

**Digital platform interactivity and Jordanian social commerce purchase intention****Malek Alsoud<sup>a\*</sup>, Luay Al-Muani<sup>a</sup> and Zeyad Alkhazali<sup>a</sup>**<sup>a</sup>*Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Jordan***CHRONICLE***Article history:*

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*Keywords:**Social commerce**Content Usefulness**Engaging**Real-time communication**E-wom**Platform interactivity**Purchase intention***ABSTRACT**

Social commerce is a first-generation platform that uses a variety of social attributes to attract the attention of internet users. The impact of platform interactivity components; Content Usefulness, Engaging, Real-time communication, and E-wom on customers' purchase intentions was investigated in this study. A Quantitative research method was applied in this study using an online self-administrative questionnaire that was published using Google Docs to collect data, and 521 consumers participated in an online survey. The research used SPSS and AMOS to validate and test the hypotheses. All platform interactivity components were significantly affecting purchase intention. This study provides insights to marketing managers of how consumers perceive social commerce and what affecting them along with practical and theoretical implications.

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**1. Introduction**

Individuals can chat and shop using social network sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc. (Hwang et al., 2014). The subsequent great movement in the technology industry and social life is generally known as social media (Lin & Lu, 2011). In recent years, social media has become increasingly popular. Due to its exponential growth, social commerce sites are offering more business opportunities (Alrousan, Al-Adwan, Al-Madadha & Al Khasawneh, 2021). The average cost of social media orders was 74.47 dollars in the third quarter of 2020 (Tugba, 2021). 28 percent of internet users spend more than two hours scouring different products on social media before making a purchase (Wade, 2018). More than 30% of online shoppers say they are going to buy from them. However, the characteristics and psychological processes by which channels affect purchasing intent remain doubtful.

The substantial growth in the number of people using social networking platforms has made it easier for marketers and businesses to tap into new business prospects. Several companies incorporated social media into their communications strategies and aided in the promotion of real consumer-platform experiences (Stackd, 2016). E-WOM are also considered valuable methods for clarifying product features and aiding prospective buyers in making the intelligent decision (Choi, 2021). Good consumer-platform experiences cultivate customer engagement, the ability to test innovative goods, platform confidence and vulnerability to negative business details (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013a). Furthermore, research suggests that the immersive nature of conversations affects positive outcomes, since customers gain advantages such as complete product details, multi-media functionality (Kingshott & Kingshott, 2006), and the opportunity to keep their interest (McMillan & Hwang, 2002), platforms interactivity is a features that the social commerce platform can efficiently perform (McMillan & Hwang, 2002).

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They are often encouraged to communicate as a result of this. Various companies are creating scripted or automatic bots to improve interactivity, but these answers lose the human interaction that businesses strive to have with their customers. But responses may be seen as deceptive or inaccurate self-representations, which can contribute to negative attitudes and actions toward the platform. As a result, sites are concentrating on real-time communication (Mata & Quesada, 2014) and engaging (Ko et al., 2005), so that users can personally engage in interactions (McMillan & Hwang, 2002). People may use social commerce platforms to connect with other users and the forum and learn more about it, check other customer feedback and change their opinions about it (Hew et al., 2017). Researchers must analyze these characteristics thoroughly to better grasp network interactivity impact since interactivity is a major element that influences purchasing intent in the social commerce platform.

Many companies are using social commerce platforms as part of their marketing mix to facilitate consumer-platform partnerships and connections (Stackd, 2016). If a strong relationship between consumers and carriers is to be formed, there must be some implicit or explicit contracts that serve as the foundation of such linkages or trade agreements. (Gefen et al., 2005; Kingshott & Kingshot, 2006). Psychological contract theory may be used in social commerce. However, the current study focuses on the implementation, rather than the infringement of the platform's and in turn, the consumers' obligations in acquiring and strengthening purchase intention. Social commerce websites often offer resources to help buyers and sellers connect (Al-Adwan & Kokash, 2019; Busalim, 2016).

These immersive elements on the platform assist and ensure that their needs will be met (Mata & Quesada, 2014), As a result, the platform and the user develop a psychological contract. Explicit agreements aren't enough to keep consumer-platform relationships alive in social commerce. (Gefen et al., 2005). Hence, psychological contracts are thought to be a novel and forward-thinking concept. However, there is no discussion of the nature and forms of psychological contracts in the form of social trade in the existing literature, which needs to be explored further.

This research utilized psychological contracts to investigate the impact of platform interactivity on purchasing intention. In some areas, it differs from the previous study in certain ways. Previous research has looked at how website characteristics, trustworthiness, and privacy affect e-commerce purchasing intentions. (Barreda et al., 2016; Jensen et al., 2014; Palla et al., 2013). The social exchange theory, which establishes the framework for platform interaction in the context of social commerce, is an essential part of this research. Consumers' responses to enhanced social connections and increased purchase intention in social networking sites are demonstrated by stressing its significance and value in social commerce platform interaction. In a summary, the findings of this study have some practical implications for social commerce professionals looking to enhance online purchase intention.

## **2 Literature Review**

Related literature covering social commerce, content usefulness, engaging, real-time-communication, E-wom, and Purchase intention, are shown below:

### *2.1 Purchase Intention and Social Commerce*

Purchase intention is defined as “a consumer's desire to engage in social networking-based online purchases” (Busalim, 2016). Since social commerce aims to use social networks to enhance market results, it's vital to increase the number of purchases by motivating users to exchange knowledge or make recommendations (Molinillo et al., 2018; Trawnih, Yaseen, Al-Adwan, Alsoud & Jaber, 2021). Many scholars have investigated the variables that affect a customer's purchasing intention, which is a clear predictor of purchase behavior. Previous research has looked at social commerce constructs, content quality behaviors, and collective capabilities in the context of soaring online purchase intentions ( Al-Husban, 2017; Fogel & Zachariah, 2017; Hajli, 2015; Huang & Benyoucef, 2013).

Furthermore, several findings have looked at the relationship between the customer and the platform as a factor in increasing purchasing intent (Gefen et al., 2005; Salvatori & Marcantoni, 2015). For a great partnership on social commerce platforms, the platform should have essential features such as real-time communications, social interactions, and relevant information, that will aid in the purchase intention phase (Yaseen, Dingley & Adams, 2016). Despite all of the research done so far, whenever it relates to social commerce platform engagement, customers continue to be limited since it is not completely grasped when addressing purchase intentions. Furthermore, platform interactivity is important in the exchange of connections, and the effects on purchase intentions are not completely investigated in the field of social commerce, leaving a gap that the present research fills.

### *2.2 Platform Interactivity*

Prior platform success research has primarily focused on platform interactivity including ranking and feedback, forums and groups, suggestion and referrals, and interactivity (Jensen et al., 2014; Salvatori & Marcantoni, 2015), Since platform attributes play a substantial effect in raising purchase intentions in the world of e-commerce, This investigation's major objective

is to understand more about them instead of how they impact social commerce. As a result, It's crucial to check that the social commerce platform's major features are in place ( Yaseen, Al-Adwan, & Al-Madadha, 2019; Busalim, 2016) to achieve the consumer's intentions. The present study focuses on the mismatch of platform interactivity's influence on purchase intention in social commerce (Sharma, 2015). Furthermore, they believe that E-wom provides a guide for improving their purchase intention (Choi, 2021). This paper also aims to address the lack of social commerce research in the Middle East region.

Platform interactivity is characterized as the ability for platform users to communicate, seek for useful information, and perform significant transactions (Parasuraman et al., 1985). It links online sellers and buyers in theory by allowing buyers to look for and scan product features (Parasuraman et al., 1985). This, in turn, influences customer purchasing behavior and, more importantly, reinforces their purchase intentions. Furthermore, it also involves the social experiences of customers on platforms, such as product reviews and recommendations (A. Busalim, 2016). Such dialogue and reviews are useful resources for the platform's enhancement and development of additional characteristics and services. The researchers have formerly established numerous parochial models concentrated on website interactivity in the e-commerce field (Barreda et al., 2016; Jensen et al., 2014; Palla et al., 2013). One such model was created to assess website interactivity as a tool for internet marketing branding and to study the link between website interactivity features, brand knowledge, and brand value. (Barreda et al., 2016). Prior analysis has also been done to look at the website's quality, functionality, and effect on purchasing intent (S. Stackd, 2016). User power, responsiveness, connectedness, and playfulness are all characteristics of platform interactivity (Zhao & Yaobin Lu, 2012).

According to website interactivity theory (Neelotpaul, 2010; Palla et al., 2013; Schlosser, 2000), the following variables help to clarify platform interaction, which is a first-order formative construct, content usefulness, engaging, real-time communication, E-wom. Content usefulness refers to "a user's ability to engage with the platform in the future as a result of the application's useful functionality" (Kingshott, 2006). Customer Engaging is described "an effort to assess the perceived interactivity of a platform by keeping the platform's content fresh to keep users' interest" (McMillan & Hwang, 2002) and increasing customer interaction with the platform (Busalim et al., 2019; Hussain et al., 2021). As a result, allow them to create optimistic emotions about the platform's valuation to make subsequent purchases. "The capacity of the platform to include an instantaneous two-way exchange of knowledge" is referred to as real-time communication. The best origins of these exchanges are social commerce sites that use web 2.0 technology to have concurrent and real-time communications between users and platforms (Mata & Quesada, 2014). However, although these constructs' philosophical foundations are well established in electronic commerce, they haven't yet made an appearance in social commerce.

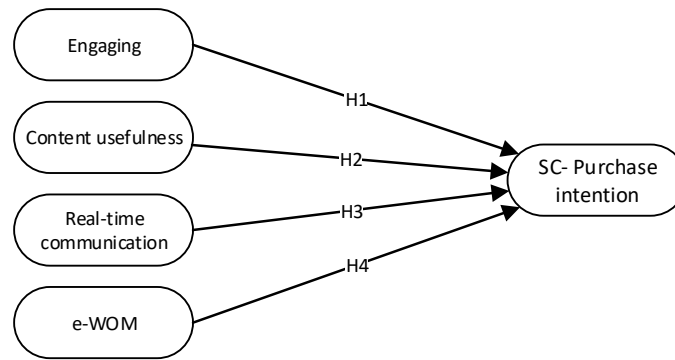
Word of mouth (WOM) is a verbal form of person-to-person contact involving a good, service, or brand between the receiver and the transmitter. The message does not seem to have a clear promotional motive to the recipient (Anderson, 1998), As a result, customers put a higher emphasis on WOM's reputation than commercial advertising (Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991). WOM is a non-commercial source of intelligence that is generally acknowledged as having a major impact on customer proposals and purchasing decisions (Richins, 1983). Marketers' actions are influenced by this form of interpersonal contact (Chih et al., 2013; Al-Adwan, 2018). As technology advances, the majority of users now use the Internet to look up information about a product or business, resulting in the emergence of E-wom. Chih et al. (2013) define it as "E-wom is any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or a company that is available to large groups of people and institutions through the Internet". According to a new poll, the majority of users consider online reviews to be as trustworthy as the brand's website (ACNielsen, 2007). Rowley (2001) has recommended that businesses aim to organize online communities rather than simply advertising on the web. These studies highlight how effective E-wom can be in shaping customer decision-making. Senecal (2004) used longitudinal research to explore how the preference of E-wom impacts product consistency and suggested the use of an online reference guide. Ownership in various channels that promote E-wom, such as message forums and other online chat resources, is being increasingly known for its impact on product adoption and use (Subramani & Rajagopalan, 2003).

Social shopping websites promote a variety of socializing practices to foster a strong consumer-platform partnership. As a result, platform interactivity acts as a stimulant and has a major impact on user experience (Palla et al., 2013). The rapid growth of e-commerce, as well as the novelty of this revolutionary conversation base, highlight the importance of grasping the platform's possible strength as a medium for forming relationships. Platform-consumer partnerships (Palla et al., 2013). Platform interactivity, in this context, is regarded as a critical high-level-technical skill for a company in order to build long-term relationships with its customers (Neelotpaul, 2010), as it tolerates mutual contact with the device and other users. As a result, we hypothesize that:

- H<sub>1</sub>:** *Engaging is positively associated with social commerce purchase intention.*
- H<sub>2</sub>:** *Content Usefulness is positively associated with social commerce purchase intention.*
- H<sub>3</sub>:** *E-wom is positively associated with social commerce purchase intention.*
- H<sub>4</sub>:** *Real-time communication is positively associated with social commerce purchase intention.*

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

The resulting model is represented in Fig. 1. The dependent variable is purchase intention and independent factors are content usefulness, engaging, real-time communication and E-wom.



Note: SC- Purchase intention= Social Commerce Purchase intention

**Fig. 1.** Research model

### 3. Methodology and analysis

It was determined to use a quantitative research strategy in this research. An online self-administrative survey was created and uploaded using Google Docs to gather data. The researchers designed the questionnaire based on the literature. Additionally, participants were selected by online convenience sampling, with two different recruitment strategies being used to test the hypothesis and verify the model, as described above. Primarily, an online poll was done via two different methods. The questionnaire URL was shared on social media platforms in order to reach the target demographic. Furthermore, Snowball sampling was used by having friends and family recruit their contacts via Facebook. Second, the researchers addressed participants in person, who depended on their professional and personal networks to find them. Participants in the research were required to be above the age of 18 to be eligible. The ethical procedure was followed in this research, in which participation is entirely voluntary, and participants were assured that any information they supplied would be kept confidential and would not be shared with other parties and that their identity would be always protected.

#### 3.1 Convergent validity

To assure the convergent validity of the model, factor loading, composite reliability as well as average variance extracted has been used. Table 1 shows that all measurements have passed the threshold values recommended by Suh and Han (2002) for factor loadings to be above 0.6, composite reliability values are bigger than 0.7 and average variance extracted values above 0.5.

**Table 1**

Convergent validity results

Latent Variable	Measurement Item	Loading	(CR)	(AVE)
1. Content usefulness	use1	.940	0.973	0.899
	use2	.938		
	use3	.942		
	use4	.937		
2. Engaging	eng1	.929	0.956	0.844
	eng2	.967		
	eng3	.992		
	eng4	.934		
3. Real time communication	com1	.889	0.937	0.789
	com2	.956		
	com3	.901		
	com4	.904		
4. E-wom	wom1	.882	0.937	0.790
	wom2	.901		
	wom3	.953		
	wom4	.915		
5. SC purchase intention	int1	.955	0.911	0.744
	int2	.939		
	int3	.939		
	int4	.788		

Note: (CR: Composite reliability), (AVE: Average variance extracted)

### 3.2 Discriminant validity

Fornell and Larcker (1981) Argue that average variance extracted could be used to test the discriminant validity. Table (2) shows that all correlation values are less than square root of average variance extracted values which means suitable discriminant validity.

**Table 2**  
Discriminant validity

	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1 Content usefulness</b>	0.899	<b>0.948</b>				
<b>2 Engaging</b>	0.844	0.047	<b>0.919</b>			
<b>3 Real time communication</b>	0.789	0.522	-0.058	<b>0.888</b>		
<b>4 E-wom</b>	0.790	0.128	0.024	-0.139	<b>0.889</b>	
<b>5 SC purchase intention</b>	0.744	0.346	0.192	.013	0.145	<b>0.863</b>

### 3.3 Model fit

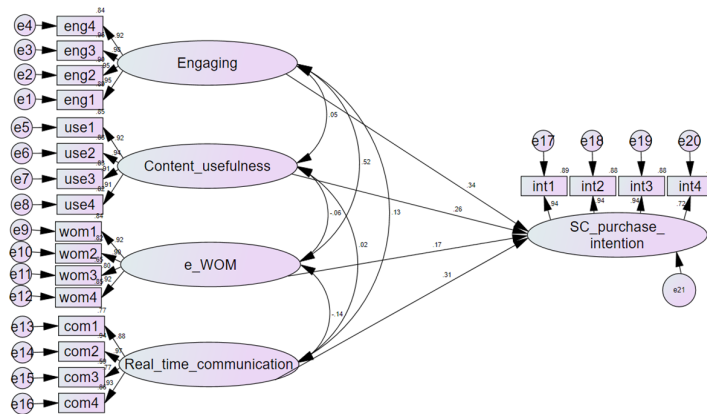
There are many fit indicators related to goodness-of-fit of the model. The researchers follow (Kline, 2005) recommendations to use Chi-Square, RMSEA, SRMR, and the CFI. Table 3 shows that all value met the threshold suggesting that the model has a good a fit.

**Table 3**  
Model fit indices

Measure	Estimate	Threshold
CMIN	511.56	-
DF	171.66	-
CMIN/DF	2.98	Between 1 and 3
CFI	0.97	>0.95
SRMR	0.05	<0.08
RMSEA	0.06	<0.06

### 3.4 Structural model and hypotheses testing

After assuring all validities prior to test hypotheses are met. The researchers test the hypotheses (see table 4) and find out that all hypotheses were supported. “Engaging ( $\beta = .338, p < 0.001$ )”, “Content Usefulness” ( $\beta = .259, p < 0.001$ ), “E-wom” ( $\beta = .167, p < 0.001$ ), “Real Time Communication”, ( $\beta = .307, p < 0.001$ ) are positively and significantly affecting “Social Commerce Purchase Intention”. Thus, H1, H2, H3, and H4 were supported. Moreover, the value of  $R^2$  for Social Commerce Purchase Intention is 0.38.



**Fig. 2.** Structural model for testing the hypotheses

**Table 4**  
Hypotheses results

Hypothesis	Coefficients	T-Value	P- value	Hypothesis result
H1 Engaging → SC-purchase intention	0.338	7.458	***	√
H2 Content Usefulness → SC-purchase intention	0.259	6.936	***	√
H3 E-wom → SC-purchase intention	0.167	3.65	***	√
H4 Real Time Communication → SC-purchase intention	0.307	7.87	***	√

SC-purchase intention: Social Commerce Purchase Intention

#### 4. Discussions

The researcher found that engaging is the most influential element that is affecting online purchase intention in social commerce. The results are in line with the previous studies (Cheung et al., 2015; Casaló et al., 2010; Laroche et al. 2012). When it comes to Jordanian customers' intention to make an online purchase, real-time communication was the second most important factor to consider. Because of the immediacy of real-time communications, viewers could be better able to evaluate product specifics more vividly because of the communication. Other research, such as (Wang & Wu, 2019; Tong, 2017), have shown that the immediacy of communication in live e-commerce increases purchase intentions via product assessment, which supports the findings of this study. Because of real-time involvement and communication immediacy, perceived ambiguity may be minimized, allowing viewers to get more credible information about product specifics and product diagnoses (Zhang et al., 2020).

Content Usefulness was found to positively affect online purchase intention; therefore, marketers should be concerned about decisions to make their platform content useful in the eyes of their customers because it will inevitably translate to consumer's purchase intention. These results are in line with other researchers where it was found that content usefulness is affecting customer purchase intention in e-commerce (Wang & Lee, 2019; Kowatsch and Maass, 2010; Hassanein and Head, 2007).

In addition to having a beneficial impact on online buy intention, E-wom is now playing a more important role in online shopping, which is mainly focused on the growth of social commerce. Customers are increasingly turning to social media to express their thoughts on the quality of the goods or services they have purchased, as well as about their own purchasing behavior. Which is similar to (Yuniarty et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2014; Gruen et al. 2006; Liao et al. 2021), as they discovered that women had an impact on online purchase intention.

According to Ketelaar et al. (2015) higher electronic word-of-mouth quality is more likely to spark consumer attention and be more persuasive than lower electronic word-of-mouth quality. The electronic word of mouth that has a greater quality of word-of-mouth is more persuasive to customers and makes it simpler to affect their intent to make a purchase. According to Roy et al. (2019), positive E-wom may help to develop a favorable image for an organization, minimize the spending on marketing and advertising, and ultimately boost the profitability of an enterprise. When customers search for E-wom information on the Internet, the good or negative signals they get may impact their decision to make an online purchase, either directly or indirectly. According to the study's findings, as mentioned above, electronic word-of-mouth has a beneficial influence on online intention to buy. On the other hand, Hansopaheluwakan et al. (2020) had different results than this study. They found out that E-wom has an insignificant effect on purchase intention in the Indonesian footwear industry.

#### 5. Theoretical and practical implications

This research examines the influence of social commerce platforms' interactivity elements; Content usefulness, Engaging, Real-time communication, and E-wom on social commerce purchase intention. This is the first time these characteristics have been studied together to see how they concurrently affect purchase intention. As a result, the theoretical contribution of this work is to build a model found in the research of platform interaction aspects to explain buy intention, which enriches the understanding of the origins of buying behaviors in a social media setting.

The relevance of social networks as a platform and as an essential aspect of building marketing strategies is supported by our results, even though practitioners may still be skeptical about the advantages of utilizing the platform to sell to clients via these channels. According to the findings of this research, all independent factors (Platform Interactivity components) had a favorable influence on social commerce purchasing intentions.

When acquiring in-depth insight information on customers' preferences, behavioral intention, and habits, brand managers should turn to social media marketing (SMM). Marketers should develop social media marketing strategies that will foster consumer-brand engagement through social media by allowing consumers to participate in social media communities by liking posts, commenting on them, and posting their content. This will allow marketers to learn more about consumers and their preferences and design more effective marketing tools. Customers' perceptions of the utility of information play an essential part in their decision to purchase anything via e-commerce. To account for this issue while building the website content for a company website, designers need to pay close attention to the following: As consumers start to anticipate immediate satisfaction from the companies from whom they buy goods and services, real-time communication plays an increasingly important role. Real-time communication provides the immediacy that customers have come to expect from businesses. Employees may connect with customers in real-time using real-time communication solutions, regardless of where they are physically situated. It is the ideal blend of video, audio, and instant messaging technologies. It also enables staff to communicate in real-time to cooperate and handle customer service problems. Finally, it has been shown by several investigations that consumers consider user-generated material to be more influential than brand-generated content. As a result, companies must concentrate their efforts on monitoring E-wom, particularly the negative spread of E-wom. Customers tend to give greater weight to negative E-wom, which will harm the company's image and result in significant financial losses.

## 6. Limitation and future research

Despite the contributions of this study, some research limitations need acknowledgment. The fact that we took e-commerce as an aggregate for all product categories. However, we encourage future studies to narrow the research for a specific product category. In addition, the researchers employed the convenience sample technique, which has its own limitation for generalizing the results. Furthermore, the research model simplified the relationship between platform interactivity components and purchase intention as a direct effect. Future research has to add moderation and mediation variables to examine their effects on the study model.

## 7. Conclusion

This study has successfully achieved the objectives to identify the impact of platform interactivity components, Engaging, Content usefulness, E-wom, and Real-time communications on customer purchasing intention. All the components have a positive effect on purchase intention. Marketing managers have to develop strategies that nurture consumer-brand engagement in social media platforms and emphasize the importance of real-time communications of customer service employees to collaborate to be available to answer any customers' query they got. In addition, it is important that platforms should offer useful content to consumers to convert them to buy the products. Lastly, marketing managers should always monitor what consumers are talking about on social media platforms due to peer-to-peer influence on purchase decisions.

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