

## **The Role of Utilitarian and Hedonic Values on Users' Continued Usage and Purchase Intention in a Social Commerce Environment**

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New business models of electronic commerce have been initiated in social commerce, whereby consumers can evaluate products based on user reviews; word of mouth further influences consumption decisions. This study aimed to develop a research model that adopts the value perspective by which to examine value-driven social commerce, and used partial least squares (PLS) to empirically test the research model and the data collected from 250 users. The results reveal that hedonic values play a more important role than utilitarian values do in users' purchase intentions and the continued use of social commerce. It was found that quality and the feelings of interactions are antecedents of customer values. Social commerce allows customers not only to post and browse product reviews, but also to buy the product. This is a new form of e-commerce that connects consumers and shopping, and opens opportunities for new business models for electronic commerce. Several implications for research and practice have been derived from these findings.

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## 1 Introduction

With the continual development of the internet, online shopping has become an ever more popular channel for consumers. The multiple online buyers' consumption experience generates word of mouth (WOM), which is integrated into user reviews, further influencing the consumer evaluation of products (Simonson, 2016). According to the Nielsen report (2015), which surveyed 30,000 internet respondents in 60 countries, 66% of global consumers indicated that they trust messages on online platforms, and 66% of consumers trust editorial content. The internet has become one of the major message sources helping consumers to make purchase decisions. In fact, WOM is a kind of communication and interaction between consumers for products or services. However, it is difficult to ensure whether WOM is a positive factor for product sales (Buttle and Groeger, 2017).

Social commerce is a new extension of e-commerce with added social networking sites featuring online platforms to support online interactions and user contributions to assist consumers in the acquisition of products and services. Not only are consumers able to discover what others are purchasing and to make purchase decisions, but they are also able to contact and maintain relationships with each other (Chen *et al.*, 2012; Shen, 2013; Lin and Lu, 2015). Therefore, social commerce has the potential to attract increasing numbers of consumer visits, and increase the time spent on the sites; it has also been shown to improve customer decision making (Liang *et al.*, 2011). Marketers can manage their relations with customers through these social networking sites, seek new business strategies to encourage consumer "engagement" and enable customers to connect with one another (Pagani and Mirabello, 2011), thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty to further stimulate sales (Harrigan *et al.*, 2017). Social commerce is a new form of e-commerce that connects consumers and shopping; it which has opened opportunities for new e-commerce business models (Olbrich and Holsing, 2011).

Research has found that the essential attributes of social commerce include

content or platform quality and the feelings stemming from interactions (Liang *et al.*, 2011; Pagani and Mirabello, 2011). Marketers should adjust the communication contents to match the different audiences and channels, and consider the limited reach of the information (Buttle and Groeger, 2017); success depends on content quality and service quality. In addition, since social media as a platform for social commerce has both a utilitarian and hedonic nature (Gu *et al.*, 2010), it is called multipurpose media. Therefore, this research is based on the essential attributes of social commerce, and adopts a values perspective to examine value-driven social commerce. The purpose of this research is to understand how social commerce is transforming consumer engagement and decision making. The findings of this research may also help marketers to better allocate resources in order to effectively engage in social commerce. In social commerce, it is extremely important for retailers to understand their customers and what they expect out of their shopping experience, in order to develop a successful social commerce strategy.

The contribution of this article is in revealing how social commerce can deliver value to consumers and influence their decision making and revisiting behavior. We close with a discussion on how understanding the effects of users' values can help marketers to reap benefits from social commerce. This paper is structured as follows. Following this introduction, a review of the literature is presented in Section 2, which focuses on the theoretical background of the study. Subsequently, the research model and hypotheses are developed. Next, the research methods are described in Sections 3 and 4, followed by data analysis and its results in Section 5. A discussion on the findings, which includes the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research, follows. Finally, the paper ends with a brief conclusion in Section 6.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Social Commerce**

With the technological advances in information and communication, the Web 2.0 applications are used to establish online platforms, places to share messages, knowledge, and communication; they are called "social networking sites" (Kim and

Park, 2013). Users typically access social networking sites for social activities and information exchanges, finally forming a community. In addition, the adoption of social media technology is one of the major reasons why this area is popular among users (Hajli, 2014a). Users can share their opinions, insights, experiences, photographs, and videos (Hajli, 2015). These online platform communities provide informational and emotional support for users (Hajli, 2014a). There are two features of social media that can be applied to commercial activities: directly engaging consumers and spreading eWOM (Thackeray *et al.*, 2008). This means that social media are a suitable communication tool for marketers to interact with target customers (Pitt *et al.*, 2011; Yates and Paquette, 2011).

Commercial activities, social media technologies and community interactions comprise the foundation of social commerce (Liang and Turban, 2011), which is a new trend in e-commerce (Kim and Park, 2013). Godes *et al.* (2005) indicate that consumers' purchase decisions are influenced by their social interactions. The appearance of forums, communities, ratings, reviews, referrals and recommendations demonstrate that communication and interactions between customers and others operate on these online platforms (Hajli, 2015). Individuals are able to easily publish reviews on the online platforms, offering advice and ratings that are overall messages about products or services. Consumers can gain valuable information by reading reviews from persons who share similar interests on social media (Amblee and Bui, 2011). These messages are word of mouth recommendations to assist in the decisions regarding the buying and selling of products and services. Therefore, a social commerce site is a place where people can collaborate online, get advice based on other consumers' experiences, find goods and services, and then purchase them (Liang and Turban, 2011). This combination of commercial and social activities connects consumers and lets them create, share, and discover user-generated content, as well as to purchase products.

The challenge for marketers is to find an integrated platform which enables products or services to connect with customers in order to improve customer engagement and build consumer loyalty (Harrigan *et al.*, 2017). Social commerce offers a wide range of opportunities for marketers to engage customers, for customers to interact with each other, and for customers to purchase products (Hajli, 2014b). It provides user-generated content with rich communication and community

features in order to leverage a rich social experience that supports both the need for interacting in a context of consumption, and the need for purchasing products. In contrast to traditional e-commerce channels, social commerce provides consumer reviews as a new wave of eWOM that helps users to make decisions about purchases (Olbrich and Holsing, 2011). Consumers are quite accustomed to the use of social media; a variety of research, including the investigation of users' continuous use and eWOM, has been conducted regarding this issue. However, the recent rise of the applications of social commerce has only gradually attracted marketers' attention, with little research carried out, so further investigation is needed.

Prior research has found that social commerce can improve users' purchase intentions (Lu *et al.*, 2016; Hajli *et al.*, 2017), but few empirical studies have been conducted regarding the unique features of social commerce and related outcomes; previous studies conducted in related contexts can provide some guidance. For example, Chu and Kim (2011) posit that users believe that information from social media is reliable; thus, they may rely on social media to obtain information for making purchase decisions. Moreover, Liang *et al.* (2011) investigated how social support and web site quality affect a user's intention to use and continue using social commerce. Combining the characteristics and features of social media and e-commerce, social commerce allows consumers to browse through information and to make purchases based on accessed information. Thus, it is important to investigate consumer behavior related to purchasing and intention to continue purchase, using such media (Pöyry *et al.*, 2013). Consumers' feelings stemming from interactions must be taken into consideration when investigating consumer behavior in relation to social commerce. Furthermore, providing good web quality as EC to promote consumers' use of social commerce is also needed. The ultimate goal of social commerce is to get users to continue participating and making purchase decisions. Determining how to get people to continue to use social commerce and make decisions is therefore very important to marketers in reaching their goals of increased sales and profit.

## **2.2 Hedonic Values and Utilitarian Values**

Traditional research typically explains consumer purchasing or usage behavior as

being based on maximizing utilitarian value. However, a number of researchers have argued that value is more complex and involves more than utilitarian values (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). The functionalist perspective only emphasizes product function and ignores the emotions involved in making a purchase or using a product. Consequently, Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) propose the concept of hedonic consumption, that is, aside from pursuing maximum utilitarian value, consumers also purchase in order to satisfy their hedonic needs; the hedonists expect to obtain pleasure from purchasing or using services (Holbrook, 1996).

Most researchers also divide customer values into two categories: utilitarian and hedonic (e.g. Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Babin *et al.*, 1994). Utilitarian value is defined as the value that a customer receives from the functionality of a product purchased (Babin *et al.*, 1994). Hedonic value is defined as the value that a customer receives in terms of subjective experiences of fun and playfulness (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Babin *et al.*, 1994). These two customer values enable a more complete evaluation of a customer's interactive experience, and highlight important outcome variables in the consumption process (Babin *et al.*, 1994). In addition, these values influence consumers' decision-making regarding future purchases.

Babin *et al.* (1994) also point out that utilitarian and hedonic values are not mutually exclusive; consumers may not only receive hedonic values while shopping, but also satisfy specific purposes (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Ozturk *et al.*, 2016). For consumers, the buying process is an experience that can satisfy their need for pleasure (Anderson *et al.*, 2014). Value is derived from users' evaluation of an interactive experience with an object or event, or with the media or an activity (Chiu *et al.*, 2005). Therefore, the hedonic and utilitarian aspects related to context should be considered in online purchase processes (Zanjani *et al.*, 2016; Ozkara *et al.*, 2017). In other words, value is not only created and perceived by consumers as a result of the shopping process, but is also perceived in their use of social media. Moreover, some researchers have suggested that using web services may actually increase the values gained by users (e.g. Jin *et al.*, 2010; Wang *et al.*, 2007). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that continued use of social media and the resultant purchase intentions could be valuable outcomes of consumers' use of social commerce.

### 3 Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses

The objective of this study is to propose a value perspective model to understand how social commerce is transforming consumer engagement and influencing consumers' decision making. The antecedents, such as web quality, pleasure and arousal, influence user values; in turn, these predict user behavior, including the intention to make purchase decisions and continue using social commerce. The model is shown as Figure 1.

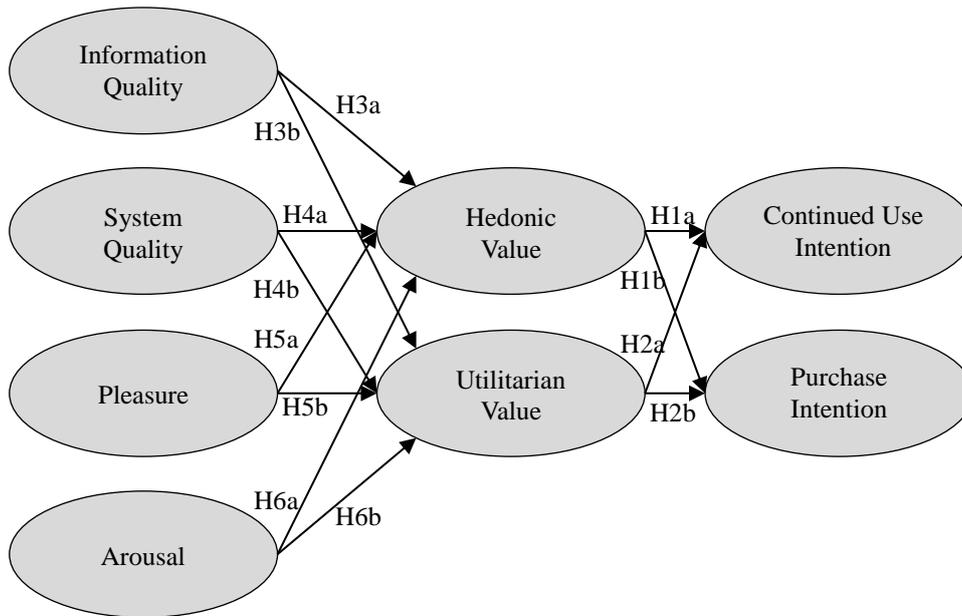


Figure 1. Research Model

#### 3.1 Hedonic Value, Utilitarian Value, and User Behavior

Social commerce includes the characteristics of social media and e-commerce. For users, a social commerce website is not only a platform for social interactions, such as sharing purchasing experiences and obtaining useful product information, but is also a channel for purchasing. The Internet enables potential customers to collect

information for pragmatic purposes (Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015). Thus, users can evaluate the likelihood of future purchases and visits on social commerce websites (Jones *et al.*, 2006). Prior studies have suggested a link between hedonic and utilitarian values, purchase intentions and continued use intention (Chiu *et al.*, 2005; Wang *et al.*, 2007; Ozturk *et al.*, 2016; Juaneda-Ayensa, 2016; Park and Ha, 2016). According to Lin and Lu (2015), if customers obtain hedonic value when browsing the web, they may be motivated to increase the amount of time they spend in visiting a Web site, and be encouraged to make repeat visits. Customer values, both utilitarian and hedonic, shape loyalty, which ultimately determines marketing success (Bilgihan and Bujisic, 2015; Stathopoulou and Balabanis, 2016). Chiu *et al.* (2014) point out that utilitarian value and hedonic value positively influence repeat purchase intention in B2C e-commerce. Ozturk *et al.* (2016) believe that utilitarian value and hedonic value significantly influence users' continued usage intentions. Therefore, we propose that utilitarian values and hedonic values will have a direct and positive effect on the intentions to continue use and to purchase via social commerce. The related hypotheses are as follows:

H1a: Hedonic value has a positive influence on the intention to continue use.

H1b: Hedonic value has a positive influence on the intention to purchase.

H2a: Utilitarian value has a positive influence on the intention to continue use.

H2b: Utilitarian value has a positive influence on the intention to purchase.

### **3.2 Website Quality**

Previous research has shown that website quality is a significant and even critical factor affecting online business (Nilashi *et al.*, 2016; Li *et al.*, 2017). For instance, Tsao *et al.*'s (2016) investigation shows that website quality influences online loyalty through perceived value. Lee *et al.* (2016) show that website quality is a key contributor to the buying intention of a group buying site. Website quality has two major dimensions: system quality which measures the functionality of the website, and information quality which measures the content of the website (Lin, 2008; Wang, 2016). In regard to social commerce, system quality means that social commerce websites are able to satisfy the functionality of user browsing, posting, and purchasing; information quality means that social commerce websites are able to

provide the content that users need. This study compares system and information quality to website quality as external variables in investigating the use of social commerce. Luo *et al.* (2016) point out that higher quality might lead to higher hedonic and utilitarian values in the service domain. Moreover, Kim and Han (2011) show that the perceptions of quality significantly influence user values; in turn, these may affect user behavior in adopting mobile services. The related hypotheses are as follows:

H3a: Information quality has a positive influence on hedonic value.

H3b: Information quality has a positive influence on utilitarian value.

H4a: System quality has a positive influence on hedonic value.

H4b: System quality has a positive influence on utilitarian value.

### 3.3 Pleasure and Arousal

The web environment is an important factor in facilitating web services because most consumers evaluate the web environment before engaging in web services (Shih, 2004). Previous studies have suggested that the emotions evoked by environmental characteristics are fundamental to explaining consumer-environment interactions (Turley and Chebat, 2002). Babain and Attaway (2000) also show that increased positive effects lead to the acquisition of higher hedonic and utilitarian values, which in turn influences user behavior.

Mehrabian and Russell (1974) propose an environmental-related psychological concept, which suggests that people experience certain emotions as a result of environmental stimuli, such as color, temperature, smell or sound, and that a person's emotional state while receiving an environmental stimulus might be expressed in terms of three basic dimensions. Pleasure is a positive emotional state of feeling happy, pleased, satisfied, contented, hopeful and relaxed. Arousal is a positive emotional response to personal awareness, motility and alertness. Dominance is a positive emotional response where the recipient may feel in control, influential, important, autonomous and dominant.

Babin *et al.* (1994) adjusted the P-A-D (Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance) dimensions proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) in order to investigate the emotional responses exhibited by consumers in shopping scenarios. Their finding

was that pleasure and arousal enhance consumers' acquisition of hedonic and utilitarian values. Similarly, Babin and Darden (1995) applied P-A-D dimensions in order to investigate the relationship between customer emotions and consumer evaluations of the shopping experience (hedonic and utilitarian values). The results showed that both pleasure and arousal related positively to the acquisition of hedonic and utilitarian values, while dominance had no influence on the hedonic and utilitarian values. Moreover, Wang *et al.* (2007) show that pleasure and arousal are significant contributors to hedonic and utilitarian values when customers use on-line stores. The related hypotheses are as follows:

H5a: Pleasure has a positive influence on hedonic value.

H5b: Pleasure has a positive influence on utilitarian value.

H6a: Arousal has a positive influence on hedonic value.

H6b: Arousal has a positive influence on utilitarian value.

## **4 Research Methods**

### **4.1 Questionnaire Development**

The questionnaire used for assessing user behavior of social commerce is described below. The measures of our framework were adapted from the validated measures of prior studies to suit the context of our study. The respondents assessed all items via a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 7 "strongly agree." The measures are listed in full in Appendix A, and the descriptive statistics on the individual scales is shown in Table 1.

Web quality includes information quality and system quality, and was measured with four items adapted from Lin (2008). Users experience pleasure and arousal when successfully using social commerce. The above-mentioned three items were adapted from Babin and Darden (1995). Customer values were divided into hedonic and utilitarian values in order to predict the behavioral intentions of using social commerce. Hedonic and utilitarian values were measured by four items adapted from Babin *et al.* (2007). To assess the consequences of social commerce use, the intentions for purchase and continued use each contained three items. The goal was to address continued usage of social commerce in the future. The items were adapted

from Lin (2007) and Li *et al.* (2006). Intention to purchase assessed whether users would purchase on social commerce websites in the future. The items were adapted from Pöyry *et al.* (2013).

## 4.2 Sample and Data Collection

Table 1. Sample Profile

Item	Demographics	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	12.4
	Female	77.6
<b>Age</b>	From 18 to 25 years old	47.2
	From 26 to 35 years old	46.4
	Above 36 years old	6.4
<b>Education</b>	High school degree and below	6.4
	College/University	76.4
	Master's degree and above	17.2
	Student	28.8
<b>Occupation</b>	Service and Financial industry	26.8
	Public service	7.2
	Information technology industry	7.6
	Manufacturing industry	9.2
	Other	20.4
<b>Experience of using blogs</b>	Under 6 months	19.2
	6 months-1 year	14.8
	1-3 years	34.8
	Above 3 years	31.2
<b>Frequency of using blogs (per week)</b>	Under 1 time	12.0
	1-2 times	21.6
	3-6 times	27.6
	Above 7 times	38.8
<b>Time of using blogs (per time)</b>	Under a half hour	10.0
	0.5-1 hour	33.6
	1-3 hours	38.0
	Above 3 hours	18.4

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of web quality, pleasure and arousal on user values, and the extent of their influence on user behaviors (intention to continue to visit and purchase on social commerce sites). To test the model and address the above hypotheses, a study was conducted through an online survey on a

social commerce website. In this study, we chose FashionGuide.com.tw, the cosmetic e-commerce website, with social media for data collection. There are two reasons for this choice. First, FashionGuide is not only a cosmetics website of e-commerce, but also allows all members to access and share information through a variety of posts or arguments about cosmetics. Second, social commerce is a virtual community of consumption that revolves around consumption-related interests; it focuses on women and “soft goods”, such as fashion and lifestyle, which are hard to compare online (Olbrich and Holsing, 2011).

We posted a message on the website asking respondents to complete an online questionnaire. A total of 268 surveys were received; 18 surveys containing incomplete data were eliminated. The remaining 250 questionnaires represent a useable response rate of 93%.

## 5 Data Analysis and Results

SmartPLS Version 2.0.M3 was used to conduct measurement validation and model testing. In the following, the models were tested with a two-stage structural equation model developed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Hair *et al.* (2009). First, the measurement model was used to construct reliability and assess item reliability, and two types of validity: convergent and discriminant validity. Second, structural equation model analysis was used to empirically test the research hypotheses.

### 5.1 Measurement Model

Item reliability, construct reliability and two types of validity (i.e. convergent and discriminant validity) were taken into consideration in assessing the quality of the measurement model. As suggested by Hair *et al.* (2009), an item loading greater than 0.5 can be considered acceptable. As shown in Appendix A, all of the item loadings exceed the minimum required value. In order to evaluate construct reliability, we assessed the composite reliabilities (CR) of all constructs. The composite reliability values ranged from 0.88 to 0.96, which exceeded the 0.7 reliability criteria (shown in Table 2). We assessed convergent validity by examining the average variance extracted (AVE); each construct had an AVE of at least 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker,

1981). The AVE from all eight constructs ranged from at least 0.65 to at most 0.90; all exceeded the critical value. Finally, we verified the discriminant validity by two steps. First, all of the items were loaded onto their assigned constructs with relatively larger loadings than other constructs (Gefen *et al.*, 2000). All loadings were above 0.70 and were significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level, as shown in Appendix B. All of them exceeded the critical value of 0.60 (Hair *et al.*, 2009). Second, we examined the value of the square root of the AVE to determine whether or not it was consistently greater than the off-diagonal correlations (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The results presented in Table 2 demonstrate satisfactory discriminant validity, which means that all of the constructs differed from each other. Overall, all multi-item constructs demonstrated high internal consistency and convergent and discriminant validity.

**Table 2. Reliability and Validity**

	Item	CR	AVE	IQ	SQ	Ple	Aro	HV	UV	CUI	PI
<b>IQ</b>	4	0.88	0.65	0.81							
<b>SQ</b>	4	0.91	0.71	0.62	0.84						
<b>Ple</b>	3	0.91	0.77	0.62	0.70	0.88					
<b>Aro</b>	3	0.94	0.85	0.49	0.46	0.63	0.92				
<b>HV</b>	4	0.90	0.70	0.57	0.64	0.72	0.60	0.84			
<b>UV</b>	4	0.90	0.70	0.68	0.66	0.69	0.56	0.68	0.84		
<b>CUI</b>	3	0.92	0.79	0.61	0.64	0.65	0.52	0.73	0.66	0.89	
<b>PI</b>	3	0.96	0.90	0.48	0.53	0.55	0.41	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.95

Note. Diagonal elements in the “correlation of constructs” matrix are the square root of the average variance extracted. CR is “Composite Reliability”; AVE is “Average Variance Extracted”; IQ is “Information Quality”; SQ is “System Quality”; Ple is “Pleasure”; Aro is “Arousal”; HV is “Hedonic Value”; UV is “Utilitarian Value”; CUI is “Continued Use Intention”; PI is “Purchase Intention”.

## 5.2 Structural Model

The structural model is primarily used for testing the hypothesized relationships. We tested the research model with a bootstrapping procedure to acquire the path estimates and t-value, which were used to test the hypotheses. The results of the structural model test are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Tests of Hypothesized Relationships

Structural Path		Standardized Coefficient	t-value	Hypothesis	
Hedonic Value	→	Continued Use Intention	0.53***	14.82	H1a (supported)
Hedonic Value	→	Purchase Intention	0.34***	7.80	H1b (supported)
Utilitarian Value	→	Continued Use Intention	0.29***	7.45	H2a (supported)
Utilitarian Value	→	Purchase Intention	0.33***	6.79	H2b (supported)
Information Quality	→	Hedonic Value	0.09*	2.31	H3a (supported)
Information Quality	→	Utilitarian Value	0.31***	7.79	H3b (supported)
System Quality	→	Hedonic Value	0.21***	4.86	H4a (supported)
System Quality	→	Utilitarian Value	0.23***	5.51	H4b (supported)
Pleasure	→	Hedonic Value	0.38***	6.56	H5a (supported)
Pleasure	→	Utilitarian Value	0.24***	5.35	H5b (supported)
Arousal	→	Hedonic Value	0.22***	5.52	H6a (supported)
Arousal	→	Utilitarian Value	0.14**	3.24	H6b (supported)

Note. \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2$  of Hedonic Value = 0.59;  $R^2$  of Utilitarian Value = 0.61;  $R^2$  of Continued Use Intention = 0.58;  $R^2$  of Purchase Intention = 0.40.

All the hypothesized paths in the research model were found to be statistically significant. Intention to continue use of social commerce was predominantly determined by hedonic values (H1a) and utilitarian values (H2a) with path coefficients of 0.53 and 0.29, respectively. Intention to make purchase decisions was determined by hedonic values (H1b) and utilitarian values (H2b) with path coefficients of 0.34 and 0.33, respectively. The results showed that hedonic values have a stronger and more significant impact than utilitarian values do on user behavior. The effects of information quality and system quality on hedonic values and utilitarian values were all supported. Information quality and system quality have significant impacts on hedonic values, with path coefficients of 0.09 (H3a) and 0.21 (H4a), respectively. They also have significant impacts on utilitarian values

with path coefficients of 0.31 (H3b) and 0.23 (H4b), respectively. Finally, as predicted by Hypothesis Sets 5 and 6, the effects of pleasure and arousal informed user hedonic and utilitarian values. Pleasure and arousal have significant impacts on hedonic values with path coefficients of 0.38 (H5a) and 0.22 (H6a), respectively. They also have significant impacts on utilitarian values with path coefficients of 0.24 (H5b) and 0.14 (H5b), respectively.

The  $R^2$  values of the endogenous constructs can be explained through the explanatory power of the proposed model. The explained variance is 58% for continued use intention, 40% for intention to purchase, 59% for hedonic values, and 61% for utilitarian value. All of the  $R^2$  values exceed the minimum criteria of 0.10 (Falk and Miller, 1992).

## **6 Discussion and Conclusion**

Social commerce is a new form of e-commerce that supports user-generated content to assist customers in making purchase decisions. This research provides insights into the relationship between users' values and important social commerce outcomes. In response to our research questions, the findings indicate that social commerce invokes multiple value dimensions which additively contribute to purchase intention and intention to continue using social commerce. Moreover, this study adopted website quality and the feelings of pleasure and arousal as external variables. The results indicate that these external variables can influence user values in the use of social commerce. In addition, the research shows that user values improve user behavior by promoting both the continued use of social commerce and purchase intention.

### **6.1 Theoretical Contributions**

The major conclusion of this study is that the primary reason that users plan to continue using social commerce and purchasing from social commerce sites is the values that users receive by so doing. The findings have important theoretical implications for social commerce. First, this study applied Babin's value perspective to explain two important behaviors of social commerce: continued use intention and

purchase intention. The results showed that hedonic values and utilitarian values are significant predictors of behavioral intentions to purchase and to continue using social commerce. This reveals that hedonic values and utilitarian values together can provide a deeper understanding of customer purchase decision making on a social commerce site, as well as intention to continue using social commerce. The results are similar to the results of previous research (e.g., Wang *et al.*, 2007; Babin *et al.*, 1994; Babin and Attaway, 2000). This study also found that hedonic value was related more strongly to continuance visit intention than was utilitarian value. Hedonic value represents the emotional worth of the participative experience in social commerce. It appears that certain types of outcome are grounded more in the phenomenological experiences, and that consumers shop with social media primarily for hedonic reasons. Although much research associated with the adoption of online shopping has focused primarily on the functional role of online shopping, the results of this research suggest that the intention to continue visiting social commerce sites will be strongly determined by its hedonic value. We also found utilitarian value to be a strong predictor of purchase intention. This finding suggests that evaluations of user purchase behavior should consider its functional nature.

Second, this study has examined the roles of affect in customer values in social commerce. This study used web quality (information quality and service quality) and emotions (pleasure and arousal) to represent customer motivations. This study shows that web quality and emotions are important factors in the social commerce context; they can enhance hedonic value and utilitarian value on social commerce sites. Information quality and system quality are shown to have significant influences on hedonic value and utilitarian value. Information quality is the content-based feature, and system quality is the functionally-based feature (Lin, 2007). This study showed that social commerce should offer good systems and complete information in order to increase user values. Higher information quality increases user values by enhancing the fit between the content on social commerce sites and user information requests. Higher system quality of social commerce platforms increases user values by providing an effective means of easy use and information exchange between social commerce and users. Hence, information quality and system quality can enhance users' positive perceptions of their interactions with social commerce, thereby influencing their purchase intention and

intention to continue using social commerce.

Moreover, pleasure and arousal are feelings that users like to experience while using social commerce. They have been identified as representing a variety of emotions (Oliver, 1997). The results show that pleasure and arousal are significant influences in increasing both the utilitarian value and hedonic value in using social commerce. Thus, user interactions with social commerce can contribute to feelings of pleasure and arousal, which help to create user hedonic values and utilitarian values. This result is consistent with previous research findings which show that users not only focus on achieving a task, but also on the process when using web services (e.g. Wang *et al.*, 2007).

Finally, it was interesting to find that the impact of functional factors (information quality and system quality) on utilitarian value remains stronger than on hedonic value. Moreover, the impact of psychological factors (pleasure and arousal) on hedonic value remains stronger than on utilitarian value. The results show that while users recognize that social commerce provides a good information retrieval tool and that this tool is stable, users have more utilitarian values. Moreover, the effect of information quality and system quality is currently more important in relation to utilitarian values than to hedonic values due to the features of social commerce. Social commerce is associated with web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing (Kim, 2011). Users can easily obtain useful product or service information delivered by experienced consumers; therefore, they have more utilitarian values. On the contrary, the results also show that pleasure and arousal have a greater influence on the acquisition of hedonic values compared to utilitarian values. The results are consistent with those of previous research findings (e.g. Babin and Attaway, 2000). Users expect social media to improve their feelings. In addition, social media is also used as an individual press (Pitt *et al.*, 2011). Users can stimulate contributors to share interesting issues with other users through their interactions. As a result, users can acquire greater hedonic values.

In particular, the effects of hedonic values on purchase and continued use are very strong. This demonstrates that when social media users decide to continue using social media services and purchase items, these are hedonic-based decisions concerned with the fun or playful aspects of using social media. In summary, the explanatory power of the research model remains high, revealing that information

quality, system quality, pleasure and arousal are the main variables determining user values. These values then determine users' continued use of social commerce and purchase intention.

## **6.2 Contributions to Management Practice**

Retailers typically seek new successful business strategies in order to get customers to purchase. Social commerce is a new type of business strategy that is transforming consumer engagement and aiding consumers in making more informed and accurate purchase decisions. Retailers enable customers to build preferences for products by their interacting with product content on social commerce websites.

The goal of this study was to use the results achieved to show where social commerce vendors should focus and strengthen their efforts to increase sales and help customers with their decision making. This study found that values are the key determinants of customer purchase decision making and continued intention to visit social media commerce sites. Hence, social commerce vendors and marketing managers should invest in efforts to satisfy users' hedonic and utilitarian values as perceived by customers, in order to attract user participation in social commerce before attempting to focus on other aspects of social commerce development.

They should also choose a stable and user-friendly platform on which to release their product or service information. In addition, famous bloggers might be employed to post high-quality information about a company's products or services. The information provided in social commerce must be complete, current and customized to match users of the site. Finally, marketing managers should carefully plan and design their social commerce procedures to evoke users' higher feelings of pleasure and arousal, which are apt to increase user values. To enhance users' emotional motivations, social commerce vendors should provide customers with enjoyable, exciting, and satisfying user experiences. In line with these results, social commerce vendors may pursue a number of the above options to improve their content and service.

### 6.3 Research Limitations and Future Development

The limitations of this study include the fact that we examined only one social commerce site. This study therefore cannot generalize these findings in reference to other kinds of social commerce. Future research could explore the use of other forms of social commerce. Second, respondents may have misreported behavioral information, as we used self-reported rather than direct measures in our survey on social commerce use. To address this concern, future research could approach social commerce use via multiple methodologies. Collecting longitudinal data over a series of years should also be considered as a necessary step. Finally, there are different factors influencing user values and behavior. Users may have privacy concerns while using social media (Lewis *et al.*, 2008) and e-commerce (Shu and Cheng, 2012), fearing that their personal profiles could be disseminated randomly over the internet. Future research could investigate the effect of perceived privacy risks and the effect of privacy concerns on user behavior.

### 6.4 Conclusion

There are two type of social commerce: social media websites add commercial features; e-commerce websites add social media capabilities (Liang and Turban, 2011). Social media offer a convenient platform for users to access other users' information. Only social activities, such as sharing users' thoughts, information, or photos on social media web sites cannot be identified as social commerce because these activities do not lead to any commercial benefits. Therefore, social activities should involve commercial intentions and implications for certain commercial events to be deemed as social commerce.

The main goal of this research was to examine whether values determine continued use of social commerce and intention to purchase. This study adopted the values perspective proposed by Babin *et al.* (1994) in order to verify that users would receive participative value from using social commerce. Participative value means that members acquire hedonic and utilitarian values by using social commerce. Our findings suggest that user values derived from user experiences and

interactions with social commerce may evoke lasting participation behavior. The results also indicate that hedonic and utilitarian values can impact the intentions of individuals to purchase and continue using social commerce. Information quality and system quality are significant influences on obtaining hedonic values and utilitarian values. As a result, a user's goal in using commerce sites is to obtain specific expected results. Finally, user feelings gained from using social commerce have a significant influence on the acquisition of both hedonic and utilitarian values. The results show that 'enhanced user emotions' is one of the important antecedents to creating a successful marketing tool using social commerce. The results are potentially useful to both marketing managers and researchers.

## Appendix A. Measurement Variables

Measurement Variables	Loading
<b>Information Quality (CR=0.88 ; AVE=0.65)</b>	
FashionGuide provides accurate information.	0.85**
FashionGuide provides complete information.	0.79**
FashionGuide provides the newest information.	0.70**
FashionGuide has fruitful content and provides all the information I need.	0.88**
<b>System Quality (CR=0.91 ; AVE=0.71)</b>	
FashionGuide has a quick response function.	0.84**
FashionGuide can satisfy my requests.	0.85**
When I want to browse FashionGuide, it works.	0.85**
The function of FashionGuide is easy to use and browse conveniently.	0.83**
<b>Pleasure (CR=0.91 ; AVE=0.77)</b>	
When I browse FashionGuide, I feel happy.	0.86**
When I browse FashionGuide, I feel relaxed.	0.93**
When I browse FashionGuide, I am satisfied.	0.84**
<b>Arousal (CR=0.94 ; AVE=0.85)</b>	
When I browse FashionGuide, I am aroused.	0.90**
When I browse FashionGuide, I am excited.	0.95**
When I browse FashionGuide, it can stimulate me.	0.92**
<b>Hedonic Value (CR=0.90 ; AVE=0.70)</b>	
I think it's interesting to browse FashionGuide.	0.89**
Browsing FashionGuide is more joyful than other things I do.	0.83**
I am immersed in exciting issues.	0.83**
When I browse FashionGuide, I can forget annoying things	0.80**
<b>Utilitarian Value (CR=0.90 ; AVE=0.70)</b>	
While browsing FashionGuide, I finished doing the things I wanted to.	0.78**
I was satisfied because I didn't need to go to other websites to get information.	0.88**
I think that the information and service provided by FashionGuide are professional.	0.81**
Getting information from FashionGuide is simple.	0.88**
<b>Intention to continue (CR=0.92; AVE=0.79)</b>	
I plan to browse FashionGuide in the future.	0.88**
I want to continue to browse FashionGuide.	0.93**
I want to extend my time browsing FashionGuide.	0.86**
<b>Purchase Intention (CR=0.96 ; AVE=0.90)</b>	
I intend to purchase something offered in FashionGuide website in the near future.	0.93**
It is likely that I will purchase cosmetics from FashionGuide.	0.96**
I predict I will purchase cosmetics from FashionGuide in the short term.	0.96**

Appendix B. Cross-Loadings of Questionnaire Items on Latent Constructs

	IQ	SQ	PLE	ARO	HV	UV	CUI	IR
IQ1	<b>0.85</b>	0.46	0.52	0.42	0.45	0.58	0.48	0.43
IQ2	<b>0.79</b>	0.52	0.51	0.33	0.47	0.49	0.53	0.35
IQ3	<b>0.70</b>	0.53	0.37	0.31	0.33	0.43	0.36	0.29
IQ4	<b>0.88</b>	0.53	0.57	0.50	0.55	0.66	0.56	0.44
SQ1	0.48	<b>0.84</b>	0.62	0.38	0.52	0.51	0.54	0.44
SQ2	0.55	<b>0.85</b>	0.55	0.39	0.51	0.56	0.53	0.47
SQ3	0.61	<b>0.85</b>	0.67	0.46	0.56	0.62	0.55	0.46
SQ4	0.46	<b>0.83</b>	0.53	0.32	0.54	0.54	0.56	0.40
Pleasure1	0.53	0.62	<b>0.86</b>	0.45	0.63	0.55	0.57	0.47
Pleasure2	0.61	0.71	<b>0.93</b>	0.61	0.70	0.68	0.66	0.53
Pleasure3	0.49	0.51	<b>0.84</b>	0.60	0.57	0.59	0.48	0.43
Arousal1	0.40	0.34	0.49	<b>0.90</b>	0.48	0.45	0.42	0.36
Arousal2	0.46	0.40	0.59	<b>0.95</b>	0.56	0.53	0.48	0.38
Arousal3	0.49	0.51	0.64	<b>0.92</b>	0.60	0.56	0.51	0.39
HV1	0.53	0.57	0.72	0.55	<b>0.89</b>	0.61	0.65	0.53
HV2	0.47	0.59	0.58	0.45	<b>0.83</b>	0.59	0.65	0.46
HV3	0.43	0.51	0.55	0.47	<b>0.83</b>	0.55	0.61	0.46
HV4	0.46	0.44	0.54	0.54	<b>0.80</b>	0.54	0.53	0.39
UV1	0.46	0.51	0.54	0.51	0.47	<b>0.78</b>	0.44	0.38
UV2	0.65	0.57	0.61	0.46	0.58	<b>0.88</b>	0.58	0.49
UV3	0.53	0.59	0.51	0.40	0.56	<b>0.81</b>	0.55	0.45
UV4	0.61	0.56	0.65	0.51	0.67	<b>0.88</b>	0.63	0.52
CUI 1	0.55	0.61	0.62	0.44	0.69	0.64	<b>0.88</b>	0.57
CUI 2	0.52	0.60	0.57	0.42	0.64	0.58	<b>0.92</b>	0.52
CUI 3	0.54	0.51	0.54	0.52	0.62	0.53	<b>0.86</b>	0.51
IR1	0.46	0.50	0.49	0.38	0.53	0.51	0.58	<b>0.93</b>
IR2	0.46	0.49	0.55	0.41	0.52	0.54	0.57	<b>0.96</b>
IR3	0.43	0.51	0.51	0.37	0.52	0.53	0.56	<b>0.96</b>

Note. \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\* p < 0.001; R<sup>2</sup> of Hedonic Value = 0.59; R<sup>2</sup> of Utilitarian Value = 0.61; R<sup>2</sup> of Continued Use Intention = 0.58; R<sup>2</sup> of Purchase Intention = 0.40.

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