

## A Comparison between the different E-Shopping Platforms and their return policies

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### Abstract:

The arrival of the internet promoted the development of various web-based retailers in our country. E-commerce became an important part of the Indian Economy with the advancement in technology and this took a hike during the pandemic time when the country shifted to an online platform for everything which enhanced the market, and every vendor tried to be part of the online platform. The paper focuses on the comparative analysis of a few online retailers such as Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, and Zara in India and their return policies. This effort mentioned below is a portrait of India's web-based buying and selling place including their return policies as well as giving a brief picture of E-Commerce, its types, benefits, and disadvantages.

Keywords: Online shopping, E-Commerce, Return policies, Internet, Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Zara

### Introduction

Internet means the vast communication network, which is connecting networks all around the globe, it is used at all levels personal as well as business and has brought a drastic change in the business world for both sellers on how to sell and for the buyer on how to make buying decisions and to buy the product. It has played a very important role in our day-to-day life can send email, talk to anyone anytime anywhere, search for information, and buy things, the shopping on internet allows people to compare their choices with the help of product reviews and comments from numerous options, as well as easy to find many things at just one tap; but at the same time lack of trust is the reason due to which people take a stepback when buying the product online.

It is an alternative for people who need time and effort to spare, it has given a lot of satisfaction to consumers who are searching for convenience and speed at the same time people, as they can try to complete the shopping with the least effort. An element that

pushes clients to buy things from Internet-based websites is the dynamic virtual platform. With this development even came the advantage of reducing cost, producing income, publicizing, and showcasing the item.

A developing country can modernise easily if it uses e-commerce effectively and efficiently as a platform where consumers who have trust and flexibility have maximum convenience, any dealer or someone who wants to get the item can advance it on the web. The power of the buyer is more than that of the one who is selling, after COVID-19 buying things online is a way to reach to potential consumers, these days customers use the online platform to compare goods without a physical visit.

The rise in e-commerce users is directly proportional to the online stores which are leading to stiff competition between them, so it is of utmost importance for online businesses to attract and retain more customers. Online the person who scrolls the website to buy the product do so after considering various things such as brand reputation, product quality, security, price competitiveness etc. and the safety of electronic transactions largely influences it. Consumers normally ask their friends or social gangs when buying online due to the risk they are assuming, furthermore, look for data and ideas on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube etc.

E-commerce has opened the wings of business organizations giving them a sky to fly and improve further, giving chance for businesses to grow to a wider consumer range. In COVID times when people forgo socialization and adopted social distancing, and isolation people tried this method of purchasing and this resulted in a

hike in sales on online websites, this gave each trader a strong intention to move towards the internet for the upliftment. It was shown by a study that e-consumers would reach three hundred to three-fifty million shoppers by the end of 2025. Today's generation is a generation of influencers, they are genuine digital endemics because they have been introduced to the internet, social networks, and mobile at an early stage of their life. Old-age people are helped by millennials and Gen Z to buy products without stepping into at just a click. This sector is targeted by competitive discounts, fast delivery, return process etc.

We have seen that the internet is growing rapidly but still, the E-commerce medium is low, here the issue is the person's expectations of what other people will do, in many cases, it depends on previous interactions is the largest impediment even in countries like Europe, as there is the physical distance, this mistrust can be fought by familiarity and the reputation, as retain loyal customers is key element to get success in this business were innumerable options are available for everything. Even the sellers use signaling to differentiate themselves from others and convey the details about their products which include internal such as display of return policy or privacy policy as well as external signals like seal to authenticate their website this helps to form perceptions of trust and mitigate the deception issues related to the unfamiliar website.

Online shopping was born in 1995 in India and in the year 1999-2000, it became popular. K. Vaitheeswaram presented the first online business site in the country, Indian markets that are accessed by computers have different categories such as Net banking, Travel and tourism and the websites of Indian shopping include Amazon, Myntra, Flipkart, Big Basket etc. India

ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in 2019, in the year 2020 with the eruption of the pandemic the use of online shopping increased. In India with 499 million plus one million internet users, the online market is moved forward by philosophy, progress related to innovation, wider product range, and changing consumption behaviour of the millennial generation; India's internet penetration rate is 35% according to a study of 2018.

The number of consumers who are buying products online is increasing day by day from bags, apparel, footwear, mobile phones, furniture, and FMGC products on hundreds of websites such as Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Grofers etc. For wooing customers vendors use policies like fast conveyance of items, simple exchange criteria and so on. As a result, virtual markets are getting popular day by day.

### **Theoretical Background**

E-commerce has expanded at a fast pace throughout the decade and expect the same in the coming years (Ghada Taher, 2021). Access, exchange, ownership, and post-buy are the key components that influence the ease of use of web-based shopping, here convince is the key aspect of the research, the business must maintain quality of both the expectation and

performance there also should be detailed and precise product description (Mansata Dhruvi, 2020). To narrow down the issues related to e-commerce the people who buy from

the online shop go to the same shop where they have an experience due to the presence of trust in that vendor and also there is a need for a deeper understanding of the issues related to e-commerce it also shows that the motivational effect has an influence on purchase

intention at the same time privacy concerns by time-saving, perceived ease of use, security concerns by cost saving are also very important (Sang Soo Kim, 2020). Mobility, versatility,

reachability, and uniqueness factors that customers take into consideration when using Myntra, especially for fashion apparel, Myntra does a great job in Marketing and providing its

services to customers (Anupindi Sravani, 2020). Apparel and footwear have the most noteworthy level of returned items as out of 800 just 2 were exchanged by the clients; also, people buy more from Amazon-owned Cloud Tail instead of other suppliers and in the case of non-cloud Tail vendors the returns are high, the average amount buyer invest to buy goods and clothing from Amazon is less than Rs 1000 (Dr Meenu Goyal, Dr Yogesh

Mahajan, 2020). Online companies reached an idea that if they want to sustain themselves in the market, they must build long-term and trust-based relationships with customers, Myntra customers would be happy if they avail discounts and coupons that are given to them as part of frequent purchases this also enhances retention rate (Shilpi Kulshrestha and Madan Lal Saini, 2017). People under 25-35 years, shop online often, women prefer Flipkart more while males like Amazon; females buy apparel more whereas males buy electronic items, people prefer Amazon and Flipkart more than Snapdeal, e-retailers need to further develop the

image nature of shown items and give detail and exact descriptions (Dr Rachna and Isha Khajuria, 2017). The external factors, as well as internal signals both, influence buyer

perceptions regarding the one who is selling the product and the product quality; it is just that buyers find external more

salient than internal signals (Tamilla, Raquel, and Guido, 2016). The service of various industries such as banking, education, commerce etc. has taken a great change after the introduction of technology into the service department, E-commerce is a magic wand for the nation whenever given the right stimulus and great structure to grow and also helps in country's development, the government should also offer level field to this for country's development (S.A Bhatt, K. Kasana, J.M. Khan, 2016). Social influence, perceived usefulness, user satisfaction, trust, and perceived risk, privacy are the ways to know the frequency of use and adoption of e-commerce (Tiziana Guzzo, Fernand Ferri and Patrizia, 2016). The factors such as return policy, trust, cash back warranty, and cash on delivery affect the decision of buyers when they are making online purchases (Teklehaimanot Tadele, R.R.K. Sharma, 2016). The return policies have a great impact on the buying decisions of E-customers, Customers take the website for shopping that provides clear and lenient return policies (Sarika Punekar and R Gopal, 2016). The barriers faced by e-commerce adoption in Saudi Arabia are weak or no after-sale support, high international shipping cost, product un-arrival, unavailability of international shipping on the vendor's site, and lack of previous experience (Moudi Almousa, 2013). E-commerce security means to protect against unauthorized access, and use of E-commerce assets. Dimensions of E-commerce security are Integrity, No repudiation, Authenticity, Confidentiality, Privacy, and Availability (Niranjana Murthy M, Kavyashree N, Mr S. Jagannath, Dr Dharmendra Chahar, 2013). The factors that allow consumers to make product choices online are cost and time efficiency, information, convenience, and available products and services whereas the ones due to which they stop while making final purchases are social contact, dissatisfaction with online shopping, intangible characteristics of the product (Chayapa and Cheng, 2011). The official authorities should try to promote confidence they should follow the appropriate code of conduct and provide the buyer with a familiar background so that a good reputation is not at stake as loyal customers with confidence are very crucial in this business (Juergen Noll, 2001). It discusses the problem of Internet abuse, and intrusion into privacy and e-commerce will enhance competition as standard assets like retailing, warehousing, factory, and office space, lacking flexibility will be driven out of the market (Nada K. Kakabadse, Alexander Kouzmin and Andrew K-Kakabadse, 2000).

## **E-COMMERCE**

E-commerce was established in 1960 whereas in 1979 they were able to share documents via electronic networks, it was on the rise in 1980 and boomed in 1990 when eBay and Amazon surged. It can be easily created as a cheap Internet service than ever before. E-commerce is an important change that has influenced both the market and the buyers, it completely means electronic commerce under which dealing is done with goods and services via electronic media and the internet it means a website of the vendor on the internet which is trading their products without any obstruction to the customer from a portal, it has an uncountable collection of apparel with various patterns, fittings etc. The facilitators of E-commerce are the Internet, Payment gateways, social media, and 3D Printing. The important feature of this is privacy which not only enhances the competitive advantage but also boosts up the confidence level of the customers. This is a recognizable retail direct in created nations yet at the same time an advancement in nations who are the race of becoming developed. Two main barriers identified in a global set-up are trust issues and the absence of experience. It accepts credit and payment over the net. It helps to conduct traditional commerce in new ways, it is a paperless exchange. Products are displayed on the online store and the people who want to buy can go through the material descriptions related to the product, have a glance at the site, and then buy them. Many companies started this for the reason of bringing down the cost of products and services.

## **TYPES OF E-COMMERCE**

**B2B (Business to Business):** Under this firm delivering services to another firm or unit; the supplier puts a request to a business organization on the website and then when received the product is retailed to the final consumer.

**B2C (Business to Customer):** When the business entity retails the product directly to the customer; the consumer sees an item on the website chooses the desired one; places product requirements with it, the company processes it and later provides it, such as Amazon Marketplace.

C2B (Customer to business): When a person barter their item to a business such as a photographer.

B2A (Business to Administration): Under this, the business with the help of a webpage transfers data and leads a business with an organization that is managed by the government.

C2A (Customers to Administration): This helps the person to ask for data or place different opinions that are related to public subdivisions straight to the government establishments.

#### INTERESTS OF E-COMMERCE:

- **Buying 24\*7** – Anytime of the period means customers can buy all day all year anytime even if it's a public holiday or a festival.
- **Convenience**-The individual can order from anywhere on the planet with just a simple tap.
- **Time** The customer needs hardly 15 minutes to perform this process.
- **Comparison Of Prices**-Consumers can see different prices of the same product can seal the best deal.
- **Many Options and Choices**-Customers get to see various products and services that are the best suited for them.
- **No Geographical Limitations:** The product can be displayed at a global level and worldwide market with fewer investments.

#### DISINTERESTS OF E-COMMERCE:

- **Inability to test the item before buying:** The purchaser can't have tangible access to the item.
- **Delay in Delivery:** When buying this mode there is always a waiting time like one week sometimes more.
- **Damage during the delivery:** There are chances that the product can get damaged during the process of bringing it to the doorstep.
- **Security Issue:** As we all know cybersecurity is a global issue that needs a solution, this is even risky for customers buying online.
- **Internet Connectivity:** There are still places on this planet earth where there is no internet connectivity without that this e-commerce has no meaning.

#### COMPANY PROFILES:

##### AMAZON

Amazon was sent off in India in the second month of 2012, and became the top website to purchase via the internet in a short period, at present it is the most visited online retail website, at 6<sup>th</sup> position in India.

In India, Amazon is a fully possessed auxiliary of internet business goliath Amazon, Inc. which is based in India, was founded in India in 1994 by Jeff Bezos, when Amazon reached a saturation point in the USA, the company thought of expanding to other parts of the world.

India was considered a country with huge growth potential, that's the reason Amazon brought the online concept of retailing to India. Amazon. in orders above 10000 were placed on the very first day, the products included sports, baby products, men's and women's fashion, books, electronic items, grocery items etc.

Its sales planning for India was based on less prices and cut prices on various products. The government of India has not permitted firms who have more part in another country

ownership to regulate the buying and selling places with their stock but allowed the manufacturers who produce and trade it off here only straight to clients via the Internet. It also allows the seller to keep a stock of their goods in a warehouse and helps in shipping goods to consumers.

It started with an online bookstore and later with growth added video games, clothing, and electronics, the company logo says that they sell products from A to Z, and even purchased the data related to customers so that it can know their wants and needs. With all these opportunities, to sell products in over 40 enclaves, and become a search engine, internal advertising platform and e-commerce and IT platform, its competitive advantages are prices are less, satisfying choices, and availability.

The entire World's economy faced a recession in 2008, so the World Bank narrowed down GDP growth in 2013 for every country and there was high unemployment as a result people shifted to online purchasing which increased sales by 11%, Amazon was also influenced by technological innovations such as payment methods like PayPal.

There are more returns in apparel and footwear, with clothing highest almost twice the expected return.

Amazon did its best in every way so that its competitors find it hard to compete with it, its power of a buyer is high as various options are available to choose from, and as it focuses on consumer service and convenience, it faces a lot of competition. Its main aim is to achieve

long-term investment in online sales and distribution centres.

Indians mainly use Amazon for the purchase of daily needs commodities such as electronic goods, cosmetics, and home chores items. The best thing about its selling platform is its speedy, simple-to-find products and innumerable options.

### **FLIPKART**

Flipkart.com which is currently claimed by the US retail location network Walmart was

delighted to be in the top web-based business website position in India for a long duration, presently it is the second most visited web-based retailer, and in India, the 10th most visited site, and on the planet it is at 140th position.

A billion-dollar company with a valuation of 11.6 billion in 2017, having more than 33000 people working for it. If we talk it is India's leading online market, founded by Sachin Bansal

and Binny Bansal in the Tenth Month of 2017, in starting it used to sell books online whereas later on included products such as music, mobile phones etc. and when India's E-commerce revolution gained the limelight it experienced a great growth which made them add more products to their than portfolio, at present it provides 80 million listed products in more than eighty categories such as books, computers, footwear, home appliances, jewellery, accessories, gadgets, mobile phones etc.

When Flipkart came to India the biggest obstruction was online payments as Indian consumers were not used to it as a result, Flipkart introduced the 'COD' service, their sales

accelerated, and they were also successful in gaining the trust and confidence of the people who were buying the products online. It set a record for selling books in number 1 lakh in a single day in the year 2013. Now it is registered in Singapore and is no longer an Indian

regulated company.

### **MYNTRA**

Myntra is the fourth position of being the most visited largest retailing company selling goods via the internet, it is mainly a fashion and lifestyle e-retailing point, with headquarters in Bangalore India. The trio named Mukesh Bansal, Ashutosh Lawania, and Vineet Saxena

discovered it, and it was a B2B type of E-Commerce from 2007 to 2010 but from 2011 the focus shifted started with retailing of the brand's textiles and pieces of clothing, offered 350 national and international brands item and products by the end of 2012. On the platform, customers can even get their products made according to their preferences but in 2011 it started selling fashion and lifestyle products. In 2014 Flipkart purchased it for \$310 million, and it claimed to have around 15000 commodities of different 1k brands, covering around 9000 pin codes in India. In 2016 it withdrew its application-only model to get back its lost customers but later relaunched the website the same year.

Myntra even collaborated with top fashion brands in our country such as Nike, Reebok,

Puma, Adidas, Lotto, and Lee., Catwalk, Carlton London, Red Tape etc. Myntra famously is known for launching Being Human and Fastrack Brands. This website has all from casuals to formal, cheap to expensive, and designer to branded. It is an exceptionally large,

imaginative, and style-oriented web retailer, in India it has a large dropdown list of buyers, and it has people who follow it for design and style. It enjoys more serious benefits about cost and quality as well as concerning buyer expectations.

Marketing and sales are core activities of Myntra. Even it has adopted many strategies to help customers and increase sales of products in a highly competitive market.

### **ZARA**

Zara is a fast fashion, clothing, and accessories retailer that has its actual roots in Spain, it was established in 1975 by Amancio Ortega and Rosalia Mera. At first, Ortega laid down a dress-making factory in 1963, under the name Inditex and ten years after this set-up, with Rosalia Mera he started a small store called Zorba which was later named Zara. The first store was in A Coruna Galicia in Spain, and slowly they expanded their empire in other parts of the country, and so on in Portugal(1988), the USA(1989), France(1990), Mexico(1992),

Greece, Belgium(1993), Japan(2000), Singapore(2002), Russia and Malaysia(2003), China(2004), Indonesia (2005), South Korea(2008), India(2010).

In the year 2010, it introduced its online store in Spain, the UK, Italy, France, Germany, and other countries whereas it entered India in 2017. From a small store, it becomes the world's largest fashion retailer with a vision – a high-end clothing brand providing low-priced

products. The USP of the brand were Beauty, Clarity, Functionality, and sustainability. Since the very beginning aim was to make luxury products accessible to everyone, so it always offered trendy clothes at affordable prices.

Zara viewed its opening the door into our birth country to be a huge key to success. Zara differs from others as it does not produce one item range for every new season, the team of design find out the ongoing trends and starts producing products which makes it possible for Zara to have four or five updated and relevant collections, every item produced comes through Spain.

According to Ortega consumers consider the clothes as perishable items like Yoghurt that are purchased to be consumed and not stored.

The company always want to be close to young age as a result have young age employees with styles, this shows Zara exactly knows the needs of its customers and quickly respond to them.

**RETURN POLICIES:**

Product return plays a very crucial role in customer service in the retail world, the customer feels comfortable when their buying decision is supported by the feature of returning goods if demands are not met. The return policy boosts the risk-bearing ability to buy the product online. There is a policy that is formed by the retailer to return the product as in the case of online buying the products are seen and decided without any touching or any access to them, the maximum number of customers check this policy before making the purchase, it very evident that if the policy to return the item is easy than the chances to buy from that same supplier, again and again, are high, the product is returned if damaged or not meet the expectations. Easy return policy of companies is a way of service differentiation and customer delight, even they also include costless going back of the item as a component of their assistance. The lenient return policy is the main reason customer goods are returned, some of the reasons to return are size issues, products no longer needed, products not matching descriptions etc. The well-to-do family choose online shopping due to convenience and flexibility, 79.1% of people prefer Amazon, 87% received products below expectation and became the main target for the return policy, 40% of people are hesitant to return the product for some other reasons such as cheap quality, below expectation product, wrong product and few accepted that due to inefficiency of return policies, they stopped buying from Amazon.

S.NO.	E-RETAILER	DESCRIPTION
1	AMAZON	You can return the item within 30 days of receipt of shipment, it offers prepaid return but if in case the return is due to your mistake so the expense related to going back of item via transport is minus from the amount would be given back to the buyer when they make the return if item do not lie in category of free returns. Some items such as devices, digital, gift card, video games etc. is non-returnable. Echo and Alexa, kindle books, musical instruments, video games accessories, mobiles, tablets, laptops, 7 days; books, mobile accessories, tv, large appliances, home, furniture; Pets-apparels, toys,
3	MYNTRA	It has easy returns and instant refund policy, a normal of 30-day return or else according to the category of the product, such as for jewellery days are mentioned, the product should be in original condition with tags and packaging were as items like sunglasses, socks, briefs, wrist bands are non- returnable
4	ZARA	It says no return and exchange for underwear, swimwear without hygiene sticker, fragrance without seal, altered garments, earrings, stockings ,accessories without original packaging. 30 days from shipping the order are valid for return, if you want to return items for free physically visit the store or if in case want to get collected from home pay 100 rupee, the articles must in original conditions with tags intact

**Methodology**

The study is descriptive in nature. As it tries to explore all the details of E-commerce and its various shopping platforms specifically related to their return policies as needed for the study. Hence descriptive method is most suitable for this study. To achieve this goal, secondary data was collected from a wide range of sources such as papers, journals, and blogs. Analysis of the data led to the inferences and conclusions.

**Conclusion**

For developing countries like India E-commerce is very important like every other thing this advancement in shopping trends due to the upliftment of technology has its pros and cons such as people have access to various options, can buy just a tap sitting at home or anywhere, is helpful for people working day and night and hardly have time to do the shopping and we all know how this benefited us in COVID-19 times whereas it has its

negative impact as the risk of privacy related to payment details, customer personal details, internet connectivity, delivery is a time-consuming process and also the consumer makes the purchase without any physical access to the products.

There are various online retailers but here only considered four and all four of them have their criteria, product delivery pattern and finally return policy which mainly differentiates them from one another and is a key element for customer retention on their specific

websites. Such as Myntra is considered by consumers for apparel, Flipkart for day-to-day

products and Amazon for electronic goods, at the same time Zara is preferred by youngsters to have trendy clothes at affordable prices.

E-commerce is an important asset for any country but what is needed is that it is encouraged in the right way and along with an organized framework so that it can be fruitful in the progress and development of the country

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