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The influence of Amazon on E-Commerce Industry Evolution and Customers' Buying Behaviour

A case study of a financial institution

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Internship Report presented as partial requirement for obtaining the Master's degree in Information Management with Specialization in Marketing Intelligence

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RESUMO

A definição de E-Commerce assenta num modelo de negócio que permite às empresas e indivíduos comprar e vender bens e serviços através da Internet (Bloomenthal, 2022). A Amazon continua a ser uma das maiores empresas no mercado da indústria do E-Commerce. Como é possível saber isso? A resposta é simples, a Amazon tornou pública a sua receita de pelo menos 75,45 mil milhões de dólares durante a atual pandemia. Deste modo, a Amazon provou uma vez mais ser uma das mais poderosas empresas dentro da indústria de E-Commerce pela elevada popularidade entre os consumidores.

O principal objetivo deste relatório de estágio é compreender qual o impacto da Amazon na evolução da Indústria do E-Commerce e no comportamento de compra dos consumidores, e para tal é necessário compreender qual o impacto da Amazon nos principais resultados das empresas que vendem produtos nessa mesma plataforma. Para responder a esta pergunta, tive de compreender qual o impacto do E-Commerce nos resultados dessas empresas (em geral) incluindo relatórios de empresas/marcas, e relatórios de campanhas realizadas e compreender também os dados das empresas na Amazon Seller Central. Toda essa informação foi analisada utilizando os dados da empresa em que realizei o meu estágio na Holanda.

É importante dizer que a Amazon tem muita influência no comportamento de compra de milhares senão milhões de consumidores, mais propriamente, consumidores da geração jovem. A razão pela qual isso acontece é porque pessoas com essa idade sabem mais sobre tecnologia e estão "mais dentro" do mundo online do que as pessoas com mais idade. Assim sendo, porque é que isso está a acontecer? Porque os clientes adoram comprar online, e porquê? Porque é fácil, confortável, sem esforço e muitas vezes vem acompanhado com grandes e vantajosos descontos para o comprador.

ABSTRACT

The definition of e-commerce stands by a business model that allows
companies and individuals to buy and sell goods and services over the
Internet (Bloomenthal, 2022). Amazon remains one of the largest
companies in the E-Commerce industry market. How is it possible to
know this? The answer is simple, Amazon has made public its revenue
of at least $75.45 billion during the current pandemic. Along with its
impressive sales numbers, Amazon has once again proven to be one of
the most powerful companies within the industry because of its high
popularity among consumers.

The main objective of this internship report is to understand what is
the impact of Amazon on E-Commerce Industry and consumers'
buying behaviour, and for that it is necessary to understand what is
the impact of Amazon on the main results of companies that sell
products in that same platform. To answer this question, I had to
understand data from Amazon Seller Central, company/brands
reports, and reports of campaigns carried out. All the information was
analysed using data from the company where I made my internship.

It is important to say that Amazon has a lot of influence on the buying
behaviour of thousands if not millions of consumers, more properly,
consumers of the young generation. The reason why this is so is
because, people of that age know more about technology and are
more into the online world than older people. So why is this
happening? Because customers love to shop online, and why? Because
it is easy, comfortable, effortless and often comes with great discounts
for the buyer.

KEYWORDS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Throughout this internship some entities and concepts were
mentioned with acronyms and abbreviations. This list of abbreviations
and acronyms was created to facilitate the reading and understanding
of this internship report:

TSPC	THE SHEETS PAPER COMPANY
CBB	CUSTOMER BUYING BEHAVIOR
CR	CONVERSION RATE
KPI	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
B2B	BUSINESS TO BUSINESS
B2C	BUSINESS TO CONSUMER
DM	DIGITAL MARKETING

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1| INTRODUCTION

The business world is constantly changing and forcing companies to improve their way of thinking, behaving, and communicating with their public. In the world of E-Commerce, there is one undisputed leader: Amazon (McAfee, 2021). Because consumers changed their buying behaviour in 2020, the retail giant's financial results revealed an increase of 38% in online sales. And these habits are unlikely to change. A study by Salesforce found that nearly 60% of consumers believe that they will do even more online shopping after the pandemic than they did before (McAfee, 2021). Amazon is a marketplace, which people trust, meaning that they know in their experience that the product will arrive in 1 or 2 workdays (Nearly 100% of regular customers trust Amazon). People that buy on Amazon really don't care about the brand of the product (70% to 80% of the clients on Amazon). So, small companies that are selling on Amazon, they can in fact compete against big brands like Nike and Adidas (King, 2020). The evolution of the number of customers on Amazon had a special incidence in the last decade. Also, in these years there was a sharp decline in the traditional formats of buying products and a substantial increase in number of accounts on Amazon, with the high registered number on the Statista website of 310 million Amazon accounts in 2022 (Boice,2022).

My report will focus on the consumers' buying behaviour and E-Commerce Industry with the impact of Amazon in the society, mostly with the young generation, through descriptive research done on the internet, but also through data of the company where I did my internship. This will allow us to detect people's buying behaviour and people's attitudes on Amazon. The objectives of the report will focus mostly on the poor data effects, studying the impact of Amazon on product sales to detect specific consumers' buying behaviour and how marketing can be used through this E-Commerce platform to generate that specific behaviour.
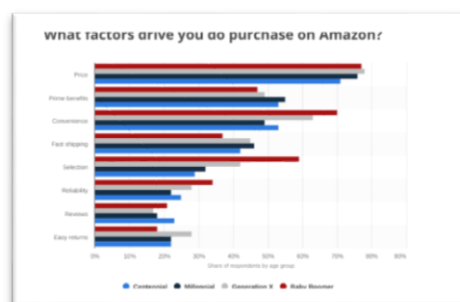
1. What factors drive you do purchase on Amazon?

The obsession of buying a lot of products that you don't need created the concept of consumerism, defined as "the idea that increasing the consumption of goods and services purchased in the market is always a desirable goal, and that a person's well-being and happiness depend fundamentally on obtaining consumer goods and material possessions" (Hayes, 2022).

Amazon helped rising E-Commerce Industry significantly in the business model, as well as intensified consumerism (D'Agostino, 2018). The increased and potentiality trend of online shopping is reshaping the footprint of retail shopping. Replacing traditional stores and in-store customer service with person-to-person shopping experience, sharing their own experience with other people through the comments, for example on the product's page. While the retail industry consistently evolves, the rise of E-Commerce is highly possible. The saturation of consumer reviews and product descriptions online allow consumers to remain in the comfort of their own homes to purchase products, making their most important product decisions within the click of a button (D'Agostino, 2018).

1.1 | BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

E-Commerce proved to be a real game changer in a very short period of time. From nowhere to the largest market share holder, online retail made a lot of difference in the last decade for the market functionality. E-Commerce has progressed beyond search engine optimization (Google, for example) to other channels of marketing, interacting with customers (Amazon, for example). Amazon is the most popular E-Commerce platform of the world. Taking out Google and YouTube, Amazon has the most search volume of the world. Because of that, selling on Amazon is one of the best opportunities to sell products in the last 100 years. Why? Because in those years the companies would need a lot of capital, which they still may need on the Amazon business, but then they would have to spend another tremendous amount of money and time on marketing, location or creating a new website for the company and to increase the level of demand for that website, the company would have to spend money in publicity and precious time. With Amazon, half of this expenditure for starting a business is eliminated, therefore helping a lot of new small businesses. However, companies that use Amazon as their main or only sales channel can also find disadvantages as they increase their dependency, involving potential threats and problems.

Digital marketing allows for a significant reduction of costs when entering in some markets. Some of the new firms even adapt in a way that they do not find the need to invest in physical infrastructure, another significant financial advantage for companies entering a highly competitive field (Arora, 2020).

Marketing growth and their expansion is primarily engrossed on attracting public in a way that demonstrates the seller's understanding of people's needs and issues, also demonstrating the ability of providing adequate solutions that fulfil themselves. When people feel that they are more likely to buy products from that seller than from other one, it demonstrates the feeling of affection. Marketing relationship tactics are more easily implemented using technology, with the creation and implementation of digital communication campaigns to attract and retain customers, increasing in this way their revenue (Dwivedi, 2020).

Consumers' buying behaviour is related on trust that people have on companies. And talking about Amazon effect on customers, it can spread buying behaviour even faster with the quality of the product/brand and delivering services. Choosing Amazon as the main channel of commercialization of their products, these brands are being given the opportunity to be featured in their website, building a strong and efficient level of trust between them and their customers (Burkhalter and Tornton, 2014).

This internship allowed me to learn and find more information about how Amazon works. Surely, this knowledge will be very relevant to understand my final internship report. Amazon is referred as the biggest everything store, as the company evolved substantially over time in order to gain its present title as the largest online retailer in the world (D'Agostino, 2018). In 1997, Amazon went public, increasing the awareness of the company and providing opportunity for investment. The company positioned itself as prominent book retailer after this development, by becoming the exclusive book retailer (D'Agostino, 2018). In 1997 the main goal for E-Commerce Industry was "the buying and selling of products, information and services" (Nanehkaran, 2013, page 192). By 1998, the company began to expand its product lines. Amazon launched its online music and video stores while introducing toys and electronics to its marketplace. At that time, the company expanded globally as well. The following years of Amazon's company history demonstrates its rapid expansion that converted to the company's title from the biggest bookstore to the biggest everything store (D'Agostino, 2018). Nowadays, Amazon can be proud of their sales and customer numbers that are moving inside their platform, making over $26 billion in global advertising revenue during 2021.

Amazon shows, mostly to the new generation, an easy, practical way to buy products spending much less money and time, promoting a game-changer for the buying habits of consumers. The abundance of information in the digital world and its accessibility has made customers more and more demanding. The wave of digitization promoted an expansion of E-Commerce marketplaces like Amazon. Also, Covid-19 helped to increase the growth of E-Commerce Industry, going even faster than before. The brick-to-click model is a trend that understands the need of going online. Nowadays, traditional businesses are following the track of technology because they know that the traditional way doesn't work anymore alone. The primary aim is to give equal convenience to online and offline shoppers and to connect the owner with every type of customer. It is simply like opening another door to the customers' shopping. With this new "door" called E-Commerce, customers can shop and receive orders at their convenience.

But, why is E-Commerce growing so rapidly? The fast adoption of smartphones, easy and affordable access to technology for everyone, and the convenience of shopping from anywhere, at any time, are the major reasons for the fast growth of online commerce.

1.2 | STUDY OBJECTIVES

Research Question: *Is there is any impact of Amazon advertising a product on consumers' buying behaviour?*
The main question will focus on the overall impact of using Amazon's advertisement to change consumers' buying behaviour through marketing data quality. To answer this, the question will bedivided into three sub-questions and will be supported by the descriptive research findings as well
as literature review.

Sub-Question: *Talking about E-Commerce Industry, how does customers' reviews and feedback have an impact on consumers' buying behaviour?*
In this sub-question the focus will be on the main challenges and issues, with a first approach donewith qualitative research, in-depth observations of customers' reviews and feedback on Amazon, followed by quantitative research to test the hypothesis and generate solutions and results.

Sub-Question: *What can happen to the customers' and company when the company decide selling only on the Amazon channel?*

Research about previous contracts and agreements done between companies and Amazon to be able to analyse data quality. That will be addressed based on the quantitative research and on literature review based on its importance and relevance to this study. The subjects referred above in the literature review will be assessed.

Sub-Question: *What are the costs and benefits of selling your product on Amazon?*
The costs and benefits will be pointed out through the secondary data and literature review and then tested as a hypothesis. The goal is to find what are the main costs, quantify them and assesswhat are the main benefits of the implementation of a Rapper's Influence approach.

2| STUDY RELEVANCE AND IMPORTANCE

The internet revolutionized the way people shop, and E-Commerce Industry reshaped the retail scene dramatically. It suddenly allowed small companies to reach out to millions of potential customers and lowered the market entry barriers significantly in areas where only big retail companies competed against each other, as I mentioned in the previous chapter. Amazon catalyses this change by seizing a growing share of the whole online retail market (Weihrauch, 2021).

One of the reasons why Amazon has become so successful is because they are very buyer friendly. As a customer, dealing with Amazon is usually a good experience, and their return policy is more customer-friendly when compared to many other E-Commerce websites in the industry.

Amazon, as I referred before, is fuelling the era of empowered consumerism, taking today's shopping experience to the next level. Not only do they predict customers' next purchase needs, but they also give them the freedom to compare shops without having to leave the application or website (Ocansey, 2021), having a huge impact on customers' buying behaviour.

The use of digital marketing for customers has been increasing steeply over the last decade. The increase of the number of internet users since 2010 was reported as exceeding two billion and it is expected to double every year from that date.

In the digital world, the internet is the primary source of information to support individuals' and companies' buying decision processes. The great majority of individuals have 24-hour access to the Internet nowadays. The youngest generation is the most exposed to this new trend called the internet. However, companies also have easy and cheap access to digital communication platforms reaching their targets in a much more effective and efficient way compared to traditional marketing processes (Kaur, 2017).
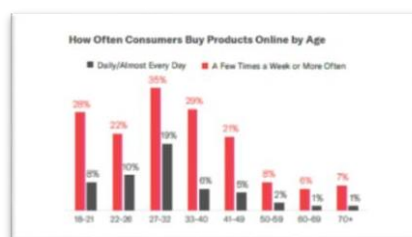
2. How often consumers buy products online by age

3| LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following chapter, the relevant literature review will be presented, considering the most significant topics of this project. It will be organized in three fundamental parts. The first one, a summary of what E-Commerce is, including some of its advantages and disadvantages and how it affects the relationship between businesses and customers (B2C). The third part will focus on customers' preferences and how Covid-19 affected the relationship between B2C and C2B. The fourth topic mentioned here will be how Amazon affected customer's buying behaviour. The fifth topic is the impact of Amazon in the growth of E-Commerce Industry. The sixth part will address E-Commerce and Amazon's growth, success and their future.

Following these parts, E-Commerce is related to a business model that allows companies and individuals to buy and sell goods and services over the Internet. The E-Commerce Industry operates in four major market segments and can be conducted over computers, tablets, smartphones, and other smart devices. Nearly every imaginable product and service is available through E-Commerce transactions, including books, music, plane tickets and financial services, such as investing in stocks and online banking. Also, it is considered a very disruptive technology (Bloomenthal,2021).

3.1 | DIGITAL MARKETING & E-COMMERCE

Traditional marketing can be defined as "the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying customer requirements profitably" (CIM, 2015, page 2). Digital marketing is defined as "achieving marketing objectives through applying digital technologies and media" (Chaffey, 2019, Page 3). Digital marketing comes to transform the traditional method, using its theoretical background data that showed to be successful in the last years (Chaffey, 2019). In the words of Chaffey (2019), it adds to the traditional method by putting together communications and the digital world. Online technologies are considered as one of the most effective tools for initiating closer relationships with consumers. Traditional marketing strategies are no longer enough in a highly competitive business environment to create a sustainable competitive edge and growth (Kaur, 2017).

According to Bharadwaj (2021), digital marketing comes as an instrument to drive customer demand in a firm, playing a crucial role in delivering growth to businesses. The new marketing opportunities allow companies to gain value with consumers, and profit (Bharadwaj, 2021). The evolution of the internet, marketplaces and technologies allowed the implementation of new strategies for companies to approach their clients as E-Commerce. E-Commerce is, as described before, a digital marketing strategy that is growing exponentially over the years, even more frequently in the last years because of Covid-19. Covid helped to this increase not just with the necessity of buying products, but also with the necessity of buying online more than before. That process fundamentally changed the people's daily life. E-Commerce is one of the main revolutions criteria of Information Technology and Communication in the field of Economy. This style of trading, due to the enormous benefits for people, has spread rapidly. Certainly, it can be claimed that E-Commerce closes the gap of many limitations of traditional business (Nanehkaran, 2013).

3.2 | E-COMMERCE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

In fact, E-Commerce has become one of the most popular activities on the internet. E-Commerce created many benefits for companies and users as I expressed before. However, some disadvantages and serious problems exist, not just for the companies but also for the customers (Nanehkaran, 2013). The most important advantages of-Commerce are:

1. An easy way to create and manage a company
2. An opportunity for customers to buy a product 24/7
3. Low prices
4. Low costs

Regarding disadvantages, I can select these:

1. Social communication
2. Security and confidentiality of information
3. Protection of customers
4. Easy to sheet financially

The need of getting in the car and driving to the store, pick out different items/ products, and wait in the line to purchase them is eliminated with online shopping. Purchasing an online item can even be cheaper than purchasing it in the store (Mitchell, 2021).

Using big data and artificial intelligence (powered systems that better monitor a customer's shopping pattern and behaviour via online portals are a win-win) can make the consumers receive customized offers and promotions (including a postal pamphlet), and shopping portals benefit by pitching products with a high likelihood of being purchased. These features are not available to traditional retailers, and if they are, the cost price is very high. So, this is the reason why retail stores are at a disadvantage, because of the high costs (Mitchell, 2021).

Buying online, customers do not get to feel, see, hear, smell, or taste a product before they buy it. In this way, physical and online shopping create a good pair. Customers can interact with a product at a physical location but then order it online at their convenience, possibly at a cheaper cost as mentioned before (Mitchell, 2021).

3.3 | HOW CUSTOMERS' PREFERENCES AND COVID-19 AFFECTED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN B2C AND C2B

Customers are not as brand loyal as in the previous years, with 60% of customers saying that they purchase products from brands that they had not previously tried before the pandemic (Nadel, 2021). As it is known, the core business of Amazon is low prices. So, for the types of brands with big names, their customers do not longer identify as a strength for the name of the brand. They (The clients) analyse not just the price, but also the image, reviews, title, ratings and number of ratings. They are not afraid to do a little research about the type of product they desire and its components. However, if the brand decides to change from Amazon to another E-Commerce platform, from my point of view, that situation can reduce their market because (as I will demonstrate) the online customers, before making an online or offline purchase nowadays, the first website they go is Amazon, with 75.9% of customers (Nadel, 2021). It is important to mention that customers check the product reviews prior to making their purchase, and the E-Commerce platform that they resort to is Amazon, again, with 73.5% of customers (Nadel, 2021). Amazon continues to be the first place where consumers look up for product information, with 75% of consumers saying that they check prices and product reviews on Amazon before making their own purchase (Nadel, 2021). In that way, Covid also had an influence on the evolution of E-Commerce because it changed the way that businesses look to customers and vice-versa, including the way they both interact with each other, giving more value to different things these days.

For example, today it is very common for businesses to try looking at the customers' perspective before they decide on the product that they will develop. What I mean is that for businesses to search and find a new business opportunity, they need to analyse and see if their new product will change someone's life. If the answer to that question is yes, then they answered the question "Should we continue to develop this new product and sell it?". It is not just one person being helped by that product, but hundreds or thousands of people.

Business-to-Consumer (B2C) refers to transactions between a business and its end consumer. It also creates electronic physical storefronts that offer information, goods, and services between business and consumers in a retailing transaction. However, it can also be an E-Commerce model that indicates a financial transaction or online sale between a business and a consumer on the web (Nanehkaran, 2013).

Consumers are shopping more online than in-store

37%
57%
6%

■ Shopping more
■ Shopping the same
■ In-store more

3. Customers buying behaviour

3.4 | HOW AMAZON AFFECTED CUSTOMER'S BUYING BEHAVIOUR

Among the various technologies it has put forth, Amazon Prime is of particular interest. This subscription-based program offers unlimited, speedy and free shipping on over 100 million items for around 150 million members worldwide, access to unlimited streaming of movies, TV episodes, songs, e-books, games, etc. among other benefits and rewards (Ramadan & Farah, 2021). What I can say about these numbers is that Amazon has a lot of power on deciding what customers will buy worldwide.

The consumer purchase journey has been reshaped in the common public mindset, due to the new innovative technological motives that have led to the digitalization of the retailing world (Farah et al., 2019). In order to deal with technological advancements in a highly competitive market, companies, such as Amazon, are offering easy services and instant access to the desired products (Ramadan & Farah, 2017). Those innovations are playing a significant role in strengthening the relationships between customers and online retailers, increasing migration from traditional shop Industry to E-Commerce Industry (Ramadan & Farah, 2021). This migration is appealing to consumers, due to the flexibility of delivery and the convenience that provides (Ramadan & Farah, 2021). Indeed, consumers are able to access a "store" 24/7 through E-Commerce marketplace and they can compare price information to get the most out of their shopping experiences, which encourages repeated and repeated purchases (Dabbous & Tarhini, 2019; Fang et al., 2014; Farah et al., 2020). In fact, an increasing number of studies are tackling the multifaceted concept of E-Commerce and its effects on online impulsive shopping behaviour (Pappas, 2016). Particularly, self-control is a crucial notion for researchers interested in this field, as the lack of the latter might lead to impulsive buying (Baumeister, 2002).

Online customer values are not just trust, but also affective attachments are considered as critical factors just like trust. Therefore, I want to understand how cognitive self-control can be affected when emotional dimensions are "open"—such as when affective-attachment is considered. Thus, this research reconciles the diverging and multi-layered effects of self-control on emotionally attached and trusting online shoppers. This allows to measure the effect of Amazon and E-Commerce platforms on impulsiveness by the online customers.

Is that clear that online shopping will remain dominant, and with that, 57% of customers claim they do more online shopping now than they did before Covid-19 (Nadel, 2021). The ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated consumer adoption for online shopping after many physical shops closed, especially after social distancing, with fluctuating in-store inventories. The study shows that Amazon and e-marketplaces continue to play a growing role in the lives of shoppers (Nadel, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic empowered consumerism as our shopping needs changed overnight and, largely housebound, our online spending behaviour (Spector, 2021). So, what I can prove is that the online customers' buying behaviour increased with Amazon and other e-marketplaces. Amazon is at the centre of online shopping behaviour with 56% of consumers visiting Amazon daily, or at least a few times a week to purchase something.

So, it is not just online shopping that emerged with Amazon, but also Amazon itself and it emerges from the growing trend towards online shopping.

Another topic that I want to clarify with my research is that Amazon will continue to grow, regardless of what the future may hold, because E-Commerce is growing. According to forecasts by EMarker, Amazon will amass more than $463 billion just in US E-Commerce sales by the end of 2022 (Nadel, 2021). The customer retention and loyalty programs will play increasingly important roles in driving engagement and maintaining shoppers' interest in their products (Nadel, 2021). Other trends gaining traction are those that enhance the buying experience from the comfort of customers as augmented reality. This one gives shoppers the ability to see how products look on similar body types, or in their homes, cars, etc. and because of that, it reduces the impulse of buying multiple items (Nadel, 2021). It also reduces the possibility of returning products that the customers would buy, so the behaviour of human race will be more rational and prudent along time, according to this study.

3.5 | THE IMPACT OF AMAZON IN THE GROWTH OF THE E-COMMERCE INDUSTRY

Since 2014, E-Commerce has been rapidly expanding around the world. The most evident example of an e-retailer revolutionizing technology is Amazon, the market leader and world's largest e-retailer (Angelovska, 2019). AI is very important to the E-Commerce Industry. However, it is still far from being perfect for each of the parts involved. E-Commerce firms continue to improve their AI tools to better match market demand. They also partner up with other companies to merge their competencies in AI and create more sophisticated solutions. They believe that Artificial Intelligence in the E-Commerce Industry will impact transactions, customer retention, satisfaction and efficiency, as an example. Artificial Intelligence is changing the way we buy and sell online. Today, every E-Commerce giant like Amazon, eBay and Flipkart are standing on the very edge of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. Artificial Intelligence is really taking over the world. AI is everywhere now, especially in the E-Commerce sector (Kumar, 2019). AI in Amazon helps to collect the training data sets for the algorithms, and that is essential for Amazon to target their marketing strategy. Amazon's recommendation system uses AI to reveal the products in demand based on the customer searches (Kumar, 2019).

E-Commerce revolutionized shopping: online merchants benefit from low cost markets, and consumers have easy access to huge catalogues of products, irrespective of their location, choosing the best product with ease and fulfilling all their needs. However, distance is still an issue, as logistics connect with the E-Commerce operations. For example, if the client orders a product from Portugal on Amazon Spain, the product will arrive in 1-2 workdays. However, if that order is made on Amazon UK, the product will only arrive in 4-6 workdays because of the logistics, as we can analyse from this data. Therefore, this is the second option for someone living in Portugal, wanting to buy something on Amazon. In other hand, logistics also matter to decide between "physical" and "online" retail leading to the rise of multichannel forms of commerce (Moriset, 2018).

As online shopping and E-Commerce grow in popularity, it has hurt many traditional businesses that are forced to compete with the online marketplace with only a physical location to survive (Mitchell, 2021).

As online shopping increases, the gains for E-Commerce businesses are coming at the expense of brick-and-mortar retail stores. An increasing number of shoppers are going for their screens instead of stores; online sales accounted for 13.6% of retail sales in the U.S. in 2020, compared to 10.7% the previous year, according to the US Census Bureau.

Apart from the impact on the revenue of traditional retail stores, the Amazon effect has also led to a significant change on the consumer's shopping patterns. For instance, based on the convenience they experience from online shopping portals, today's shoppers expect a lot more variety and quality even while visiting a retail store (Mitchell, 2021). The consistency of the online shopping experience has also impacted the behavioural expectations of shoppers, as they now expect the same smoothness, timely response and convenience, even for services that generally cannot be offered online. Customers can also read online comments, instantly seeing how others feel about the product, and that can help the customer decide if they buy the product or not, changing their own perspective about the product (Mitchell, 2021).

## 3.6 | E-COMMERCE AND AMAZON'S GROWTH AND SUCCESS AND THEIR FUTURE

What if the E-Commerce Industry growth and success fully depended on Amazon's success? For this reason, I began to try to understand why Amazon is so successful: (Thomas, 2021)

- They put their customers first no matter what
- They have a huge selection and diversity of products
- Innovative technology during the customer buying process; Customers can play their favourite music during that process with their voice
- They have excellent Customer Services
- Amazon Prime Membership, customers can use Amazon Prime Video, Prime Delivery; their incentives to buy more products is immense.
- Delivery speed
- Full UX Team to understand what customers are more interested in buying, allowing the customers to have their own product suggestions, producing even more sales
- Discounts and low prices
- Worldwide services
- Very safe to purchase on Amazon, because Amazon doesn't share personal and financial information outside of third-party sellers

One of the reasons Amazon is so successful is because they built the best customer experience. However, it is not because there is no Amazon that E-Commerce industry will not necessarily grow and prosper. E-Commerce is a virtual place where goods and services are sold on the internet, as I mentioned before in this report. Currently, E-Commerce is the trending form of performing businesses. As a result of the expansion of internet services, there has been an enormous growth of E-Commerce over the recent few years. (Akhtar,2019)

Amazon can be known as the biggest E-Commerce platform that exists today, but E-Commerce is much more than just Amazon. There are three types of E-Commerce: Business-to-Business, Business-to-Customer and Customer-to-Customer. There have never been as many opportunities in the E-Commerce Industry as now because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Businesses turned to their own digital mode to get some income and in turn businesses created a huge competition between them.

What I mean to say is that small businesses now can compete with large business and companies, with their low prices, without paying a rent to own a physical place.
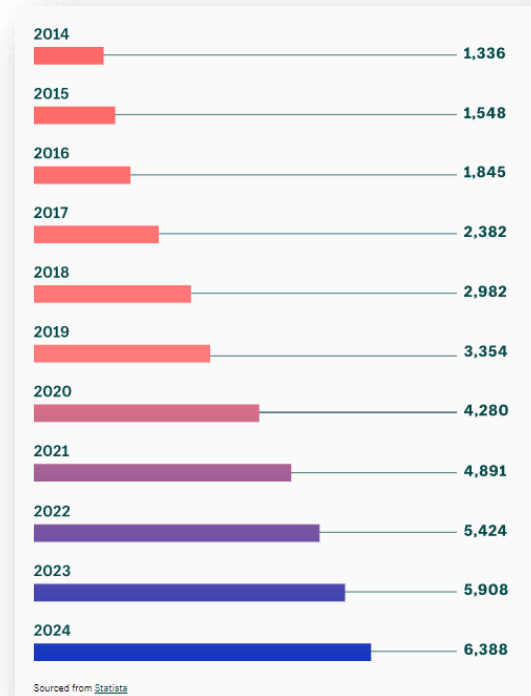
4. Retail ecommerce sales worldwide from 2014 to 2024 In billion U.S dollars

4| SHEETS PAPER COMPANY

The Sheets Paper Company is a small company that was established in 2015, in The Netherlands. It started as a company that provided services to small businesses that wanted to have better results in terms of the number of selling products, while also helping businesses to achieve more people and possible clients with marketing, design and video-making innovations.

The focus of The Sheets Paper Company is on retail brands who are active on online marketplaces like Amazon. The main tasks that are developed in their office are mostly related with social media management, Facebook ads, Amazon PPC, influence marketing, video, and image creation as I expressed before.

After being recruited by the company, I was placed in Orange Sellers, which is a brand that The Sheets Paper Company works with. Green Sellers is an Amazon accelerator, the Amazon marketplace management service provider. Their goal is to create the most possible extra value for their brand partners, by increasing their visibility and sales on the Amazon Marketplaces. Green Sellers help to maximizing the potential on the biggest platform in the world with products from different brands.

Along the years, the development of internet and E-Commerce platforms as Amazon provided an expansion for many other companies that provide services to help brands of other companies or individual sellers on Amazon, to do "the right thing", which means that they help them grow, putting their businesses in the next level. The company has been growing, maintaining the objective of always meeting the customers' requests with the needs of the brand.

These innovative solutions are expanding and changing every day. Also, the company works in close relationship with brands that are selling products on Amazon such as Cat, CozyOrange, Piano, QueenBoss, and UriGreen.

The company (Organization) in its innovation's solutions and professional experience try to place university's students in the work world through their recruitment program. Most of the workers of the company are interns that are finalizing their masters or bachelors. The internship is helping students to enter the professional market by giving them the opportunity of working in different type of training sessions for each type of internship. The training that I received consisted of understanding how Amazon works and how to take the biggest advantage out of it. The company doesn´t provide technical assistance to the client, because Amazon does that work for us. However, the company does have Customer Services to ensure the best customer satisfaction with the brands that they work with.

Nowadays, the company comprises a team just below fifty people, all working to keep the firm surviving and growing. There are people working remotely and on-site. The ones that are working remotely are living outside The Netherlands. Our team is spread around the world in regions such as The Netherlands, Europe, Philippines, China, and India. The range of services provided is mostly comprised of solutions for the brands and the customers, working on a B2B and B2C approach.

The solutions offered by the company to these brands are:

- Graphic Design, for example for the Store Front
- Product Research, for example to help the brand select their new product
- Videography, for example, creating an unboxing video to reach more people
- PPC & Listing Optimization, for example, to select which Keywords the brand can use for reaching better results
- Customer Services to build trust and loyalty between the brand and the customer by understanding the customers wants and needs.
- Inventory Management, for example, doing the stock management
- Making an offline business go online
- Complete management and growth of Amazon brand businesses
- Consulting services to improve Amazon Businesses
- Sharing knowledge between the company and the brands

Currently, the company is selling on the US market, but they are studying and planning to make an expansion of their market to Amazon UK and the Canada market.

Most customers are corporate (B2B) but there are also private customers (B2C). Most customers include:

- Private Brands
- Private Consumers

To continue foster growth as it has been doing for the past years, the company is focusing on the pillars that led it to success, including maintaining their good relationship with existing consumers, investing on staff, as well as on the innovation and quality of what they offer. The Sheets Paper Company is also looking forward to attracting new clients, using the abovementioned assets, so it can, not only enhance its revenue levels, but also its market share in a growing industry that is E- Commerce.

4.1 | DAILY TASKS

The main digital marketing activity that I carried out in this company and, of course, on the internship process, was customer service for all the brands of the company.

After the agreement between me and the manager, defining I would be responsible for the Customer Service of every brand, we also agreed that the creation of e-mails and/or messages would be given to me, to allow me the freedom of my creativity, and not just to solve problems, but also to thank the ones that gave love to the products from the brands managed by this company.

To do customer service, I needed not only to check the feedback and reviews, but also to add all this information to the Star Rating Report. I would also need to check emails and messages, and replying all of them, as I mentioned before.

5. Daily Report (Star Rating Report) - Reviews

6. Daily Report (Star Rating Report) - Feedbacks

Through customer service I discovered that the clients were impatient, in a good way, for a new product called "Transparent Sheets". That situation made me warn the manager to speed up the process of the creation of that new product. The manager told me to research not just for new KPI's, but also the main competitors for that new product. To appeal for potential and/or new clients our team decided to change the catalogue image to a more professional design, more likely to be enjoyed by the clients. These changes would provide potential sales and more visits on the Amazon's page of their brand products and their website.

Apart from the new product creation and launch, it was necessary for the company to raise awareness of its existence and of the existence of their other products. With their YouTube profile, E-Mail was seen as a proper tool to be considered. These were created to allow interaction between the company and potential or real clients.
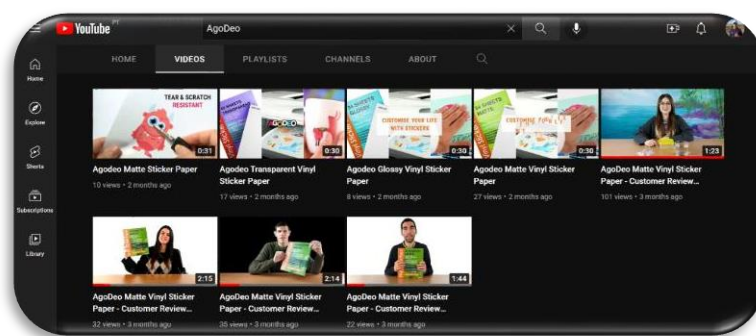
7. Cat's YouTube Channel

E-Mail and video marketing campaigns had already been used before to divulge services and products offered by the company, but with this new product, improving all the other advertising products specifically targeted campaigns were put into place, where the main goal was to help boost the brands' names, leading to an increase on their sales.

The e-mail campaigns had different targets according to the type of client. The objective was to have the most personalized email for each possible client. I created a document for each brand where I placed all the E-Mails that they received to analyse them and create an answer to that matter. In the beginning of each message, I mentioned not only the name of the client, but also the product name that he/she bought. If it was a review, feedback, an e-mail or message through the Amazon website, I would mention that and the status of the message, meaning if that matter is resolved or not.

8. Word Document (Customer Services – Example of a client of Cat)

With each product, the company can use three different types of advertisement campaigns:

1) **Sponsor Product Ad (SPA) -** Sponsored product (no video, only image) that I find in the first page and in the other pages (normal product) - they must have written below the product
When I create a SPA, I can choose between 2 types of targeting:

      1. Keyword
      2. Product Targeting (ASINs)

If the company decides to use this **sponsor product ad (SPA)** the product/s will appear in the client's search through keywords or through ASINs.

2) **Product Display Ads (PDA) -** It is the campaigns that appear on the side of the page

3) **Sponsored Brand Ads (SBA) –** It can be chosen between a video or an image to represent our brand and can appear also all the products on the side of that video or image that represent our brand: (the name of the brand appears in this type of ad)

      1. Sponsored Brand Video
      2. Sponsored Brand Image

Following that, the company can choose between an image or a video that appears in the research tab with the name of the brand in question and on the side of that video or image (depending on the choice of the company) their product marketing strategies as a video and/or image. Between both strategies, the one that the company uses the most is the image advertisement, also because of the biggest money spending.

Another important aspect, that was incorporated in my work during the 2 months that was there, was to find the clients that made a bad review, including info about every detail of their profile; then I would try to understand and talk to them about what went wrong and invite them to receive a new brand product without any extra payment associated. For the QueenBoss' product (portable battery) was different because the price of that product was too high. So, what I would do was to return the money to the client and only if the client asked for it. Also, I would give the money back if they had the package and proof of damage. To search for these clients, I usually would research for the "id number" to understand if the client really purchased our product and which product he/she purchased. After that I would check the "idTracking" to analyse where we should send the new brand product. However, if the client decided that wanted a full refund, we needed to ask them for the bank details to finalize the refund process.

Besides that, I also had a task of checking the ranking of all the brands for the main competitor campaign and the main Keyword campaign. The reason was to know if the product was well positioned in the search tab or not depending on the keyword that the customers would type on the search tab, or even the ASINs that they would type. Related to the ASINs, I needed to go to our competitor's product Amazon page and analyse the tab of "products related to this item" and if the "product targeting" of our product was better positioned than others. In the next figures, as I will demonstrate, the Agoten's product (Matte Sheet) appears in the fifth position on the tab "products related to this item" of AgoTen's principal competitor. So, that means that when the client searches and visits the product of one of our biggest competitors, they can see AgoTen's product and compare both products to make their best decision.
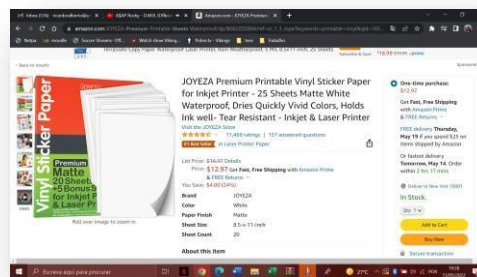
9 (1). Competitor's product page
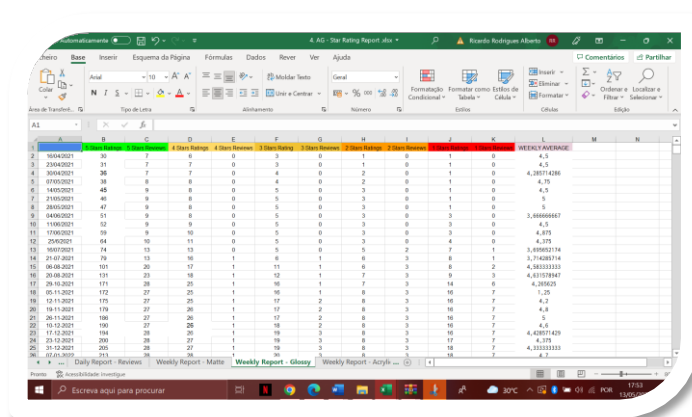
9 (2). Position of Matte Sheets of AgoTen on the competitor's page

The best position the products can get on Amazon's website is second or third position. The first position is not particularly good because to sponsor that position the company needs to pay more PPC than all our competitors and that cannot be effective and efficient in the long term. However, if the product is on that position without paying for it, then it is the best position because it describes who is selling the most, compared with the competitors. When the product is too high on the research tab, customers will think that the price is too high and will not trust blindly on the reviews of that product, because of the first position. That is why customers prefer to choose products that are second or third because they can relate more with these than with the ones positioned first. Also, as I told before, they can trust more on these reviews than the ones in first positions. For example, for all our products, the company tried to place them on second and third positions instead of the first. Below the third position, it is already too low in the eyes of the company to compete in the highest level on Amazon.

For the company, it is important to know not just the position of the sponsored advertisements but also the position of the unsponsored advertisements on Amazon's website. And the reason is because if the unsponsored ad is in better position that the sponsored one, the company should analyse and make a strategic decision about if that makes sense in middle/long term or not, and if not, they should reduce the PPC in a way to reduce the spending of the company without losing money or sales, or even clicks. Meaning that the company pays to be good positioned and if they are not, they need to do things differently, maybe increasing the bid, in a way to put the product in a better place compared with their competitors. I was responsible for researching the positions of the products for each brand of the company. Then, after checking these positions every day, I would have a meeting with the E-Commerce and Finance teams (all of them interns) and we would decide and choose the new PPC strategy to recover or maintain the position of the products writing the right KPI's for the respective products.

On Amazon's Website it is very important the rate given by the clients. It is also important to answer all the classifications and comments written by the clients, for giving the potential customers good feedback from the brands.

However, I also carried another marketing task to research and update the weekly star rating, where I would mention how many stars the products got for each brand every week. The next figure will show the excel that I was updating to make that task:

10. *Excel Document (Weekly Report – Example of Glossy product of AgoTen)*

To provide an efficient and effective communication, the company
must have a clear description on the product's profile. Basically, with
a brief and concise description, quality images, number of reviews and
the rating stars, the company can take advantage of that to increase
sales. These details can differ from other sellers' listings (Robbins,
2022). For example, you might sell the same Bose speakers just as
another seller, but your condition, price, etc. may be different.

11. *Title and Image of the Matte product of AgoTen*
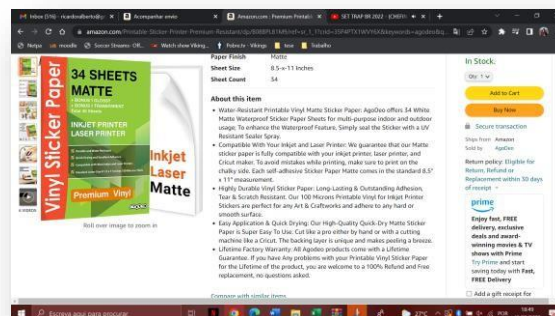
12. *Description of the Matte product of AgoTen*

Another marketing task that I was responsible of was to create a listing
of the brands' products to reach even more people, who search on
Amazon every day. The listing was composed of a brief description, a
high-quality image and/or video. On the listing, it was mandatory to
have general details written for the product itself, such as the name
and model number.

Another task that I did was to find competitors that were violating the TOS (Terms of Service) of Amazon. This task was very important for the company and with immediate impact because if I found a brand using one of the next rules posted in the figure below, I needed to copy it and put it on a word document with all the information on these brands. After that I would send that document to the Finance department, and they would inform the manager about it.

Image rules resulting in suppression	Required Action	Where Prohibited
Text/Logo/Graphics/Watermarks	We believe the main image has text, logo, graphic, or watermark, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Main Image
Non-White Background	We believe the main image has a non-pure white background (RGB 255 255 255), which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Main Image
Cropped Product	We believe the main image has a portion of the product cropped (missing), which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Main Image
Product not outside of packaging/has package tags	We believe the main image has your product in packaging or brand/swing tags which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Main Image
Propping	We believe the main image has props that are inside your product or obscures/surrounds your product, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Main Image

| Image rules resulting in suppression	Required Action	Where Prohibited
Blurriness or pixelatation	We believe the main image has a blurred or pixelated product, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Image
Product Too Small	We believe the main image has a product that is too small in the image frame, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Image
Prurient	We believe the main image has prurience, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Image
Multiple Product Views	We believe the main image has multiple images of a single product, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Main Image of Apparel
Human Model	We believe the main image has a human model for a non-clothing product, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Main Image in Softlines (For example: Kids, Baby, Shoes, Luggage, Watch, Jewelry) except Adult Apparel
Mannequin	We believe the main image has a mannequin, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Image of Apparel or Accessories
Model in non-standing position	We believe the main image has a model not the standing position, which is not permitted for this product type. Please submit a compliant image to lift the suppression.	Any Main Image of Apparel
Bad ASIN or Variant	Your file could not be associated with an ASIN and/or variant. Upload a file	Any Main Image

Image rules resulting in suppression	Required Action	Where Prohibited
	that meets naming requirements.	
Unsupported file suffix	Your file type is not allowed. Upload a file with an acceptable format.	Any Main Image
Image file was corrupted or of an unexpected format	Confirm that your file is smaller than 10,000 pixels on the longest side, is not corrupt, and is in the correct file format (JPG, TIF, PNG, GIF in either RGB or CMYK).	Any Main Image
Image dimensions too small	Upload an image that is larger than 500 pixels on its longest side. Images that are larger than 1000 pixels will enable zoom functionality on the site.	Any Main Image
Authoritative image already exists	If a preferred image already exists for your ASIN and variant, your image will be rejected.	Any Main Image
Resubmission of previously accepted/rejected images	This exact image file has already been submitted. If your ASIN still requires an image for this variant, ensure that you are uploading an image that meets requirements.	Any Main Image
Unknown internal error	An unknown failure occurred. Please try your upload again.	Any Main Image
Image with identical ASIN and Variant submitted	An image with this ASIN and variant was submitted after this file was submitted. We will always accept the latest image submission. Ensure that you have uploaded the correct image.	Any Main Image

13. Rules resulting in suppression from Amazon for the brands

I was the responsible to update the stock and sales for all the brands.
Related to the stock management, I would create a Trello card where
I would put the number of available products of Matte, Glossy, Acrylic
in the AgoTen's case putting the number of inbound/receiving
products of each product also in that case.

Related with the sales update task for all of the brands, I would go to
Helium10 and check all the orders, all the units and all the gross
revenue, concluding by writing them in the Trello card that I would
create to analyse the possibility of making some changes or even
creating a new promotion to increase sales of these brands.
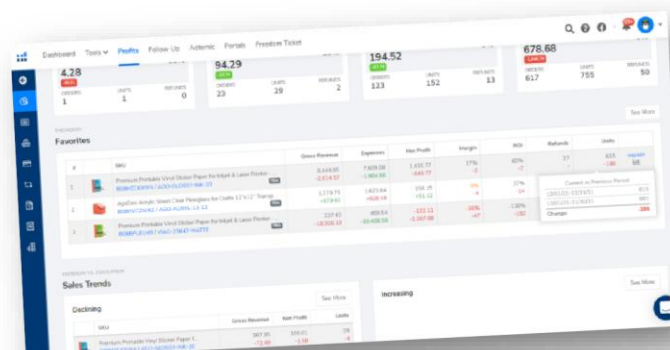
14 (1). Helium10 (profits)
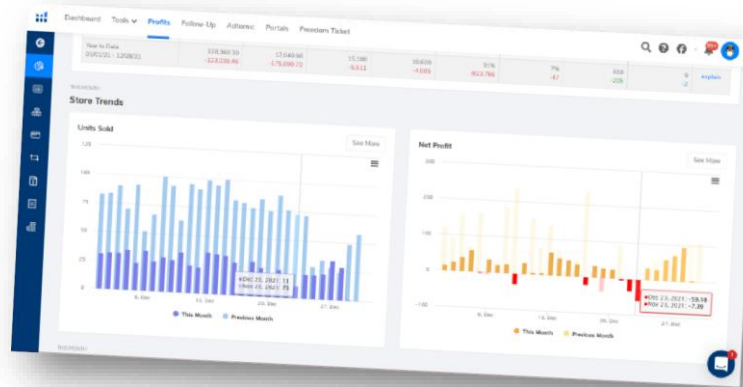
14 (2). *Helium10 (profits)*

Our team also updated the Orange Sellers's website with new instructions for the next interns that will succeed in our team. The new interns will read that and immediately know what to do, step by step. The people that will replace me and my colleague from the E-Commerce department will start doing Facebook ads to reach more people and try to get more clients for the brands' products including the new one, the Transparent Sheet, from AgoTen's brand.

To conclude this chapter, the following activities were considered as essential for developing actions throughout the internship, serving as the base strategy for its execution, in order to achieve the goals reached at the beginning, and with the objective of gaining more insight on the thesis main issues:

- To run and be responsible for one or multiple online products
- To develop products by researching and identifying potential products
- Managing the online image of the product (website, social media, Amazon)
- Managing one or multiple Amazon Accounts
- Identification of functional areas and tasks where it would be necessary to intervene
- Updating the website to a modern, new version, with all the information about the different tasks that the interns need to know to efficiently carry out their work provided by Orange Sellers
- To research and analyse data

● Configuration and implementation of an analytics tool to measure and analyse the main variables of the website (users, sessions, bounce rate, average time on page, clicks, among other metrics)

● Developing products by researching and identifying their potential, for example Transparent Sheets (new product)

● Selection of the best digital marketing tools (Google Analytics, LinkedIn, YouTube, Amazon, E-Mail) accordingly to the objectives of the marketing plan

● Configuration and implementation of digital marketing campaigns (e-mail marketing, LinkedIn, YouTube, Amazon, Facebook, among others)

● Measurement and improvement of the website based on feedback and Google Analytics data

● Researching and identifying the main competitors in the USA and their digital strategies

● Covid-19: Adaptation and quick response to the new challenges of the market, through the commercialization of new products and quick replies to the customers, giving them the perfect answer to their wants and needs

● Analysis of the evolution of the main performance indicators

5| HYPOTHESIS

H1: "Using Amazon as one of the sources of revenue will increase the number of customers of the brand"

H2: "The number of online customers' buying behaviour increased with Amazon"

H3: "Having few reviews can damage the image and trustworthiness of the brand"

H4: "For the customers on Amazon, the most important factor that affects their behaviour is the price and image of the product"

6| METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The overall aim of this research is to find how can Amazon influence the consumers' buying behaviour and E-Commerce industry through marketing. To test the hypothesis and formulate the findings, I will have to rely on literature review first, then find what is the impact of Amazon on consumers' behaviour and, following this, formulate the hypothesis based on the findings. With this, there will be a quantitative research on the marketing department of the company, to find if the hypotheses are valid or not. The focus of this research will be on the consumers' buying behaviour.

In fact, this internship report has a practical nature, and therefore, the methodology used to try to answer the main question, "what is the impact of Amazon on the E-Commerce Industry and customers' buying behaviour" will be focused on analysing data from the previous studies and data from the company where I had my internship relating to E-Commerce and digital marketing strategy.

To achieve the final results, it will be necessary to analyse several data reports and extract information from different sources, such as website analytics, as previously referred, which will provide valuable information that will possibly help connecting the dots between evaluation of E-Commerce Industry and Consumers' buying behaviour in general.

Every day during this internship, we had morning meetings before work, where everyone (including the manager) would share what we did and which deadlines had been met or not in the day before, to understand the evaluation of our work. These regular reports about the coordination and management of digital marketing activities were given to the company manager and important insights were discussed so everyone kept track of the project's evolution.

Ultimately, the applied methodology will gather and compile all the information, as well as produce a report summarizing the activity. This will allow for conclusions about the initial questions of this report. To better target these answers, it is important to set out the main KPIs to be analysed in the results, which are later discussed in the findings, namely:

- E-Commerce industry
- Online customers
- Amazon customers
- Consumers' behaviour
- Marketing analytics

7| RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

In the following paragraphs of this section, results will be drawn from my research, together with the respective findings, in order to accept or reject each of the written hypotheses of this internship report.

As the company's growth was recorded and documented during the years of its existence, this growth wouldn't have been possible if the company wouldn't have moved to the E-Commerce Industry. What I mean is that the company wouldn't reach the number of customers that they have now if they wouldn't have chosen to be on Amazon for expanding their business. The investment made in the company's marketing strategy (placing the company on Amazon's website) decreased the traffic overload of their website, balancing it with Amazon's website traffic. These were very important digital marketing actions for the maintenance and endurance of the company in the market, with a continuous annual growth which included an increase on their sales whilst easing down the traffic of their website. They were able to provide large advantages for all the brands of The Sheets Paper Company. The reason why Amazon turns out to be one of the best sources of revenue for this company, is because Amazon can increase the number of customers of every brand and provide them with the best customer services. Everything that Amazon does is designed to serve their customers in a better way. (MacNeil, 2022). I decided to present some of the numbers of AgoTen's brand in my internship report because this can help me to demonstrate the growth in revenue of these two products in just one day. The refund helps to understand if sales are going well or not. The ROI (Return on Investment) is also important to understand if the investment has some return or not. The figure showspart of the Word document that our team created to file the sales information. From there, I can accept the first hypothesis as true.
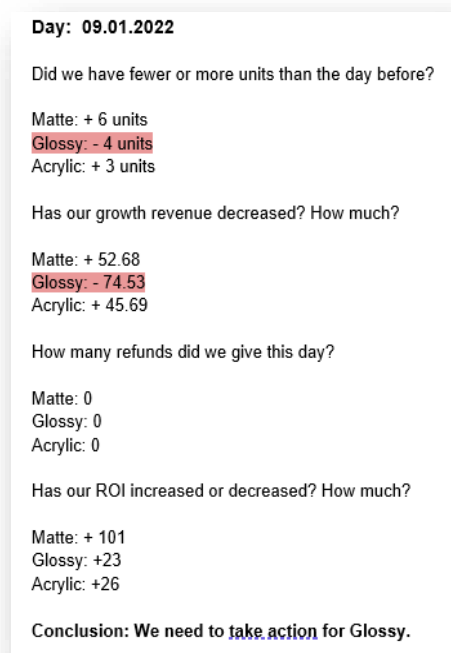
15. Sales of the company and decide what action to take

The questions in previous figure allow the company to know not only if they are selling more each day, but also reveal the changes that exist on the revenue growth. Moreover, the document also shows how many refunds were requested by customers and if the company's ROI (Return on Investment) decreased or increased. In general, this document will give important information to the company on how they should act, and which strategy to choose depending on the values provided by the marketing department. In that day, 09-01-2022, as you can see in this picture, the company sold 6 units more of "matte" product, 3 units more of "Acrylic" product and less 4 units of "Glossy" product compared with the day before. These were just numbers, but if these values continue to be negative in the next three days (a period that the company considers relevant) after the marketing department' analysis, then the different departments in the company, including marketing, design and finance need to schedule a meeting to discuss these values and try to understand what must be done in terms of the increasing the values, moving the product away from this red line. In the next figure, I can demonstrate that since the company has joined Amazon, their revenue growth has been obvious, increasing exponentially, starting from $0 in January 2017 and ending with a revenue of $206,241.58, when the target for 2019 was $170,000.00.

		January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
2017	Revenue	$0,00	$247 358,27	$74 626,88	$88 943,53	$99 415,49	$77 448,73	$88 552,96	$130 475,97
2017	Index	0,85	0,82	0,69	0,82	0,92	0,72	0,82	1,21
2018	Revenue	$100 848,86	$97 590,93	$92 129,43	$129 969,00	$130 402,77	$116 228,33	$154 491,98	$141 027,62
2018	Index	0,85	0,82	0,78	1,1	1,1	0,98	1,3	1,19
2019	Revenue(Actual)	$115 997,82	$109 446,07	$129 515,98	$126 354,19	$149 170,08	$136 115,89	$153 627,86	$206 241,58
2019	Index(Actual)	0,82	0,78	0,92	0,9	1,06	0,96	1,09	1,46
2019	Revenue(Target)	$120 416,67	$116 166,67	$104 833,33	$136 000,00	$143 083,33	$120 416,67	$150 166,67	$170 000,00
2019	Index(Target)	0,85	0,82	0,74	0,96	1,01	0,85	1,06	1,2

16. *Amazon revenue growth for AgoTen*

If a brand has few reviews, it can damage the brands' image and trustworthiness. However, having fake reviews are the customers' top concern on Amazon. Why? Simply because in this age, where people's social validation and opinions determine other people's decisions, and where people influence each other to do or buy things, it is essential for the customers to know if the product that they will buy is trustworthy or not. And to this question, the answer awaits on the reviews made by people that have already bought the product. So, if there are few reviews or if the ones that exist are fake, the image of the brand is in risk because customers will not trust it. However, there is another perspective on this matter that really fits on the new product of AgoTen, a brand of The Sheets Paper Company. As the figure below shows, this AgoTen's product has only a few reviews but that cannot demonstrate a damage to the image and trustworthiness of the brand with the clients. This is not just because the brand has a story which cannot be deleted with other products that bear more than a thousand reviews, but also because the existing reviews are very good. But because 41% of customers always read product reviews before making a purchase on Amazon (Nadel, 2021), the company will need to prove to the customer that they can trust the brand to purchase that product, even with the demonstrated success of the brand from the reviews of other products. Trust is something that is very difficult to gain, and very easy to lose. It is something that you must earn every single day with the company's relationship with its customers. Even when you have proved your clients that you can be trusted with a certain product, you must prove it once again so that they can trust on your other products. So, I would say that is one of the most important things for Amazon's customers before the clients actually buy the product. One reason for this is that customers buy the product without having touched it, so they need to see with their own eyes that they can trust this product and brand. In my opinion, the third hypothesis is false because the image of a brand should not depend only on analysing reviews, should it be damaged or lose trust between other brands. They must have the opportunity to show the clients that they can be trusted, by doing the following: (Google, 2022)

1. Encouraging the customers to leave reviews
2. Being more transparent
3. Not removing negative feedback
4. Being within reach of potential customers
5. Treating customers as friends
6. Offering loyalty programs

However, more than reviews, there are other things that affect the buying behaviour of Amazon customers and this is the price and the image/ design of the product. 78% of the customers say that price is the most important factor when selecting a product (Nadel, 2021). According to this study, when customers search on Amazon and click on one product, 44% of consumers said that price is the product detail that stands out the most, while images come on second place, with 26% of consumers saying that a product image stands out the most in Amazon search results (Nadel, 2021). So, the sixth hypothesis is truthful because for Amazon's customers, the most important factor that affects their behaviour is the price and image of the product. An example confirming that images with higher quality can increase sales in a company is QueenBoss' case. With the QueenBoss brand, because there was a decrease in sales, we uploaded a new video on Amazon's QueenuBoss page product with a higher quality, to try to increase sales. Because of this, QueenBoss's brand went from 0 sales to 3 sales in a few days. This brand sells very few units, however the price per unit is very high, so the ROI (Return on Investment) is very good when the sales are low. But if the sales are 0, something must be done to change that, so the creation of a new video was the solution for this problem. Therefore, the fourth and last hypothesis is true. With the research that I carried out and real-life examples from my internship, I can state that images and videos, for customers on Amazon, are the most important factors that affect their buying behaviour.

Amazon is one example of technology that makes our society lonelier and more imprudent. As I already explained before, especially after covid-19 pandemic, customers are increasing their online purchases and because of that circumstance, people can get lonelier. What I mean is that buying on Amazon can be good in terms of saving time and money, not just for customers but also for the companies. However, this cost can require spending more time in front of a computer and less time with people, which can create a lonelier society that only wants to satisfy their own necessities.

8| CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The numbers and data were obtained not only from the company's data but also from the internet. It seems short, if we wish to draw a high, satisfactory level of confidence. However, I can tell that I gave my very best on this report to finalize my academic path with success and happiness.

There was a major risk associated with the Covid-19 pandemic because it reduced all economic activity in the main market sectors. Every company, including The Sheets Paper Company and every brand represented by them were affected by the pandemic, decreasing their sales and revenue. However, setting up the company and beginning to sell products on Amazon helped this company to act significantly on their revenue. The pandemic affected not just the tourism sector but also the consumers' purchasing possibilities. It may be difficult to understand the effect on digital marketing of this pandemic crisis, because it damaged mainly on-site businesses and locations and it caused the reduction of the consumer purchasing power, leading to less purchases.

Still, the main problem for on-site street businesses was that people were not in the streets. They couldn´t sell any of their products or food because there were no clients to sell it to. In this period, selling on Amazon or other E-Commerce platforms (including, of course, digital platforms for food) would lead to a greater business growth and sustainability, but there is a steep learning curve (limitation) in the beginning of this journey, as the learning process on how to work with digital marketing strategies that can cost businesses a lot of time and money.

A good advantage for The Sheets Paper Company is that E-Commerce is there for the brands that the company is responsible for. For this reason, there are online sales and with this, the company understands the impact of their own marketing campaigns for each product in the company's results.

Another limitation that I faced was related with time. I was writing this report whilst working part-time at the Charm Discovery Experiences and doing another activity that required dedication and time. I needed to organize myself to achieve not only all my personal goals, but also the deadlines proposed by my supervisor for the report.

A big limitation that I faced was the availability of a few important reports about similar topics, that would have been useful for my internship report. This situation was tackled by my mentor and she helped me find these reports, when I didn't have free access to them, and providing me complete reports for free.

With all the limitations, I think the results of my report were achieved with success. The final output from my point of view is that Amazon has a huge impact on the E-Commerce Industry. However, Amazon alone is not the reason why the E-Commerce Industry will continue to exist and be developed. Also, the E-Commerce Industry changed every consumers' buying behaviour for good. It helped them with time-wasting issues, helped them to choose more rationally the products they wish to purchase, and by spending less money. People get to know other competitors with more options, and this is a great point because they can then make better decisions, on their own terms. So, in my point of view, despite not receiving the product immediately after buying it on the internet, there are many more advantages with E-Commerce, for example, spending much less money and time, two of the most precious things for a human being.

A prove that E-Commerce is not dying is the explosion of NFTs. NFTs are not part of my internship journey, but these keep a special place in my report because it is part of the E-Commerce future. I found it important to analyse and better explain the reason for this. NFTs are more than products. They are somewhere between a product, a game, and a code. It is all about the interactivity between the virtual product and the customer. Instead of simply owning a piece of digital art, NFTs as superplastic have become a promise of community and belonging. NFTs are the new way of communication, of interaction. There is a limited number for one specific NFT. That NFT will give you access to people, communities, groups of people that you are interested about. It will give you many more opportunities, not only for businesses but also knowledge, eight hypotheses declare.

According to RetailDive, the ability to see, touch and feel products ranks highest among the reasons consumers choose to shop in the physical stores versus online stores. However, over 55% of consumers visit these physical stores before buying online and that means that even with the increase of customer's online buying behaviour, people still prefer the idea of physical on-site experiences before they buy online. To understand this better, the company where I did my internship is the perfect example. There was a huge growth since they became part of the online world. So, what I can say about my sixth hypothesis is that it is true. However, it is relevant to explain that customers' buying behaviour changes not only with the category of the product being purchased, but also with the age of the customer and even with where he/she will buy the product (online or physically).

When someone compares older generations with the youngest generation, it is obvious that young people will purchase more online than older people. Customers today prefer to buy online than in street shops because of prices. There are still big differences between shop prices and website prices. For this difference, people are willing not to see, touch or feel the product in order to buy it for a better price, and gaining an advantage from that. However, these circumstances are constantly changing because the customers' needs are constantly changing and so are their actions. The price, as I mentioned before, weights immensely, more than the five senses (sight, hearing, taste, alphabet, touch) in terms of the customer's final decision. With NFTs that gap will disappear, changing the E-Commerce Industry, Amazon included, because NFTs fully give the customer all these feelings made possible on the internet.

NFTs help closing the gaps of the E-Commerce Industry. This industry is user-friendly, and for that reason it eliminates all the disadvantages of the older methods of purchasing an item. Also, it eliminates the need of waiting in some street shop line and time wasted on travel to buy something. However, there is a gap as I claimed before. This gap is related to the fact that E-Commerce does not deliver the feeling of satisfaction straight after the customers' payment. Customers need to purchase the item and then wait a few more days to receive their delivery. In this light, it does not deliver satisfaction as fast as the traditional method of purchasing (pay and receive immediately). What I mean is that when someone orders a product in an E-Commerce platform, this customer will immediately receive a virtual version of it, as an NFT. In this way, people can use the product that was ordered virtually without having the product yet. Customers receive the NFT of their desired product immediately after payment, giving them the satisfaction of the traditional method of purchasing products. (Patel, 2022)

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