

The Influence of Streamer's Characteristics on Consumer Purchase Intention Through Live Streaming

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Abstract

This study conducted in Malaysia aimed to investigate the factors influencing consumers intentions to make purchase through live streaming. The research focused on streamer's characteristics, specifically attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, and interactivity, to determine their impact on consumer purchase intention. The survey involved 150 respondents randomly chosen among Malaysian, who answered a questionnaire distributed through platforms live WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter. Multiple regression analysis revealed that two streamer characteristics, trustworthiness and expertise, exhibited a strong association with customer intention to purchase through live streaming. However, streamer's attractiveness and interactivity were not found to be significantly related to customer purchase intention. This findings offer valuable insights for both aspiring live streamers and marketers. Trustworthiness and expertise emerged as crucial attributes for streamers looking to influence consumer purchase intentions. This information serves as a practical guide for individuals aspiring to become live streamers, emphasizing the importance of building trust and showcasing expertise. Additionally, marketers seeking suitable candidates for live streaming partnerships can use this study as a reference to identify streamers who possess the key characteristics that positively impact consumer behavior. Overall, this study provides nuanced understanding of the dynamics between streamers characteristics and consumer preferences in the context of live streaming in Malaysia.

Keywords: Consumer Purchase Intention, Live Streaming, Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, Expertise, and Interactivity.

INTRODUCTION

The continuous growth of technology has changed how sellers promote their business these days. In addition to social media, sellers now can also promote their products through live streaming. Chen & Lin (2018), stated that live streaming has developed as an effective marketing tool which enabled by new technology and users can access them through their own computers or smartphones. This means that there are no barriers for sellers to reach out to their customers since there are a lot of platforms available for them to reach their target market.

The term "live streaming" refers to a digital medium that broadcasts in real-time online to transmit messages to specified target viewers (Apasrawirote & Yawised, 2022). Since the conversation happens in real-time, live streamers or sellers should be able to demonstrate their products' appearance, explain its functions as well as any related information regarding the product. While doing that, consumers will get the chance to ask questions about the product including the price, shipping fee or the benefit they will receive after buying the product.

According to Lee & Chen (2021), there are three types of live streaming that can be utilized by sellers. The first one is through a live streaming platform that includes commercial activities through TikTok applications. Second is through e-commerce sites or marketplaces like Shopee or any mobile app that has live streaming features and the third is on any social media that has live streaming features like Facebook Live that could support selling activity. Therefore, there are a variety of platform that sellers could choose to perform live streaming activities. Live streaming commerce also offers substantial benefits in terms of product presentation, time and, cost savings, real-time shopping experience as well as sales logic compared to traditional e-commerce (Li et al., 2021). Thus, this indicates that live streaming commerce is not only an important channel for sellers but also to consumers since it provides direct interaction between buyers and sellers.

Therefore, understanding the nuance of streamers characteristics is like unlocking the secret recipe for successful streaming sessions. It's not just about the game they're playing, it's about the entire package -their personality, engagement style, and even the vibe they create. The more marketers get this, the better they can tailor their strategies for a win-win situation. In Malaysia, live streaming marketing usually happens via Shopee Live and TikTok Live. Shopee Live was introduced in 2019 to bring consumers closer to their favourite brands, shifting the old way of product-purchase model (Huijun, 2019). Through this new live streaming features, sellers can provide more accurate product conditions and guide, review as well as demonstrate to the users who are watching the live. Next, TikTok LIVE is TikTok's live streaming service that pays top creators up to RM20,000 per month on average. Sellers or live streamers can generate income by the TikTok's LIVE through variety of gifts awarded by consumers who are watching them (Tan, 2023).

The above scenario highlights that anyone can hop onto the live streaming bandwagon and make some cash. Live streaming is not just a game for marketers; any individual can cash in on each live session too. So this study isn't just a marketer's handbook – it's also serve as a guide for everyone. Knowing the specific characteristics of streamers that impact consumer purchasing decisions provides individuals with a strategic advantage into positioning themselves as successful live streamers. It's like having the insider knowledge to stand out the thrive in the dynamic world of live streaming.

With more people flocking to live streaming to shop and regular folks turning into live streamers. It's crucial to understand what makes a streamer click with viewers. This research

aims to figure the influence of live streamer's attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise and interactivity on consumer purchase intention during the live streaming sessions.

Thus, the objectives of this study are:

- To investigate the relationship between live streamer's attractiveness and customer purchase intention through live streaming.
- To determine the relationship between live streamer's trustworthiness and customer purchase intention through live streaming.
- To measure the relationship between live streamer's expertise and customer purchase intention through live streaming.
- To identify the relationship between live streamer's interactivity and customer purchase intention through live streaming.

The findings of this study won't just help marketers pick the right candidate with the right traits for live streaming their products. They'll also be a handy guide for individuals dreaming of becoming live streamers themselves. It's like a roadmap for both marketers and aspiring streamers to navigate the world of live streaming.

Literature Review

Purchase Intention

Presently, the international commerce industry is currently quite cutthroat, resulting in various new concepts in the industry to attract more customers. Customers have various options for purchasing things in this situation; yet there are several factors that influence product success and customer purchase intention. A customer purchase intention is constructed by a consumer's attitude and appraisal, as well as external influences, and it is a significant aspect in predicting consumer behaviour (Flanders et al., 1975). Purchase intention measures a consumer's likelihood of purchasing a product. When their purchase intention is high, they are more eager to purchase a product (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

Other than that, purchase intention also shows that customers will gather information and assess options based on their previous experience, preferences, and external environment (Dodds et al., 1991; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). According to Pavlou (2003), online purchase intention is customers' propensity to make an online purchase, while Ali et al. (2020) defined purchase intention as the likelihood of the consumer to buy a product. This means that clients' purchasing behaviour is tied to how they make decisions about the products and services to acquire through online platform (Meskaran et al, 2013). As a result, it is critical to examine customer purchasing intentions in order to know what factors affect them the most in buying a product especially during the live streaming sessions.

Live Streaming Marketing

Live streaming marketing is an evolution of e-commerce that incorporates real-time social interaction (Lee & Chen, 2021). The delivery of e-commerce activities and transactions via a live streaming platform is referred to as live streaming commerce. It entails a live streaming space, live streaming technology, and infrastructure that provides a cyber environment with seamless affordance cues for real-time interaction, entertainment, social activities, and commerce (Xiaoyu et al., 2020). Normally, the usual live streaming activity for selling products entails a live streamer demonstrating various perspectives of the products and encouraging the audience to purchase them on the spot (Lee & Chen, 2021). Other than that, this kind of marketing not only allows customers or viewers to acquire product information in real time,

but it also enables interaction between the live streamer or seller with the viewers (Wongkitrungreung & Assarut, 2020).

Next, live streaming marketing seems to be a brand-new marketing method that debuted in 2016 and has grown rapidly since 2019 (Wang et al., 2022). This particular marketing strategy gained popularity particularly after the Covid-19 pandemic that introduced businesses a brand-new way to promote their products (Abdul Samat et al., 2019). According to Dixon (2022), as of the third quarter of 2021, around 23.8% of internet users globally aged between 16 to 64 years old watched live streaming. Other than that, the number of people in China who watch live streaming extends to 617 million which covers 62.4% of the overall number of internet users of that country (Wang et al., 2022). Furthermore, it was stated that in the 20th quarter, China's e-commerce livestreaming industry is expected to exceed 1.2 trillion yuan, with an annual growth rate of 197.0%. The e-commerce live streaming industry in China is projected to be worth more than 4.9 trillion yuan by 2023 (Wang et al., 2022).

However, even though this marketing strategy is getting more popular, the research for live streaming marketing is still limited. Nowadays, a few research has been done related to the live streaming marketing, including research done by Wongkitrungreung & Assarut in 2020 suggesting a broad framework for investigating the connection between consumers' perceived quality of live streaming, trust and interaction. Aside from that, a study from Lu & Chen in 2021 investigated the impact of live streaming on consumers' purchase intention in online apparel as well as cosmetics markets using signalling and uncertainty theory. Then, Chandruangphen et al., (2022) did research to analyse how live streaming attributes affects consumers' trust and shopping intentions especially for apparel products.

Live Streamer's Attractiveness

As stated by Park & Lin (2020), attractiveness is defined as the familiarity, likeability, and similarity that influence consumer opinion as well as their product evaluation. The attractiveness of endorsers boosted the effectiveness of endorsements in both traditional and online media (Till & Bustler, 2000). This shows that the attractiveness value of a seller will affect their sales and popularity. Based on Xiaoyu et al. (2020), consumers are more likely to form favourable stereotypes of people who appeal to them. For instance, researchers said that attractive spokesperson are more successful in changing consumers' mindsets and beliefs about a product (Xiaoyu et al., 2020).

Other than that, Chi et al. (2011) proposed that celebrity endorsements can boost a consumer's perception of a product quality and thus facilitating buying decisions. This shows that any visually appealing streamer may influence viewers to accept his or her recommendation, absorb product information, and alter their initial knowledge and mindset accordingly. Moreover, viewers may extend the time and frequency with which they engage in watching a live stream if they believe the streamer is appealing to them (Xiaoyu et al., 2020)

Trust towards the live streamers

Based on the view of e-commerce, trust is described as beliefs in something, or someone based on their characteristics such as kindness, fairness, honesty, competency, and many more (McKnight & Chervany, 2001). Trust in a seller is defined as the customer's conviction in the seller's competence and dependability to fulfil the customer's long-term interests (Chandruangphen et al., 2022). Besides that, Pavlou (2003) said that trust is a fundamental component of most economic and social transactions when doubt exists; simply, all trades require a component of trust, the majority of which are performed in a virtual online context.

Customers should trust the seller and believe that they will act in an ethical and socially acceptable manner in the online context; otherwise, they will face difficulties that may prevent their ability to assess the situations and, as a result, may discontinue their purchasing activity (Gefen et al., 2003). Trust in an online situation is described as the extent to which the online shop fulfils its responsibilities; behaves as anticipated; and pays attention to their clients (Dachyar and Banjarnahor, 2017). Hence, we could say that the customer's conviction that the product will satisfy their expectations is characterized as product trust (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020).

Live streamer's Expertise

According to Wang et al. (2022), when consumers interpret information, expertise is the extent to which an online influencer can supply relevant knowledge or experience that is true and valid. Then, consumers can identify people who give helpful consumption data and are specialists in specific fields through the commerce medium (Lee and Chen, 2021). Moreover, Kim and Lennon (2013) said that the ability to steer others in a certain direction is what draws individuals to expertise.

Apart from that, an online influencer's professionalism refers to the relevant knowledge, skills, or talents that the influencer possesses and disseminates to their followers or other audiences (Lee & Chen, 2021). As mentioned by Rotter (1967), important opinion leaders are those with specific professional expertise or charisma who may discreetly influence others' views and judgements. When viewing an online influencer's live stream, the influencer usually delivers a professional introduction to their items. The more professional they appear, the more buyers believe that they really know about the product, minimizing the amount of time and money they must spend learning about it (Yang et al., 2017). As a consequence, professionalism will drive customers to trust online influencers more and more, increasing consumers' willingness to spend on their product.

Live Streamer's Interactivity

As stated by Kang et al. (2021), the intensity and complexity of interaction that happens in mutual communication between two persons is referred to as interactivity. Chandruangphen et al. (2022) said that seller interactivity refers to the seller's capacity to communicate with customers. The customer gets more faith in the vendor and the items when they are able to communicate with the seller, thus affecting the engagement with the seller (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). Aside from that, Ma et al. (2022) also discovers that seller's engagement with viewers influences consumer intention to continue watching.

Based on Fangfang et al. (2020), interactivity is considered to be an important component of internet communication and it relates to how much individuals are permitted to communicate in real time. As a matter of fact, interactivity consists of three dimensions which includes active control, two-way communication, and synchronicity (Liu, 2003). The degree of control that participants have over the information transmitted is referred to as active control. Next, two-way communication denotes that the interaction allows information flow in two directions while synchronization indicates that participants can be in touch simultaneously (Liu, 2003). Interactivity in the e-marketplace is vital for developing strong connections between customers and vendors since it allows for excellent interaction (Ou et al., 2014).

Methodology

This section will discuss the methodology used in this study. Apart from that, this part provides a conceptual framework of the study which consists of the five Independent Variables (IV) including attractiveness, trust, expertise, and interactivity. While in contrast, the Dependent Variable (DV) for the study represents the consumers' purchase intention through live streaming marketing. Figure 1 below shows the research framework for the study.

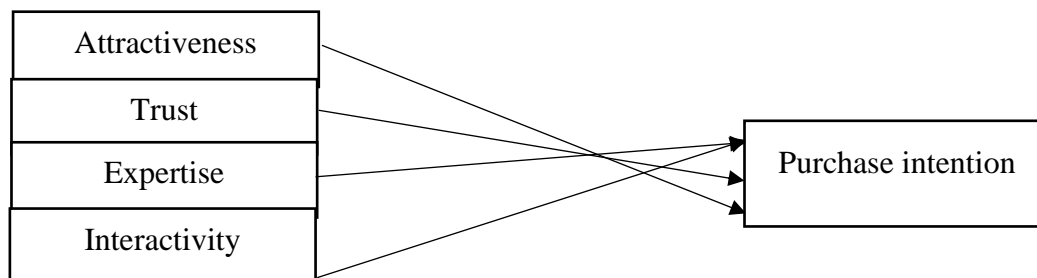


Figure 1: Research Framework

For this study, the researcher used the quantitative technique with a focus on the main objectives that have been stated in the previous chapter. According to Apuke (2017), a quantitative research approach focuses on quantifying and analysing factors to obtain findings. Quantitative research also involves gathering data in order to quantify information and apply it to statistical analysis to support or disprove competing knowledge assertions (William, 2011). Thus, this kind of approach entails the use and analysis of numerical data through the use of specialized statistical procedures to answer questions such as who, how much, what, where, when, how many, and how.

Next, the data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science Students (SPSS) programme. This specific analysis will be used to test the reliability of the instrument as well as the relationship that exist between the variables. Then, descriptive analysis would be the most fitted test for this research. This test will reveal the characteristics of the entire population based on the frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and score distribution.

For this study, it focuses on consumers in Malaysia that have experience in purchasing products through live streaming as the study population. Around 150 respondents were chosen randomly to answer the research questionnaires, which were sent using Google Forms through social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter.

Research instrument

The data was gathered via a questionnaire survey that included six sections. Section A, contains questions related to the respondents' demographic information. Then, Section B until Section E comprise questions regarding the factors influencing consumer purchase intention through live streaming marketing which includes attractiveness, trust, expertise and interactivity. While the last section which is Section F consists of questions related to the consumers' purchase intention. To meet the current study aims, all instruments have been adopted or altered from previous studies.

Table 1: Questionnaire Source

No.	Variables	Items	Source	Number of items
1	Attractive	A1 - The live streamer gives me a good feeling. A2 - The live streamer is attractive. A3 - The live streamer catches my attention. A4 - I feel the live streamer is friendly. A4 - I feel the live streamer is likeable.	(Lee & Chen, 2021)	5
2	Trust	T1 - I believed that the streamers were trustworthy. T2 - I trusted that the products I would receive would be the same as those shown on live streaming. T3 - I believed there will be no problem with the product he recommended. T4 - I can rely on the information he gives to make sufficient judgement on the product. T5 - I think the information he provided corresponds to the actual situation of the goods.	(Wang et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2022)	5
3	Expertise	E1 - I feel the live streamer is experienced. E2 - I feel the live streamer is skilled. E3 - Online influencers' explanation and introduction can let me quickly understand the product. E4 - I consider him to be an expert in this field. E5 - I think he has enough experience to make a judgement on this kind of product.	(Lee & Chen, 2021; Wang et al., 2022)	5
4	Interactivity	I1 - The streamers were very happy to communicate with viewers. I2 - The streamers actively responded viewers' questions. I3 - The streamers answered viewers' questions and requests in time. I4 - Seller makes me feel she/he wanted to listen to her/his viewers. I5 - I am able to obtain the information I wanted without any delay.	(Ma et al., 2022; Chandruangphen et al., 2022)	5
5	Consumers' Purchase Intention	CPI1 - I expect that I will purchase products or services through the seller.	(Chandruangphen et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022)	5

CPI2 - I think the product he recommended is worth buying.

CPI3 – I want to try the product he recommended.

CPI4 - I will recommend the products he recommended to my family and friends.

CPI5 - He changed my mind about the product.

Research Finding

This section contains data analysis and displays the results of research findings. The data analysis was done based on the response of 150 respondents from the survey.

Demographics

The demographic distribution of respondents is shown in Table 2. Most of the respondents were female (60.0%). Majority of the respondents (46.0%) were between the ages of 22 and 29. In terms of educational background, majority of respondents, (75.3%) are university students, with a monthly income less than RM3,000 (73.3%). In terms of time spent watching live streaming, majority (60.0%) of the respondents spent less than an hour. Finally, majority of respondent (86.0%) had experience buying online through live streaming 1 to 2 times per week.

Table 2: Respondents' Demographic (n=150)

Demographic	Sub-profile	Numbers	Percentage
Gender	Male	60	40.0
	Female	90	60.0
Age	18-22 years old	54	36.0
	22-29 years old	69	46.0
	30-39 years old	20	13.3
	40-50 years old	4	2.7
	More than 50 years old	3	2.0
Education	High school or below	19	12.7
	Junior college	9	6.0
	University	113	75.3
	Graduate school or above	9	6.0
Monthly income	Below 3000	110	73.3
	3000 – 8000	27	18.0
	8000 – 15000	7	4.7
	Above 15000	6	4.0
Time spent engaging in live streaming (average/per day)	Less than 1 hour	90	60.0
	1-3 hours	48	32.0
	4-5 hours	8	5.3
	More than 5 hours	4	2.7
Frequency of online purchase via live streaming (per week)	1-2 times	129	86.0
	3-5 times	19	12.7
	6-10 times	1	0.7

More than 10 times	1	0.7
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Reliability Test

Table 3 shows the dependability range of attractive, trust, expertise, interactivity, and consumer purchase intention. Based on the Cronbach's Alpha table, the reliability range for each instrument is high, with values ranging from 0.914 to 0.943.

Table 3: Instrument Reliability

Variables	Cronbach Alfa	Items
Attractive	0.914	5
Trust	0.935	5
Expertise	0.924	5
Interactivity	0.915	5
Consumer Purchase Intention	0.943	5

Multiple Regression

The findings of the regression analysis revealed that all factors, including attractiveness, trust, expertise, and interactivity had a substantial impact on the consumer's intention to purchase through live streaming, $R^2 = 0.621$ $F(4, 145) = 59.491$, $p < 0.05$. All of the factors accounted for 78.8% for the variation of consumer purchase intention through live streaming. Further research revealed that attractiveness and interactivity had no influence on consumers' intention to buy through live streaming, with attractiveness recorded $\beta = .689$, $t(145) = .643$, $p > 0.05$ and interactivity recorded $\beta = .070$, $t(145) = .751$, $p > 0.05$. However, the findings revealed that the other two factors affected consumers' intention to purchase via live streaming as the data indicated trust, $\beta = .420$, $t(145) = 5.172$, $p < 0.01$ and expertise, $\beta = .335$, $t(145) = 3.827$, $p < 0.01$.

Table 4: Model Summary (Adjusted R Square)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.788	.621	.611	.4596

a. Predictors: (Constant), Attractive, Trust, Expertise & Interactivity

Table 5: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	50.277	4	12.569	59.491	.000
	Residual	30.636	145	.211		
	Total	80.913	149			

a. Dependant Variable: Consumer Purchase Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Attractive, Trust, Expertise & Interactivity

Table 6: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.199	.289		.689	.492
	Attractiveness	.054	.084	.051	.643	.521
	Trust	.419	.081	.420	5.172	.000
	Expertise	.383	.100	.335	3.827	.000
	Interactivity	.087	.115	.070	.751	.454

Dependant variables: Consumer Purchase Intention

Discussion

In this section, the researcher will go into depth on how the research led to the study's main finding. Based on the research data analysis results, the researcher will summarize the general finding of this study.

Table 7: Summary of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Result
H1 There is significant relationship between live streamer's attractiveness and consumer purchase intention through live streaming.	Not supported
H2 There is a significant relationship between trust on live streamers and consumer purchase intention through live streaming.	Supported
H3 There is a significant relationship between live streamer's expertise and consumer purchase intention through live streaming.	Supported
H4 There is a significant relationship between live streamer's interactivity and consumer purchase intention through live streaming.	Not Supported

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between streamers attractiveness, trust, expertise and interactivity with consumer purchase intention through live streaming. It is hypothesized that all four variables have a significant link with consumer purchase intention through live streaming. However, the results shows that only two out of four variable have a significant relationship with consumer purchase intention. Table 7 summarized the hypotheses testing results, it shows that H1 and H4 are not supported. It is revealed the insignificant value for attractiveness and interactivity of .521 and .454 respectively, as the insignificant values should be less than $p < 0.000$. In contrast trust and expertise shows significant relationship with customer purchase intention through live streaming.

Based on the findings, it is proved that trust played a significant role to influence consumer purchase products through live streaming. This finding is supported by the research from Chandruangphen et al. (2022), as who suggested that trust indicated that product quality had a favourable impact on consumer trust and buying intention. Trust was also discovered to have a large direct influence on online purchasing intention in the study by Meskaran et al., 2013. Indeed, trust is one of the primary reasons why buyers choose to buy through online streaming, as it is their option to believe the vendor after seeing the live broadcast. This factor is important as consumers usually need to build trust towards the seller before making a purchase decision. Furthermore, Heijden et al. (2003) and Delfarouz et al. (2011) revealed that trust to be the most important element that driving online purchase intention. This

shows that once the seller manages to acquire the audience's trust, consumers will not hesitate to make a purchase immediately. In the end, consumers will keep buying from the seller if the product that they received is the same as claimed by the seller.

In addition, the expertise of the seller is also one of the reasons that influence consumer purchase intention. According to Ma et al. (2022), the streamer often delivers several product explanations to their viewers. When sellers have appropriate expertise on the products, they will be able to convince the customer with trustworthy information. Moreover, Lee & Chen (2021) also claims that consumers are more inclined to engage with people who have knowledge about brands and goods. The more professional the sellers are, the more efficient and effective the distribution of product information will be, and the more customers believe they can acquire more specific information about items from them (Wang et al., 2022). This indicates that customers are more interested in a seller who is knowledgeable about their items or who can provide some tips or techniques to use their products. Especially these days, where the consumers have plenty of choices, they really want to know how the product is beneficial to them. In the cosmetics business, for example, people want to know more about the ingredients to ensure that it is suitable for their skin or can treat their skin problem. This type of information is vital to buyers nowadays, thus the streamers should be able to clearly explain the product information to the viewers during the live streaming sessions.

Conclusion

The findings of this study reveals that trust and expertise play a pivotal role in driving customer buying intentions via live streaming. Surprisingly, the streamer's attractiveness and interaction had insignificant influence, indicating a shift towards more rational purchasing behaviors among consumers. Notably, confidence in streamer's expertise inherently foster trust, emerging as key factors in shaping consumer purchase intention during live streaming sessions. As live streaming marketing are is becoming more popular, proactive efforts by streamers to showcase expertise and trustworthiness in this dynamic environment become imperative. Absolutely, it's like a compass for marketers seeking the perfect live streamers to showcase their products and for individuals honing their skills to become standout live streamers. This study provides valuable guidance for both parties, offering a roadmap to success in the dynamic world of live streaming.

Implications

Overall, the study will benefits both buyers and sellers. This study focusing on the factors influencing customers' purchase intentions through live steaming, offers valuable insights for both parties. Buyers, learning the significance of a streamer's knowledge and expertise, can make a more informed choices and establish trust. Meanwhile, sellers can use this knowledge to refine their approach. The revelation that physical appearance and interactivity have limited impact on buyers serves as a cautionary note to customers, emphasizing the need for careful consideration when making purchases via live streaming. It's serves a balanced guide that empowers both side of the transactions. Additionally, consumers can leverage the insights from this study to venture into the realms of live streaming themselves. Armed with the knowledge of the crucial factors influencing purchase decisions, individuals can refine their own traits and characteristics to become effective and trustworthy live streamers. It's not just about making informed purchases; it's also an invitation for consumers to steps into the spotlight and potentially thrives as live streamers, creating a more interconnected and informed community within the live streaming landscape.

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