

# Master's Thesis

Master's Programme:  
Business Administration



## **E-commerce in Georgia: A study of the User Experience in purchasing electronics through online platforms**

**Chanel van der Merwe**

*A project/thesis submitted to the Faculty of Ilia State University Business, Technology and Education Business School in fulfilment of the requirements for the academic degree of Master of Business Administration*

Thesis Supervisor: Resan Kikava, Assoc. professor, Doctoral

Ilia State University Tbilisi, 2022

*As the author of this paper, I declare that this thesis presented for the degree of Master of Business Administration is the original report of my research and has been written by me. Due references have been provided on all supporting literatures and resources. I also confirm that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.*

*“Some of the work described in this thesis was previously written and submitted as assignments in the courses Research Methods (Autumn semester, 2021) and Academic Writing for MBA (Autumn semester,2021) at Ilia State University Business School. “*

Chanel van der Merwe

Signature: 

Date: 9 July 2022

## Acknowledgements

I would like to show my appreciation to all my lecturers at Ilia State University that I met along this journey, without each and every one of you I would not have been able to make it here. I would like to make special mention of Nino Patariaia, Maia Rogava and my supervisor Resan Kikava. Thank you for your patience and guidance through this process it was invaluable. I cannot express with words the difference you made.

I would also like to thank my family for the never-ending love and support even from afar. I would like to thank my husband especially who showed great patience and understanding, “Thank you for being in my corner I could not have done it without you”.

## Abstract

E-commerce has boomed around the world since the start of COVID-19. Many companies were forced to go online in order to survive as lockdowns and restrictions became the norm all around the world. Georgia was no exception, the market increased by a little more than three times year on year in 2020 showing a great need and a big rush for companies to establish an online presence, though a little haphazardly at first. One of the product categories that were a little more prepared having invested in online platforms before COVID-19 hit was the electronics, household appliances and equipment category which made up 65% of purchases in that year.

Electronics have become increasingly integrated into people's everyday lives, with the increased rate of technological advancement as it makes our lives easier and finds new ways to keep people connected. When COVID-19 hit these things became even more important as people were physically restricted from interacting with each other making this specific sector one of the utmost importance. This was further echoed in Georgia by the large percentage of purchases coming from this sector. Reports done in Georgia focused on electronics, household appliances and equipment as a group, but it did not specifically look at electronics. Due to the nature and importance of this the consumer electronics segment it needs to be further investigated on its own, as these purchases are made more frequently than household appliance and serve a different market.

It is imperative to understand the local markets expectations when it comes to purchasing electronics and their experience when purchasing electronics online, as customer experience is largely informed by expectations. Good customer experience is proven to drive sales and customer loyalty and therefore contribute to the overall success of the business. A need for further study has been identified and will be conducted using both primary and secondary research.

The aims of this research were to investigate consumers experiences with local online shopping merchants, to determine their overall satisfaction and identify key areas that need attention

when it comes to the consumer electronics sector. For this study the survey method along with haphazard convenience sampling was used. The surveys were distributed via Facebook, one of the biggest news and connection platforms that is most widely used in Georgia.

The findings gathered from the research proved both hypotheses and established a need for further research to be conducted, showing direct correlations between customer experience and intent to return to the platform. Furthermore, customer expectations in this sector were established giving businesses a clear indication of importance of these features. Key problem areas were identified as well as areas that need improvement.

The results of the research conducted showed that online retailers in Georgia had above average scores in UX. CX findings further corroborated the need for better strategies to be put in place in order to improve customer experience. Evidence from this study and other studies suggests that customer experience is directly tied to sales, consumer perception and customer loyalty which ultimately contributes to the success of a business.

Keywords: E-commerce, Customer experience, Customer satisfaction, Consumer electronics, Georgian e-commerce market.