

The Effect of Virtual Showrooms on The Watch Purchasing Process

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Submitted to Dr. Marion Garaus

Michaela Riedl

1821012

Kolja Heimberger

1821011

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Abstract

This paper aims to demonstrate the relevance of a virtual showroom for the watch brand Jacques Lemans during the watch purchasing process. A virtual showroom could affect customer's buying behaviour and promote website visit intention based on a well-established digital tour. Nowadays, consumers increasingly switch from shopping at traditional retailers to online shopping.¹

However, there was a literature gap due to insufficient research about showrooms. The virtual room stimuli were created by using 360-degree pictures and putting the data into a real environment. The virtual showroom displays watches that can be viewed by the showroomer, to gain a new online shopping experience. Besides that, users are given an opportunity to watch a product video and visit the firm's website. The development process involves specific processes such as planning, object modelling, navigation, web page integration and evaluation.¹

Data was collected from a sample of 79 participants giving first insights into its effects and potential for the e-commerce space. Participants were questioned about their perception of the virtual showroom, the perceived interactivity, the level of authenticity generated, the system usability and word of mouth and purchase intentions. Results demonstrated that customers tended to be satisfied with the experience and perceived the showroom with a positive attitude. As previous literature already suggested, word of mouth and purchase intention seemed to be positively affected by the virtual showroom experience.¹

The authors conclude that the virtual showroom demonstrates a new technology with large potential for the retailing space and can be a powerful branding tool in the online-dominant retailing environment.¹

Keywords: Virtual showroom, Immersive visualization, Showrooms, e-commerce, Virtual tour, Store brand experience, Visit intention¹

¹ Written by Michaela Riedl