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TO RETAIL OR TO E-TAIL? : SHAKESPEAREAN DILEMMA

LEENA KAKKAR*, SAPNA BHADWAR**

*Head Department of Commerce, Dev Samaj College for Women,
Ferozepur, Punjab, India.

**Asstt. Professor, Dev Samaj College For Women
Ferozepur, Punjab, India

ABSTRACT

The organized retail sector in India has been witnessing winds of changes in the last couple of years. During the dotcom boom, commerce proved to be the sunrise industry, the one that would change the face of the world. In present time, consumer's decision making process has considerably changed with the introduction of the internet as an alternative channel for shopping. The new wave of consumerism coupled with increasing urbanization and burgeoning middle class with paradigm shift in their demographic and psychographic dynamics have driven consumers frequently to use retail websites to search for product information and/or make a purchase of products. The problem that exists is that in this highly technologically advanced market, people who don't trust the payment mechanisms and are skeptical about online transactions. But hopefully, with smart strategies, the right use of technology and internet penetration, this market will grow at a much faster pace, which will benefit consumers living across the country.

The present paper will examine the distinctive features, comparative advantages and disadvantages of retailing and e-tailing, reasons for preferences of the shoppers for e-tailing, consumer's allocation of money online spending and future of e-tailing. There is every possibility that traditional retailing would coexist in complimentary role with e-tailing.