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Retail shopping typology of American teens

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ABSTRACT

Teenagers often use labels to describe each other (i.e., cool, geek, hottie) as shorthand that sums up a teen in the minds of his or her peers. Marketers use the same kind of heuristic devices to describe segments in target markets. Currently measuring over 30 million strong, today's teens are the adult consumers of tomorrow. Therefore, marketers need the ability to divide this teen market into unique segments. In this study, the authors develop a psychographic retail shopping typology of American teens' retail channel preferences depending on levels of self-esteem (SE), extraversion, and interpersonal communication (IC). Three distinct market segments evolve – Social Butterflies, Confident Techies, and Self-Contained Shoppers – and link to channel shopping, spending, and future intentions. These segment descriptions should be valuable to retailers in determining primary teen markets and how to best market to them.

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Oh, he's very popular Ed. The sportos, the motorheads, geeks, sluts, bloods, waists, dweebies – they all adore him. They think he's a righteous dude. (A delineation of various teenage groups in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, 1986)

1. Introduction

Recent marketing literature reflects a renewal of the interest in the impact of personality on consumer behaviors with researchers calling for further investigation (c.f., Bosnjak et al., 2007a; McDaniel et al., 2007; Mooradian and Swan, 2006). Marketers equally have an interest in the ways that these distinguishing consumer characteristics can influence market segmentation and targeting strategies. Contributing to the need for developing these strategies is the fact that today's consumer faces numerous shopping channel choices (i.e., brick-and-mortar stores, home shopping television networks, etc.). Understanding the personality factors that affect a consumer's choice to utilize one channel instead of another is important to retailers. Although researchers can investigate the issue of personality as a predictor of consumer behavior in many different populations of interest, the United States teenage market is a key demographic in terms of both size and expenditures. This segment comprises approximately 32 million people who spent \$159 billion in 2005 (Teen Research Unlimited, 2005).

Because this study focuses on teens, the personality traits of particular interest are self-esteem (SE) and extraversion. These personality traits are important indicators of consumer behaviors especially considering the age of the population of interest. Because teens are actively undergoing the consumer socialization process (Ward, 1974) these constructs might influence a teen consumer's shopping channel selection. Interpersonal communication (IC) is also a key part of this socialization process (c.f., Lueg et al., 2006; Moschis and Churchill, 1978) and links to SE (Clark and Goldsmith, 2005), so the authors include this construct in this investigation.

This study answers the research question, how can marketers segment the teen market in a way that will allow effective prediction of retail channel selection? To answer this question, this study develops a typology of a teen consumer's channel use relative to the personality traits of SE, extraversion and IC with friends and relatives in regard to shopping channels. Developing profiles of consumers is consistent with prior research (c.f., Reynolds and Beatty, 1999; Reynolds et al., 2002; Ruiz et al., 2004), and such profiles provide practical guidance to marketers who seek to better understand their customers. In order to facilitate this study, the focus is the mall and the Internet—two shopping channels that receive the most investigation in existing literature. Outcome variables are channel shopping time, spending level, and future intentions to shop and purchase.

This study contributes to the literature by considering whether contextual factors affect one's propensity to mall and/or Internet shop. The behaviors of today's teen consumers are of great interest because they have the ability to influence the future of retailing. Academic researchers can benefit from this knowledge as they develop their future retailing research. The findings of this study will be of interest to retailers who need to know how to present their offerings in both

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channels. By focusing marketing efforts on the appropriate teen segment, marketers can best utilize their resources to ensure delivery of the correct message in the correct channel. For instance, if outgoing, confident teens are in the malls shopping on weekends, mobile text messaging sent at peak times could prove maximally effective. Conversely, if introverted teens are choosing Internet shopping channels in greater numbers, then a better understanding of their shopping styles could allow more efficient target-marketing efforts. Moving forward, as today's teens become tomorrow's adult consumers, marketers will need to understand how to best reach the target markets of this important generation.

2. Literature review

Although no single overriding theory might explain consumer shopping channel use, the literature reports the general value in studying personality traits to understand consumer behavior (c.f. Baumgartner, 2002; Horton, 1979). Additionally, Trait Theory of Personality suggests that certain general characteristics form the basis of personality (Allport and Odbert, 1936). These central traits are the major characteristics one might use to describe a person and tend to be relatively stable throughout a person's life (Costa and McRae, 2004). Because of their stability, central traits are useful in predicting behavior. Previous studies use psychographics and personality traits to investigate consumer motivations for shopping in a particular channel. For instance, Gillett (1976) and Taylor et al. (1988) find different profiles for users of each shopping channel (i.e., mail-order shoppers versus television shoppers) and conclude that future research needs to identify why consumers choose a particular shopping channel.

Regarding the mall, Reynolds et al. (2002) develop typologies specifically for users of different brick-and-mortar retail formats (traditional mall versus factory outlets) and Ruiz et al. (2004) link consumer psychographic dimensions to various mall shopping behaviors. Regarding the Internet, Bosnjak et al. (2007b) investigate the effects of personality on Internet consumers. Despite these investigations, a retail shopping typology for teen consumers that simultaneously considers two shopping channels does not exist. But what are the appropriate traits to consider when investigating teen consumers?

2.1. Self-esteem

SE is one personality trait that impacts many consumer behaviors, that is a confidence in and satisfaction with oneself (Blascovich and Tomako, 1991). SE Theory (Rosenberg, 1965) describes adolescent behaviors as diverse as resilience (Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008), anorexia (Paterson et al., 2007), athletic performance (Green and Holean, 2004) and the formation of friendships (Cramer, 2003). In adults, SE is an important motivator for consumption of symbolic and high-involvement goods (Banister and Hogg, 2004) and is a predictor of compulsive shopping behaviors (Faber, 1995). In a study of teens, Darley (1999) examines the effects of SE on search effort, finding that intrinsic motivation (enjoyment of shopping) is a significant predictor of search effort and product knowledge perception.

A link between SE and shopping channel use also exists. In adult samples, Reynolds (1974) and Berkowitz et al. (1979) find that consumers using in-home shopping channels have more SE/self-confidence than traditional store shoppers while Rosa et al. (2006) find that SE links to shopping venue selection. Consumer SE as a function of body image also impacts perceptions of mall retailers (Chebat et al., 2006).

2.2. Interpersonal communication

Furthermore, Clark and Goldsmith (2005) report that SE positively links to market mavenism (Feick and Price, 1987). Market mavens

provide more information about retailers (including shopping channels) than other consumers (Higie et al., 1987). A key way that mavens spread their knowledge and influence throughout the marketplace is via IC. IC is overt interaction with members of one's social network concerning goods and services and is a vital component of a teen's consumer socialization (Moschis and Churchill, 1978). Most ICs in consumer socialization studies are those ICs between the developing consumer and peers and relatives.

2.3. Extraversion

Interestingly, Mooradian and Swan (2006) find that reliance on IC with friends and relatives for product information links to cultural extraversion. Extraversion is a personality dimension with links to traits such as activity, energy, and sociability (Benet-Martínez and John, 1998), as well as warmth, involvement with people, and social participation (Costa and McCrae, 1980). Additionally, extraversion is the strongest dimension of the Five-Factor Model across cultures and can influence consumer behavior (Lucas et al., 2000). Coshall and Potter (1986) find that although extraversion does not influence spatial patterns of behavior or cognition, extraverted consumers have a greater tendency to shop at more of the stores known to them than non-extraverts. Mowen and Spears (1999) find that extraversion contributes to the tendency of college students to consume compulsively. Furthermore, Berkowitz et al. (1979) and Taylor et al. (1988) find that mall shoppers appreciate the social aspects of being among other shoppers. However, Bosnjak et al. (2007b) do not find a direct effect between extraversion and intention to shop online in a sample of adult Croatian Internet consumers.

In summary, the personality traits of SE and extraversion link to consumer shopping channel use. Both of these traits also link to IC in the consumer socialization process, a process that teens are actively undergoing. Also, although consumer typologies exist for consumers in general (c.f., Reynolds and Beatty, 1999), one such typology does not exist for explaining teen consumer motivations for shopping channel selection. The current study addresses this research need.

3. Method

3.1. Sample

Distribution of the questionnaires took place at four high schools in a mid-sized Southeastern U.S. city. Numerous studies employ convenience sampling at local schools as a sampling method (e.g., Mangleburg and Brown, 1995; Shim and Gehrt, 1996). The schools provide a broad representation of various socioeconomic and ethnic groups as well as curricula. Three of the schools are public institutions and one is private. The authors intentionally controlled the data collection process to obtain equal representation across the four grades (ninth through twelfth), across the curricula (standard and advanced), and across the four schools.

The final valid sample is 583 usable questionnaires, yielding a response rate of 90%. Overall, the sample consists of 34.4% of respondents under the age of sixteen, 51% female, and the ethnic breakdown is 67.8% Caucasian, 25.1% African-American, 3.1% Asian-American, and 1.8% Hispanic-American. Good representation across grade levels (23.0% of respondents in the ninth grade, 27.9% in the tenth grade, 22.2% in the eleventh grade, and 26.9% in the twelfth grade) and curricula (45.6% standard) also exists.

3.2. Measures

3.2.1. Antecedents

The individual items which capture the antecedent constructs are shown in Table 1 along with the item means, construct mean, and coefficient alpha for each scale. All of the scales perform well with the

Table 1
Antecedent items, means, and scale coefficient alphas.

Item	Item mean	Construct mean	Coefficient alpha
SE		5.3	.86
I feel capable of handling myself in most social situations.	5.2		
I seldom fear my actions will cause others to have a low opinion of me.	5.4		
It doesn't bother me to have to enter a room where other people have already gathered and are talking.	5.2		
I don't spend much time worrying about what people think of me.	4.9		
I am never at a loss for words when I am introduced to someone.	5.8		
Extraversion		5.4	.83
I see myself as someone who is talkative.	5.3		
I see myself as someone who is full of energy.	5.6		
I see myself as someone who generates a lot of enthusiasm.	5.2		
I see myself as someone who has an assertive personality.	5.2		
I see myself as someone who is outgoing, sociable.	5.6		
Mall IC		4.6 (4.2)	.89 (.89)
I spend a lot of time talking with my peers (relatives) about shopping at the mall	4.2 (3.9)		
My peers (relatives) encourage me to make purchases at the mall	4.3 (3.8)		
My peers (relatives) and I tell each other where to find items for sale at the mall	5.3 (4.7)		
I ask my peers (relatives) for advice about buying things at the mall	4.7 (4.2)		
Internet IC		2.4 (2.2)	.89 (.93)
I spend a lot of time talking with my peers (relatives) about shopping on the Internet	2.3 (2.1)		
My peers (relatives) encourage me to make purchases on the Internet	2.2 (2.1)		
My peers (relatives) and I tell each other where to find items for sale on the Internet	2.7 (2.3)		
I ask my peers (relatives) for advice about buying things on the Internet	2.4 (2.2)		

lowest alpha being 0.83 for extraversion. A discussion of each construct follows.

SE is confidence in and satisfaction with oneself (Blascovich and Tomako, 1991). Similar to Darley (1999), a short version of the Janus and Field (1959) Feeling of Inadequacy Scale measures SE, with respondents indicating their level of agreement with ten statements on a seven-point scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). The authors employ the full scale despite the warning of Herche and Engelland (1996) to avoid the use of reverse-code items because of their effect on scale unidimensionality. As Herche and Engelland (1996) discuss, the reverse-coded items do indeed load on a second factor from the positive items during principal component analysis. Further consideration of these second factor items reveals no unique sub-dimension of SE but rather that they merely share the common characteristic of being reverse-coded. Therefore, the removal of these items results in a five-item scale with an alpha of .86.

Extraversion is a personality dimension with links to traits such as activity, energy, and sociability (Benet-Martínez and John, 1998), as well as warmth, involvement with people, and social participation (Costa and McCrae, 1980). Essentially, extraversion reflects a concern with the external environment rather than with one's own thoughts and feelings. The authors employ the extraversion scale from the Big-Five Inventory (Benet-Martínez and John, 1998) to measure extraversion. Respondents indicate their level of agreement with eight

statements using a seven-point scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). Similar to the SE scale, in principal components factor analysis the extraversion reverse-coded items impact scale unidimensionality. These items load onto a non-unique second factor. Removal of the reverse-coded items results in a five-item scale with an alpha of .83.

In relation to shopping behaviors, IC is overt interaction with members of one's social network concerning goods and services (Moschis and Churchill, 1978). A four-item scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) (Lueg and Finney, 2007) measures IC in relation to both the Internet and the mall, and to both peers and relatives.

3.3. Outcomes

Shopping time is the amount of time a respondent spends shopping over a given period. The instrument includes the following definition of shopping for the respondents: "Shopping means time spent specifically looking for and examining products or services. This does not include time spent just messing around on the Internet or hanging out at the mall." Respondents identify, on average, approximately how many hours per month they spend shopping for anything both on the Internet and at the mall. The questions are open-ended. Regarding future shopping intentions, the respondents indicate on a seven-point scale (Much Less to Much More) their future shopping time for each channel.

Spending level represents the amount of money that the respondent spends in each of the venues over a given period. Respondents identify, on average, the amount of money (in dollars per month) that they spend buying anything on the Internet and at the mall. These questions are also open-ended. As with shopping time, the respondents identify their future spending intentions, indicating on a seven-point scale (Much Less to Much More) their future purchasing frequency in each channel.

4. Results

To begin the analysis, the sample is randomly split into two groups of approximately equal size, allowing for a holdout sample to be used to enhance the validity of the findings (Hair et al., 2006). Classification of the respondents from the first sample into groups is contingent upon their responses to the consumer characteristics scales (SE, extraversion, and IC) described above. A multi-step cluster analysis (Hair et al. 2006) takes the scores on the scales and forms clusters on the basis of factor scores using Ward's method. A three-cluster solution emerges based on examination of the changes (scree plots) in the root-mean-square standard deviation (RMSSTD), semi-partial R-squared (SPR), R-squares (RS), and the distance between clusters for two, three, four, and five cluster solutions (Sharma, 1996). Then, a K-means cluster procedure reveals the final three clusters using the initial seeds from the hierarchical analysis. A duplicate procedure on the holdout sample allows a comparison of the results. Cluster size as well as the cluster centroids is nearly identical for the two groups and all indicators are significant at the .000 level, providing evidence of the generalizability of the findings. For descriptive purposes, the authors combine the two samples and subject the resulting sample to the same clustering procedure. Table 2 presents the results of this cluster analysis. Assessment for common-method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003) indicates that common-method bias is not present.

The cluster descriptions are as follows:

Social Butterflies (41.9% of sample—n = 260) – These teens score the highest on extraversion and peer mall IC, and tie for highest on relative mall IC. They spend the greatest amounts of both time and money at the mall. Their perception of their future mall shopping behaviors (shopping time and spending level) also shows the greatest anticipation of increase. They score the lowest on all

Table 2
Results of the nonhierarchical cluster analysis.

Variable	Cluster 1 Social Butterflies N = 260 41.9%	Cluster 2 Confident Techies N = 152 24.5%	Cluster 3 Self-Contained Shoppers N = 209 33.7%	F-value	Significance
SE	5.3	5.3	4.9	8.12	.000
Extraversion	5.6	5.6	4.9	36.71	.000
IC: peer Internet	1.7	4.1	2.0	296.73	.000
IC: peer mall	5.7	5.1	3.0	342.13	.000
IC: relative Internet	1.4	4.2	1.6	459.45	.000
IC: relative mall	5.0	5.0	2.4	360.74	.000

Highest scores are in bold; lowest in italics.

Internet behaviors (shopping time, spending level, future shopping intentions, and future buying intentions).

Confident Techies (24.5% of sample—n = 152) – These teens score the highest on SE as well as peer and relative Internet IC. They tie for the highest on relative mall IC. They represent the highest levels of all Internet behaviors (shopping time, spending level, future shopping intentions, and future buying intentions).

Self-Contained Shoppers (33.7% of sample—n = 209) – These teens score the lowest on SE and extraversion and both mall ICs (peer and relative). They represent the lowest mall shopping time and mall spending level. Their future expectations of mall behavior (shopping time and spending level) are also the lowest.

Table 3 shows partial demographic descriptions of each cluster. No significant differences in the age, grade, grade point average, socioeconomic status, mall access, or Internet access among the three segments exist. However, gender and race show significant differences at the .001 and .05 levels respectively. Males represent a

Table 3
Cluster demographic profiles.

	Cluster 1 Social Butterflies N = 260 41.9%	Cluster 2 Confident Techies N = 152 24.5%	Cluster 3 Self-Contained Shoppers N = 209 33.7%
Gender ^a	72.7% female	51.3% female	76.6% male
Grade			
9th	25.4%	22.4%	20.6%
10th	29.6%	26.3%	26.8%
11th	21.5%	25.0%	21.1%
12th	23.5%	26.3%	31.6%
Race ^b			
African-American	30.4%	28.3%	16.3%
Asian-American	1.5%	5.9%	2.9%
Caucasian/White	63.9%	62.5%	76.5%
Hispanic-American	2.7%	1.3%	1.0%
Multi-cultural	1.5%	2.0%	3.3%
Age			
14 and below	11.9%	7.7%	9.2%
15 years old	25.8%	23.0%	24.3%
16 years old	26.2%	22.5%	25.0%
17 years old	25.4%	28.7%	27.0%
18 and older	10.8%	18.2%	14.5%
GPA			
Less than 2.0	1.0%	0.8%	1.8%
2.0–2.5	10.0%	8.0%	11.1%
2.6–3.0	19.0%	22.4%	21.6%
3.1–3.5	33.3%	28.8%	31.0%
3.5–4.0	36.7%	40.0%	34.5%

^a Significant at the .01 level.

^b Significant at the .05 level.

large percentage (76.6%) of Self-Contained Shoppers and females represent a large percentage (62.7%) of Social Butterflies. Self-Contained Shoppers has the highest concentration of Caucasians (76.5%); African-Americans (30.4%) and Hispanic-Americans (2.7%) demonstrate their highest concentrations in the Social Butterflies cluster; and Asian-Americans (5.9%) are greatest in Confident Techies.

5. Discussion and implications

To better understand the important teenage market segment, the authors investigate three characteristics that relate to teenagers' motivations for shopping channel preferences. Three segments emerge from the analysis, each with distinctive characteristics. Additionally, the shopping behavior and future intentions data suggest that retailers need to tailor their offerings to appeal to the most attractive teen shopper segments for each retail channel. Table 4 contains the behavioral means for each teen consumer segment.

For example, the two highest purchasing shopper segments are at opposite ends of the personality spectrum. The Social Butterflies spend more money and time at the mall than their peers. This outgoing, predominantly female (72.7%) group enjoys the social atmosphere of the mall and discusses their mall adventures with both friends and family, displaying the highest levels of mall-relevant IC and the highest concentrations of African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans. The Confident Techies, a group nearly evenly divided along gender lines (51.3% female) spends more of their resources on the Internet than the other groups. They are not the most outgoing group but they still display the highest levels of Internet-relevant IC and have the highest levels of SE and the highest concentrations of Asian-Americans. Thus two segments who are different socially are both big spenders, but in different retail channels. Their high levels of IC behavior also make them potentially valuable retailer resources.

The third teen segment, the Self-Contained Shoppers, a predominantly male segment (76.6%) with the highest concentration of Caucasians, appear to have the least confidence in their own social skills and, as a result, tend to talk very little about shopping (but more with peers than with relatives). This segment, at first glance, may appear to be of little interest to retailers, but upon further inspection, they do have some important traits. Their future intentions regarding Internet spending and shopping are higher than those of the Social Butterflies. Additionally, because their IC behavior is the lowest of all the segments, they are probably the least likely influenced by the IC of others.

Although at face value each segment does not appear to be dramatically different from the others, their subtle differences are statistically significant. The Social Butterflies love to spend time and money at the mall. The extraversion that partially defines them influences brand affect, which in turn drives attitudinal and purchase loyalty (Matzler et al., 2006) as well as the tendency to be a market maven (Brancaleone and Gountas, 2007). Not surprisingly (because

Table 4
Cluster means related to consumption behaviors^a.

Variable	Sample mean	Cluster 1 Social Butterflies	Cluster 2 Confident Techies	Cluster 3 Self-Contained Shoppers
Hours spent Internet shopping	3.2	2.1	5.8	2.6
Hours spent mall shopping	11.5	15.8	11.6	6.1
Dollars spent Internet shopping	15.75	8.50	35.20	10.78
Dollars spent mall shopping	144.94	175.63	143.47	107.86
FI: shopping time on Internet ^b	3.7	3.3	4.4	3.7
FI: shopping time at mall ^b	5.2	5.6	5.2	4.7
FI: spending level on Internet ^b	3.6	3.1	4.3	3.682
FI: spending level at mall ^b	5.2	5.6	5.2	4.8
Gender	50.9% female	72.7% female	51.3% female	76.6% male

FI = future intentions.

Highest scores are in bold; lowest in italics.

^a All means are significant at the .000 level.

^b FI measured on a seven-point scale and indicates whether the respondent feels that the behavior will decrease (1), remain the same (4), or increase (7).

this group is predominantly female) in a 2004 survey, teenage girls rank shopping as more important even than dating (Thomas, 2004). Yet the broad array of merchandise available on the Internet would also seem to appeal to female consumers' tendency to enjoy shopping more when they perceive a greater assortment (Raajpoot et al., 2008). Of additional consideration is that this group of consumers has the highest levels of African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans so ethnically targeted retailers catering to the needs of these demographic segments can focus their efforts on this group of consumers.

The Confident Techies love spending time on the Internet, but not because they do not feel good about themselves; in fact, they are quite secure in their ability to browse and shop on the Internet. Furthermore, this group of consumers is the most likely to contain Asian-Americans so retailers focusing on this market might consider concentrating efforts on this cluster. The Self-Contained Shoppers are the least comfortable in social situations and, possibly as a result, spend the least amount of time shopping in either channel. They are still important consumers, however, spending on average in excess of \$100 per month. They are also most likely to be Caucasian. Despite subtle differences, the similarities among the three groups raise two key points. First, retailers that are budgeting for their marketing efforts to reach a particular segment/cluster might be able to achieve a collateral benefit in the non-targeted segments/clusters due to the possible similarities. Second, retailers should not, however, count on this collateral benefit and should make sure that the expenditures relative to reaching and serving a targeted segment are cost effective for the single segment of interest.

That said some interesting implications for retailers exist. Some researchers and practitioners question the future of the mall as a viable retailing channel (Bodamer, 2005; Kramer, 2004; Max, 2003). These findings indicate that for the largest segment, the Social Butterflies, the mall channel is preferred. They like to be out-and-about amongst their peers and going to the mall satisfies their need to be around people. Here the teen can see and be seen (Chang, 2004). Also, this group spends the most of any of the segments. Retailers should consider the important social aspect of shopping for this segment in their offerings and in the design of their servicescapes (Bitner, 1992).

The mall is a gathering place for these shoppers, but contrary to the fears of some retailers (Lee, 2006; Rawe, 2007) they do spend money while they are at the mall. Servicescapes that allow adequate room for socializing while shopping and music playing at appropriate levels to encourage chat are only two of the design modifications that would appeal to this segment. Urban Outfitters, a company that strives to create a "lifestyle-sensitive store environment" (www.urbanoutfittersinc.com-a), is an excellent example of a retailer who understands this concept. Their stores' wide aisles and eclectic merchandise mix draw teenage shoppers and their dollars in

growing numbers (www.urbanoutfittersinc.com-b). Taking the same concept in a different direction, Hollister, a subsidiary of Abercrombie & Fitch, creates dark club-like stores that recreate the atmosphere of a hip beach shack. The loud music and dark interiors appeal to teens' desire to hang out in trendy nightclubs (Sokol, 2003).

Advertisers can benefit from the ample amount of time that this group spends at the mall. Mobile text messaging sent during peak teen shopping times could support the intention to reach this audience while they are in the shopping environment. Teen-directed advertisements placed within the mall could be especially appropriate based on the level of spending of the teens that spend so much time at the mall. The recent proliferation of digital communication networks (Platt and Chebat, 2008) allows mall management to customize marketing messages to appeal to the teen demographic at the times when that group is a primary presence in the mall, such as weekend nights.

The Confident Techies also present some unique opportunities for marketers. As a group, techies tend to be early adopters (Helm, 2007; Moore, 2005). This teen group displays a great deal of IC behavior regarding Internet consumption. Both characteristics make them valuable to Internet retailers. They also represent some unique challenges. Techies, especially those of the adolescent variety, practice selective consumption (O'Sullivan, 2007). The ability to purchase only their favorite songs from an album for their MP-3 players and to watch only the best parts of TV shows on their DVRs, create a cut-and-paste generation who will be increasingly selective in all retail consumption (O'Sullivan, 2007). This group will not suffer bad service or poor selection. Via the Internet, the whole world is their mall and they will choose the retailer who serves their most immediate needs. This fact provides special opportunities for the small retailer whose brick-and-mortar presence may be limited, but who is tech-savvy enough to utilize viral marketing at Internet sites such as Facebook. Facebook is rapidly eclipsing other social networking sites, drawing 123.4 million unique visitors during October 2007, in comparison with MySpace which drew 40.1 million during the same month (Honigman, 2008). Teens enjoy the Internet experience. This enjoyment often develops into a state of flow, a mental state of immersion in which the teen experiences higher involvement and increases in focus (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Because elements of utilitarian flow have been shown to increase Internet purchasing (Bridges and Florsheim, 2008), site designers might pay special attention to those flow elements that facilitate information search or purchase completion while focusing less attention on creating teen-oriented nonfunctional flow elements. Make the site easier, not cooler.

The Self-Contained Shoppers present different opportunities for retailers. Because they tend to be less vocal regarding consumption, they are probably less likely to experience influence by IC from their

peers or relatives. Their tendency to perceive themselves as more individualistic than previous generations (Sokol, 2003) is likely a result of their ability to customize their channel choices and their shopping choices. Each click of the mouse has the potential to reshape their identities. Marketers can best reach this group online. Appeals to their sense of individuality would likely be very successful with them. The ability of Internet retailers to customize their product offerings would also enhance their appeal to the Self-Contained Shopper.

Retailers focusing on reaching teen consumers should note that, although sizable, the overall spending by the U.S. teen demographic slipped from \$175 billion in 2003 (Zollo, 2004) to \$159 billion in 2005 (Teen Research Unlimited, 2005). This slight decline emphasizes the necessity for retailers to be more effective in reaching this key demographic. The same statistic points to the fallacy that many mall managers currently hold – that teens are a blight on a mall and decrease mall revenues. During the past several years, the popular press is replete with stories describing mall curfews with the intention to keep teens out of the mall during peak shopping times (Lee, 2006; Misonzhnik, 2007; Rawe, 2007; Zimmerman, 2007). The idea is that teens get in the way of the adults who are doing the actual consuming. These findings cast some doubt on the validity of that philosophy. Teen mall curfews might also have a negative impact on bricks-and-clicks retailers that have both a mall and Internet presence. These retailers' business models acknowledge the possible symbiotic relationship between both channels and that mall shopping might not translate into mall purchases; but mall shopping might result in Internet sales.

6. Limitations and future research

Consider the following limitations to this study. First, only single item measures capture the outcome variables of interest (Internet/mall shopping/purchasing/future intentions). Second, the elimination of the reverse-code items in the scales capturing SE and extraversion also eliminates control for possible acquiescence bias. Third, any problems with these scales might be the result of the age of the sample or possibly due to respondent fatigue (order effects). Fourth, the sample comes from one community. Finally, other personality traits (i.e., neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness, etc.) might provide more explanatory power.

Future research should consider the impact of other external variables such as school communication, the issue of time constraints on the shopper, and cross-cultural factors in consumer shopping channel use. Calls for research regarding the influence of consumers' culture on their responses to online atmospheric cues exist (Davis et al., 2007; Eroglu et al., 2003). Perhaps a similar call can be made for research regarding the impact of consumers' age on their emotional and behavioral responses to online atmospherics. Because significant ethnic differences between the groups exist, future research might further explore the reasons for these differences. Perhaps ethnic or cultural issues could be a factor. For instance, the fact that Social Butterflies has the highest levels of African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans might be explained by artifacts within these subcultures. Additionally, consumers' ages have an impact on their service perceptions in the in-store environment (Thakor et al., 2008). Extension to the online environment might also prove enlightening. Future research should consider other shopping channels such as television shopping networks or catalogs. Furthermore, this study needs replication in an adult sample to see how the findings might vary. Another direction for this research would be to look at personality extremes (Woodside, 2008); examining the behaviors of extreme extraverts and introverts to see if any differences between them and more mainstream consumers are present. Finally, an investigation of the other personality traits mentioned above would be valuable.

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