Abstract

As it is essential for life, consumers cannot opt out when it comes to food consumption. As a result, they need to make several decisions regarding where and how to purchase groceries. Over the past decades, an alternative to traditional grocery shopping has been developed: consumers can now buy (part of) their groceries via the online channel. The general purpose of this dissertation is to advance the knowledge of consumers’ adoption and use of these online grocery services. The dissertation consists of four empirical papers – which exploit on three different datasets – on the adoption and use of click-and-collect grocery services in Belgium.

In a first paper, we explore the predictive power of socio-demographic variables in order to distinguish users and non-users. We find that while variables at the personal level do impact adoption, consumers’ motivations to adopt in fact lie on the household level. If one wants to see the complete picture, it is thus imperative to also take into account household-level characteristics.

A key finding of our second, qualitative, paper is that situational factors (such as health problems or a voucher for the service cost) often induce adoption, but not in isolation from an evaluation of adoption constructs. Where use is concerned, this second paper also answers some important questions with regards to the organization of online grocery shopping using click-and-collect services. Although our findings suggest that women are still the main responsible, reasons for this do not relate solely to traditional gender roles, but also involve practical considerations.

The third paper validates the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) in the context of online grocery shopping, and improves the model by extending it with five additional constructs. Whereas for potential adopters the main predictors of online purchase intention are,
order of importance, hedonic motivation, habit, perceived time pressure, and innovativeness, users’
behavioral intention for continued use is determined by performance expectancy, habit, and – to a
lesser extent – perceived time pressure. Users’ actual usage of online grocery services is driven by habit
and behavioral intention.

In a final paper we find that – for users – the absolute maximum service cost is not the best measure
of willingness to pay, and that the maximum total service cost over a given period is a better measure.
In particular, we find that a higher level of perceived time pressure does not translate into a higher
willingness to pay per order, but that time-poor users would maintain their higher order frequency if
the service fees were to increase (and would maintain it for slightly longer than the other user groups)
in spite of the bigger cost impact.