

**Malaysian Students Adoption for Social Commerce Activities**

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**ABSTRACT**

Social commerce is the direct selling of products via social media platforms. This is different from social media marketing, when you try to direct visitors from your social accounts and pages to your website or online store. In social commerce, the store visit and the entire shopping experience happen without the customer ever leaving the social media site. This paper will discuss the ideas of social commerce and the adoption among Malaysia users. This study results social commerce positively impacts the overall sales volume, that's not the only benefit you can get. In the twenty-first century, social media has become a vital aspect of everyone's life, particularly among millennials, students, academics, and practitioners. Part of the reason for this is because social media allows people to share their daily activities, keep up with news and trends, and connect with markets or groups. With the widespread use of social media among communities throughout the world, social commerce has emerged as one of the most important avenues for businesses to engage with customers and sell their goods and services. Simply put, social commerce is the practice of doing e-commerce transactions through social media platforms. Facebook business sites, Instagram shopping, and a variety of other social commerce technologies are just a few examples.

**Keywords:** Social Commerce, social Media, Malaysian Community.

**I. INTRODUCTION**

At this time, the fast changes and breakthroughs in technology are plainly visible. As a result, this generation is sometimes referred to as the "speed generation." Nobody can deny that smart gadgets are quite popular these days. With all of its creative capabilities, smart phones, for example, have become a vital part of many people's life [1]. As the number of individuals who possess smart devices grows, so does the proliferation of social networks throughout the globe. The present huge range of services, applications, and social networks may be explained by the diversity of people's interests and methods of using technology [2].

In this context, "Electronic Commerce (E-Commerce)" has emerged as "one of the most significant and fastest-growing sectors of high-technology sector development, particularly in trading and commercial contexts". It is the most recent method for businesses and people to profit and satisfy their needs [3]. E-Commerce satisfies these standards. Organizations in Malaysia have used the internet to handle information and incorporate E-Commerce into their business operations as a result of technological technologies [4].

In this paper, social media tools are used to benefit and enhance “E-Commerce, Electronic Marketing (E-Marketing), and Electronic Shopping (E-Shopping)” usage behaviors in order to obtain any information about any offered commodity in the simplest, fastest, and most familiar manner possible, thereby increasing retail profit [5]. Apart from that, “Social Commerce (S-Commerce)” is: “a term that often used to describe new online retail models, or marketing strategies that incorporate established social networks and/or peer-to-peer communication to drive sales” [6]. The S-Commerce as: “a technology-enabled shopping experience where online consumer interactions while shopping provides the main mechanism for conducting social shopping activities” [7].

The term “social commerce”, sometimes known as “social business”, refers to a subset of internet commerce. It refers to electronic commerce transactions carried out through social media. To put it another way, social commerce is the result of combining electronic commerce, electronic marketing, social media, and supporting technologies [8]. The emergence of the social Web and social media is known as social commerce. The key beneficial activities of social commerce are judged to include “customer service areas, online sales transactions, marketing communications, and user-generated content networks”. Recruiting, cooperation, and problem-solving activities are also essential aspects of social commerce. Another advantage of social commerce is that it brings markets closer to their customers and allows for cooperation via social media. Collaborations like this led to product innovation and increased consumer value [9].

For enterprises and organizations, social commerce offers major monetary and strategic rewards. Customers, businesses, and retailers all gain from it. Customers may quickly acquire recommendations for a certain product by reading product reviews, participating in group discussions, and so on. Furthermore, their purchase may be tailored to meet individual requirements, increasing satisfaction and shortening the time it takes to make a choice. Customers can easily utilize social commerce, and it fits with their mobile device lifestyle [10]. It motivates consumers to assist other customers, resulting in an increase in customer trust. Customers' input on market communication strategies and the product itself is one of the advantages of social commerce for retailers. The use of social commerce will improve website traffic, resulting in greater sales and revenue. Vendors may also benefit from free word-of-mouth marketing [11]. Businesses may use social commerce to complete tasks more quickly and strengthen relationships with local and international partners. Social commerce can assist enterprises to locate experts quickly and conduct market research very fast. Furthermore, social commerce factors can increase customer intention to purchase [12].

Definitely, embedding the social media tools in the process of the online shopping will enhance the experience and the efficiency of this process. So, it can be perceived that the social online shopping websites are designed to be online shopping communities [13]. Actually, the shopping websites, which adopted S-Commerce in their marketing strategies, differ from other online shopping websites in many features in order to facilitate the social interactions among shoppers. The shoppers can create their profiles with their pictures and personal information, make their shopping list and share it between their friends and community, they can post blogs, like a shopping activity done by others, give their opinion about a commodity by making a comment on it. Many specialized websites offer these services are available on the internet such as: ShopStyle, ThisNext, and Fancy [14].

In S-Commerce, the relationship between the consumer and the online store website is still found, but over a new environment, which is the social media. All data needed to view the commodity and its information, and all data needed to complete the purchasing process is also stored in the website's

database. Social networks websites are designed by using Web 2.0 technology, which means that we can interact with others in our network [15]. This new process for online shopping over the social media will necessarily increase the number of users for social networks over the world, as well as, it will increase the profit from the electronic retail.

The company goal should be to meet and retain consumers' wants and desires [16]. Furthermore, businesses should concentrate on the needs of their consumers instead of the precise offers used to address those requirements. In order to prove the proposed suggestions, this research will tackle Malaysia market as a special reference whereas 77.3% of the society having their own accounts on the Facebook, as an example for the most common social network within the Malaysian society [17]. This necessitates a study of Malaysian customers' behaviors and demands in relation to their culture, as well as their capacity to adopt this type of development in the traditional E-commerce manner that they are familiar with. It's vital to note that this study may be replicated in any underdeveloped nation, since their demands and internet buying behaviours are almost identical [18].

The degree of the acceptance for the adoption of this new technology through a group of users, either in a small group of users or through a society, has to be assessed [19]. The most effective strategy to achieve this aim is to use one of the technology acceptance and adoption models and theories to analyse the potential of the suggested study population in Malaysia to integrate such technology (S-Commerce) into their daily routines (online shopping) [20]. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, software engineering has had a long history and close relationship with psychological and social sciences.

## **II. SOCIAL COMMERCE AS A NEW TREND**

There is now a large portion of the world's population living in a digital world. Many of our daily duties may now be accomplished online because the Internet has become a fundamental part of our life [21]. This technology has undergone a sea change as a result of the numerous advancements on the Internet and the advent of Web 2.0. [22].

Electronic business is one of the aforementioned advancements that is transforming the way businesses operate in the contemporary economy. Content, community, and commerce intersect in the new electronic business model and online trade has become one of the most essential instruments for businesses [23].

Customers' purchasing habits are changing, but so are the relationships between businesses and their customers. Web 2.0 has altered the habits of Internet users. They've moved on from email and search engines to information creation, uploading, and sharing [24]. The rise of social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, has made it easier for people to connect and share information with each other. One obvious example is Facebook's 1.49 billion monthly active users as of June 2015 [25]. As a result of social media's potential to make users more engaged online, customers have grown more informed.

The impact of social networks and social media on people's daily lives is a compelling cause for businesses and organisations to adjust their strategies to these developments in order to obtain competitive advantages [26].

Customers are now able to influence the market since information is easily accessible. We've also talked about the importance of online trading in the modern world, along with Web 2.0. E-commerce, as it is presently known, is largely based on this concept.[27]

E-commerce has been viewed in a variety of ways by academics. In a nutshell, it's the exchange of goods and services across electronic networks like the Internet. Commercial transactions can now be organised, controlled, and executed in a new way using the most recent information technology. In today's competitive marketplace, e-commerce has become a need for businesses to stay relevant.[28] E-commerce benefits include constant accessibility, direct contact between consumers and producers, open markets, cost savings, time savings, immediacy of connection and personalization, and market globalisation [29].Installing recommendation systems to provide clients with personalised recommendations based on previous purchases and their profile and interests is one of the most significant advancements in e-commerce. However, e-commerce companies discovered that consumers were far more likely to trust ideas from individuals than from a system, despite the fact that this worked effectively at first. For Internet business, this discovery represented a turning point [30].Already, Web 2.0 has had a profound impact on the way people think about the Internet. Understanding the evolution of e-commerce from the beginning is essential if we are to fully appreciate how social commerce has evolved in our eyes [31].

Businesses began utilising the Internet in the years following its launch in 1994. Since most businesses only used their physical storefronts to sell their products and/or services, the internet shopping formula was almost invisible [32].During these years, interest in the Internet grew dramatically as a result of this. Online sales have become a new business model for certain companies, which they believe will provide them an advantage over their competitors. Internet commerce was born during this time period. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the first Internet-based businesses, such as eBay and Amazon, began to develop[33].

With the ease with which they were able to reach customers in numerous regions and countries, traditional firms felt an increased need to increase their online presence. When it comes to long-term business plans, the Internet is considered as an essential commercial platform. Stock market speculation fueled the Dot-com Bubble, which lasted from 1998 to 2001. Consumers' online transaction habits were not affected by the 2000 bubble collapse, which resulted in a decrease in online firms. In 2003, sites like MySpace and Facebook were initially launched[34].

The proprietors of online enterprises initially ignored the commercial value of these sites. It was coinciding with the rise of Web 2.0 and social networking sites in 2005 that social commerce was first mentioned [35].

In order to promote customer loyalty, proactive firms were able to gather information about consumers by allowing them to produce their own content on the Web 2.0 platform. In 2008, the term "social commerce" was coined because of this, as well as the potential of social networking sites to draw money. More than 500 percent more consumers were using social features in online stores in the year from 2007 to 2008 than in the previous year. Around 88% of companies expect to raise their social commerce investment in the future; since then, it has increased at a rate of 43% per year[36].

In tandem with the expansion of e-commerce and the Internet, the fusion of Web 2.0 features with e-commerce characteristics and benefits has developed a new kind of Internet trading known as social commerce [37].Because social commerce, also known as s-commerce, is a relatively new concept, there is no single definition for it at the moment. While some scholars define it as e-commerce that combines sales with customer social participation in a social media environment, others have proposed a concept for "social commerce" that focuses on the seller. Social commerce is a growing

trend in which vendors are linked through online social networks and the sellers are individuals rather than corporations [38].

This point of view is linked to a research line that splits social commerce into two perspectives, seller and consumer, as well as two unique concepts: "social commerce (from the seller's perspective)" and "social shopping (from the consumer's perspective). [39]. Others, however, argue that the terms social commerce and social purchasing are interchangeable. The researchers did not consider "social commerce" and "social shopping" to be synonymous in our case. This is owing to the fact that "the pleasure of shopping with friends and family, socialising while shopping, and connecting with others while shopping" is described as "the pleasure of shopping with friends and family, socialising while shopping, and interacting with others while shopping." [40] The notion is oriented on sociability and enjoyment, but there is no proof of interactive social links, leading us to believe that social buying is related to "Web 2.0 or e-commerce" [41].

The aforementioned diversity of meanings is formed not only by the views of the vendor and buyer, but also by the inclusion of other disciplines. Marketing, computer science, sociology, and psychology are just a few of the fields that have developed an understanding of social commerce. Social commerce is a prominent trend in online marketplaces in which firms use social media or Web 2.0 as a direct marketing tool to help customers' decision-making processes and purchasing behaviour. Social commerce, as defined by computer science, is "an application that blends Web 2.0 technologies, interactive platforms, social media, and communities in a commercial setting" [42]. Sociology defines social commerce as the effect of social influence exerted by e-commerce businesses' Web-based social networks.

Finally, social commerce refers to the psychological impact of knowledge gained from a networked community on online purchasers. Taking all of these things into consideration, we believe that social commerce has a broader reach, because the perspectives of sellers and consumers intersect to produce a global concept that defines social commerce. As a result, we believe social commerce encompasses both business-to-business and consumer-to-consumer methods [43].

The researchers offer the following definition of social commerce in light of these viewpoints: Through social commerce, customers connect with one another and contribute to the online buying and selling of items and/or services. Consumers may make better decisions by sharing information with other customers through product evaluations, ratings, and comments, resulting in synergy between consumers, services, and social networks [44]. As we've seen, social commerce has the ability to totally revolutionize a company's marketing approach, therefore businesses in the digital age must adjust their business models to accommodate it. In the next years, social commerce will have a considerable influence on market developments. As a result of this fast-changing online paradigm, we've discovered a necessity to properly understanding the key factor that affect social commerce acceptance and utilization [45].

### III. SOCIAL COMMERCE TYPES

The term "social commerce," shortened as "s-commerce," refers to the merging of shopping and social networking. As a result, this refers to any type of social media that aids in the process of purchasing and selling things and services through the internet. When you consider how popular social media has become in recent years, it's easy to see why many people regard the merging of social media and shopping as a natural progression, as social media offers a plethora of options. Continue reading to learn about several sorts of social commerce [46].

While keeping this in mind, sales Driven by Social Media - A social network-driven sale occurs when a customer buys a product after being directed to the site through a social media platform like Facebook, Twitter, or Pinterest. The 'shop' tab function on Facebook is a fantastic example of this. Platforms for Peer-to-Peer Sales — Platforms for peer-to-peer sales provide a community-based marketplace where people can sell to one another. Individuals can upload their products for sale at a specified price, like they do at ASOS marketplace or they can use an auction site like eBay [47].

Social Shopping — As the name implies, this sort of social commerce is self-explanatory. It's about internet stores with social aspects. Individuals could, for example, use a chat feature to exchange advice and discuss their viewpoints. Fashion, Motilo, Listia, and Go Try It On are examples of this. [48].

Pick List Sites — Lyst and The Fancy are two popular examples of user-curated shopping sites. These websites allow users to build and share product lists, after which other users can shop from the list [49].

Group Buying and Daily Deals — Groupon is undoubtedly one of the most well-known examples of this sort of s-commerce. These websites offer customers the opportunity to buy something for a lower price if a large number of people agree to buy it [50].

Participatory Commerce, often known as 'crowd funding' or 'crowd sourcing,' is a type of participatory commerce. Consumers are involved in the manufacturing process in this case. How? Through voting, collaborative product creation, and production finance. Cut On Your Bias, ModCloth, Threadless, and Kickstarter are examples of participatory commerce platforms. [51].

User Review Sites - Last but not least, there are peer recommendations. These are sales generated as a result of product or service reviews. Other features, such as purchasing history, are available. Amazon's feature that allows you to view what other individuals who bought the same item as you have purchased is a nice illustration of this. There are also incentives for discussing products or making purchases through social networking platforms [52].

To summarise, there are seven major types of social commerce: user review websites, group buying and daily offers, social network-driven sales, participatory commerce, pick list sites, peer-to-peer sales platforms, and, of course, social shopping. Hopefully, this article has adequately demonstrated the many possibilities available when it comes to using social media to boost sales.

#### **IV. E-COMMERCE AND S-COMMERCE IN MALAYSIA**

E-commerce has a huge advantage in that it may be used to develop creative customer management strategies. This is because E-Commerce connects buyers and sellers directly, allowing them to exchange completely digital information regardless of time or location. E-commerce also allows interactivity, allowing it to respond to consumer behaviour dynamically and be updated in real time, guaranteeing that it is always up to date. The expanding number of Internet users and the global expansion of electronic commerce highlight the importance of E-Commerce. According to a study published in The Star IN-TECH on April 18, 2000, there were only 7,000 Internet users in Malaysia in 1995, but this figure has risen by 100% by 1999. (700,000). Furthermore, E-Commerce spending in 1997 was RM 12.54 million, and this figure is expected to climb to RM 2.46 billion by 2002 [53].

The Malaysian government is leading the charge to expand Internet use and E-Commerce expenditure by establishing the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC). The MSC offers affordable telecommunications rates, no Internet filtering, and a well-developed IT infrastructure with fibre-optic connections. This goes hand in hand with the advent and expansion of the Internet and E-

Commerce operations ([www.mdc.com.my](http://www.mdc.com.my)). Although E-Commerce is still in its infancy in Malaysia, it is projected to transform the way businesses conduct their everyday operations. Organizations will get extra value by using E-Commerce, which will allow them to develop, change, and reinvent their businesses. E-commerce is a broad term that encompasses a variety of activities. It encompasses not only the electronic exchange of goods, services, and information, but also new developments in “advertising, market research, customer service, order and delivery, and financial operations (payment)” [54].

This research focuses on E-Commerce applications in various fields. It investigates the degree to which various E-Commerce applications are used in Malaysia, namely in “the Manufacturing, Services, and Agriculture/Construction industries”. The study starts by outlining the numerous methods through which businesses might do E-Commerce. It follows with a description of the study methodology, followed by a discussion of the results, including the most and least often utilised applications. It then moves on to a discussion of the different apps' E-Commerce application levels [55]. Finally, the report identifies variables that stymie E-Commerce adoption across the organisations studied.

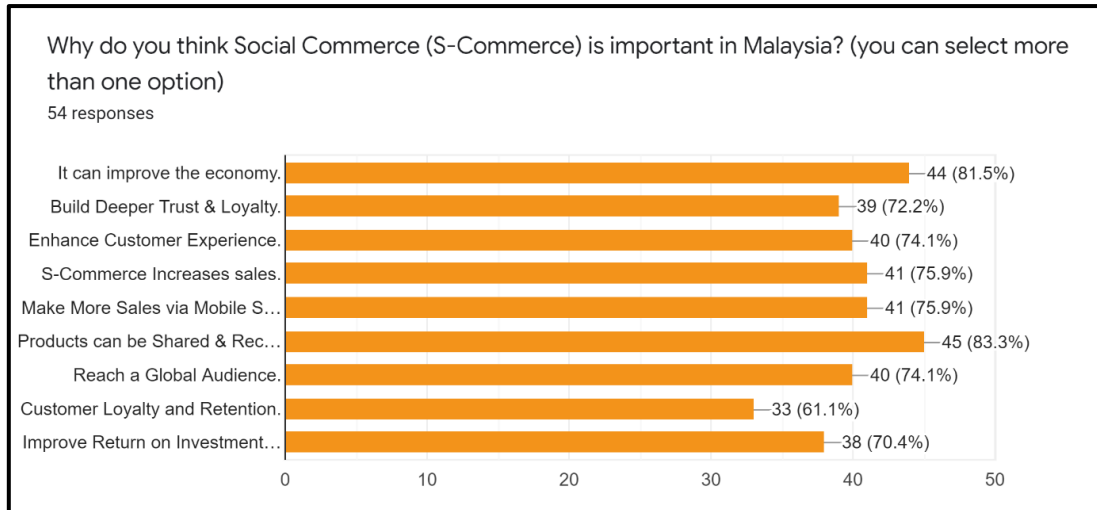
This study sheds light on the common awareness that the services of S- Commerce for the students of the private universities in Malaysia are not very much. It also triggers the need for a new study that can dwell into the current S- Commerce services adopted in nations including Malaysia. The significance of this study can be stressed from the theoretical points of view [56].

In addition, this study is a helpful to Malaysian academics who are interested to embark more into studies concerning S- Commerce topics, where to date, there have only been limited research that target this particular topic. Moreover, each participant's (students') behavioural intention for utilising S-Commerce differs from one another. Although the early use of services is an important measure of S-Commerce success, study in management information systems reveals that there is a scarcity of information [57].

## **V. PRELIMINARY STUDY ABOUT MALAYSIAN STUDENTS' VIEWS TOWARD SOCIAL COMMERCE**

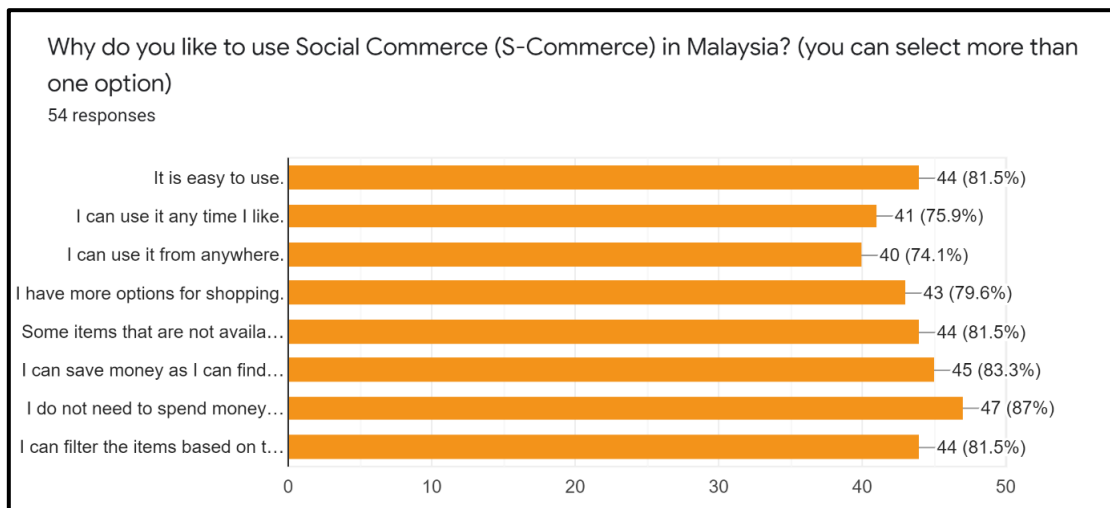
The significance of this work in the context of students' service is explored in this study. In particular, this research also looks at the link between student acceptance and the impacts of using S-Commerce. This relationship has the potential to transform students into use makers, rather than the service's unresponsive consumers. The nature of the users evolves with time, and the service may happen at any time or in any location. Apart from that, the knowledge on the factors determining the student's acceptance of S-Commerce will provide invaluable guidance where students are made aware of the most significant factors which encourage them to utilize S-Commerce services.

Based on the results of preliminary, respondents believe that social commerce is important in Malaysia because products can be shared and recommended, it can improve the economy, it increases sales, make more sales via mobile shoppers, enhance customer experience, build deeper trust and loyalty, it improves return on investment (ROI), creates customer loyalty and retention respectively and finally, reach a global audience, see Figure 1 [58].



**Figure 1: Reasons of Social Commerce Significance in Malaysia**

There are various reasons that respondents would like to use social commerce. For instance, the respondents believe that by using social commerce they do not need to spend money on transportation to go to the shops. Moreover, they believe social commerce is easy to use, they can save money as they can find select the item with reasonable price. Other reasons for using social commerce are availability of the items that are not available in the shops, can be found in S-Commerce and they have options to filter the items based on the price, brand, colour, etc. They think that have more options for shopping and they can use social commerce from anywhere at any time. All reasons behind using social commerce are listed in Figure 2 [59].



**Figure 2: Reasons for Intention to Use Social Commerce in Malaysia**

## VI. RESULTS OF S-COMMERCE ADOPTION IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia is the world's fourth largest market for social commerce adoption, with a high likelihood of social media users converting into paying customers.



## Malaysian Students Adoption for Social Commerce Activities

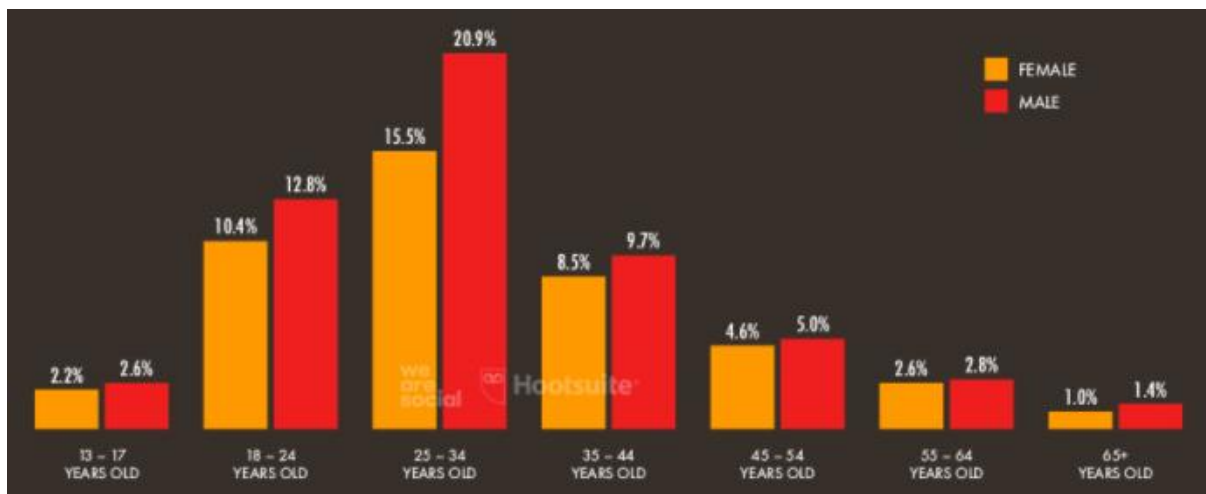
Because of the country's vast population of nearly 32 million people, approximately half of whom are digitally savvy consumers aged 18 to 54, with an internet penetration rate of 83 percent, and roughly 26 million are active social media users, the country finds itself in such a favourable situation. To top it all off, e-commerce adoption is high, with more than 70% of people shopping online by 2020.

Malaysians utilise social media for more than just communication and information exchange. The majority of Malaysian customers use social media to gather information about possible purchases.

According to a poll done by Econsultancy and Magento, more than 8 out of 10 Malaysian consumers use Facebook to look for suggestions and reviews, and about half use Instagram and YouTube for the same purpose.

Consumers would publish their thoughts, comments, and reviews about their purchases on social media, influencing the shopping decisions of their peers. According to BigCommerce, social media recommendations affect 23% of online shoppers, and 84% of shoppers would examine reviews on at least one social media website before making a purchase.

Furthermore, 7 out of 10 Malaysian consumers believe, strongly or slightly, that they would purchase a product online after seeing it advertised (alternatively known as sponsored post) or shared by their peers on social media.



**Figure 3: The young generation of tech-savvy Malaysians are the highest audiences of social commerce and marketing. – Chart from Data Reportal**

As social media grew in popularity in Malaysia, so did the number of social media influencers who promoted and marketed sponsored items and services from brands and businesses to their followers, fans, and peers.

Businesses and brands that have recognised the impact of social commerce offer sponsorships and endorsements in the hopes of leveraging popular social media influencers' reach and reputation. Influencers have evolved into more modest content providers in recent years, sharing and producing material centred on a certain love, such as cuisine or fitness. It has become easier for businesses and brands to choose which social media influencers to contact as a result of this trend.

Businesses and brands have begun to pay attention to smaller scale influencers, or "micro influencers," as their followers are frequently specialised consumers seeking extremely specific

content, not wanting to miss out on the viral impact of social commerce. Brand awareness would be able to reach all, if not the majority, of their target market this way.

Apart from the "word of mouth" aspect of social commerce, entertainment is an important aspect of internet shopping. Short, engaging, and eye-catching promotional content must stay up with the trend of content that is relevant to the target audience.

Photos and short videos are the monarchs of social commerce, given the fast-paced nature of today's age. If the information they're looking at on social media isn't interesting enough to hold their attention, they'll quickly move on to the next post or video. Because social commerce should be done judiciously and tastefully, and not as a blanket plan for all items, businesses and brands will need to be precise and creative in order to develop content that will be able to grab the attention of their target audience.

Effective social commerce will be able to turn social media users into potential clients with the help of tailored marketing.

Aside selling brief films and photographs, livestreaming is another aspect of social commerce. What began as a way for social network users to post their livestreams for socialising has evolved into a platform for businesses and brands to showcase and discuss their products and services. Businesses and brands may tap into their existing popularity and followers with the help of social media influencers.

Fans and followers would tune in to these livestream sessions in order to learn more about the items and services that they are interested in. The presenter can communicate and engage with their audience in real time during the broadcast, offering them with additional information, directions, and promotions.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Social commerce is the main driving force that will help build Malaysia's e-commerce industry, according to the current digitally savvy generation of Malaysians, who spend an average of 2 hours and 45 minutes every day on social media.

The majority of Malaysian firms believe that social media is a powerful tool for driving online sales and spreading brand recognition. Despite the fact that many Malaysian consumers do not purchase products or services directly from social media platforms, it is undeniable that social media plays an important role in the discovery and research phases for most Malaysian consumers prior to purchasing a product or paying for a service.

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