

Adopting the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to Explore Online Purchase Intention via Facebook Live Streaming: Empirical Evidence from Bangkok, Thailand

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Abstract

Live streaming, such as, for example, Facebook Live streaming, has been steadily growing in popularity in recent years, which makes understanding how it contributes to online purchases especially critical. This qualitative study seeks to do just that. Using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which posits that both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence the decision to adopt a new technology, it explores customer purchase intention via Facebook live streaming. Purposive sampling was utilized to select Bangkok-based Facebook Live customers for in-depth interviews. The data collected was analyzed using content analysis and NVivo software. The results indicate that online consumers' perception of usefulness and ease of use influence customer purchase intention via Facebook Live streaming. The ease of leaving comments and receiving responses from the host, creates a seamless and interactive shopping experience and plays a crucial role in the decision-making process. Informative content positively impacts customers. The findings may assist Facebook Live sellers improve service and enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Intention, Facebook Live.

1. Introduction

The growing importance of social networks and their impact on online business has been widely acknowledged (Kraiwanit & Sornsrimai, 2017; Napawut et al., 2022; Obermayer et al., 2022). By creating a world without boundaries and connecting people across the world, the internet has caused ecommerce to grow exponentially and online sales transactions to keep rising at a pace unimaginable a few decades ago. Due to the convenience of making purchases online at their own pace, literally billions of people are online every day; many of them potential customers for businesses offering online sales and many of them preferring the online purchase experience to the in-store purchase one (Chusminah & Sugiyah, 2020). Some also have severe time constraints and find it difficult to shop at physical retail stores. The exponential rise in the number of buyers has been accompanied by a significant rise in the number of sellers, who, given the fierce competition, must look for ways to promote their products (Cheong et al., 2020). Many now view social media as a tool for improving customer

relationships as online interactions facilitate the exchange and sharing of information and allow for widespread communication among individuals (Valmohammadi, Taraz, & Mehdikhani, 2021). As a result, live streaming, such as Facebook Live, has been growing in popularity among sellers (and of course buyers) in recent years. For many brands and organizations across all sectors, this is no longer a passing fad, but a fully accepted marketing strategic tool (Jakwatanaham, Phayaphrom, & Nurittamont, 2022). Live video streaming has emerged as a powerful tool for online businesses to gain a competitive advantage. By leveraging live streaming, organizations can engage with their customers in real-time, build a loyal following, and generate interest in their products or services. Moreover, live streaming can also help them reach a wider audience, as it can be easily shared and accessed through social media platforms (Skjuve & Brandtzaeg, 2019).

The increasing popularity of live video streaming has not only created exciting possibilities for businesses looking to enhance their online presence and engagement with their target audience. It has also paved the way for new research opportunities (Wohn & Freeman, 2020; Zhang et al., 2020) and heightened the relevance of studying its impact on online consumption in social commerce (Jakwatanaham et al., 2022). In short, understanding the online purchase intention of live streamers has become critical (Siripipatthanakul et al., 2022a). A person's online purchase intention is closely linked his or her behavioral intention, which refers to a person's conscious plan or the likelihood that he or she will engage in or refrain from engaging in a specific behavior, in this case personal acceptance of IT systems (Haimson & Tang, 2017). One theoretical model widely used to make this determination is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) initially proposed by Davis (1989) and premised on the belief that behavioral intention determines system use. TAM is used to predict users' intention to accept technology based on their perceptions (Woodeson, 2022). The model includes two independent variables, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use. Since the model's acceptability impacts users' attitudes, behavioral intentions, and actual consumption, it can be used to explain the causal relationship between customers' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use and their attitudes and purchase intentions in the context of online purchases (Kei & Chaichi, 2021).

Previous studies have predominantly used quantitative methods, such as survey questionnaires, to explore the relationship between TAM and behavioral intention, causing a qualitative approach to be underutilized (Suprawan, 2017; Zhang, Ali, & Kanesan, 2022). This study, however, favors a qualitative approach. Specifically, it uses in-depth interviews to gain valuable insights and a deep understanding of customers' online purchasing behavior and answer the following research question: How do perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence the intention of consumers to make online purchases through Facebook Live Streaming? It also incorporates TAM's perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. The study holds the potential to assist e-marketers in gaining a comprehensive understanding of their customers' behaviors in online purchases.

2. Literature Review

- *Live Streaming*

Live streaming is the broadcasting of video content in real-time over the internet, which allows viewers to watch content as it is being created or performed, rather than having to wait for a pre-recorded video to be uploaded (Liu et al., 2022). Live streaming can be used for a wide range of purposes, including entertainment, education, marketing, and communication. It has become extremely popular in recent years, thanks to the advent of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, which have all added live streaming features to their platforms (Kutuchief, 2022). The increasing availability of high-speed internet connections has also contributed to making live streaming more accessible to a wider audience (Rogers, 2023).

One of the key advantages of live streaming is its interactivity. Viewers can interact with content creators in real-time through comments and live chat, making the experience more engaging and immersive (Yuen, 2023). This interactivity can also help content creators to build a loyal following and create a sense of community around their brand or content (Chen & Lin, 2018; Liu et al., 2022). In summary, live streaming offers a unique and powerful way to connect with an audience in real-time, making it an increasingly important tool for businesses, educators, and content creators alike (Dredge, 2017; Sandler, 2017).

- Facebook Live

Facebook Live was first introduced in 2015 as a platform for celebrities and public figures to broadcast live content (it was then launched as a full platform in April 2016). Facebook Live, a popular Facebook feature added to use live broadcasts, provides video recording and broadcasting capabilities, as well as a channel for instant communication between the broadcaster and the audience (Jakwatanaham et al., 2022). Also including in it is the ability to express the audience's opinions at the time (Jakwatanaham et al., 2022). While Facebook Live streams can be broadcast to the public, most people only see streams broadcast by people they follow, either through notifications or when a stream appears in their newsfeed. Users can also search for event live streams using Facebook Live Map. Facebook Live streams offer a variety of interactions, including comments (which appear to the right of the video for viewers and below the video for broadcasters) and reactions (which include Like, Love, Haha, Wow, Sad, and Angry) (Rein & Venturini, 2018). When clicked or touched by the viewer, the latter shows a small photo of the viewer's face before transforming into the reaction's emoji while floating across the video screen (Haimson & Tang, 2017; Skjuve & Brandtzaeg, 2019).

- Online Purchase Intention

The intention to purchase has been defined as the desire to buy a specific product or service within a specific time frame (Lin & Chen, 2009; Peña-García et al., 2020). It somehow predicts what consumers believe they will buy in the future to meet their needs and desires. Purchase intention in consumers is classified as a complex process that is usually related to their behavior, perception, and attitude (Dastane, 2020). A consumer's willingness to purchase goods or services from an e-commerce company has an impact on his/her online purchase intention (Naseri, 2021). Consumers who are knowledgeable about and familiar with e-commerce and understand what is happening, why it is happening, and what will happen next are more likely to visit an online shopping site with the intent to buy. Consumers' purchase intention, however, may change due to unforeseen circumstances. Thus, it is critical for businesses to take proactive steps to ensure that their products and services are positively perceived by their customers as purchase intentions are frequently influenced by a company's marketing strategy, attitudes, how much they value the deals it offers, and so on. Therefore, it is an obvious call for online companies to meet consumer demand to improve purchasing intentions as they must comply with consumer requirements and standards (Naseri, 2021).

- The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a theoretical model initially proposed by Davis (1989) to explain personal acceptance of IT systems. It is based on the rational behavior theory (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989; Yousafzai, Foxall, & Pallister, 2010), and premised on the belief that use is determined by behavioral intentions, which are influenced by behavioral attitude, itself influenced by perceived usefulness and ease of use (Shao, 2020). Perceived usefulness is an assessment of the benefits provided by technology to make it easier for users to obtain the desired services. It is the extent to which a user's faith in technology can improve and enhance its effectiveness and performance. An individual's interest in using technology

can result in a good assessment of perceived usefulness. If an individual believes that technology can be useful, he or she will use it. Wardana et al. (2022) determined that the advantages of using technology are closely related to productivity, effectiveness, task performance, the need for work, and overall benefits. As to perceived ease of use, it refers to a user's willingness to use a system that requires no effort on his or her part. The term “easy to use” refers to the level of difficulty in understanding and the duration of use (Sitthipon et al., 2022). It is regarded as an important factor not only for the adoption of technology, but also for its long-term use. The perceived ease of use of a technology increases the likelihood of its being used (Prastiawan, Aisjah, and Rofiaty, 2021). Both usefulness and ease of use are important factors in determining a user's behavioral intention and both have a positive impact (Woodeson, 2022).

- Related Research

To and Trinh (2021) identified the key factors influencing behavioral intent to use mobile wallets in Vietnam. They found that perceived ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment all have a positive and significant impact on the behavioral intention to use mobile wallets. Alfadda and Mahdi (2021) investigated the relationship between the TAM variables and the use of the Zoom application in language learning as well as how gender and experience influence the use of technology. Their findings show a strong positive relationship between actual Zoom use and students' attitudes and behavioral intentions. In addition, it was found that there is a positive relationship between computer self-efficacy and the other variables considered in this study, namely, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude, and behavioral intention. Martin-Garca, Redolat, and Pinazo-Hernandis (2022) pinpointed the major determinants influencing older people's intention to use digital technology in their daily lives. The TAM turned out to be a useful model for explaining older adults' intentions to use digital technology, with high predictive power, highlighting perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as the main predictor variables. Van, Quynh, and Doanh (2022) investigated the factors influencing tea-producing farmers' intention to sell their products through e-commerce exchanges (ECEs). They found that farmers' intention to use ECEs to sell their products is significantly influenced by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Wardana et al. (2022) studied the impact of convenience, perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness on generation Z's intention to use an e-Wallet in Surakarta, Indonesia, and concluded that perceived ease of use has a positive and significant effect on user intention. Perceived usefulness is positively influenced by perceived ease of use and influences the intention to use e-Wallet significantly.

3. Methodology

A qualitative approach was used as the research strategy in this study. The goal of qualitative research is to understand the context in which individuals or groups make decisions and behave in specific ways and to explain why the precisely observed phenomenon occurred (Mohajan, 2018). Moreover, two-way communication in the form of in-depth interviews facilitates the collection of additional data. It provides in-depth knowledge and allows the researchers to ask questions outside of the parameters of semi-structured surveys, making data collection and follow-up more efficient (Siripipatthanakul et al., 2022b). As part of the process of collecting primary data, the researchers conducted an in-depth review of secondary data (documentary method) for appropriate key survey questions. Purposive sampling was used to select interviewees. This approach, frequently used in qualitative research, prompts researchers to select the most useful sample based on their expertise.

The goal is to gain in-depth knowledge about a specific phenomenon or population (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Francis et al. (2010) and Namey (2017) have proposed that conducting a minimum of six interviews is generally recommended in

qualitative research to achieve data saturation. Consequently, in-depth interviews were conducted with eight Facebook Live customers in Bangkok, Thailand, using purposive sampling. To be eligible to participate, individuals had to meet the following criteria: (i) be a customer of Facebook Live; (ii) reside in Bangkok; (iii) be at least 18 years old; and (iv) have recently made online purchases through Facebook Live Streaming. Data was collected between October and December 2022. As a qualitative method for systematically and objectively describing and quantifying specific phenomena, using valid inferences drawn from verbal, visual, or written data (Vespestad & Clancy, 2021; Viphanphong et al., 2023), content analysis was utilized to analyze the qualitative data gathered through in-depth online and face-to-face interviews. Moreover, NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software, was used to interpret the results.

4. Results

Table 1 shows the respondents' demographic profile.; i.e., their age, gender, and occupation. All of them are over the age of 18, live and work in Bangkok and purchase items from Facebook Live streaming at least twice a month.

Table 1: Respondents' Demographic Profile

No.	Age	Gender	Occupation	Date and Time of Interview
Respondent 1	34	Female	Nurse	October 19, 2022 at 10:30 am
Respondent 2	28	Male	Teacher	October 20, 2022 at 09:00 am
Respondent 3	31	Female	Chief	October 20, 2022 at 11:00 am
Respondent 4	47	Male	Policeman	October 22, 2022 at 09:00 am
Respondent 5	38	Female	Doctor	October 22, 2022 at 11:00 am
Respondent 6	39	Female	Housewife	October 23, 2022 at 09:00 am
Respondent 7	42	Female	Businessman	October 23, 2022 at 11:00 am
Respondent 8	42	Male	Engineer	October 25, 2022 at 01:00 pm

- Content Analysis

Every respondent interviewed indicated that their intentions to purchase online via Facebook Live streaming were influenced by their perceptions of usefulness and ease of use. As potential customers, they could obtain detailed product information through online video streaming since the host, generally the seller, would provide many useful product information that would benefit them and lead to purchase. According to one of the interviewees:

“Live streaming on Facebook is incredibly easy [...]. The best part about Facebook is how simple it is to participate in the fun of live streaming videos. Facebook's video support policies are a little hazy, but in general, you can stream in 720p at 30 frames per second and have no problems with your viewers. Your webcam, a camcorder, or even a multi-camera setup can be used to stream. Any setup can be optimized if you know how to keep an eye on the caliber of your streams”.

As another interviewee pointed out, the Covid-19 pandemic has been instrumental in increasing online purchases: He, as well as his family and friends, *“have become more willing to make purchases through live stream selling since the COVID-19 outbreak.”* As he further

stated, their *“usage of social video and online shopping has increased dramatically over the past year and is likely to do so in the years following COVID-19 as it is easy and very useful.”* Clearly, the pandemic has been an accelerator of trends. Because of the need for social distance, it has made online shopping a necessity, even for those hitherto reluctant to use e-commerce.

The pandemic, however, is not the only reason for the exponential growth of online shopping via Facebook. *As one interviewee stated, “Facebook has offered a fully integrated shopping experience with the launch of Live Shopping, which in my opinion makes it simple for companies to boost online sales and for customers to shop their favorite brands.”* All the respondents interviewed concurred that if they intended to make an online purchase through Facebook Live Streaming, they could go directly to Facebook Live and see the streaming of a specific product that was promoted by a host.

Furthermore, if it was easy for them, they intended to make an online purchase via Facebook live streaming, for example, by making the supporting tools appealing and simple to use. They only needed to leave a comment, and the host would respond to whatever question the customers had. As one of the users interviewed explained:

“It makes sense that using the Facebook app to stream live via Facebook Live should be simple, and it is. By tapping on the “what’s on your mind” field and selecting “Go Live” as the type of post you want to make, you can stream directly from your profile page. Alternatively, you can perform the same action from your feed by tapping the camera icon in the top left corner. It is super easy and very useful.”

That it is “super easy and very useful” is an opinion shared by all the participants to this study. Most comments made were dithyrambic and full of praises for the application: *“Online buyers can easily view the products, add them to their carts, and make purchases. As viewers ask questions about sizing and fit or make direct purchases while watching the live stream, sellers can also go live and show off their products in real-world settings.”* Among other features listed as contributing to making Facebook very appealing for live streaming video are *“its well-known reach, the best targeting and analytics capabilities in the industry, the advertising platform, and the synergy with Instagram.”*

- NVivo Analysis

The interpretation and analysis were also based on NVivo. To make the results more understandable, a word frequency query was run in NVivo. The words frequently used by the respondents during the interviews are displayed in the word cloud in Figure 1. Word trees (Figure 2, 3, 4, and 5) display the results as a tree with branches representing the various contexts in which the word or phrase occurred.



Figure 3: Word Tree (Easy)

Based on the feedback from the interviewees and as indicated in Figure 3, ease of use emerges as a prominent factor influencing the decision to make online purchases through Facebook Live streaming. All participants shared a common perception that Facebook Live streaming is remarkably user-friendly and straightforward, which significantly adds to its attractiveness as a platform for online shopping.



Figure 4: Word Tree (Useful)

The comments from interviewees, as illustrated in Figure 4, emphasize the significant benefits of Facebook Live streaming for online purchasing. The interviewees unanimously acknowledged the usefulness of detailed product information provided by hosts during live streams. This information was perceived as highly useful by potential customers, enabling them to make informed decisions and ultimately increasing their likelihood of making a purchase.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings in this study highlight the significance of perceived usefulness and ease of use in influencing customers' intentions to make online purchases via Facebook Live streaming. As we just saw, the respondents in this study recognized the value of useful product information provided by sellers during live stream sessions. It plays a crucial role in their decision-making process. This is in keeping with the notion that informative content can positively influence customers and lead to conversions (Kumar, Lall, & Mane, 2017; Saputra & Darma, 2022). Moreover, the ease of use of Facebook Live streaming and its supporting tools emerged as equally important factors. All the participants explained that the simplicity and convenience of the platform encouraged them to make online purchases. The ability to directly access Facebook Live and watch specific product streams, coupled with the ease of leaving comments and receiving responses from the host, created a seamless and interactive shopping experience, which they all enjoyed as their aforementioned comments testify. These findings reflect the growing trend of consumers seeking engaging and informative content while shopping online. The live format of Facebook Live streaming allows for real-time interaction, fostering a sense of connection and trust between sellers and buyers. This level of interaction can in turn lead to increased customer satisfaction and confidence in making online purchases. The study's results clearly emphasize the importance of optimizing the usefulness and ease of use of Facebook Live streaming for sellers.

By providing detailed and relevant product information, sellers can meet the needs and preferences of potential customers. Additionally, enhancing the user experience and simplifying the purchasing process can further motivate customers to engage in live stream commerce. The results support previous research by Kumar et al. (2017), who concluded that the underlying factors in the behavioral intention to use mobile banking services are perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, social influence, and trust propensity. They are also consistent with Lai's (2017) findings which confirmed that security, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use are important factors that influence consumers' willingness to use a single platform payment system. Organizations will be able to use the study information to develop products and services that meet the consumers' single platform e-payment system requirements while also meeting their corporate social responsibility objectives.

Furthermore, Saputra and Darma (2022) use the extended TAM approach to examine the level of intention to use blockchain in Indonesia, specifically the My-T Wallet developed by Tokoin. The findings demonstrate that the general perception of the usefulness of the My-T Wallet application is most strongly influenced. Meanwhile, the user interface in My-T Wallet has the greatest influence on perceived ease of use. The positive behavior of users then has a strong impact on their intention to use the My-T Wallet application. On the other hand, application users' trust must be continually increased by paying more attention to government regulations and security issues. Abu-Taieh et al. (2022) also concluded that the behavioral intention to use mobile banking is influenced by effort expectancy, performance expectancy, perceived risk, perceived trust, social influence, and service quality.

To conclude, in today's digital age, It is imperative that businesses operating in the realm of online commerce understand the impact of perceived usefulness and ease of use on their success. By acknowledging the significance of these factors and adapting their strategies accordingly, sellers can effectively cater to customer preferences, leading to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and overall business performance. This study's findings provide further evidence of the pivotal role that perceived usefulness and ease of use play in influencing customer purchase intentions through Facebook Live streaming. By prioritizing the delivery of valuable content and optimizing the user experience, businesses can harness the full potential of live streaming as a powerful tool for social commerce.

- Managerial and Theoretical Implications

In light of the above, people's intention to buy online via Facebook Live streaming were influenced by their perceptions of usefulness and ease of use. The findings may assist Facebook Live sellers improve their services to respond to customer behavior in the digital age. Furthermore, owners in any online industry could incorporate TAM into their business model to improve consumer behavior and increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. Facebook Live sellers, for example, should develop a simple payment method on Facebook Live. Moreover, customers should benefit from the product or service information. Hence, high business performance will incur. For research implications, this study added to the existing literature on the TAM model (perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use), Facebook Live, and online purchase intention. Hence, this study's findings may aid academics in broadening their research by incorporating more potential elements. The measurements could be used to guide future research on the TAM model (perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use), Facebook Live, and online purchase intention.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study contains several limitations:

- For one, it used the TAM Model to examine the impact of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use on customer purchase intention through Facebook Live Streaming. It is recommended that further research be conducted to explore the applicability of TAM in the context of other online platforms, such as, for example, TikTok and Instagram. Moreover, future research could explore the applicability of the TAM framework in dissimilar cultural contexts. Comparing and contrasting the results across different regions and cultures, or sub-regions and sub-cultures, could provide further insights into the generalizability of the model. In addition, conducting longitudinal studies could help to examine the stability and consistency of the relationship between TAM constructs and online purchase intention through Facebook Live Streaming over time. Such studies could also seek to determine how changes in consumer behavior and technological advancements impact the model.
- While TAM is a widely used theoretical framework for studying technology adoption, future studies could be conducted applying alternative frameworks to examine online purchase intention via Facebook Live Streaming, two in particular, the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and the Extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (EUTAUT),
- The respondents in this study were Facebook Live customers located in the province of Bangkok. Focusing on only one province may not adequately represent Thailand. It is therefore suggested that more provinces be added in order to reflect the diversity of Thailand's population and regional specificities.
- Future studies could also utilize other qualitative research methods, such as focus groups, to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons behind consumer behaviors and decision-making processes in the context of online purchase intention via Facebook Live streaming.

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