does in a traditional brick and mortar shopping context as studied in previous research. This study thus extends the CIFE model into an online shopping context. This research informs consumers of marketing tactics used to encourage impulse buying online. Marketers can use this information to assess their own websites in terms of what external stimuli to present on their websites to trigger impulse buying. Limitations in this study include the small sample size of retailers content analyzed and the time limitation of coding websites. This study also did not adopt the entire CIFE model to an online shopping context which a further study is suggested to do so.
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRIGGER CUES OF IMPULSE BUYING ONLINE

By

Sandy E. Burnett

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Sandy E. Burnett, Author
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dedicated to....

My Daren for always being there for me
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

Online shopping is one of the fastest growing forms of shopping with growth rates exceeding traditional retailing (Levy & Weitz, 2001). According to an annual Shop.org study conducted by Forrester Research, online retail sales rose 23.8 percent reaching $141.4 billion in 2004, representing 4.6 percent of all total retail sales in the US. Shop.org reported that online retail sales in 2005 rose 22.0 percent to $172 billion from 2004 (Silverman, 2006). This is a jump from $45 billion in 2000. The future of online retail sales is very optimistic. By 2010, it is predicted that 15.0 to 20.0 percent of all retail sales in the US will be conducted using the internet (Shopping Around the Web, 2000). Forrester Research (2004) predicts that by 2010, online retail sales will reach over $331 billion, accounting for 13 percent of total retail sales.

Online apparel products consistently rank among the most popular product categories sold over the internet (Desmarteau, 2004). Sales over $3.7 billion in apparel purchases made up just the holiday season in 2003 (Shop.org & Nielsen Net ratings, 2004). According to a UCLA study (2002), 48.2 percent of new online users and 41.8 percent of experienced online users reported making an online apparel purchase (Lebo, 2003).
In a recent study conducted by Shop.org (2005), reasons for shopping online include convenience (66.6%), avoiding lines (59%), ease of finding items (51.6%), ability to make price comparisons (51.1%), and ability to make product comparisons (44.5%).

While the increased convenience in online shopping compared to traditional brick and mortar shopping is advantageous to many shoppers, such convenience may also encourage impulse buying. The internet serves as a convenient shopping channel that allows the consumer to shop at their leisure, offering 24 hour/7 days a week shopping, and in the comfort of their own home. Rook (1987) stated that “Conveniences such as credit cards, cash machines, instant credit, 24-hour retailing, and home shopping networks make it easier than ever before for consumers to buy things on impulse” (p.189).

The internet is an alternative impulse channel (Phau & Lo, 2004) that offers increased accessibility of products and services, and ease of making impulse purchases (Kacen & Lee, 2002). Prior research has found that impulse buying is commonly encouraged by retailers and practiced by consumers in brick and mortar stores. The internet serves as an additional shopping channel for impulse purchases to be made, and not as a substitute for brick and mortar stores (Kotan, 1999), therefore consumers are likely to conduct impulse buying online (Phau & Lo, 2004; Bayley & Nancarrow, 1998).

Welles (1986) reported that most shoppers occasionally engage in impulse buying, and an upward trend in unplanned purchasing was found (Cobb & Hoyer, 1986). More recently, retailers reported that over 50 percent of their mall shoppers purchased on impulse (Nichols, Li, Roslow, Kranendonk & Mandakovic, 2001). Seventy percent of all grocery transactions found that at least one item purchased was bought on impulse.
Apparel products are commonly purchased on impulse. Bellinger, Robertson, and Hirshman (1978) found that apparel purchases made up 50 percent of impulse purchases made in retail stores. They also found that more than one third of all department store purchases were bought on impulse (Bellinger et al., 1978) indicating the importance of impulse purchases for a retailer’s profits.

A typical online shopper spends about 30 seconds viewing a website before they decide to click away or view the merchandise on a website (Brohan, 1999), which makes creating an enticing website ever important in drawing shopper’s buying attention. Many online retailers are implementing impulse buying strategies that employ an array of promotional and personalization strategies to entice shopper’s impulse buying behavior (Brohan, 1999). Practitioners and scholars have also been investigating ways to implement techniques in site promotion (Berthon, Pitt, & Watson, 1996; Ducoffe, 1996; Coyle & Thomson, 2001), as well as presentational delivery of website appeal (Palmer & Griffith, 1998; Huizingh, 2000). According to a recent survey (Shop.org, 2005), most successful website features in a holiday shopping period included free shipping, gift idea centers, suggested items, and featured sale item pages.

1.2. Problem Statement

While evidence suggests that impulse purchases are likely to be prevalent in an online apparel shopping context (Bellinger et al., 1978), there is a limited amount of impulse buying research conducted in the context of online shopping. Much of the research done on impulse purchases has focused on in-store purchases (Bayley &
Nancarrow, 1998); a problem arises in the limited amount of impulse buying research online. With the tremendous growth and importance of online retailing, and the prevalence of impulse buying today, further research must look at consumer impulse buying behaviors online as impulse buying is highly likely in online shopping.

1.3. Purpose of Study

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate impulse buying behavior in an online setting. More specifically, this study aims to examine the internal and external factors of impulse buying in online retailing; internally looking at what triggers the consumer to buy impulsively, and externally looking at what external trigger cues on retail websites encourage impulse buying. Because no literature exists that examines external cues on websites that potentially trigger impulse buying behavior, focus group interviews will be conducted to determine the following research question: “What external cues exist on apparel retailer websites that potentially trigger impulse buying?” The information collected from the focus group interviews were used to develop an appropriate coding guide of external impulse trigger cues that currently exist on apparel retailer websites. A content analysis was then be conducted to assess current retailers in terms of the amount of external cues present on their websites. The content analysis will specifically addressed the following research question: 1. “Is there a relationship between the top 99 online apparel retailers’ financial performance and the amount of external impulse trigger cues available on their websites?” Finally, an experiment was conducted
to test whether these external cues (gathered from coding guide) affect impulse buying behavior, and how internal cues are relate to impulse buying in online retailing.

The contributions to this study are three-fold. There is no prior research that examines external cues present on a website that potentially trigger impulse buying behavior. Thus this study will contribute to this field of research and will provide insight into consumers’ impulse buying behavior when exposed to external trigger cues of impulse buying on a retailer’s website (which research there of is lacking). Second, this study will be useful to marketers in understanding the importance of website design and offerings and how these factors affect impulsive behavior online. And third, this research provides information to consumers in terms of what aspects marketers include on their websites to encourage consumers to impulsively buy.

1.4. Hypotheses

Based on the following review of literature and the Consumption Impulse Formation and Enactment Model, the following hypotheses were developed. The Consumption Impulse Formation and Enactment Model, developed by Dholakia in 2000 measures several antecedents such as marketing stimuli, situational factors, a person’s impulsivity trait as they form to create a consumption impulse enactment (or impulse purchase). This model was adopted and revised to fit an online context, and to measure the following hypotheses: A further review of this theoretical framework is discussed in Chapter Two under “Theoretical Framework”.
H1  There is a difference between the types of external impulse trigger cue and the level of impulse purchase made.

H2  Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between impulse buying tendency and impulse buying.

H3a Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between a person’s affective state and impulse buying.

H3b Among online apparel shoppers, there is a negative relationship between a person’s cognitive state and impulse buying.

H4  Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between normative evaluation and impulse buying.

Each of these hypotheses are further explained in the following chapter.
1.5. Definition of Terms

The following terminology was used throughout this study.

1. *Affective aspects*: refers to a person’s emotional state, mood, or feelings evoked during impulse shopping (Wansink, 1994; Youn, 2000).

2. *Consumer’s lack of cognitive deliberation*: refers to a sudden urge to act without evaluating the consequences (Youn, 2000).

3. *Consumption impulse*: refers to the “irresistible urge to consume” (Dholakia, 2000, p.960).

4. *Cognitive aspects*: refers to how one understands, thinks and interprets information (Youn, 2000).


7. *Impulsivity*: refers to the tendency to make a quick response without reflection (Murray, 1938).

8. *Impulsivity trait*: refers to “the tendency to respond quickly and without reflection, and is characterized by rapid reaction times, absence of foresight, and a tendency to act without a careful plan” (Dholakia, 2000, p.961).

9. *Impulse buying*: “occurs when a consumer experiences a sudden, often powerful and persistent urge to buy something immediately” (Rook, 1987, p.191)
10. **Impulse buying tendency**: refers to the “degree to which an individual is likely to make unintended, immediate, and unreflective purchases” (Jones, Reynolds, Weun, & Beatty, 2003, p.506).

11. **Internal cues**: refers to a person’s emotional state, mood, and self-feelings (Wansink, 1994).

12. **Mood management**: refers to the process of impulse purchase acquisitions fulfilling the need to manage or change one’s feelings or moods (Coley & Burgess, 2003).

13. **Normative evaluations**: refers to “consumers’ judgments about the appropriateness of making an impulsive purchase in a particular buying situation” (Rook and Fisher, 1995, p. 306).

14. **Planned impulse buying**: refers to when a consumer has the intention to purchase certain items; and the purchase is dependent upon sale conditions and promotions (Stern, 1962).

15. **Positive buying emotion**: refers to a consumer’s positive mood state that is generated from the impulse purchase gratification (Coley & Burgess, 2003).

16. **Pure impulse buying**: refers to when a consumer makes a “novelty” or “escape” purchase, breaking the normal buying pattern (Stern, 1962).

17. **Reminder impulse buying**: refers to when a consumer recalls a previous experience or need recognition of a certain product that results in a purchase (Stern, 1962).

18. **Suggestion impulse buying**: refers to when the consumer sees the product for the first time and rationalizes a need for the product (Stern, 1962).

19. **Unplanned buying**: refers to purchases that were not planned in advance (Stern, 1962).
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Impulse Buying

Early research on impulse buying behavior has attempted to define impulse buying. Murray in 1938 defined impulsivity as a tendency to make a quick response without much reflection. Tauber in 1972 defined impulse buying as shopping that was not planned. Rook redefined impulse buying in 1987:

"Impulse buying occurs when a consumer experiences a sudden, often powerful and persistent urge to buy something immediately. The impulse to buy is hedonically complex and may stimulate emotional conflict. Also, impulse buying is prone to occur with diminished regard for its consequences." (p. 191).

Research on impulse buying proliferated into investigating how merchandising attempts affected impulse buying (Rook, 1987) such as retail shelf location (Patterson, 1963), and the amount of shelf space (Cox, 1964).

Many researchers have associated unplanned or unintended purchasing with impulsive purchasing, and is necessary for categorizing a purchase as impulsive (Kollat & Willet, 1967; Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995). According to Stern (1962), unplanned buying refers to purchases that were not planned in advance, and includes impulse buying. The two are distinguished by the “relative speed with which buying decisions occur” (Hausman, 2000). Planned buyers enter a shopping situation with a prior
intention to buy knowing which product and brand they will buy. Their decision takes thought and is planned. Unplanned buyers enter a shopping situation with a prior intention to buy, but do not know which product or brand they will purchase. Their purchase decision is made quicker than planned buyers, but not as hastily as impulse buyers’ purchases. Impulse buyers have no prior intention to buy with no preconceived idea of what they will purchase. Their decision is made quick and hastily. (Hausman, 2000). Stern (1962) grouped impulse buying into four categories:

1. Pure Impulse Buying: When a consumer makes a “novelty” or “escape” purchase, breaking the normal buying pattern.

2. Reminder Impulse Buying: When a consumer recalls a previous experience or need recognition of a certain product resulting in a purchase.

3. Suggestion Impulse Buying: When the consumer sees the product for the first time and rationalizes a need for the product.

4. Planned Impulse Buying: When a consumer has the intention to purchase certain items; the purchase being dependent upon sale conditions and promotions.

This study will treat all types of impulse buying the same with no distinction among the types of impulse buying.

Dholakia (2000) recognized four characteristics of an impulse purchase. First, the impulsive behavior is viewed to have occurred from “a sudden, often powerful, and persistent urge to consume, often without much deliberation” (Dholakia, 2000, p.957). A second characteristic of an impulse purchase is that it occurs in a short time span (Dholakia, 2000). The decision to purchase occurs after exposure to the product (Hock &
Loewenstein, 1991) and the decision to purchase is made quickly and hastily (Barrat, 1985; Rook, 1987). Thirdly, the consumption impulse does not always result in a purchase, and fourthly a consumer’s impulse to buy may occur once or recur more than once for the same consumer (Dholakia, 2000).

Impulse Buyers. Impulse buyers are less likely to consider the consequences of buying on impulse (Rook, 1987) and less likely to thoroughly evaluate their purchase decisions than a typical informed shopper (Jones, Reynolds, Weun & Beatty, 2003). They are more willing to accept spontaneous buying ideas (Hock & Loewenstein, 1991), and are more focused on the immediate gratification of purchasing the product. Impulse buyers are often drawn to a mysterious attraction of the product which motivates the buyer to purchase the item. (Rook, 1987)

2.2. Internal and External Factors of Impulse Buying

Consumers are affected by both internal and external factors of impulse buying (Wansink, 1994). These factors include internal and external stimuli that affect a consumer’s decision to engage in impulse buying. Because impulse buying behavior is exclusively stimulus driven (Rook & Fisher, 1995), increased exposure to certain stimuli increases the likelihood of impulsively buying (Iyer, 1989). Such factors decipher which consumers engage in impulsive buying behavior, and how retailers play a part in encouraging impulsive buying behavior.
2.2.1. Internal factors of impulse buying

Internal factors of impulse buying focus directly on the individual, examining the internal cues and characteristics of the individual that make them engage in impulsive buying behavior. Such factors involve a consumer’s personality traits which determine the degree of their impulse buying tendency, internal cues such as emotional states, moods, and self-feelings, the consumer’s normative evaluation of impulse buying engagement, and demographic factors (Kacen & Lee, 2002).

**Impulse buying tendency.** The present research investigates consumer’s impulse buying tendency in an online context. Several researchers have suggested that consumer personality traits can exemplify impulsive behavior more than other traits (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Puri, 1996; Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Rook & Gardner, 1993; Weun, Jones, & Beatty, 1998). Research contends that these personality traits can help determine the degree of a person’s impulse buying tendency. (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Puri, 1996; Rook and Fisher, 1995; Rook and Gardner, 1993). Impulse buying tendency (IBT) is defined as the “degree to which an individual is likely to make unintended, immediate, and unreflective purchases” (Jones, Reynolds, Weun, & Beatty, 2003, p.506).

There have been several scales developed to measure such consumer personality traits related to impulse buying (Puri, 1996; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Rook & Gardner, 1993; Weun, et al., 1998). Youn and Faber (2000) found that the tendency to impulsively buy was linked to a personality trait “lack of control” where impulse buyers lack the cognitive control of not purchasing on impulse in a buying situation. Youn and Faber in their study also found that consumers with a higher impulse buying tendency were more
likely to be affected by stimuli such as advertisements, visual elements, promotional gifts, clothing and looks, and feeling fat than others with a lower impulse buying tendency. A person with a higher impulse buying tendency is more likely to engage in in-store browsing and likely to “experience more urges to buy impulsively and will tend to act more frequently on those urges” (Beatty & Ferrel, 1997, p.4). To measure a consumer’s impulse buying tendency, Rook and Fisher (1995) developed a nine-item measure called the Buying Impulsiveness Scale which was found to have a strong correlation with impulse buying behavior. In 2001, Verplanken and Herabadi developed an Impulse Buying Tendency Scale that measures both an individual’s impulse buying tendency and affective state (emotions, mood), and serves as a reliable scale in measuring an individual’s impulse buying behavior, with Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.86$ for the complete 20 item scale. See Appendix C for the full scale.

**Internal cues of impulse buying.** Internal cues of impulse buying include a person’s affective and cognitive state. A person’s emotional state, mood, and self-feelings can be recognized as a person’s “affective state” (Youn, 2000). These affective aspects can refer to one’s “emotions like pleasure, excitement, and guilt” (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001, p.74). Internal stimuli is processed by the consumer affectively and/or cognitively resulting in impulsive or non-impulsive behavior. In result, feelings might include an “irresistible urge to buy, positive buying emotions, and mood management,” (Coley & Burgess, 2003, p.283). When a consumer experiences an “irresistible urge to buy”, he/she feels compelled to make a particular purchase. “Positive buying emotion” refers to a consumer’s positive mood state that is generated from the impulse purchase.
A consumer can also be motivated to impulsively buy through “mood management” where the impulse purchase acquisition fulfills the need to manage or change one’s feelings or moods (Coley & Burgess, 2003; Youn, 2000), and often results in impulse purchasing (Gardner & Rook, 1988; Rook, 1987; Rook & Gardner, 1993).

Cognitive aspects of a person can also affect impulse behavior. Cognitive aspects refer to how one understands, thinks and interprets information, and can result in unplanned buying tendencies, little cognitive deliberation, and disregard for the future (Youn, 2000). A consumer’s lack of cognitive deliberation refers to a sudden urge to act without evaluating the consequences, and often results in impulse buying behavior.

Consumers who are more responsive to their affective state and less responsive to their cognitive states have been found to experience a strong urge to buy (Dholakia, 2000; Rook, 1987; Youn & Faber, 2000) and are more likely to engage in impulsive buying behavior. Impulsive consumers are more likely to be sensitive to their emotions and feelings, than non-impulsive consumers (Rook & Gardner, 1993) and this affective state can act as internal triggers to buy impulsively (Dholakia, 2000; Youn & Faber, 2000). Impulse buying can thus satisfy a consumer’s emotional condition and stimulate immediate gratification from the hedonic satisfaction of making a purchase (Youn & Faber, 2000). When consumers are more responsive to their affective state, and less to their cognitive state, little cognitive deliberation and evaluation of consequences occur (Youn & Faber, 2000), and impulse purchases are more likely to result (Dholakia, 2000).

Normative evaluation of impulse buying. Rook and Fisher (1995) define normative evaluations as “consumers’ judgments about the appropriateness of making an
impulsive purchase in a particular buying situation” (p. 306). Research has found that consumers tend to give a favorable evaluation of their impulse purchases and do not necessarily view them as wrong. In Rook’s (1987) study, the majority of persons reported feeling good about their impulsive purchases. Negative views tend to arise about impulse buying in general such as viewing impulsive behavior as “irrational, immature, wasteful, and risky” (Rook & Fisher, 1995, p.306). Consumers might feel regretful emotions or guilt after an impulse purchase, concerning unnecessarily spent money (Dittmar & Drury, 2000; Gardner & Rook, 1988). Yet in fact the majority of consumers “failed to view impulse buying as normatively wrong” (Rook, 1987; Hausman, 2000, p.405). Rook and Fisher (1995) proposed that a person’s impulse buying tendency (an inherent personality trait) moderates these negative views of impulse buying, allowing the consumer to engage in impulse buying with less guilt. They discovered that consumers engage in impulse buying only when they feel it is appropriate. Consumers’ impulse tendencies are thwarted when they believe impulse buying is socially inappropriate (Rook & Fisher, 1995).

**Demographic factors of impulse buying.** Consumer demographics have been found to influence unplanned purchasing such as a consumer’s age, gender, and education. Results from one study found that traditional aged college students were more prone to engage in impulsive buying behaviors than older shoppers who were 35 and older (Wood, 1998; Bellenger et al., 1978). Younger individuals have also scored higher in terms of impulsivity than older adults (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1978; Helmers, Young & Pihl, 1995; Rawlings, Bodero & Wiseman, 1995). Dittmar et al. (1995) hypothesized that
impulse purchases would symbolize the ideal self, which differs between gender. Their results were consistent with gender differences (women being more relationship oriented and men being more independent). A relationship between educational experience and impulse buying was also found (Wood, 1998) where more educated individuals were less prone to engage in impulsive buying behavior. Student consumers have also been measured in terms of their impulse buying tendencies. Han, Morgan, Kotsiopulos, and Kang-Park (1991) measured past impulse purchases made of apparel products and found college students were more likely to engage in impulse buying of apparel products than non-student consumers.

2.2.2. External factors of impulse buying

External factors of impulse buying include external trigger cues associated with shopping or buying (Wansink, 1994). These cues (also referred to as marketing stimuli) involve “marketer-controlled environmental and sensory factors” (Youn & Faber, 2000, p. 180). Atmospheric cues of a retail environment (such as smells, sights, and sounds), marketing innovations (such as 24-hour retailing, credit cards, cash machines, etc.), and marketing mix cues (such as “point-of-purchase displays, promotions, and advertisements”) are all external cues that can trigger impulse buying (Youn & Faber, 2000, p.180). Point-of-purchase displays and end-of-aisle displays have been found to instigate impulse buying behavior (Levy & Weitz, 2004). Visual encounters or promotional incentives can induce an urge to impulsively buy (Dholakia, 2000; Rook, 1987; Park & Lennon, 2004). A recent study conducted by Shop.org/Biz rate (2005) found that online retailers experienced a 30% increased sales growth by implementing
aggressive promotions. Some of these promotions included direct email promotions, paid search engine marketing, free shipping, gift idea centers, suggested items, and featured sales item pages.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

2.3.1. Consumption Impulse Formation and Enactment (CIFE) Model

The Consumption Impulse Formation Enactment (CIFE) Model is a relatively new model developed by Dholakia in 2000. The model begins with the impulse-formation process: developing the ‘consumption impulse’ defined as the “irresistible urge to consume” (Dholakia, 2000, p. 960). One or more of three antecedents must be present to culminate the formation of the consumption impulse. Please see figure 2.1. for a graphical representation of the CIFE framework.

The first antecedent is ‘marketing stimuli’ which include factors such as physical proximity (positive memories associated with product’s consumption) and temporal proximity (immediate availability of the product) that lead to a desire to purchase the product. Consumers experience impulsive desires to consume when visually exposed to the product. These factors are called marketing stimuli because the marketers can control the presentation of the product and thus can trigger the consumption impulse. The author notes that “attractive displays, tempting graphics or copy, or associated sales promotions” can encourage an urge to consume (Dholakia, 2000, p. 960).
Figure 2.1 CIFE Framework.
Dholakia’s (2000) second antecedent in the CIFE model is ‘situational factors’ including environmental, personal and social factors present in the context of a particular shopping situation, which may affect the consumer’s propensity to impulsively consume. Examples of these factors include the amount of discretionary income the consumer has, and the consumer’s current mood or emotional state.

A third antecedent of the CIFE model that helps culminate the formation of the consumption impulse is the consumer’s ‘impulsivity trait’. The impulsivity trait is defined as “the tendency to respond quickly and without reflection, and characterized by rapid reaction times, absence of foresight, and a tendency to act without a careful plan” (Dholakia, 2000, p. 961). It is this inherent trait that affects a consumer’s propensity to engage in impulsive buying behavior.

When one or more of these three antecedents are present to an adequate level, the consumption impulse is formed (an irresistible urge to consume). The initiated consumption impulse influenced by each of these antecedents may also vary by individual and for different occasions. Once the consumption impulse is formed, possible constraints to enactment are automatically evaluated (Loewenstein, 1990). Three categories of constraints exist. During the consumer’s evaluation, he or she might experience constraints such as ‘current impediments’ to enactment (e.g., consumer does not have enough time or money), a ‘consideration of long-term deleterious consequences’ of enactment (e.g., consumer thinks of the consequences of spending rent money), or ‘anticipatory emotions’ of enactment (e.g., consumer imagines the positive or negative affect of the impulsive behavior) (Dholakia, 2000).
If the consumer is not aware of any constraining factors during their evaluation, the consumption impulse “may be viewed by the consumer as harmonious with his or her goals, resources, and situation” (Dholakia, 2000, p.952) and then enacts in his/her impulse consumption. If however, there are constraining factors identified, ambivalence and conflict are thus experienced (Dholakia, 2000; Rook, 1987) and the consumer engages in cognitive evaluation of the action. If the cognitive evaluation of the impulsive behavior is positive, the consumer will thus proceed with the enactment and view the constraining factor as “not significant enough” (Dholakia, 2000, p.963). If the cognitive evaluation is negative however, the consumer utilizes their volitional system which acts as a harness to resist the impulsive behavior. Such resistant strategies include ‘formulation and learning of explicit rules (e.g., setting a strict budget to follow to resist impulsive behavior), ‘selective attention’ (e.g., avoiding situations of distractment), ‘encoding control’ (e.g., identifying features that encourage the consumption impulse), ‘exposure control’ (e.g., manipulating environment to avoid consumption impulse stimuli), ‘parsimonious information processing’ (e.g., not allowing information that encourages the consumption impulse to be processed), and last ‘motivation control’ (e.g., activities that help resist consumption impulse such as substitution). As these resistant strategies are implemented, the consumption impulse gradually decreases to dissipation without enacting in the impulsive behavior.

Figure 2.2. shows the original CIFE model compared to the revised CIFE model in Figure 2.3. in the context of online shopping. The revised model assumes that the same consumption impulse enactment will be formed in an online shopping context. While previous research has studied impulse buying behavior in a traditional brick and
Figure 2.2. Original CIFE Model.

Marketing Stimuli

Impulsivity Trait

Situational Factors

Consumption Impulse

Constraining Factors?

Yes

Cognitive Evaluation

Neg

Volitional System
Resistance Strategies

Consumption Impulse Dissipation

No

Consumption Impulse Enactment

*Note: Shaded boxes and dashed lines represent items investigated in current study

Figure 2.3. Revised CIFE Model for Impulse Buying Online.

External Trigger Cues of Impulse Buying

Impulse Buying Tendency

Internal Cues of Impulse Buying

Normative Evaluation

Consumption Impulse

Online Impulse purchase Decision
mortar shopping context (Dholakia, 2000; Rook & Fisher, 1995; etc.) and television shopping context (Park & Lennon, 2004), this study assumes the same impulse buying behavior will occur in an online shopping context. Many external stimuli present on online retailers’ websites mock those external stimuli in traditional brick and mortar stores. For example, customized online customer services are comparable to customer services offered in a traditional brick and mortar store. Sales promotions and special offers are found both in the traditional and online shopping context. Marketing signs and advertisements are hung in the physical stores while presented as a banner ad across online stores’ websites. The online shopping channel also offers more convenience than the traditional brick and mortar stores such as 24/7 hour shopping, online customer service hosts, special shipping promotions, increased accessibility of products and services, and ease of making impulse purchases (Kacen & Lee, 2002). These services make it easier than ever for consumers to engage in impulse buying behavior (Rook, 1987), making the internet an alternative impulse channel (Phau & Lo, 2004). Much of previous impulse buying research has also linked impulse buying behavior to a personality trait (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Puri, 1996; Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Rook & Gardner, 1993; Weun, Jones, & Beatty, 1998). This current study shows that these same personality traits that determine impulse buying behavior is also exemplified in an online shopping context.

Applied to an online shopping context, marketing stimuli in the CIFE model refer to the external stimuli that are present on the website to trigger impulse buying behavior. The first factor in the revised model thus is labeled “external trigger cues of impulse buying” to refer to marketing stimuli present on an online website. A person’s impulse
buying tendency provides a good measure of a person’s impulsivity traits whether in a brick & mortar or online shopping context; thus being the second factor in the new model (Rook & Fisher, 1995). According to the original CIFE model, situational factors refer to a person’s emotional state or mood, which is consistent with internal cues of impulse buying. Situational factors were broken up into two different parts to be measured separately. Thus, the first part of situational factors is labeled “internal cues of impulse buying” including a consumer’s mood or emotional state while shopping online. The second part of situational factors refers to a consumer’s normative evaluation of making impulse purchases online. A person’s normative evaluation was found to be an important influencer of impulse buying by previous research, and thus was added to the revised CIFE model (Rook & Fisher, 1995). Normative evaluations most appropriately fit under situational factors. The current study does not focus on how constraining factors of impulse buying affect a person’s impulse purchase decision, as this was beyond the scope of this study. Important to note however is while the original CIFE model measures cognitive evaluations only when constraining factors are present (as shown in the original CIFE model in Figure 2.2), whereas the revised CIFE model considers cognitive evaluations much earlier in the decision making process. This is consistent with previous research that has linked a person’s cognitive evaluations as a direct influencer of their impulse buying behavior (Dholakia, 2000; Rook, 1987; Youn & Faber, 2000). The current study will only focus on the antecedents that lead a consumer to make an impulse purchase in the context of online retailing.

The use of external cues (marketing stimuli) on a website can be highly influential in encouraging impulse buying behavior in an online shopping context and the degree of
this influence is measured in this study. The effects of different external cues on a website were explored in this study. Because there is no prior literature or theory to suggest which strategy would work better in triggering impulse buying, the approach used in this study is exploratory in nature.

**H1** There is a difference between the types of external impulse trigger cue and the level of impulse purchase made.

Several researchers have agreed on the notion that personality traits can exemplify impulsive behavior more than other traits which can be described as the consumer’s impulse buying tendency (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Puri, 1996; Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Rook & Gardner, 1993; Weun, Jones, & Beatty, 1998). Therefore, it is reasonable to expect a positive relationship between impulse buying and a high impulse buying tendency.

**H2** Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between impulse buying tendency and impulse buying.

According to Coley and Burgess (2003), positive mood states can be generated from the self gratifying motivations provided by impulse buying. Consumers who are more responsive to their affective state and less responsive to their cognitive state have been found to experience a strong urge to buy (Dholakia, 2000; Rook, 1987; Youn & Faber, 2000) and are more likely to engage in impulsive buying behavior. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect a positive relationship between impulse buying and a high affective state as well as a low cognitive state.
H3a Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between a
person's affective state and impulse buying.

H3b Among online apparel shoppers, there is a negative relationship between a
person's cognitive state and impulse buying.

Impulse buying behavior can be viewed by either positive or negative normative
evaluations. Consumers evaluate the appropriateness of buying on impulse which largely
affects their purchase behavior (whether they engage in impulse buying behavior or not)
(Rook & Fisher, 1995). Therefore, it is reasonable to expect a positive relationship
between impulse buying and a positive normative evaluation.

H4 Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between
normative evaluation and impulse buying.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1. Overview

The purpose of this study is to investigate impulse buying behavior in an online setting. More specifically, this study examines the internal and external factors of impulse buying in online retailing; internally looking at what triggers the consumer to buy impulsively, and externally looking at what external trigger cues the online retailer can include on their website to encourage impulse buying. This study consists of three phases. Phase one consisted of focus group interviews to determine what external cues exist on apparel retailer websites that lead consumers to make unplanned purchases (external trigger cues of impulse buying). The findings from the focus group interviews were then used to create an appropriate coding guide consisting of external trigger cues of impulse buying that could be found on apparel retailer websites. Phase two consisted of a content analysis of external impulse trigger cues of impulse buying to support the content validity of the focus group findings. The content analysis was of the top 99 online apparel retailers ranked by Internet Retailer (2005). The purpose of the content analysis was to examine the amount of external trigger cues of impulse buying on an online website. More specifically, this study measured whether there is a relationship between the top online apparel retailers' financial performance and the amount of external trigger cues
available on their websites. Examining the top ranked apparel retailers will give a realistic overview of what external impulse trigger cues retailers are offering on their websites. Phase three consisted of a web survey and an experimental study of impulse buying online. The purpose of the experimental study was to examine whether there was a difference between the type of external impulse trigger cues and the respondent’s level of impulse purchase. The purpose of the web survey was to measure whether a person’s impulse buying tendency, affective and cognitive state, and normative evaluation affects their impulse purchase behavior in an online setting. This chapter will explain the specific methods used in each phase of this study.

3.2. Phase One

3.2.1. Sample Selection

Participants eighteen and over were recruited to participate in focus group interviews at a Northwestern college campus. Participants were recruited from merchandising classes in return for receiving extra credit. Fifteen students were recruited overall to participate in five separate focus group interviews. The same process and questions asked were used for all five focus group interviews. All participants recruited were undergraduate college students which is a good representative sample of online shoppers, and impulse buying behavior has been found to be prominent in younger adults (Retail World, 2002).
3.2.2. Procedure

The purpose of the focus group interviews was to determine what external cues exist on apparel retailer websites that lead consumers to make unplanned purchases (external trigger cues of impulse buying). Very little is known about external cues of websites that trigger impulse buying from previous literature. Thus, focus groups helped generate useful information to identify potential impulse trigger cues present on apparel retailer websites. Focus group interviews utilize group dynamics and foster group interactions which help create a breadth of insight (Krueger, 1988) and generate a “sheer quantity of ideas grounded in consumers’ vocabulary” (Abraham-Murali, & Littrell, 1995, p.67). Thus, focus group interviews were chosen for the purpose of generating a broad range of external cues that exist on apparel retailer websites.

The focus group interviews lasted around a half an hour and were audio-recorded. There were two parts to a focus group session. First, the participants were asked general questions about their online shopping behavior, such as what factors they considered when making an unplanned online purchase, and what aspects of a website influence them to make an unplanned purchase. In the second part of the focus group session, the participants viewed several online apparel retailer websites and were asked to identify any aspects on the website that might encourage them to make an unplanned purchase. Five to six online apparel retailer websites were visited at random and the website’s introduction page, specific product category pages, and specific product item pages were viewed. The websites that were viewed included several top 99 websites such as Gap.com, Nordstrom.com, and Bluefly.com. Participants also completed a questionnaire that included the Impulse Buying Tendency Scale (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001),
general questions about their online shopping behaviors, as well as demographic information.

3.2.3. Interpretation of Data

The five focus group sessions were transcribed and a comprehensive list of the external cues (on a website) mentioned was developed. Similar external cues were grouped together and categorized into separate themes of external cues.

3.3. Phase Two

3.3.1. Sample Selection

The content analysis in phase two was conducted to support the content validity of the focus group information. The sample of websites was drawn from Internet Retailer's (2005) top 99 online apparel retailers based on annual e-commerce sales in 2004. Internet Retailer is an online source that provides up-to-date news, statistics, articles etc. about current e-commerce issues. See Table 3.1 for a complete list of the retailers used.

The websites were categorized into types of web retailers and types of product offerings (whether they offered apparel only, apparel and home products, apparel and other products or all of the above). Virtual retailers refer to websites who solely sell products to the end consumer via the internet. Catalog company web retailers refer to retailers who offer a catalog and web store to their consumers. Bricks and mortar web retailers refer to retailers who offer a web store in addition to their traditional shopping
Table 3.1. Apparel Retailer Websites Used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Type of Web Retailer</th>
<th>Product Category</th>
<th>Web Sales (2004)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gap Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$438,960,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Redcats USA</td>
<td>Apparel, home products</td>
<td>$401,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Neiman Marcus Grp Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$240,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Eddie Bauer</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$222,306,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>L.L. Bean Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$219,796,200*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nordstrom Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$200,076,480*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Zappos.com Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only (shoes)</td>
<td>$184,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Coldwater Creek Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$162,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Victoria’s Secret</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$157,690,800*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Saks Fifth Avenue</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$135,000,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Hanover Direct Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$124,890,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>J. Crew Group Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$112,100,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Abercrombie &amp; Fitch</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$110,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Foot Locker Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$109,089,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Blair Corp.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$91,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The Talbots Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$82,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The J. Jill Group Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$80,560,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>eBags.com</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$73,416,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Alloy Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$62,607,600*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Norm Thompson Out.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other products</td>
<td>$61,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The Orvis Co. Inc</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$57,288,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Polo Ralph Lauren</td>
<td>Apparel, home products</td>
<td>$50,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>American Eagle Out.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$49,104,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>ShoeBuy.com Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$45,900,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Ann Taylor Stores</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$44,640,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>YOOX Spa</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$44,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Bluefly Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home products</td>
<td>$43,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Hanna Andersson Corp.</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$43,200,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The Finish Line Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home products</td>
<td>$41,943,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>BrideSave.com LLC</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$40,500,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Hot Topic Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$11,048,400*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Hat World Corp.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$10,284,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Carabella Corp.</td>
<td>Apparel, home products</td>
<td>$10,188,750*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Danskin Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$9,281,250*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Dr. Jay’s Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$9,114,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Dresses.com</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$8,370,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Boot Barn Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$8,257,920*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>The Men’s Wearhouse</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$7,812,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Sheplers Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$7,246,932*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>The Buckle Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$7,189,644*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Classic Closeouts LLC</td>
<td>Apparel, home products</td>
<td>$7,068,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Type of Web Retailer</td>
<td>Product Category</td>
<td>Web Sales (2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>World Traveler</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$6,750,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>DiscountDance.com</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$6,723,234*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Dooney &amp; Bourke Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$6,510,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Avenue.com</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$6,411,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Limitedtoo Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$5,989,200*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>T-shirt King</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$5,985,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Artbeads.com</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$5,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Casual Male Retail</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$5,691,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Allheart.com</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$5,624,640*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Rocawear Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$5,580,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Limited too Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$5,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Choice Shirts</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$5,115,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Jasco Uniform Co.</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$4,642,560*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Loralie.com Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$4,278,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Wilsons Leather Expert</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$4,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>AmeriMark Direct LLC</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$4,092,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Leather Tree Inc.</td>
<td>Apparel, home, other</td>
<td>$3,900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>New York Dancewear</td>
<td>Apparel, other products</td>
<td>$3,807,000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>FigLeaves.com</td>
<td>Apparel only</td>
<td>$3,580,000*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Internet Retailer Estimate

Source: Internet Retailer Top 400 Guide
channel. Multi-channel web retailers refer to retailers who offer all three channels to their consumers: online shopping, catalog, and physical store.

3.3.2. Instrument Development

To assess the amount of external trigger cues of impulse buying available on each retailer’s website, a coding guide was developed from the focus group interviews. The full coding guide used for this study is presented in Table 3.2.

The below coding list of external impulse trigger cues of an online website consisted of five categories of information. Each cue was coded on the scale of (0 = cue unavailable), and (1 = available). The first category “E-retailer info” included what type of retailer format the retailer employed, what type of product category the retailer offered ranging from “apparel only” to “apparel, home, and other products”, and whether the retailer offered women’s, men’s, or children’s apparel or a combination of the three. The second category titled “sales” consisted of (1) whether the website offered items on sale such as clearance items, markdowns, or limited time only sales. Also included in this category was (2) whether the website highlighted or bolded a sale description of the actual product on sale. “Promotions” make up the third category and coded the website in terms of eight types of promotions the website offered. These cues included (1) buy one-get one free deals, (2) coupons, (3) percentage off when spend a certain limit, (4) free gift with purchase, (5) free shipping or shipping discount, (6) ability to return online purchase in a physical store, (7) contests or sweepstakes, and (8) membership discounts. The fourth category “ideas” includes six different cues of impulse buying triggers. These include (1) whether the online shopper could shop by featured outfits, or (2) by new styles or
Table 3.2. External Cues on an Online Apparel Website: Coding Guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>E-retailer Info:</strong></th>
<th>1 (pure etailer)</th>
<th>2 (Brick &amp; Mortar)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of e-retailer</td>
<td>3 (Catalog)</td>
<td>4 (Multi-channel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company category</td>
<td>1 (apparel only)</td>
<td>2 (apparel &amp; home products)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (apparel &amp; other products)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel category</td>
<td>1 (women’s only)</td>
<td>2 (women &amp; men)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (women,children)</td>
<td>4 (all)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Sales:**          |                  |                   |
| On sale (clearance, sales, markdowns) | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Bold sale price on product | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |

| **Promotions:**     |                  |                   |
| Addit. purch % off (ex. buy 1 get 1....) | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Coupon              | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| % off when spend certain limit | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Gift with purchase  | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Free shipping or shipping discount | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Return purchase in store | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Contests/sweepstakes | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Membership discount | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |

| **Ideas:**          |                  |                   |
| Shop outfit         | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| New styles/fashions | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Featured items      | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Top picks/favorites | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Gift ideas          | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Price point items (ex. items under $30) | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |

| **Suggestions:**    |                  |                   |
| Suggested coordination items | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Suggested non-coordination items | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Customer favs/reviews/recommendations | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
| Last thing you looked at | 0 (unavailable) | 1 (available) |
fashions. Also included in this category are (3) featured items on a website, (4) top picks or favorites, (5) gift ideas, and (6) items presented in price points (e.g., “items under $20). “Suggestions” make up the last category and include four different external cues; (1) whether the website offers suggested coordination items when a shopper is already viewing a particular product. (2) Non-coordination items refer to suggested items yet the purpose is not to be coordinated with the item already in view, but merely just a suggestion of a similar item in some aspect. (3) Customer favorites, reviews and recommendations, as well as (4) presenting the last item a customer viewed are also included in this category. Twenty-three statements total were coded from the above five categories.

3.3.3. Procedure

Data were quantitatively collected over a one month time period. Two coders independently analyzed 10 websites to check the reliability of coding. To code the websites for external impulse trigger cues, the home page of every apparel website was coded, along with the first product page available on the apparel website. The information was coded on a two-point scale: cues that were available on the website received a (1), and cues that were not available on the website received a (0). A total of 21 marketing cues were evaluated in terms of its availability. Scores from coding the 21 cues were summed for individual websites to indicate the amount of marketing stimuli available on each individual website.
3.3.4. Analysis of Data

To analyze the data, a correlation was ran to see if there exists a relationship between the amount of external impulse trigger cues available on apparel retailer websites and the top 99 online apparel retailer's annual financial performance (web sales) in 2004.

3.4. Phase Three

3.4.1. Sample Selection

For the web survey and experimental study, a convenience sample of female undergraduate students 18 years and older from a Northwestern university was used. Undergraduate female students were recruited from merchandising, apparel, and business classes and received extra credit for their participation. Trade literature has indicated that young adults are prominent impulse shoppers (Retail World, 2002), as well as a growing segment of online shoppers (Levy & Weitz, 2004). The web survey was directed towards females which have been found to be a good representative sample of online shoppers. Prior research has shown that men and women approach shopping processes differently (Chang, 2004), therefore it is appropriate to study the female gender in this study.

Respondents participated in an online survey measuring four factors that affect impulse buying behavior (corresponding to the four hypotheses presented earlier): (1) external trigger cues of impulse buying available on the website, (2) impulse buying tendency, (3) internal cues of impulse buying such as a consumer's cognitive and affective states, and (4) their normative evaluation of impulse buying. The experimental
study tested the first hypothesis (external trigger cues of impulse buying available on the
website), while the web survey measured the other three hypotheses. See Table 3.3 for a
summary of the dependent variables.

The Effects of External Impulse Trigger Cues of a Website on Impulse Buying Decision

To measure the external impulse trigger cues of a website, five conditions were
created that represent a different category of external impulse trigger cues. For each of
the five conditions, two simulated online apparel retailer webpages were created each
presenting a different apparel outfit for stimulus sampling purposes (Fontenelle, Phillips,
& Lane, 1985). Thus, there were 10 webpages total. The webpages mocked an apparel
website targeted to young female consumers and was named ApparelVenue.com. Feedback
of the webpages’ appearance was sought, and slight changes were made to improve the
attractiveness of the final webpages. The external impulse trigger cues were drawn from
the coding guide developed in Phase One of this study, and were used to create the five
conditions. The five conditions each focused on a different category of external impulse
trigger cues, with exception to an experimental control webpage. The first condition
focused on the “sales” category of external impulse trigger cues and contained features
that exemplified “on sale” cues of a website. The second condition focused on the
“promotions” category of external impulse trigger cues and contained cues pertaining to
sales promotions and special offers available on a webstore. The third condition focused
on the “ideas” category of external impulse trigger cues and included cues that offered
shopping ideas to the customer such as “gift ideas” “featured items” or “top picks”, etc.
And the fourth condition focused on the “suggestions” category of external impulse
trigger cues containing features that offered suggestion items to shoppers or customer favorites and recommendations. Again the fifth condition was the experimental control webpage, and did not focus on a specific category of external impule trigger cues. Figure 3.1 compares the ideas webpage condition to the control webpage condition. Please see Appendix A for a picture of each of the webpages developed.

Participants were presented with a hypothetical buying scenario giving them purchase alternatives which will determine whether an impulse purchase was made. Rook and Fisher (1995) used a similar buying scenario in their study measuring impulsive purchase decisions in a brick and mortar shopping context. For this study, the buying scenario was revised to fit an online setting, as well as to measure external cues of an online website. With an exposed simulated apparel retailer webpage, participants will be given the following situation, and will be asked what the consumer in the imaginary shopping situation would do:

“Mary is a 21-year old college student with a part-time job. It is two days before Mary gets her next paycheck and she has only $75 left for necessities. In addition to food, Mary needs to buy a cocktail dress for a cocktail party this weekend. After work, Mary goes online to purchase the cocktail dress she had in mind for $55. After browsing through ApparelVenue.com, Mary sees other items that would go great with her new dress.”
Figure 3.1. Ideas Webpage Condition Compared to Control Webpage Condition.

Ideas Webpage Condition:

New arrivals:
- New arrivals
- Complete the outfit
- Customer favorites
- Spring Favorites
- Top ten favorites

Customer favorites:
- Glass Bead Crescent Earrings
- Black Leather Peep Toe Shoes
- Spring Favorites

Spring Favorites:
- Gift ideas

Top ten favorites:
- Top Ten Customer Spring Favorites

Control Webpage Condition:

New arrivals:
- New style/Just Arrived
- Gift ideas
- Spring Favorites

Complete the outfit:
- Featured items

Customer favorites:
- Glass Bead Crescent Earrings
- Black Leather Peep Toe Shoes

Featured items:
- Gift Ideas under $10

New style/Just Arrived:
- Tango Show Dress
  - Ruffled black cotton stars in a dramatic, drop-waist dress.
  - Knotted halter ties.
  - Machine wash.
  - Imported
  - Price: $55

Gift ideas:
- New Style
  - Just Arrived
  - Nonna Hawaiian Jeans
  - Price: $45
Respondents were then instructed to choose one of five purchase decision alternatives for Mary. The decision alternatives represent varying levels of impulse buying and were the following: (1) buying the cocktail dress only, (2) wanting the dress shoes but not buying them, only the dress (3) buying the dress and shoes with a credit card (4) buying the dress, shoes and earrings with a credit card, and (5) buying these plus a new top and pair of jeans for work, also with a credit card. The higher the number (e.g., 5), the higher the likelihood of making an impulse purchase; the lower the number (e.g., 1), the lower the likelihood of making an impulse purchase. Research participants were randomly assigned to one of 10 experimental webpages. It was predicted that there would be significant differences among the types of external impulse trigger cues and the level of impulse purchase made.

The use of this “imaginary stimulus situation assumes that respondents will project themselves into the shopping scenario presented” (Rook & Fisher, 1995, p.308). See Appendix A for full scenario script, and print screens of the simulated webpages.

The Relationship Between Impulse Buying Tendency and Impulse Buying Online

To measure the degree of impulse buying tendency, Rook and Fisher’s (1995) Buying Impulsiveness Scale was used. This scale was created to measure impulse buying tendency from a total of 35 items measuring buying impulsiveness, generated from prior research on impulse buying (e.g. Rook, 1987). The final scale is composed of nine items scored on a seven point Likert-type scale; strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). An overall index score can range from 9 to 45. Several validity checks were conducted by Rook and Fisher (1995) such as correlations with other constructs, as well as mean-level
difference testing, and all support the scale’s validity, with Cronbach’s alpha = 0.88. See Appendix B for full scale.

*The Relationship Between Internal Cues and Impulse Buying Online*

To measure internal cues of impulse buying such as a person’s affective and cognitive state, a scale was used by Verplanken and Herabaldi in 2001 called The Impulse Buying Tendency Scale. This scale contains two parts. The first part measures cognitive aspects of impulse buying (e.g. tendency not to think, plan or deliberate when making a purchase). The second part measures affective aspects of impulse buying (e.g. feelings of excitement and pleasure, urge to make a purchase, lack of control), which is the focus of this section. This scale was generated from 52 items to measure cognitive and affective aspects of impulse buying and were drawn from prior research and previous constructs (Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995). The final scale is composed of twenty items (ten items for cognitive items and ten items for affective items). To assess unidimensionality, a principal component analysis was conducted and found this scale to be unidimensional. Inter-item reliability was also checked and suggested this scale to be a reliable scale, with Cronbach’s alpha = 0.86 for the complete 20 item scale. Thus, the items for this scale were averaged to produce one score. See Appendix C for full scale.

*The Relationship Between Normative Evaluation and Impulse Buying Online*

To measure respondent’s normative evaluation of impulse buying, this study used the same process as Rook and Fisher (1995) used in their study. This normative evaluation measure assumes that consumers will assess the appropriateness of making an
impulse purchase. Discussed earlier was the buying scenario including Mary the imaginary consumer. As stated by Rook and Fisher, “this buying situation invites either negative or positive normative evaluations”, (p. 308). After this buying scenario was presented to participants, and participants indicated which buying alternative Mary should choose, they were informed that Mary bought both the unplanned dress shoes and earrings and the planned cocktail dress. Respondent’s normative evaluations of Mary’s decision was then be measured on a semantic differential scale including 10 bipolar adjective pairs: good-bad, rational-crazy, wasteful-productive, attractive-unattractive, smart-stupid, acceptable-unacceptable, generous-selfish, sober-silly, mature-childish, and right-wrong. This normative scale proved as a reliable instrument in measuring normative evaluations, with a Cronbach’s alpha = .91. The full scale is presented in Appendix D.

Inter-item reliability was checked for all scales, and acceptable reliability was found for all three scales. Thus, the scores for each scale were averaged, to produce one score for each scale.

3.4.2. Procedure

Online surveys were distributed roughly over a one month period after approval from the University’s Institutional Review Board. Please see Appendix F for IRB approval letter. Participants viewed one of 10 simulated web pages (five different webpages each focusing on an external impulse trigger category with exception to a control group X two conditions of outfits to be purchased) to test whether there is a difference between the type of external impulse trigger cue and level of impulse purchase
made. Thirty female students were assigned to each of the 10 webpages. The other independent variables (internal cues of impulse buying, impulse buying tendency, and normative evaluation) were then measured through survey questions to see whether they have an effect on respondent’s impulse purchase behavior (dependent variable).

An informed consent form was presented to participants at the beginning of the online survey to inform participants of their rights. Those who decided to proceed taking the survey gave their consent by participating. Each online survey lasted around 5 minutes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **External Impulse Trigger Cues**: Rook & Fisher 1995 | 1. Buying the cocktail dress only  
2. Wanting the dress shoes but not buying them, only the dress  
3. Buying the dress and shoes with a credit card  
4. Buying the dress, shoes and earrings with a credit card  
5. Buying these plus a new top and pair of jeans for work, also with a credit card | NA               |
| **Impulse Buying Tendency**: Rook & Fisher 1995 | 1. I often buy things spontaneously.  
2. “Just do it” describes the way I buy things.  
3. I often buy things without thinking.  
4. “I see it, I buy it” describes me.  
5. “Buy now, think about it later” describes me.  
6. Sometimes I feel like buying things on the spur of the moment.  
7. I buy things according to how I feel at the moment.  
8. I carefully plan most of my purchases. (R)  
9. Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy. | .88               |
| **Internal Cues**: Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001 | 1. I usually think carefully before I buy something (R)  
2. I usually only buy things that I intended. (R)  
3. If I buy something, I usually do that spontaneously.  
4. Most of my purchases are planned in advance. (R)  
5. I only buy things that I really need. (R)  
6. It is not my style to just buy things. (R)  
7. I like to compare different brands before I buy one. (R)  
8. Before I buy something I always carefully consider whether I need it. (R) | .86               |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. I am used to buying things ‘on the spot’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. I often buy things without thinking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. It is a struggle to leave nice things I see in a shop.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. I sometimes cannot suppress the feeling of wanting to buy something.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. I sometimes feel guilty after having bought something.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. I’m not the kind of person who ‘falls in love at first sight’ with things I see in shops. (R)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. I can become very excited if I see something I would like to buy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. I always see something nice whenever I pass by shops.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17. I find it difficult to pass up a bargain.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18. If I see something new, I want to buy it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19. I am a bit reckless in buying things.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20. I sometimes buy things because I like buying things, rather than because I need them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Normative Influence</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Good/Bad</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Rational/Crazy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Wasteful/Productive (R)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Attractive/Unattractive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Smart/Stupid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Acceptable/Unacceptable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Generous/Selfish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Sober/Silly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Mature/Childish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Right/Wrong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. (R): reverse-scored
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

4.1. Overview

The purpose of this research was to investigate whether internal and external trigger cues of impulse buying affected a person’s impulse buying behavior in an online shopping context; internally looking at what triggers the consumer to buy impulsively, and externally looking at what external trigger cues the online retailer can include on their website to encourage impulse buying. This chapter presents the results found for all three phases of this study.

Phase one consisted of focus group interviews to determine what external cues exist on apparel retailer websites that lead consumers to make unplanned purchases (external trigger cues of impulse buying). The findings from the focus group interviews were then used to create an appropriate coding guide consisting of external trigger cues of impulse buying that could be found on apparel retailer websites. Phase two consisted of a content analysis to support the content validity of the focus group findings. The content analysis was of the top 99 online apparel retailers ranked by Internet Retailer (2005). The purpose of the content analysis was to examine the amount of external trigger cues of impulse buying on an online website. More specifically, this study measured whether there is a relationship between the top online apparel retailers’ financial performance and
the amount of external trigger cues available on their websites. Examining the top ranked apparel retailers will give a realistic overview of what external impulse trigger cues retailers are offering on their websites. Phase three consisted of a web survey and an experimental study of impulse buying online. The purpose of the experimental study was to examine whether there was a difference between the type of external impulse trigger cues and the respondent’s level of impulse purchase. The purpose of the web survey was to measure whether a person’s impulse buying tendency, affective and cognitive state, and normative evaluation affected their online impulse buying behavior. This chapter will present the results found for each phase of this study.

To analyze the responses collected, descriptive statistics, simple correlations, one way ANOVA, and univariate analysis of variance were performed. Stata 9.0 was used to perform all statistical analyses. A cut off of $p < .05$ was used as the significance level criterion for all the analyses ran, which is commonly used by social scientists (Kennedy & Bush, 1985). The actual value for all p-values was recorded.

4.2. Phase One

4.2.1. Sample Characteristics

Five focus group interviews were conducted at a Northwestern college campus with a total of 15 participants (14 female, 1 male). The mean focus group size was around 4 with a minimum of two participants per focus group. All participants were undergraduate college students which is a good representative sample of online shoppers,
and impulse buying behavior has been found to be prominent in younger adults (Retail World, 2002). The participants were not offered any direct benefits for participating.

The median age of the participants was 21 years old and 60% said they made an online apparel purchase in the last 6 months; and 27% said they make an online purchase about once a month. Of these apparel purchases made online, a third said a few or almost all of them were unplanned purchases. Fifty-three percent of the participants said almost all of their in-store purchases made in general were unplanned purchases.

4.2.2. Summary of Results

A comprehensive list of the external cues (on a website) mentioned was developed. Similar external cues were grouped together and categorized into separate themes of external cues. Four mutually exclusive categories were formed from the emerging themes. For example, a category called “promotions” was developed from mentionings that included “free shipping”, “contests or sweepstakes”, “buy one get one free deals”, etc.. The four categories along with their frequencies and percentages are presented in Table 4.1. Among the four categories of external impulse trigger cues, the promotions category had the highest amount of responses, \( f = 38 \), making up roughly 37% of all responses given in the focus groups. Among the external cues mentioned under the promotions category, 20 responses which was by far the highest frequency amount, suggested that free shipping or a shipping discount would entice impulse buying behavior online; alone making up about 20% of all focus group mentionings. Also interestingly, the ideas category held the second largest frequency amount of responses, \( f = 30 \), making up about one third of all focus group responses. In contrast, responses
Table 4.1. External Cues on Online Apparel Websites: Frequency Responses for Content Categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories and external cues:</th>
<th>Frequency of responses</th>
<th>Percentage of responses (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sales:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One sale (clearance, sales, markdowns)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold sale price on product</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotions:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional purchase % off (ex. buy one get one..)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coupon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% off when spend certain limit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift with purchase</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free shipping or shipping discount</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return purchase in store</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contests/sweepstakes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership discount</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop outfit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New styles/fashions</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured items</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top picks/favorites</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift ideas</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priced point items (ex. items under $30)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggestions:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested coordination items</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested non-coordination items</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer favorites/reviews/ recommendations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last thing you looked at</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pertaining to the suggestions category had the least amount of responses, \((f = 16)\), making up about 16% of all focus group responses. The four categories of external impulse trigger cues were then used to create a coding guide of external impulse trigger cues in Phase Two of this study.

4.3. Phase Two

4.3.1. Sample Characteristics

Out of sixty apparel retailers, pure e-retailers made up 21.7 percent \((n=13)\), catalog companies made up 6 percent \((n=6)\), brick and mortar retailers made up 35 percent \((n=21)\), and multi-channel retailers made up 33.3 percent \((n=20)\). Descriptive data including frequency counts and percentages are presented in Table 4.2. A total of 21 marketing cues were evaluated in terms of its availability. Scores from coding the 21 cues were summed for individual websites to indicate the amount of marketing stimuli available on each individual website. Please see Table 4.3 a list of the retailer’s frequency scores. While the focus group responses showed the highest frequency of responses pertaining to the promotions category, results from the content analysis showed that external cues pertaining to the ideas category had the highest frequency amount, \((f = 161)\) with 35.5% of the total online apparel websites containing “ideas” external impulse trigger cues. The second largest frequency total came from the sales category, \((f = 117)\), with about 26 % of the websites containing sales cues. Similar to the focus group findings, the smallest frequency amount came from the suggestions category, \((f = 74)\), with only about 16% of the apparel retail websites containing external impulse trigger
Table 4.2. Frequencies of External Impulse Trigger Cues Available on Online Apparel Websites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Cues</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sales:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On sale (clearance, sales, markdowns)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold sale price on product</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotions:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addit. purch % off (ex. buy 1 get 1.....)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coupon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% off when spend certain limit</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift with purchase</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free shipping or shipping discount</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return purchase in store</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contests/sweepstakes</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership discount</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop outfit</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New styles/fashions</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featured items</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top picks/favorites</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift ideas</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prict point items (ex. items under $30)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggestions:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested coordination items</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested non-coordination items</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer favs/reviews/ recommendations</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last thing you looked at</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 List of Retailer’s Available Stimuli Scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Frequency of Available Stimuli</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Gap Inc.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Redcats USA</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Neiman Marcus Grp Inc.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Eddie Bauer</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 L.L. Bean Inc.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nordstrom Inc.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Zappos.com Inc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Coldwater Creek Inc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Victoria’s Secret</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Saks Fifth Avenue</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Hanover Direct Inc.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 J. Crew Group Inc.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Abercrombie &amp; Fitch</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Foot Locker Inc.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Blair Corp.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 The Talbots Inc.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 The J. Jill Group Inc.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 eBags.com</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Alloy Inc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Norm Thompson Out.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 The Orvis Co. Inc</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Polo Ralph Lauren</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 American Eagle Out.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 ShoeBuy.com Inc.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Ann Taylor Stores</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 YOOX Spa</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Bluefly Inc.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Hanna Andersson Corp.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 The Finish Line Inc.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 BrideSave.com LLC</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Hot Topic Inc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Hat World Corp.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 Carabella Corp.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Danskin Inc.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 Dr. Jay’s Inc.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 Dresses.com</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 Boot Barn Inc.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 The Men’s Wearhouse</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 Sheplers Inc.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 The Buckle Inc.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 Classic Closeouts LLC</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 World Traveler</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43 DiscountDance.com</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Frequency of Available Stimuli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Dooney &amp; Bourke Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Avenue.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Limitedtoo Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>T-shirt King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Artbeads.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Casual Male Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Allheart.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Rocawear Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Steve Madden Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Choice Shirts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Jasco Uniform Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Loralie.com Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Wilsons Leather Expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>AmeriMark Direct LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Leather Tree Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>New York Dancewear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>FigLeaves.com</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cues from the suggestions category. Regarding individual external cues, the free shipping or shipping discount cue that had the highest frequency amount from the focus group interviews also scored highly in the content analysis of the top online apparel retailer websites, \( f = 20 \), with about a third of the retailers’ websites containing a free shipping or shipping discount cue. Other large frequencies of external cues found on the top online apparel retailer websites included “on sale” (98.3% of the retailers), “bold sale prices” (96.7% of the retailers), “featured items (70% of the retailers), and “new styles/fashions” (65% of the retailers).

4.3.2. Summary of Results

A correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the amount of external impulse trigger cues available on apparel retailer websites and the websites’ financial performance in terms of web sales in 2004. Results showed that web sales of the top 99 online apparel retailers (Internet Retailer, 2004) were significantly correlated with the amount of external impulse trigger cues available on apparel retailer websites, \( r = 0.528, n = 60, p < .00001 \). This positive relationship shows that as the amount of external impulse trigger cues available on apparel retailer websites increased, so too did their web sales in 2004. Results from Phase One and Phase Two were then used to develop the simulated web pages in Phase Three for the experimental study.
4.4. Phase Three

4.4.1. Sample Characteristics

A total of 400 female students were recruited and 300 of them participated (75% response rate); totaling 30 female students for each webpage. Participants ranged from 18 to 48 years of age, with an average age of 22 years old. Refer to Table 4.4. for participants’ demographic and past online purchase behavior information. About 86.7% of the participants were aged 20-24 years old. Most participants earned a salary between $15,000 to $19,999 a year. This makes sense as the majority of students are full time college students. Information about participants’ online purchase behavior was also collected. Participants were asked how often they made purchases online in the last year, how often they made apparel purchases online in the last year, and of these online purchases, how many of them were made on impulse. More than three quarters of participants reported they were online shoppers. Roughly 44% of participants had made an online purchase at least once in the last six months, whereas about 30% of participants made an online purchase about once every other month. Around 2% of participants reported they made an online purchase at least once a week. For apparel online shopping, about 70% of the participants were online apparel shoppers. Forty-three percent of the participants had made an apparel online purchase at least once in the last six months. About 17% of participants reported they made an apparel online purchase about once every other month, while only around 1% made apparel purchases at least once a week. Among those who made online purchases, 57% of participants reported they made impulse purchases online.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Samples Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>22 (3.13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td></td>
<td>261</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-30</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 30</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Salary</td>
<td>0 to 19,999 (1.99)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 14,999 to 29,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>269</td>
<td>89.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000 to 49,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 and higher</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online purchases made (last year)</td>
<td>2.49 (0.95)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 times</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once in last 6 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>134</td>
<td>44.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once every other month</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
<td>30.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once a month</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once a week</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online apparel purchases made (last year)</td>
<td>2.07 (0.97)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 times</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
<td>30.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once in last 6 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>130</td>
<td>43.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once every other month</td>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
<td>17.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once a month</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once a week</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once a week</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online impulse purchases made (last year)</td>
<td>2.64 (1.10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have not made online purchase</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
<td>18.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
<td>23.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few of them</td>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>36.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost all of them</td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
<td>16.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of them</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thirty-six percent of participants reported that a few of their purchases online were made on impulse. Those who reported almost all of their online purchases were made on impulse made up about 16% of all participants. About 5% of participants said that all of their online purchases were made on impulse.

4.4.2. Dependent Variables

The Effects of External Impulse Trigger Cues of a Website on Impulse Buying Decision

Manipulation Check. A pilot test was conducted to verify to determine any differences between the two outfits. ANOVA was conducted to compare whether the two outfit conditions differed from another in terms of results. No significant differences were found between the two outfit conditions, thus concluding that the outfit conditions did not contribute to the test results.

The Relationship Between Impulse Buying Tendency and Impulse Buying Online

Nine items adopted from Rook and Fisher's (1995) Buying Impulsiveness Scale was used to measure the degree of impulse buying tendency. Internal reliability was checked for the nine items and was found to be reliable with Cronbach's alpha = .90. Based on the acceptable reliability, the nine items were averaged to produce one score. Please see Table 4.5. for descriptive statistics of the nine items.
**The Relationship Between Internal Cues and Impulse Buying Online**

To measure internal cues of impulse buying, 20 items were adopted from Verplanken and Herabaldi’s (2001) The Impulse Buying Tendency Scale. This scale contained two parts. The first part measured cognitive aspects of impulse buying while the second part measured affective aspects of impulse buying. A reliability check was run separately for cognitive aspects and for affective aspects. All ten items, representing the level of cognitive evaluation were found to be reliable with all Cronbach’s alpha = 0.84. Based on this reliability, the ten items were then averaged to create one score. All ten items for affective aspects were also found to be reliable with all Cronbach’s alpha = 0.90. The ten scores were also averaged to create one score, representing the level of affective state. Please see Table 4.5. for descriptive statistics of the 20 items.

**The Relationship Between Normative Evaluation and Impulse Buying Online**

To measure the relationship between a person’s normative evaluation of assessing the purchase decision made for Mary in the discussed buying scenario, and the level of impulse purchase he/she made for Mary, ten bi-polar adjective pairs were used to compose a differential semantic scale of normative evaluation. Reliability of the scale was measured with all items having Cronbach’s alpha = 0.88. All ten scores were then averaged to produce one score of normative evaluation.
Table 4.5. Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impulse Buying Tendency</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBT1. I often buy things spontaneously.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT2. &quot;Just do it&quot; describes the way I buy things.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT3. I often buy things without thinking.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT4. &quot;I see it, I buy it&quot; describes me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT5. &quot;Buy now, think about it later&quot; describes me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT6. Sometimes I feel like buying things on the spur of the moment.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT7. I buy things according to how I feel at the moment.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT8*. I carefully plan most of my purchases. (R)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT9. Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Aspects</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA1. I usually think carefully before I buy something</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA2. I usually only buy things that I intended.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA3*. If I buy something, I usually do that spontaneously.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA4. Most of my purchases are planned in advance.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA5. I only buy things that I really need.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA6. It is not my style to just buy things.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA7. I like to compare different brands before I buy one.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA8. Before I buy something I always carefully consider whether I need it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA9*. I am used to buying things 'on the spot'</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA10*. I often buy things without thinking.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affective Aspects</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA1. It is a struggle to leave nice things I see in a shop.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA2. I sometimes cannot suppress the feeling of wanting to buy something.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA3. I sometimes feel guilty after having bought something.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA4*. I'm not the kind of person who 'falls in love at first sight' with things I see in shops.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA5. I can become very excited if I see something I would like to buy.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA6. I always see something nice whenever I pass by shops.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA7. I find it difficult to pass up a bargain.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA8. If I see something new, I want to buy it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA9. I am a bit reckless in buying things.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA10. I sometimes buy things because I like buying things, rather than because I need them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normative Evaluation</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NE1. Good vs. Bad</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE2. Rational vs. Crazy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE3. Wasteful vs. Productive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE4*. Attractive vs. Unattractive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE5. Smart vs. Stupid</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE6. Acceptable vs. Unacceptable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE7. Generous vs. Selfish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE8. Sober vs. Silly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE9. Mature vs. Childish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE10. Right vs. Wrong</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* * Item was reverse-scored
Figure 4.1 CIFE Model for Impulse Buying.

External Trigger Cues of Impulse Buying

Impulse Buying Tendency

H2 (+)

Internal Cues of Impulse Buying

H3a (+)
H3b (-)

Normative Evaluation

H4 (+)

Consumption Impulse

Online Impulse purchase Decision
4.4.3 Hypotheses Testing.

The Effects of External Impulse Trigger Cues of a Website on Impulse Buying Decision

H1 There is a difference between the types of external impulse trigger cue and the level of impulse purchase made.

To test for differences between the types of external impulse trigger cues and the level of impulse purchase made, a univariate analysis of variance was performed. The results showed that there is no significant difference among the types of external impulse trigger cues; $F(299) = 1.59, p > 0.177$. When respondents were asked to choose the best purchase decision for Mary, results showed no differences by type of external impulse trigger cues available on the presented webpage. Results suggested that different types of external impulse trigger cues (sales, promotions, ideas and suggestion cues) do not affect the level of impulse purchases made; $F = 1.59, p > 0.177$. Thus, Hypothesis one was not supported.

The Relationship Between Impulse Buying Tendency and Impulse Buying Online

H2 Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between impulse buying tendency and impulse buying.

A simple correlation was performed to test the relationship between impulse buying tendency and past online impulse buying behavior. Results showed that buying tendency scores and past online impulse buying behavior were positively correlated, $r = \ldots$
0.394, n = 300, p < .00001; thus supporting Hypothesis two. The higher the impulse buying tendency score, the more frequently products were purchased. Please see Table 4.6 for a correlation matrix of the independent and dependent variables.

The Relationship Between Internal Cues and Impulse Buying Online

H3a  Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between a person’s affective state and impulse buying.

H3b  Among online apparel shoppers, there is a negative relationship between a person’s cognitive state and impulse buying.

To test the relationship between cognitive and affective states and past online impulse buying behavior, a simple correlation was performed. For the relationship between a person’s affective state and their past online impulse buying behavior, a significant positive relationship was found, \( r = 0.154, n = 300, p < 0.01 \); supporting Hypothesis three (a). This relationship suggests that when a person is more responsive to their affective state, they are more likely to engage in impulse buying behavior online.

For the relationship between a person’s cognitive state and their past online impulse buying behavior, a significant negative relationship was found, \( r = -0.169, n = 300, p < 0.01 \); supporting Hypothesis three (b). This relationship suggests that when a person is more responsive to their cognitive state, they are less likely to engage in impulse buying behavior online.
The Relationship Between Normative Evaluation and Impulse Buying Online

H4 Among online apparel shoppers, there is a positive relationship between normative evaluation and impulse buying.

A simple correlation was also performed to test the relationship between normative evaluations and the level of impulse purchase made. Results indicated a positive correlation between normative evaluation and the level of impulse purchase made, $r = 0.14$, $n=300$, $p < 0.05$. The higher the normative evaluation of an impulse purchase, the greater the likelihood of impulsively buying.

Table 4.6. Correlation Matrix of the Independent and Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Online Impulse Purchase Behavior</th>
<th>Impulse Buying Tendency</th>
<th>Affective State</th>
<th>Cognitive State</th>
<th>Normative Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Impulse</td>
<td>0.3936</td>
<td>0.1539</td>
<td>-0.1693</td>
<td>0.1401</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase</td>
<td>0.0000****</td>
<td>0.0074***</td>
<td>0.0032***</td>
<td>0.0148*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ****p < 0.0001, *****p < 0.00001
CHAPTER 5
GENERAL DISCUSSION

5.1 Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate impulse buying behavior in an online setting. This study examined the internal and external factors of impulse buying in online retailing; internally looking at what triggers the consumer to buy impulsively, and externally looking at what trigger cues the online retailer can include on their website to encourage impulse buying. Phase One consisted of focus group interviews that identified possible external cues on apparel retailer websites that lead consumers to make unplanned purchases (external trigger cues of impulse buying). The findings from the focus group interviews were then used to create an appropriate coding guide consisting of external trigger cues of impulse buying that could be found on apparel retailer websites. Phase Two consisted of a content analysis of apparel retailer websites to support the content validity of the focus group findings. From the content analysis we tested whether there was a relationship between the top online apparel retailers’ financial performance and the amount of external trigger cues available on their websites. Results indicated a positive relationship between retailers’ web sales and the amount of external cues present on their websites. Phase Three consisted of an experimental study of impulse buying online, using a web survey format. The purpose of the experimental study was to examine
differences between the type of external impulse trigger cues and the respondent’s level of impulse purchase. The purpose of the web survey was to test whether internal cues of impulse buying affect a person’s impulse purchase behavior.

This chapter will first summarize the empirical findings of this thesis research for each of the three phases of the study. Theoretical implications and contributions will also be discussed, as well as marketing implications for online apparel retailers. This chapter will be concluded with limitations to this study as well as suggestions for future research.

5.2. Phase One

A broad range of marketing cues emerged from the focus group interviews that were believed to encourage impulse buying in an online apparel store. Among the four categories of external impulse trigger cues, two main categories emerged as important indicators of impulse buying online. Mentioned in the results section, these two categories included the promotions category and the ideas category. According to online shoppers, it is these two categories of external impulse buying cues present on online apparel retailer websites that entice people to impulsively buy. Such cues include various sales promotions, gift with purchase, free shipping, contents or sweepstakes, easy return policies, or idea cues including new styles, featured items, top picks, and gift ideas to name a few. The differing frequency amounts suggest that online shoppers may value different types of external cues on a website more than others. Promotional offers and purchase ideas were desired the most.
Contributions of This Study

Very little is known about external cues of websites that trigger impulse buying, especially in online retailing (shopping). Thus, the findings from these focus groups helped generate useful information to identify potential impulse trigger cues present on apparel retailer websites, and develop a reliable coding guide of external impulse trigger cues on an online apparel website.

It is worthy to note that additional discussions from the focus group interviews revealed other common themes that were stated to be important in determining an online retailer’s success. These included the visual quality and design of a website, how user friendly the website was, and the product presentation and description. Additional features mentioned included an available size chart, alternative views and different color views of the merchandise, frequent updates made to the website with different featured items, the product selection available, and the availability of a product (whether the product was in stock).

5.3. Phase Two

The developed coding guide was then used in Phase Two to conduct a content analysis of the top online apparel retailer websites (Internet Retailer, 2005). The content analysis found a positive relationship between the top online apparel retailer websites’ financial performance based on 2004 web sales and the amount of external impulse trigger cues available on their websites. This finding suggests that as the amount of external impulse trigger cues present on apparel retailer websites increased, the web
retailers' financial performance also increased. The sales category, ideas category and the promotions category of external impulse trigger cues were the most available among the top online apparel retailers. This is consistent with findings from the focus group interviews in Phase One of this study. Whereas online shoppers in the focus group interviews identified the top categories of external cues on a website that would encourage impulse buying, the content analysis confirmed that these selected categories were in fact present on the most successful online apparel retailers' websites. This finding suggests that not only are external impulse trigger cues available on online apparel retailer websites important to online impulse buying behavior, but that the different types of external cues available on online apparel retailer websites' may be more important than others.

Several online retailers in fact have experienced increased impulse sales by implementing such marketing tactics on their websites. As recently stated, promotional incentives can induce an urge to impulsively buy (Dholakia, 2000; Rook, 1987; Park & Lennon, 2004). Eve.com, a San Francisco based online beauty store experienced a 20% increase in sales by implementing an integrated database system that automatically provides suggested coordination items to the product being viewed, as well as related items that the customer might also want (Brohan, 1999). FigLeaves.com, a U.K. based apparel retailer also saw increased conversion rates as well as increased sales after offering suggested coordination and/or related items displayed with the particular product being viewed (Internet Retailer, 2003). To note, FigLeaves.com is among the top 99 online apparel retailers (Internet Retailer, 2005). Perfumia Inc., a Miami based specialty fragrance store, experienced a significant increase in impulse purchases after offering
frequent sale specials, free gifts with purchase, free samples, and featured items on their website; impulse purchases accounting for one-third of its annual sales of $175 million (Brohan, 1999). A growing trend for brick & mortar stores is offering the option of returning an online purchase to a physical store. The option of returning an online purchase in physical stores was among the top features offered on the top online apparel retailers’ websites, and were said by focus group interviews to be an important factor in encouraging impulse buying online. Returning online merchandise has been a major concern for customers and a realized factor for retailers in whether a customer is “wooed” in to making an impulse purchase, according to Bratton, vice president of marketing development for Envilen, an online advertising and marketing firm (Brohan, 1999). The option of returning an online purchase in the stores creates an advantage for the online customer by providing more return options and locations. This return option can make it much easier for an online shopper to make an impulse purchase.

The findings from this study suggest that the amount of external trigger cues of impulse buying may be a factor that affects a retailer’s profitable success in encouraging online impulse purchases, thus driving sales. Obviously, there are other factors that determine an online apparel retailer’s success such as whether the retailer is a successful brick and mortar store or an established catalog company, the retailer’s brand equity and image, the quality and value of the merchandise, website design and navigation, product presentation, available customer service and purchasing options, as well as other factors. While this study focused on the external trigger cues of impulse buying available on the top successful online apparel retailers which suggests that the amount of impulse cues on a website could affect a retailer’s impulse sales, the above factors should also be
considered as determinants for an online retailer's success and perhaps examined in future research.

*Contributions of This Study*

This study provided insight into what external trigger cues of impulse buying exist on the top online apparel retailers' websites, which research thereof is lacking. More specifically, this study identified what types of external impulse trigger cues were more commonly being used on online apparel retailer websites than others. This study is also useful for marketers in understanding the importance of website design and offerings and how these factors could affect impulsive behavior online. Online retailers can use this information to assess their own online apparel websites, and determine what external impulse trigger cues might be useful to employ on their websites to entice more impulse buying behavior.

### 5.4. Phase Three

*The Effects of External Impulse Trigger Cues of a Website on Impulse Buying Decision*

Unexpectedly, this study found no significant result that suggested different types of external impulse trigger cues affect the level of impulse purchase made. While the focus group interviews and the content analysis of the top online apparel retailer websites suggest that different types of external cues available on a website may be more important than others in regards to encouraging impulse buying behavior, this study
found no such difference. There are several possible explanations why such a difference was not found.

The level of participant involvement could have played a factor in not finding a significant difference among the four conditions of external impulse trigger cues. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983) suggests that consumers process a message by following two routes of purchase persuasion. Consumers will follow a peripheral route or central route to persuasion depending on the degree of personal relevance of the message. A central route is taken under conditions of high involvement. The consumer finds the message to be interesting or relevant and engages them self into the message content, thoroughly evaluating the available information. In conditions of high involvement, attention to detail is more common than in conditions of low involvement. A peripheral route is taken under conditions of low involvement. Here, the consumer is not interested in the message content, and therefore not engaged in making an informed purchase decision. The consumers attitude is formed by a low-involvement hierarchy of effects (Erickson, Johansson, & Chao, 1984) where the consumer bases their attitude and acts on limited knowledge when making a purchase decision. Little information search and attention to detail of the message occur. What is proposed here is that participants of this study showed low involvement with making an informed purchase decision for Mary in the simulated buying scenario. They therefore took a peripheral route to making a purchase decision where they did not pay attention to the detail presented on the webpages and based their purchase decisions off of their own habitual buying behavior. With low involved participants, there would be no difference observed among the five conditions of websites. Participants were asked to make a
purchase decision in a hypothetical buying scenario for a female named Mary. The use of this “imaginary stimulus situation assumes that respondents will project themselves into the shopping scenario presented” (Rook & Fisher, 1995, p.308). However, if the participants had little involvement with the buying scenario, they would not be motivated to make an informed purchase decision for Mary (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). Also with this low involvement, consumers were not motivated to “project themselves into the shopping scenario presented” (Rook & Fisher, 1995, p.308). Therefore participants might not have given an honest response as to what they might do in the same buying situation.

A second factor could have played a factor in not finding a significant difference among the five conditions of external impulse trigger cues. This study adopted the Consumption Impulse Formation Enactment Model (Dholakia, 2000) as a theoretical framework. The adopted model for impulse buying only focuses on how the internal and external cues of impulse buying affect the consumption impulse to form which then leads to an impulse purchase online. This study did not focus on how constraining factors could get in the way of carrying out the impulse purchase due to being beyond the scope of this study. These constraining factors however, could have played a role as to how participants decided on which impulse purchase decision to make for Mary. Three categories of constraints exist, and may have occurred in this study. During the participants’ evaluation of Mary’s purchase, they might have experienced certain impediments to enactment such as Mary not having enough time or money. Participants could have considered long term deleterious consequences for Mary such as not having enough money for rent. Participants could also have experienced anticipatory emotions of
enactment (e.g., consumer imagines the positive or negative affect of the impulse behavior). If any of these three types of constraints occurred in participant's intentional purchase decisions, their level of impulse purchase made could have been negatively affected. (Dholakia, 2000) Participants could have also wanted Mary to make a more reasonable purchase decision due to social desirability, where participants feel that not making an impulsive purchase is more socially desired and acceptable than making an impulsive purchase (Muhenfeld, 2005). These limitations and others to this study are further discussed under the limitations section.

The Relationship Between Impulse Buying Tendency and Impulse Buying Online

Results from the web survey showed that impulse buying tendency and past online impulse buying behavior was positively correlated, thus supporting Hypothesis two. The higher the impulse buying tendency, the more frequently products were purchased on impulse. This is consistent with Rook and Fisher’s (1995) research that used the original Buying Impulsiveness Scale in a traditional shopping context, and found that those with higher impulse buying tendency scores were more likely to make impulse purchases and made impulse purchases more frequently than others. A significant amount of impulse buying research has linked impulse buying to a personality trait, (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Puri, 1996; Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Rook & Gardner, 1993; Weun, Jones, & Beatty, 1998). Research contends that these personality traits can help determine the degree of a person’s impulse buying tendency, and that a person’s impulse buying tendency is a reliable indicator of impulse buying behavior (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Puri, 1996; Rook and Fisher, 1995; Rook and Gardner, 1993).
The Relationship Between Internal Cues and Impulse Buying Online

The current study found a significant relationship between cognitive state and past online impulse buying behavior, supporting Hypothesis three (a). This relationship suggests that when a person is more responsive to their cognitive state, they are less likely to engage in impulse buying behavior online. This study also found a significant positive relationship between affective state and past online impulse buying behavior, supporting Hypothesis three (b). This relationship suggests that when a person is more responsive to their affective state, they are more likely to engage in impulse buying behavior online. Both of these results are consistent with previous research that has linked both affective and cognitive aspects to impulse buying. In previous studies, when consumers were more responsive to their affective state and less responsive to their cognitive state, they were found to experience a strong urge to buy (Dholakia, 2000; Rook, 1987; Youn & Faber, 2000) and were more likely to engage in impulsive buying behavior. Impulsive consumers are more likely to be sensitive to their emotions and feelings, than non-impulsive consumers (Rook & Gardner, 1993) and this affective state can act as internal triggers to buy impulsively (Dholakia, 2000; Youn & Faber, 2000).

The Relationship Between Normative Evaluation and Impulse Buying Online

This study found a positive relationship between normative evaluation and the level of impulse purchase made, thus supporting Hypothesis four. As a person’s normative evaluation of an impulse purchase moves positively towards favoring the impulse purchase, they are more likely to make a higher level of impulse purchase. This finding is also consistent with previous research that explores normative evaluations of
impulse buying behavior. Rook and Fisher’s (1995) study looked at the moderating role of normative evaluations in a traditional shopping context. They found similar results such as a positive relationship with a person’s normative evaluation and the degree of impulsive purchase made.

**Contributions of This Study**

This study provides valuable support for the CIFE model (Dholakia, 2000) which was originally used to measure consumption impulse enactment in a traditional brick and mortar shopping context. The current study adopted the CIFE model, and applied it to an online shopping context. In the original model, in order for a consumption impulse to form, one of three variables must be present: marketing stimuli, impulsivity trait, and situational factors. Exposure to marketing stimuli in the new model referred to the external stimuli present on online retailers’ websites that entice people to form a consumption impulse. The impulsivity trait was measured by a person’s impulse buying tendency, and situational factors included both a person’s internal cues that influence impulse buying behavior as well as their normative evaluation of impulse buying behavior. The findings showed that internal factors of impulse buying (impulse buying tendency, internal cues of impulse buying, and normative evaluations) led consumers to form a consumption impulse which led to a consumption impulse enactment or impulse purchase online. These results therefore extend the CIFE model to measure impulse buying in an online shopping context.

Little if any research has measured impulse buying behavior in an online shopping context. As important as online retailing is in today’s ever changing retail
environment, this study's findings add valuable knowledge about the two phenomenons of impulse buying and online shopping. Little research has also looked at external stimuli available on online retailers' websites and how these cues might influence impulse buying behavior. This research is valuable both to consumers and marketers. This research can inform consumers of what marketers employ on their websites to encourage impulse buying behavior. With this knowledge, consumers are better apt to make better informed purchase decisions without being swayed by external stimuli present on retailers' websites. On the other hand, marketers can use this information to better design their websites, determining what external impulse trigger cues to employ on their websites.

5.5. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Limitations

As in any study, limitations in this study are present. Several limitations were present for Phase Two of this study, the content analysis of the top 99 online apparel retailer websites. Although the top 99 online apparel retailers provided a reliable sample as well as insight into what the top successful retailers were providing on their website, this sample cannot be generalized to all apparel websites. Thus, a further study should analyze a larger sample size to affirm the results of this study. Also, because of the time limitation, websites were only coded during a one and a half month period, whereas a longer time frame would allow a longitudinal assessment of website contents related to impulse buying trigger cues. Another limitation was that the study only focused on
functional qualities, and not psychological attributes such as the customer’s perceptions or feelings about website attributes. This study also only focused on external marketing cues offered across different apparel websites, whereas discussed in the focus group interviews, other factors exist that affect an online retailer’s success. Thus, a further study should analyze these additional factors identified by focus group participants to affect an online retailer’s success, such as visual quality and design of a website, product selection available and availability of a product, etc.

Several limitations also exist for Phase three of this study, the experimental study and web survey. As discussed earlier, the adopted CIFE Model for impulse buying in an online shopping context only focused on how the four variables (external impulse trigger cues, impulse buying tendency, internal cues of impulse buying, and normative evaluation) contribute to form a consumption impulse which then leads to a consumption impulse enactment or impulse purchase made online. This adopted model did not measure how constraining factors, a person’s cognitive evaluation, and volitional system play a role in leading to an actual impulse purchase. Please see Figure 5.1 for the variables (shaded) that were excluded in the adopted model. As discussed in the discussion session under Phase Three, constraining factors could have influenced why a significant difference was not found among the four different conditions of external impulse trigger cues. If constraining factors were present when participants were making their purchase decision for Mary in the hypothetical buying scenario, according to the original CIFE Model, a person’s cognitive evaluation of the purchase decision would come into play. If the person formed a positive evaluation of the purchase decision, the person would then engage in the impulse purchase enactment. However, if there was a
Figure 5.1. Adopted CIFE Model-Excluded Variables.

*Note: Shaded boxes and dashed lines represent items excluded in adopted model.*
negative evaluation of the purchase decision, the person would utilize their volitional system which triggers resistance strategies in attempt to avoid making the impulse purchase. Once these resistance strategies come into play, the consumption impulse is dissipated and no impulse purchase decision is made. These steps could have largely come into play in the participants’ process of making the impulse purchase decision for Mary. Perhaps, a future study could measure these additional variables that affect impulse buying behavior in an online shopping context.

A considerable factor that might have influenced the non significant finding among the five conditions was the participants’ level of involvement with the hypothetical buying scenario. If would have been nice if this study measured the participants’ level of involvement so as to determine whether such a factor was a reason for the unanticipated result. Future studies should consider measuring participants’ level of involvement as their involvement level could very much determine how participants respond to different buying scenarios.

This study also used a hypothetical buying scenario which asked participants to project themselves into the buying situation. Any hypothetical buying scenario is an obvious limitation, as experimental designs have been criticized for its artificiality (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). It is argued that participants’ intent to purchase may be different than their actual buying behavior in an actual buying situation. Their personal situational factors could influence their purchase decision. Also, the web pages created were only simulated creations of online apparel retailer web pages. It is possible that real online apparel retailer web pages with recognizable brands and merchandise may have received different responses than this study’s simulated web pages. An ideal study would
measure consumers’ actual purchase decision making process in a real online apparel retailer website.
Bibliography


APPENDIX A

IMPULSIVE PURCHASE DECISION

(ROOK AND FISHER, 1995)

A MEASURE OF EXTERNAL TRIGGER

CUES OF IMPULSE BUYING
“Mary is a 21-year old college student with a part-time job. It is two days before Mary gets her next paycheck and she has only $75 left for necessities. In addition to food, Mary needs to buy a cocktail dress for a cocktail party this weekend. After work, Mary goes online to purchase the cocktail dress she had in mind for $55. After browsing through ApparelVenue.com, Mary sees other items that would go great with her new dress.”

Please choose one of five purchase decision alternatives for Mary:

(1) buying the cocktail dress only
(2) wanting the dress shoes but not buying them, only the dress
(3) buying the dress and shoes with a credit card
(4) buying the dress, shoes and earrings with a credit card
(5) buying these plus a new top and pair of jeans for work, also with a credit card

Sales #1:
Sales #2:

Just marked down

New price

New price

Promotions #1:

10% off purchase

Special buy item get half off

Free shipping

Clearance sale

Sale price

On sale today only

10% off purchases of $100 or more New members sign up today and receive $10 off your purchase

Special: Buy Any Dress, Get Any Heels Half Off

Free item w/ purchase

Contest/sweepstake
Suggestions #2:

You might also like...

Recommended item

Customer favorites

Customer reviews

Suggested fashions

Suggested item

Last thing looked at...

View Last Think Looked At...

Control #1:
Control #2:

- Tropez Glim Earrings
  Price: $6

- Ornate Embellished Platform Shoes
  Price: $35

- Outdoor Café Dress
  Soft jersey, gathered & draped into a strapless neckline w/swinging bubble hem.
  Hand wash, Imported
  Price: $55

- Flower Appliqué Cami
  Price: $19

- Angel Crush Jeans
  Price: $45
APPENDIX B

BUYING IMPULSIVENESS SCALE

(ROOK AND FISHER, 1995)

A MEASURE OF IMPULSE BUYING TENDENCY
On a scale of 1-7 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = neutral, 5 = somewhat agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree), please rate yourself on the following statements:

1. I often buy things spontaneously.  
   Strongly Disagree:  
   Strongly Agree: 

2. “Just do it” describes the way I buy things.
   Strongly Disagree: 
   Strongly Agree: 

3. I often buy things without thinking.
   Strongly Disagree: 
   Strongly Agree: 

4. “I see it, I buy it” describes me.
   Strongly Disagree: 
   Strongly Agree: 

5. “Buy now, think about it later” describes me.
   Strongly Disagree: 
   Strongly Agree: 

6. Sometimes I feel like buying things on the spur of the moment.
   Strongly Disagree: 
   Strongly Agree: 

7. I buy things according to how I feel at the moment.
   Strongly Disagree: 
   Strongly Agree: 

8. I carefully plan most of my purchases.
   Strongly Disagree: 
   Strongly Agree: 

9. Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy.
   Strongly Disagree: 
   Strongly Agree: 

NOTE: Item 8 requires reverse coding.
APPENDIX C
THE IMPULSE BUYING TENDENCY SCALE
(VERPLANKEN AND HERABADI, 2001)
A MEASURE OF COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE ASPECTS OF IMPULSE BUYING
On a scale of 1-7 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = neutral, 5 = somewhat agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree), please rate yourself on the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive items</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I usually think carefully before I buy something.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I usually only buy things that I intended.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If I buy something, I usually do that spontaneously.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Most of my purchases are planned in advance.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I only buy things that I really need.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. It is not my style to just buy things.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I like to compare different brands before I buy one.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Before I buy something I always carefully consider whether I need it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I am used to buying things ‘on the spot’</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I often buy things without thinking</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
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Affective items

<table>
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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tr>
<td>11. It is a struggle to leave nice things I see in a shop.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I sometimes cannot suppress the feeling of wanting to buy something</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I sometimes feel guilty after having bought something.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. I’m not the kind of person who ‘falls in love at first sight’ with things I see in shops.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. I can become very excited if I see something I would like to buy.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I always see something nice whenever I pass by shops.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
17. I find it difficult to pass up a bargain. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. If I see something new, I want to buy it. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. I am a bit reckless in buying things 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. I sometimes buy things because I like buying things, rather than because I need them. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Note: Items 1,2, 4-8, and 14 should be reverse coded.
APPENDIX D

NORMATIVE INFLUENCES OF IMPULSE BUYING SCALE

(ROOK AND FISHER, 1995)

A MEASURE OF NORMATIVE EVALUATION
Imagine that Mary actually bought both the unplanned pair of dress shoes and pair of earrings along with the planned cocktail dress. Using the below adjective pairs, please rate Mary's purchase.

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<thead>
<tr>
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Note: Question 3 should be reverse coded.
APPENDIX E

EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENT
Attention:
Looking for DHE female students interested in participating in a web survey.

Purpose:
The purpose of this web survey is to examine whether different marketing stimuli on a webpage affect people's purchase intentions.

Duration:
The web survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

URL Link:
https://surveys.bus.oregonstate.edu/BsqSurvey2_0/main.aspx?SurveyId=1

Confidentiality:
The survey is completely anonymous and all information collected will be kept confidential. Each participant will be asked to read an informed consent form before participating.

For Questions please contact:
Sandy Burnett at 541-968-9044 or by email at Burnetts@onid.orst.edu
or
Minjeong Kim at 541-737-3468 or by email at Minjeong.kim@oregonstate.edu

Thank you!!
APPENDIX F

HUMAN SUBJECTS INFORMED CONSENT PAGE

AND APPROVAL
INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Internal and External Trigger Cues of Unplanned Buying
Principal Investigator: Minjeong Kim, Design and Human Environment
Co-Investigator(s): Sandy Burnett, Design and Human Environment

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?
You are being invited to take part in a research study designed to examine whether different types of marketing stimuli present on an online apparel website affect people's purchase intentions. The aim of this study is to examine why consumers make unplanned purchases online, and how a retailer's website can influence consumers to make unplanned purchases online. We are studying this because much of consumer's purchases are made impulsively (unplanned), and with the tremendous growth of online retailing, it is important to research unplanned buying online.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?
This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about the research, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?
You are being invited to take part in this study because you are a female college student over 18 years of age which is a good representative population of online shoppers in the U.S. You must be 18 years of age to participate. Prior research has found that females and males approach shopping differently (Chang, 2004). This study will specifically focus on how female shoppers approach unplanned buying in an online context. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to answer any question or stop the survey at any time.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?
If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a short online survey. This survey will present a short buying scenario and simulated webpage of an online store, along with several questions pertaining to the buying scenario. If you agree to take part in this study, your involvement will last for approximately 10-15 minutes.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?
There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?
You will not benefit from being in this study, besides the extra credit you will receive from your instructor for participating. In the future, we hope that other people might benefit from...
this study because the results will help consumers and retailers learn what entices people to make unplanned purchases, which in return will create more knowledgeable consumers.

**WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?**

You will not be paid for participating.

**WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION I GIVE?**

The information you provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. To help protect your confidentiality, nowhere on the survey asks for any identifying information. Also, all information collected will be securely locked in a filing cabinet and out of view to the public. If the results of this project are published there is no way your identity will be available to the public. Your questionnaire will also be destroyed once your responses are tallied. There are no foreseeable risks to you as a participant as well as any direct benefits. You participation however, is greatly appreciated.

If the results of this project are published your identity will not be made public.

**DO I HAVE A CHOICE TO BE IN THE STUDY?**

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering. If you choose not to participate in this study, your standing as a student in the Department of Design and Human Environment or in the present course will not be affected. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. You are free to skip any question you prefer not to answer. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researchers may keep information collected about you and this information may be included in study reports.

You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. You are free to skip any questions that you do not prefer to answer. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researchers may keep information collected about you and this information may be included in study reports.

**WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: Minjeong Kim at (541) 737-3468 or by email at Minjeong.Kim@oregonstate.edu as well as Sandy Burnett at Burnetts@onid.orst.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at (541) 737-4933 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu.

OSU IRB Approval Date: 6-12-06
Approval Expiration Date: 6-11-07
APPENDIX G

Focus Group Interviews

Transcriptions
Focus Group One:

Interviewer: So whoever wants to start, on a scale of 0-10, 0 being never and 10 being very frequently, how often do you purchase products online?

Interviewee 1: 3

Interviewee 2: probably like 5

Interviewee 3: 1

Interviewee 4: between 4 and 5

Interviewee 5: I’d say like a 6

Interviewer: And using the same scale, how often do you make apparel purchases online?

Interviewee 2: 5

Interviewee 4: the same 4 or 5

Interviewee 1: 3 again

Interviewee 5: like a 1

Interviewee 3: probably even less.

Interviewer: So for the apparel purchases that you made online, were they intentional meaning you planned to make them or were they unintentional meaning you had no plan to make them?

Interviewee 5: either way, like I’ve purchased a couple of items planned and a couple of items not planned.

Interviewee 4: Yeah I usually go to a website planning on buying something and then maybe you see something else and I’m like oh maybe I’ll buy that too.

Interviewee 1: yeah I do that too.

Interviewer: So what made you decide on making those purchases? Was it something about the product, was it something about the website? What cued you in to that specific product and what actually made you make the purchase?

Interviewee 2: To me probably the product, if I think it’s cute or what not or if they have like, I’ll buy something more because the shipping charges are between the same and so I’m like well I might as buy more and can return it if I don’t like it.
Interviewee 3: I would say probably a good price and then like the uniqueness of it. Because if I could buy it at a store, I'd probably go there before buying it online.

Interviewee 1: I just buy stuff on sale and free shipping.

Interviewer: Does it matter, when you say on sale, does it matter if it’s like 25% off, buy one get one free, does it matter if its free shipping or does it just matter about the end price?

Interviewee 1: yeah pretty much the end price.

Interviewee 3: For me, I know I’ve bought stuff at Nordstroms because like they’ll return it at the store anyways and it’s only like $3 shipping so I figure its no more than going in the store.

Interviewee 5: Price is definitely the reason I buy online pretty much anything. I mean if there’s a sale or something usually I buy it. That’s what happened with my last pair of soccer kleats I bought, they were like on sale at this website and they were ones that I wanted and I almost bought in the store and I decided to buy them online and then just wait the extra five days to get there.

Interviewer: For each of you, think of an apparel purchase that you’ve made or it doesn’t have to be apparel, just a purchase that you’ve made online and kind of describe the steps that you went through making the purchase starting from logging onto the website to the purchase.

Interviewee 3: I just bought Uggs online and I went to Google and found a place that had them. And I clicked on boots, like the color or style and size and stuff and then purchased it.

Interviewer: So this was for a planned purchase that you were making?

Interviewee 3: yeah.

Interviewee 1: I guess mine was like I was just looking at famousfootwear.com and I was looking at the on sale things and I wasn’t planning on buying anything and I went to like all the way to the end and I found a pair of boots that wasn’t in the stores but it was on sale online so I bought them.

Interviewee 4: Okay its not apparel but I bought a book once because well I needed it for school and I didn’t want to pay as much so basically I just did like a Google search and then searched every website to compare prices and how long it would take to deliver.
Interviewee 3: I just kind of bought a pair of pants from urban outfitters and I actually saw it in the catalog but I went online to order it and so I just went to urbanoutfitters.com and found them and yeah I just picked the color.

Interviewee 5: I actually bought my pair of soccer cleats, like I had seen them in a catalog and so I went to their website and they also had better prices like if you pay like $20 like one time fee to join like their little club, and they were already on sale so I knew that I could get them cheaper than go buy them like at the store and like I said I was just patient enough to wait the 5 days for them to come in the mail and I didn’t need them right away so.

Interviewer: How many of you guys browse on the internet for shopping?

All: Yeah

Interviewer: And while you’re browsing, have you made a purchase that was unplanned?

All: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now describe that process:

Interviewee 3: I can’t think of one on the top of my head but I know I’ve done it. But usually I go like the site, I don’t really Google that much just go the a website I know I want to go to and look around and usually find something.

Interviewee 2: I go to ebay just to look. And you get sucked in and start looking at just like random things that have so many different styles and they seem pretty cheap.

Interviewee 5: Ebay definitely. I went on an ebay binge. It was a while back but for like 3 months I was like on ebay just everyday just looking at random stuff because I mean like I have a house in Sunriver, my parents do, and we’re always looking for like neat things just to put in the house so I just get on ebay and just looking at random like stuff like knives and stuff.

Interviewee 4: It’s definitely impulse buying on ebay.

Interviewee 3: You just see the buy it now, and oh I got to get it.

Interviewer: What aspects about the website enticed you to make that purchase besides the product? What about the website drew you or grabbed your attention, encouraged you to make an unplanned purchase?

Interviewee 5: Ebay has everything.

Interviewer: So like product selection.
Interviewee 5: yeah. I go there and you can find anything that you need whether you want to impulse or shopping, you can pretty much find what you’re looking for or if you’re looking for a specific item.

Interviewee 1: I get annoyed with like sites like Anthropology but they won’t let you view them all at once. You have to like you keep flipping through pages that you have to go through, you have to go through like floral dresses and then strips and I just like to view them all at once. I don’t want to have to like keep clicking. View all, that one I like.

Interviewer: So now I want you guys to put your merchandiser, marketing caps on, what can an apparel website to persuade someone to make an unplanned purchase?

Interviewee 2: I think the websites that have like, like when you look at something and it says “other items you might like” so when I see those and I don’t know where to find them in the actual website so clicking on that is like a lot easier.

Interviewee 5: I’d say price definitely. If they have a promotion or a deal or buy one get one free because I mean honestly I’m not really an impulse buyer, I usually plan my purchases but if there was a deal then I might be more inclined to buy something, me personally.

Interviewee 3: Well probably if they partner with other websites too and have like little flags or links but that might help if they’re related websites.

Interviewee 5: I like reviews actually thinking about it, like customer reviews. You know that view and you see customer highlights or problems with the product, or if it’s a good product

Interviewer: What about customer recommendations

Interviewee 5: Yeah, customer recommendations too, if they included that.

Interviewer: Or would you rather have their manufacturer recommendations?

Interviewee 5: I like when they have like when people who actually bought the product review because they’re the consumer. They are the ones who have tested them out but usually I do read like an actual consumer report or like someone from like another company, a professional source.

Interviewer: Anything else. What apparel websites do you frequently visit? It could just be browsing.

Interviewee 3: My friend like worked at the Buckle last year so I was always looking there because I knew someone so kind of if I know someone in the company, I’m more inclined to look there.
Interviewee 2: Nordstrom usually.

Interviewee 4: I go to shoe ones like famousfootwear.com like that.

Interviewee 1: Urban outfitters.

Interviewee 5: I’d say ebay

Interviewer: So now, I just want to go through a couple of websites, and I want you to look at the website and see if any stand out to you that would grab your attention that would make you might want to look into an item and possible purchase an item. So you guys can yell things out or if you don’t see anything too.

Interviewee 3: Well I started reading when I saw “for a limited time only” I was like oh, what’s that. But then when I saw what it was, it lost my interest

Interviewer: “take 20% off your first purchase when you get a Gap card” okay so the Gap card threw you off?

Interviewee 3: Yeah.

Interviewee 4: Free shipping

Interviewer: Anything on this page?

Interviewee 2: I like when they have the size charts on the ones you don’t know so it helps tell you how the size is going to fit. I think it helps you be more interested.

Interviewer: Anything about this page?

Interviewee 3: Maybe like the $5 shipping thing in the corner

Interviewee 2: Yeah. That grabs my attention.

Interviewer: Anything here?

Interviewee 4: The Valentine’s day gifts with the heart right there.

Interviewee 5: the items under $30.

Interviewer: About here?

Interviewee 2: I like when they give alternative views or when you can go to the color you want. I think that would be pretty easy to do.

Interviewee 3: Suggestion coordination items
Interviewee 1: When they show it in other colors too.

Interviewer: How about here?

Interviewee 2,3,5: Free shipping

Interviewee 4: Featured item

Interviewee 3: I like how they have like price lines like $29 and up just so you know what you're getting into right away.

Interviewer: Anything here?

Interviewee 2: When they have the sale price, it's like oh, I'm saving this much, it's a better deal”

Interviewee 5,4: Yeah

Interviewer: How about this page?

Interviewee 3,5 : Free shipping again

Interviewee 1: I like how they show like all different angles of it.
3: the layout looks better. I don't know if it shows it on this page but at the bottom it says like Europe, Interviewee Urban Europe. That's kind of cool. To me is sounds like its going to be different styles you wouldn't find here.

Interviewer: Anything about this year?

Interviewee 4: Ebay is like whatever it is, you can get here, you can find whatever you need or whatever you want.

Interviewer: So would you say that the organization of the website helps you find things in the store or the categories?

Interviewee 5: Like if you're looking at a specific item the search is like right there or yeah you just like go down to the categories and they have the category and its easy to find.

Interviewer: What about ceramic plates for $10

Interviewee 5: Yeah I like how they just throw random stuff on there on the home page I mean.

Interviewer: Are you guys interested in the featured items?
Interviewee 5: Yeah like I’d said pretty much they just throw random things on the page and its different every time you come back and its just like you were just on there an hour ago.

Interviewee 3: Yeah you might see something that you never think to buy and you see it and you’re like “oh that’s cool”.

Interviewee 2: I like went here on Halloween time and they had like Halloween costumes and I went on it and I ended up buying my Halloween costume on ebay.
Focus Group Two:

Interviewer: On a scale of 0-10, 0 being never and 10 being very frequently, how often do you purchase products online?

Interviewee 1: 3

Interviewee 2: maybe like a 4

Interviewee 3: yeah, maybe like a 4

Interviewer: Using the same scale, how often do you make apparel purchases online?

Interviewee 2: probably like the same, a 4

Interviewee 1: 3 again

Interviewee 3: more like a 2

Interviewer: For the apparel purchases that you made online, were they intentional meaning you planned to make them or were they unintentional meaning you had no plan to make them?

Interviewee 3: Well, thinking about it, they were mostly unplanned. I didn’t set out to buy them.

Interviewee 1: I would have to say a few of them were intentional, like I went to Nordstrom’s website specifically for something but ended up buying something else that was not planned, so both.

Interviewer: What do you think made you decide on making those purchases? What cued you in to that specific product and what actually made you make the purchase?

Interviewee 3: Well, I was just surfing the net and looking at different shopping websites and ended up purchases stuff from websites that caught me attention.

Interviewer: How did they catch your attention?

Interviewee 3: Well, clearance bolded signs always catch my attention, and then one site had a special coupon that I could use in the online store and in their actual store. So that was pretty cool. Definitely the promotions though.

Interviewer: What about you guys?

Interviewee 1: Again like I said I new what I wanted to buy at Nordstrom’s and bought that, but what drew me to buy the other stuff was that it was featured as their
new styles. I like when they feature products. You can see how they put the outfits together and it gives you good ideas. It usually makes me want to buy the outfit.

Interviewee 2: Yeah, the clearance or sale signs always catch my attention and that is usually where I go first and see what’s on sale and what I can’t live without. But I also like when they suggest others products you might like when they recommend a pair of pants with a certain shirt or a pair of earrings. Or even when they suggest another cute shirt that they think you might like. It’s also cool when they have the last thing you looked at. To me that is always a cool feature, and kind of I don’t know keeps that product in the back of your head, making you think about it until you end of buying it.

Interviewer: Okay, I want each of you to think of an apparel purchase that you’ve made online and describe the steps that you went through making the purchase starting from logging onto the website to making the purchase.

Interviewee 1: I’ll start. I guess I first go to the website, look at the intro page and see if there are any promotions or cool offers going on. I usually check out the sale or clearance page and see if there is anything I can’t live without. Or if I have something already in mind, I go and search for it, and then click add to cart or something and purchase it.

Interviewee 2: For me, I too go to the website, and browse around. I guess I go to their new stuff...try to find stuff that I haven’t seen or is not in the stores. I look around a lot, looking at the whole website to make sure I haven’t missed anything or any sales because sometimes they only show special promotions on certain pages so you have to find them and not miss them. Anyways, once I find something, if I do, I do the same thing and first think about whether I really need it, how it will fit with my other clothes, whether I can make an outfit with it, and then decide whether or not to purchase it.

Interviewee 3: Let’s see...thinking about a specific purchase, I went to ebay to look for Seven jeans. I usually check out the site quite often to see if there are any better ones there before I made my purchase. Looking on ebay could take along time because there is so much stuff there, and if you wait and look around you can find a better deal or bid than the ones on there presently. Anyways, I finally found this one pair and bought them. The cool thing about the page was the seller had other items they were selling and I ended buying a pair of Guess jeans from them too. So I guess that was bought on impulse.

Interviewer: What aspects about a website entice you to make that these unplanned purchases? What about the website drew you or grabbed your attention, encouraged you to make an unplanned purchase?
Interviewee 3: When they have special offers or sales. Maybe if they have sales that they don’t in their stores, so you know you are getting a better deal. Also, if they have free shipping.

Interviewee 1: yeah, free shipping definitely. Also if you can return the product in the store, that helps.

Interviewee 2: Yeah, I would say free shipping. Again, I like when retailers have featured items, they could be on sale or new merchandise in their upcoming season. Oh, what I like is when they give you gift ideas for like Christmas or Mother’s day or something. That’s nice. I’m sure the guys like this too.

Interviewer: Now, what I’d like to do is go to a couple of websites, and I want you to look at the website and see if any stands out that grabs your attention might entice you to purchase an item.

Interviewee 1: Oooh, I see a 10% off thing, that grabs my attention.

Interviewee 3: Yeah. Me too.

Interviewee 2: Free shipping

Interviewer: Anything on this page?

Interviewee 1: I like the layout of this website. It seems easy to find stuff.

Interviewer: What about this page?

Interviewee 3: The free shipping.

Interviewee 2: Yeah. That grabs my attention.

Interviewer: Anything here?

Interviewee 2: Go back... yeah I like when you can shop the whole outfit. That’s a cool feature.

Interviewee 1: Yeah, I like that feature too. It gives you good ideas and suggestions.

Interviewer: Anything here?

Interviewee 2: I think the pictures should be displayed bigger. Also, they need to bold the sale sign more, because that would grab my attention.

Interviewee 1: Suggestion coordination items
Interviewer: How about here?

Interviewee 2: I like the alternative color views.

Interviewee 3: The features items are cool.

Interviewer: Anything about this one?

Interviewee 3: This site is pretty cool, I would definitely check out the sale section, you can’t miss the sale sign.

Interviewee 2: I know, that grabbed my attention too.
Focus Group Three:

Interviewer: On a scale of 0-10, 0 being never and 10 being very frequently, how often do you purchase products online?

Interviewee 1: 2

Interviewee 2: 3

Interviewer: Using the same scale, how often do you make apparel purchases online

Interviewee 2: maybe like a 2

Interviewee 1: yeah, again like a 2, that’s usually all I buy, but I guess not that often.

Interviewer: For the apparel purchases that you made online, were they intentional meaning you planned to make them or were they unintentional meaning you had no plan to make them?

Interviewee 2: I would say half and half. It sometimes depends on my mood, and also my pocket book. If I do really well on an exam or something, I reward myself. Or even if I need a pick me up.

Interviewee 1: I guess some of them are unplanned. I haven’t thought about it till now. Actually, most of them were because I really didn’t plan to make them, I just did.

Interviewer: What made you decide on making those purchases? What cued you in to that specific product and what actually made you make the purchase?

Interviewee 1: My friend told me about Zappos.com, and you can pretty much find any pair or style of shoe you want. So definitely the selection they had. The site is almost kind of overwhelming so it helps when they display the top favorites that other people bought which are usually the cuter ones. I like how they have the customer reviews or recommendations too. Those helped convince me to buy a pair.

Interviewee 2: For me it’s like...I don’t know whether the item catches my eye or stands out. I like things that are unique and not everyone has. Usually you can find stuff online that the stores don’t have. If the store will ship the product for free, that’s always nice. I won’t buy it if its not free shipping.

Interviewer: I want you to think of an apparel purchase that you’ve made online and describe the steps that you went through making the purchase starting from logging onto the website to making the purchase.
Interviewee 1: I’ll do the zappos purchase. I first went to zappos.com. viewed the first page, and looked at the sandals section. They had like a couple of sandals all ready displayed, which were the cuter ones that people already bought I think. Anyways, they have like a million on each page, so I went to the featured sandals. On this page, they had a recommended sandal which is exactly what I wanted so clicked on its page and ended up buying these shoes. They were really cute. They had like customer reviews which were helpful.

Interviewee 2: Ummm… I usually go to a website like ebay because you can find really unique stuff there. They have like the top ten things which I usually check out. But I usually have some product type in mind like if I want to buy a certain CD or a bag or something, then I’ll click on the bags tab. I’ll browse through the tons of bags they have until I find one I want to bid on. Then I make a bid and keep track of the bag until the bidding ends.

Interviewer: What aspects of a website entice you to make unplanned purchases?

Interviewee 1: I would say the sales, free shipping, and when you can return something in a store so you don’t have to worry about sending a package. It’s neat when they show you the latest fashions that just arrived. I always like checking those out.

Interviewee 2: Yeah free shipping definitely, major sales, when they give you suggested items…I like that.

Interviewer: Okay, we are going to visit a couple of websites, and I want you to look at the website and see if any stands out that grabs your attention might entice you to purchase an item.

Interviewee 1: It’s good that they make the sale sign stand out and bigger font than other stuff.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Ohh, I see a coupon I’d want to check out.

Interviewer: What about this page?

Interviewee 2: Hmm, the merchandise is kind of drab. They could put better outfits together to make the merchandise look better. Just preference though I guess.

Interviewee 1: True. They could do a better job at that. I could do a better job at that.

Interviewer: What about this page?
Interviewee 1: Oh, the sale section.

Interviewee 2: Yeah, check that out.

Interviewee 1: Sales section always grabs my attention.

Interviewee 2: Me too.

Interviewer: What about here?

Interviewee 2: I like how they advertise items all under $20 because people might only want to spend that much or are only willing to spend that much and I think people would be more easily to make a purchase under $20.

Interviewee 1: I would agree.

Interviewee 2: Especially if there was free shipping.

Interviewee 1: Free shipping is so important for online retailing I think.

Interviewee 2: Or definitely at least a discount of some sort.

Interviewee 1: yeah, I would agree.

Interviewee 2: Even if it was like $5 off or something.

Interviewee 1: yeah, that would be better than nothing.

Interviewee 2: And it gives the impression that they are getting a good deal or discount.

Interviewee 1: yeah.

Interviewer: Anything here?

Interviewee 2: This page is kind of boring. They need something in the background to make it more interesting. Perhaps more color or something. The website design could be more... modern or trendy.

Interviewee 1: I like the suggested coordination items.

Interviewer: How about here?

Interviewee 2: I like when you can see different angles of the item. Also, I like when they have the stuff you viewed before at the bottom of your page so you can keep track off what you want and not want.
Interviewee 1: the featured outfits catch my attention. I might want to check those out.

Interviewer: Anything about this page?

Interviewee 2: Again, I would want to check out the sale section. Hey, if you could get a free gift, that’s cool. People might want to do that just for the gift.

Interviewee 1: Yeah, that’s a good idea.
Focus Group Four:

Interviewer: On a scale of 0-10, 0 being never and 10 being very frequently, how often do you purchase products online?

Interviewee 1: 4

Interviewee 2: 2

Interviewee 3: maybe a 3, no maybe a 4.

Interviewer: Using the same scale, how often do you make apparel purchases online

Interviewee 1: Probably like a less…a 2.

Interviewee 2: I’d say the same, a 2.

Interviewee 3: More like a 2.

Interviewer: For the apparel purchases that you made online, were they intentional meaning you planned to make them or were they unintentional meaning you had no plan to make them?

Interviewee 1: Usually mine are planned if I go online to shop. I pretty much know what I’m going to buy.

Interviewee 2: Some of them are planned and some are not. If I am familiar with the store or brand, I might buy things unplanned, otherwise they are pretty planned.

Interviewee 3: I would say some are unplanned.

Interviewer: What made you decide on making those purchases? What cued you in to that specific product and what actually made you make the purchase?

Interviewee 1: If I need to buy something specific like a textbook. I’ll go to like Amazon.com and buy it there.

Interviewee 2: Whether I had money or not at the time I guess. Definitely if the item was on sale, like with a really good discount or promotion.

Interviewee 3: Well one time if I spent a certain limit I would get I think it was like 20% off the entire purchase and I was just shy of something, so I just searched to find another item. The item happened to be on sale too.
Interviewer: I want you to think of an apparel purchase that you’ve made online and describe the steps that you went through making the purchase starting from logging onto the website to making the purchase.

Interviewee 1: I know I’ve made an apparel purchase before but can’t remember what I bought or where. I’m sure I just went to the website and went directly to the product. I probably saw it in a store or something.

Interviewee 2: Umm, one time I bought a shirt from Forever21.com. I went to the site to check out the new stuff and see if anything was online that I didn’t see in the store, and went to the tops section. They had a really cute top displayed or featured or whatever and I liked the way it looked in the picture and just bought it.

Interviewee 3: Yeah, my steps were pretty similar. I just go to a website, browse around, look at their sale section or see if there are any other offers, and then see whether I feel like buying something. Pretty common I think.

Interviewer: What aspects of a website entice you to make unplanned purchases?

Interviewee 1: Well if they have a sales section or display sale stuff. Also if there is no hassle of returning something like in their stores. That makes life easier. I like when they display certain stuff too which gets your attention to look into a particular product.

Interviewee 2: Definitely free shipping for online stores. That’s important. When they give you ideas for gifts. I always get stuck on what to buy stuff, and especially for my friends I see what experts suggest to give, that’s helpful.

Interviewee 3: I liked the promotion where you spend a certain amount and then get a percentage off your whole purchase. That makes you spend more I think.

Interviewer: We are now going to visit a couple of websites, and I want you to look at the website and see if any stands out that grabs your attention might entice you to purchase an item.

Interviewee 1: Oh, free shipping…always good.

Interviewee 2: Yeah.

Interviewee 1: Hey you can shop by outfit. That seems interesting. You might want to look at what outfits they put together and what they suggest with what.

Interviewee 3: yeah, I like when they suggest items with certain things to create a whole outfit. Except sometimes I don’t like what they suggest.

Interviewee 1: yeah, but it gives you an idea.
Interviewee 2: yeah, then you could get an idea to put your own outfit together.

Interviewer: How about this page?

Interviewee 2: Ohh, you should check out the contest to win something.

Interviewee 3: yeah, I like when like bluefly or something has those contest like to win a free designer purse or something. I know I won’t win, but it’s fun to play and gets you to go to their website like everyday you want to play.

Interviewee 1: I’ve never been there.

Interviewee 3: You should check it out, they have like designer clothes and stuff for a discounted price and cute stuff too.

Interviewer: What about this page?

Interviewee 1: Hey they have gift ideas.

Interviewee 2: Oh yeah, I see that.

Interviewer: What about here?

Interviewee 2: I like how they feature a couple of different shirts or pants or whatever on each page. That way you can see more of the selection.

Interviewee 3: yeah, I like that.

Interviewer: Anything here?

Interviewee 2: Gift ideas?

Interviewer: How about here?

Interviewee 2: This site’s a little different from the others. I don’t think I like it as much.

Interviewee 1: I don’t know, I think I like the simplicity of it. It’s not crowded with a bunch of merchandise.

Interviewee 2: True. Yeah, I see where you’re coming from.

Interviewer: How about this page?

Interviewee 2: Same stuff.

Interviewee 1: I don’t see anything new.
Focus Group Five:

Interviewer: On a scale of 0-10, 0 being never and 10 being very frequently, how often do you purchase products online?

Interviewee 1: Maybe like a 6.

Interviewee 2: Probably like a 5.

Interviewee 1: yeah, we both shop online quite often.

Interviewer: Using the same scale, how often do you make apparel purchases online?

Interviewee 1: probably the same.

Interviewee 2: I don’t know like a 4.

Interviewer: For the apparel purchases that you made online, were they intentional meaning you planned to make them or were they unintentional meaning you had no plan to make them?

Interviewee 1: My purchases I would have to say are unintentional. Some are planned though. I don’t buy everything on impulse.

Interviewee 2: Yeah, probably more are planned than unplanned. At least I am trying to make less unplanned than planned.

Interviewer: What made you decide on making those purchases? What cued you in to that specific product and what actually made you make the purchase?

Interviewee 1: Well I think it depends on the website, and what I want to look for or need to purchase. If it’s a textbook or something, than the class made me buy the book. But if it’s like a pair of shoes or something, then I’ll shop around the different websites to find a better deal or if a new pair of shoes came out that I know I have to have then I’ll find the site that carries them.

Interviewee 2: Definitely if I can get a good deal on whatever it is that I’m buying like it is on sale or if there’s a shipping discount. I agree though that I like when websites have the latest stuff. It’s nice when they display it too like on their opening page so that you can see that they carry it or something.

Interviewer: I want you to think of an apparel purchase that you’ve made online and describe the steps that you went through making the purchase starting from logging onto the website to making the purchase.

Interviewee 1: I can’t remember what the site was called, but its not a familiar site. Anyways I saw this top I really liked and didn’t even know if it was going to fit me,
but it was first of all a good price like under $20, and there was free shipping, and also, it was like a top favorite item or something on the site. So I decided to purchase it even though I didn’t even know it would fit me.

Interviewer: What made you want to buy it so bad?

Interviewee 1: Well everything about the purchase seemed so attractive, plus that had a good return policy, I think they would like pay for the return shipping fee of something. But I didn’t have to return the shirt thankfully!

Interviewee 2: What site was this?

Interviewee 1: I can’t remember. I’m sure it will come to me.

Interviewee 2: Let’s see, I bought some doc martins off ebay once. I knew I wanted a pair but didn’t know I was going to buy them that day. I just went to ebay to browse around and found them.

Interviewer: What aspects of a website entice you to make unplanned purchases?

Interviewee 1: I like the free shipping, and the good return policy like when you can return stuff in their stores for the websites that have physical stores.

Interviewee 2: I like when they feature items at the top of the pages.

Interviewee 1: Yeah, you get a good feel of what’s their merchandise is like.

Interviewee 2: And if you can view outfits together, that’s a good idea.

Interviewee 1: I think a lot of people would like to look at whole outfits.

Interviewee 2: I like when they group things all under the same price.

Interviewee 1: Yeah, so you don’t wander into a really expensive designer section that you know you can’t afford.

Interviewer: We are now going to visit a couple of websites, and I want you to look at the website and see if any stands out that grabs your attention might entice you to purchase an item.

Interviewee 1: they display their latest fashions. They do a good job at displaying in too. It makes you want to check them out.

Interviewee 2: Yeah, I think so too.

Interviewee 1: I think you can view stuff by outfit too.
Interviewer: What about this page?

Interviewee 2: Oh, they have Valentine’s Day gifts. That’s nice.

Interviewee 1: oh yeah, that catches a person’s eye.

Interviewer: What about this page?

Interviewee 1: Suggested coordination items.

Interviewee 2: and even non-coordination items too like similar shirts.

Interviewer: What about here?

Interviewee 2: Pretty much the same

Interviewee 3: yeah, this page has the same stuff like featured merchandise and sales signs, which is all interesting.

Interviewer: Anything here?

Interviewee 2: I think people would check out the top favorites.

Interviewee 1: Yeah I think the majority of people would want to see what other people already bought because the majority of people are mainstream shoppers and just follow and buy the styles that are already tested by others.

Interviewee 2: That’s a good point.
### E-retailer Info:

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<th>1(pure etailer)</th>
<th>2(Brick &amp; Mortar)</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel category</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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#### Sales:

- On sale (clearance, sales, markdowns):
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Bold sale price on product:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

#### Promotions:

- Addit. purch % off (ex. buy 1 get 1...):
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Coupon:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- % off when spend certain limit:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Gift with purchase:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Free shipping or shipping discount:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Return purchase in store:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Contests/sweepstakes:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Membership discount:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

### Ideas:

- Shop outfit:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- New styles/fashions:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Featured items:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Top picks/favorites:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Gift ideas:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Price point items (ex. items under $30):
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

### Suggestions:

- Suggested coordination items:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Suggested non-coordination items:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Customer favs/reviews/recommendations:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)

- Last thing you looked at:
  - 1(pure etailer): 0(unavailable)
  - 2(Brick & Mortar): 1(available)