

# Chapter 10

## Social Shopping: Implications for Store Retailing

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### ABSTRACT

*Online retailing is continuing to grow at a time with many fashion brands are closing retail stores. Social media is now an essential component within the purchase journey of a fashion consumer. As social media networks continue to develop transactional capabilities, this has giving rise to the expansion of social shopping. Fashion brands need to consider how best to optimise social shopping opportunities as an extension of the retail shopping experience. Reviewing developments within retailing, a conceptual model of social shopping is proposed, which places mobile technologies as central to the social shopping experience both on social media and in store.*

**Keywords:** Store retailing; social shopping; social media; digital technology; omni-channel; fashion consumers

### Introduction

Online retailing continues to grow faster than the wider retail sector and now accounts for 18% of total sales. By 2024, online sales are estimated to account for nearly 30% of all retail sales with fashion products as the most popular category online (Mintel, 2019a). Yet this is taking place against a background of retail stores closures on the UK high street with fashion brands such as Karen Millen and Coast closing stores and concessions (Simpson, 2019). Other brands such as Debenhams, Top Shop, Jack Wills and Laura Ashley have rationalised their store numbers (Guardian, 2019). Social media statistics from 2019 show that there are 3.5 billion social media users worldwide, and this number is only growing. That equates to about 45% of the current population (Tjepkema, 2019). Social media networks such as Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest are increasing their commerce capabilities to take enhance shopping opportunities through social networks (Mintel, 2019b). Yet, fashion clothing consumers prefer to shop in stores rather than online across Generations X, Y and Z

(Mintel, 2019e). This indicates that there is still a role for retail stores in consumer shopping journeys.

A key trend beyond 2020 is the expansion of social commerce and in particular, social shopping (State of Fashion, 2020). Social commerce has become a new retail avenue for brands, on par with other mediums like websites and offline stores as social networks are evolving to become retail platforms (Jones, 2017). Fashion brands have used social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest to present their products. (Siddiqui & Barlow, 2019). A key challenge for retail brands is how to optimise the opportunities for social shopping as an extension of the retail shopping experience. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to investigate how retail brands may optimise the potential of retail stores through an evaluation of social commerce, social media and social shopping.

This chapter is structured as follows: it will provide a review of impact of the most recent developments within retail formats; discuss definitions of social commerce to provide clarity within a retail context; investigate the use of social media consumption in the UK; and propose how social shopping could benefit store retailing.

## Development of Retailing

Retailing has dramatically changed over the past few decades as a result of the globalisation of technology and the development of online channels. From traditional bricks and mortar stores, the past decade has witnessed the development of many different digital business models with multi-channel, omni-channel and mobile retailing as recent formations. Multi-channel retailing refers to offering a consumer shopping experience through separate and different channels (Brynjolfsson, Hu, & Rahman, 2013). 'Multi-channel' implies a clear division between the physical and online store. Research has focussed from the perspective of traditional channels such as stores (traditional), catalogues (direct marketing) and online channels developing multiple channel propositions (Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015). A multi-channel format allows consumers to research in one channel (e.g. online) and purchase in another (e.g. store) (Verhoef, Neslin, & Vroomen, 2007). Multi-channel retailing increases synergies not only to fulfil consumer preferences and brand experiences across channels efficiently, but also to increase sales and profits in a retail business (Kwon & Lennon, 2009).

The most prevalent format of retailing is often referred to as omni-channel retailing. Beck and Rygl (2015, p. 175) describe omni-channel retailing as:

*the set of activities involved in selling merchandise or services through or all wide spread channels, whereby the customer can trigger full channel interaction and/or the retailer controls full channel integration.*

This is where omni-channel customers move freely between the online sources such as the PC, mobile devices and the physical store itself, all within a single transaction process (Rosenblum & Kilcourse, 2013). Regardless of the amount of channel usage, the journey should provide a seamless experience for consumers. As the channels are managed together, the perceived interaction is not with the channel itself, but with

the retail brand involved (Piotrowicz & Cuthbertson, 2014). Because channels can be developed to assist the customer throughout their decision journey, there is an opportunity to forge deeper relationships with customers. Such opportunities and resources are likely to lead to competitive advantage (Lusch, Vargo, & O'Brien, 2007). There is no one correct omni-channel model, and channel choices must be adapted to the firm's particular context (Grewal, Roggeveen, & Nordfalt, 2017). However, what is emerging within an omni-channel retail strategy is the role of the physical store is key as shoppers are still looking to touch, feel and try products before they buy (Ghazarean, 2016).

Mobile retailing (m-retailing) is defined as a new consumer purchasing experience, where the consumer buys via their mobile phone and collects at home or at the store (Pantano & Priporas, 2016). The paradigm of m-retailing was inspired by consumer's excessive usage of mobile devices for shopping purposes. Pantano and Priporas (2016) note that as a consequence of mobile technologies and mobile marketing, traditional types of retailing have shifted base from access of consumers in the retail environment to a new linkage between consumer purchase decisions that can be recorded anytime and anywhere due to the mobility of the mobile phone (Shankar, Kleijnen, Ramanathan, Rizley, Holland & Morrissey, 2016). Technologies, such as mobile applications, in-store technologies, social media and web sites, have enabled omni-channel retailing dynamics that influence both the consumer and the business (Lazaris & Vrechopoulos, 2014). With mobile technologies, retailers can increase perceived value, which increases both loyalty and sales results (Strom, Vendel, & Bredican, 2014). In addition, mobile shopping has strong emotional significance to customers because mobile shopping sites are a source of entertainment (Thakur 2016). Mobile shopping is seen as an adventure – a possibility to escape the real world (Dennis, Alamanos, Papagiannidis, & Bourlakis, 2016). Mobile shopping engrosses customers and deepens their involvement because they feel that they have more control over their shopping (Persaud & Azhar 2012). It has been noted that the role of mobile shopping is used more for searching than actual purchases (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). However, recent data indicate that 50% of all retail sales now takes phase through mobile technologies with fashion retailers attracting the highest level of traffic and sales (Charlton, 2020). Because of the growing popularity of mobile shopping, in-store experiences are also in transition. The ability to reach a mobile channel anywhere and anytime leads to an increase in in-store mobile use, which creates a demand for new mobile solutions that facilitate searching, locating, comparing and purchasing products in stores (Tyrvaïnen & Karjaluo, 2018). Retailers also view a mobile centric approach as important for future store development as it provides opportunities for interactions (Alexander & BLazquez Cano, 2019). Within the UK, smart phone uptake is almost at 80% of adults with access to social media as a key consumer priority (Mintel 2019d), providing an opportunity for social commerce.

## Social Commerce

Social Commerce is a relatively new concept and it is not always used consistently. Without a clear definition of social commerce, its characteristics have allowed for various scholars to define it in their own terms according to their focus of study. According

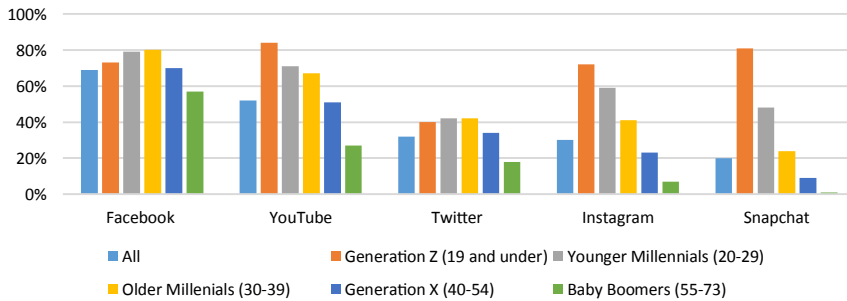
to [Yadav, de Valck, Hennig-Thurau, Hoffman, and Spann \(2013, p. 48\)](#) social commerce can be defined as the:

*exchange-related activities that occur in, or are influenced by, an individual's social network in computer mediated social environments, where the activities correspond to the need recognition, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages of a focal exchange.*

[Han and Trimi \(2018\)](#) found that most definitions refer to four components: social media (e.g. social networking sites); social activities like social interactions, word-of-mouth and user-generated content; e-commerce; and Web 2.0. Another viewpoint is that social commerce has two elements, for instance, social commerce is generally seen as the fusion of social media with e-commerce (e.g. [Wang & Zhang, 2012](#)). Social commerce is also viewed as a subset of e-commerce using social media to facilitate social interactions and enhance the online shopping experience ([Marsden & Chaney, 2012](#)). The functionality of social commerce may be viewed through the option of selling through a choice of social media platforms available, adding features to existing electronic commerce (e-commerce) websites that will allow for user interaction and sharing user-generated content with other users who have similar interests regarding a particular subject area (e.g. [Liang, Ho, Li, & Turban, 2011](#)). What emerges is that social commerce, social media, social interactions and social shopping are interlinked activities. It also implies that there is a seller and buyer (retailer and consumer) exchange with interactions taking place on social media. A recent definition of social commerce has been put forward by [Han and Trimi \(2018\)](#) who view social commerce as a new business model of e-commerce, which makes use of web 2.0 technologies and social media to support social-related exchange activities. Taking this recent definition of social commerce, the following section evaluates social commerce within the business model of retailing to support social-related exchange activities on social media networks that encourage sales.

## Social Media

Social media can be defined as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content ([Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010](#)). Its growing adaptation and innovative culture have changed the lives of individuals and businesses both internally and externally. This is exemplified through the purpose of Facebook initially being launched as a social networking service for Harvard University students in 2004 and now has over 2.4 billion monthly users and 1.6 billion daily users worldwide ([Mintel, 2019b](#)). Furthermore, a group of people who have common interest or purpose and keep up relationships with a group is known as a social network ([Nadeem, 2016](#)). There has been an interlink between social media and social networking. Whilst some argue they are similar in their qualities, their main difference is that social media is a communications channel and social networking is the act of communicating ([Baird & Parasnis, 2011](#)). There is no definitive typology of social media (e.g. [Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010](#)) but it is common to differentiate amongst social networking (e.g. Facebook), video sharing (e.g. YouTube), picture sharing (Flickr), social bookmarking (e.g. Delicious), social sharing of knowledge (e.g. Wikipedia), micro blogging (e.g. Twitter) and user forums.

**Figure 10.1** Use of Social Media by Generational Cohorts.

Source: Adapted from [Mintel \(2019b\)](#).

Current figures indicate that the top five social media networks in use are Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat (Mintel, 2019b). [Fig. 10.1](#) indicates the preferences of social media networks by different consumer segments. Consumers from all generational cohorts most used social media platform is Facebook. However, there are differences in the use of Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube. Generation Z prefer YouTube (84%) and Snapchat (81%). Younger Millennials also prefer YouTube (71%) as well as Instagram (59%), whilst Older Millennials, Generation X and Baby Boomer prefer YouTube and Twitter.

The common characteristic between different social media networks, for example, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, is that they allow individuals (consumers) and entrepreneurs (fashion brands) to engage in social interactions in a way and on a scale that was not possible before (e.g. [Wang, Yu, & Wei, 2012](#)). Brands engage with social media to enhance consumer engagement, raise brand awareness and increase sales ([Tsimonis & Dimtriadis, 2014](#)). The use of social media allows organisations the opportunity to engage with both existing and potentially new customers (Lim et al., 2015). In today's challenging business environment, social media tools have been actively used by firms to present their business online and achieve marketing values ([Stephen & Toubia, 2010](#)). Within the retail sector, fashion brands have been found to use an average of seven social media networks with Facebook and YouTube as the two dominant networks ([Siddiqui & Barlow, 2020](#)). Developing social strategies may assist in gaining insight into customer behaviour, developing sales and provide opportunities for developing stronger ties between the brand and the consumer ([Kozinets, 2014](#)).

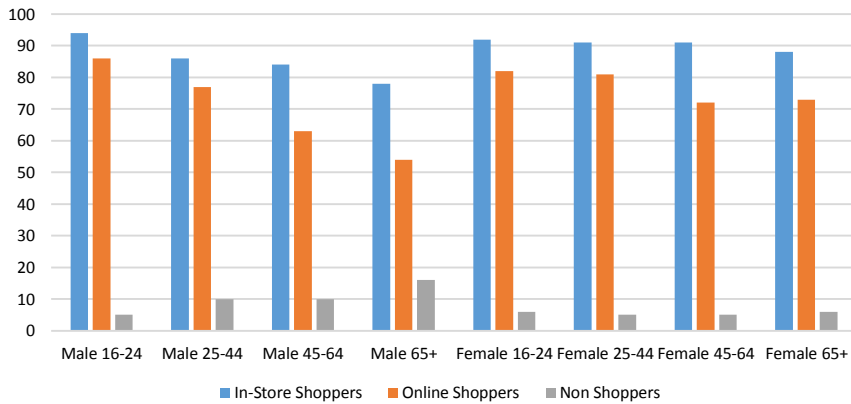
A significant aspect of social media has been the emergence of consumer power and the proactive role of consumers in creating content and involvement in conversations amongst other consumers within a transparent market environment ([Labrecque, Esche, Mathwick, Novak, & Hofacker, 2013](#)). Content can be passed through networks very rapidly and efficiently with brands no longer having significant control over the content, timing and frequency of conversations ([Mangold & Faulds, 2009](#)). Consumers engage with social media to primarily consume, create and contribute to interactions that take place within online brand communities ([Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011](#)). Whilst there are a number of consumer motivations to engage in social media,

establishing social interactions has emerged as a key objective (e.g. Ruiz-Mafe, Marti-Parrero, & Sanz-Blas, 2014).

Daily engagement on social media has had an impact on every stage of consumer decision making and has a direct relationship with purchase intentions, purchase stages and the purchase decision accordingly (Hinz, Skiera, Barrot, & Becker, 2011). The customer journey is viewed as the process a customer goes through across all stages and touchpoints with an organisation (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016) which may include stores, websites and social media through mobile technologies. Hence, engaging with social media is now considered to be an essential element of the consumer purchase journey (Kim & Kim, 2018).

Within a consumer journey, it is the impact of social media which has directed decision-making from a linear model to a continuous loop. For example, Ashman, Solomon, and Wolny (2015) propose that consumers are entering a decision-making environment which is always 'switched on'; with many consumers engaged in an on-going loop of sharing information about products, monitoring social updates and requests for opinions and ratings on planned and completed purchases. They refer to this as 'polysynchronous consumption' defined as 'integration of two-way peer to peer, peer content and peer brand interaction, through a blending of multiple channels of face to face, asynchronous and synchronous online communication' (Ashman et al., 2015, p. 129). Hence, no shopping trip is now complete with affirmation on social media from friends or participants within an online social context. Social networks are becoming a place to start the shopping process with fashion consumers searching for products, comparing prices and looking for inspirations on blogs, forum and social networks before entering a store (Blazquez, 2014). This would suggest that the shopping process could potentially start and end with social networks accessed via mobile phones. This also requires a new understanding of how consumers are affected by a shopping journey which may be solitary through the mobile technology and social through social networks simultaneously. Edelman and Singer (2015) extend this line of thinking and argue that brands should strive to understand consumer decision journeys. Consumer journey decision-making is more streamlined with consideration and evaluation stages reduced due to the information gained through digital technologies.

New behaviours have emerged within the consumer journey such as webrooming and showrooming. Webrooming is the practice of searching for information before entering a store for a purchase experience (PR Newswire, 2013) whilst showrooming is when information and examination of the physical products takes place in the store and the purchase is made online or another retailer (Rapp, Baker, Bachrach, Ogilvie, & Beitelspacher, 2015). This signals the importance of mobile technologies but also as both behaviours take place within retail stores – the potential of opportunity still presented within a store environment. Within stores, consumers may be affected by the tactility of products which increase feelings of psychological ownership and purchase decisions may be affected by promotional activities accessed through mobile technologies (Adams & Gips, 2014; Hui, Huang, Jeffrey, Huang & Suher, 2013). Whilst many consumers across Generations X, Y and Z shop online and in-store, they all have a preference for in-store shopping, especially for fashion clothing (Mintel, 2019e). The following section will evaluate the role of retail stores within social shopping.

**Figure 10.2** Fashion Consumer Segments.

Source: Adapted from [Intel \(2019e\)](#).

### Role of Retail Stores

Within the UK, retail sales through the internet accounted for almost 20% of total retail sales suggesting that most sales are likely to take place in stores ([ONS, 2019](#)). Within fashion clothing, total sales reached £59b in 2019 with online sales of £23b representing almost 40% of clothing sales ([Intel, 2019a, 2019e](#)). Despite this rise in online sales, 81% of consumers have a preference to visit a high street retailer demonstrating that stores still have a role to play for fashion consumers ([Intel, 2019e](#)). [Fig. 10.2](#) demonstrates that across all key fashion consumer segments, visiting a store is still part of the shopping process.

The retail store remains a key channel as it is the main touch point of face-to-face interactions with customers and is the place of convergence of multiple retail channels ([Alexander & Blazquez Cano, 2019](#)). For the omni-channel customer, the in-store experience they want is different from that of a traditional customer. They may be more prepared, they make use of technology, they know the products they wish to see and are aware of the price they are expecting to pay ([Cook, 2014](#)).

Shoppers in stores tend to buy more products and have a tendency to purchase more 'experiential' products such as clothing, footwear and makeup ([Ideawatch, 2016](#)). In creating a store experience, retailers have introduced advance technologies to create immersive retail experiences ([Blazquez, 2014](#)). For example, mobile technologies, self-service checkouts, interactive digital screens iPads and Wifi are some of the most diffused ([Linzbach, Inman, & Nikolova, 2019](#)). Fashion consumers are looking for an in-store experience which is enhanced with appropriate technology and includes fitting rooms with touch screen mirrors and digital screens for product information ([Intel, 2017](#)). The presence of technology redefines the store experience. Technology allows the consumer to have access to a wider offering, customised services and new entertaining tools amongst others ([Pantano et al., 2018](#)). However, the primary purpose of fashion consumers is to visit stores to gain inspirations with the latest style and trends ([Intel, 2019e](#)).

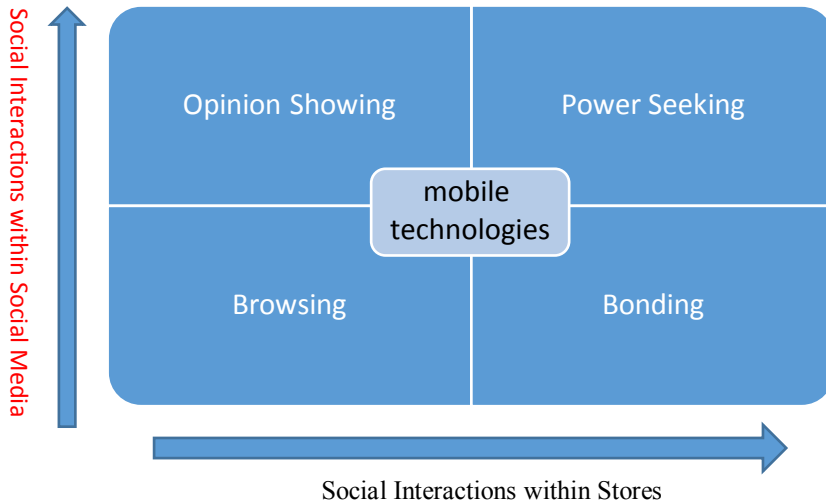
Customer service is one of the most influential reasons to go to a retail store as customers expect a more personalised shopping experience through the advice of store

staff (Backstrom & Johansson, 2006; Hure, Picot-Coupey, & Ackermann, 2017). Factors such as the location of employees, the quality of the interactions or the use of technologies to assist customer service must be considered (e.g. Ballantine, Jack, & Parson, 2010). It has been suggested that employees be provided with technology and the appropriate training to make the shopping experience more relevant (Cook, 2014). Future store development should be cognisant of the influence of social media on consumer behaviour with increasing influence from peers and influencers (Alexander & BLazquez Cano, 2019).

## Social Shopping

Shopping can be viewed as a social activity. Stone (1954) was the first study to highlight the need for social interaction within the shopping process. Tauber (1972) identified that shopping behaviour is motivated by a variety of psychosocial needs beyond product acquisition. He identified five social needs that are satisfied by the shopping process which include (i) social interaction outside the home; (ii) communications with others with similar needs; (iii) affiliation with reference groups; (iv) obtaining increase in social status; and (v) achieving success in bargaining and negotiation. Since then many studies have confirmed that shopping is a social activity which provides consumers opportunities to interact with others and satisfy social needs (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Westbrook & Black, 1985). Hence, the idea of shopping and satisfying social needs is not new. With the rise in the use of mobile technologies and social media, this raises the question of whether social shopping can create opportunities for retail stores within an omni-channel retail format.

Social shopping may be defined as a form of online shopping with social media tools and networks and sharing shopping experiences with friends (Lee & Lee, 2012). Social commerce takes the key features of social media (e.g. discussion groups, blogs reviews) and uses them before during and after the shopping experience (Turban, Strauss, & Lai, 2016). Social shopping may occur in any type of retail venue including traditional shopping places (e.g. malls) and environments outside of conventional stores (e.g. online shopping) (Kang & Park-Poaps, 2011b). Social shopping for fashion clothes refers to ‘consumer behaviour involving verbal and non-verbal interactions with others in the process of shopping for fashion products’ (Kang & Park-Poaps, 2011a, p. 340). The social shopping process broadly consists of three main stage of pre-purchasing (information search) purchasing (actual buying) and post-purchasing (showing off purchased products to others). Kang and Park-Poaps (2011a) suggest that social shopping consist of five dimensions: (i) social browsing; (ii) social bonding; (iii) opinion showing; (iv) power seeking; and (v) new socio networking. This research focussed in the main, on store shopping and at a time when social networking and social shopping where was in the early stages of development (Pitta, 2011). These dimensions will be reviewed in line with current trends and practice within social shopping and social media, and their impact on retail stores. Dimension 5, New Socio Networking, refers to interacting with other shoppers and developing new friendships within online shopping where consumers can experience social networking and shopping simultaneously (Vascellaro, 2007). Current levels of social media activity by consumers would suggest that social networking accessed via mobile phones is now dominant within the journey of the fashion consumer (Mintel, 2019e). For example, fashion consumers now have a range of social media networks for the initial search phase of the shopping journey

**Figure 10.3** Social Shopping for Fashion Consumers within Retail Stores.

such as personal networks, online communities of fashion brands, following influencers on Instagram or watching vloggers on YouTube. Fashion consumers are still in the main influenced by family and friends, but fashion editors, bloggers and influencers are part of the search process as well as a visit to a store before a purchase has been made (Mintel, 2019c).

In this regard, it is proposed that social networking on social media has been integrated within the other dimensions of social shopping. In light of the role of the retail store within an omni-channel strategy, the other four dimensions of social shopping may be encapsulated with Fig. 10.3.

Fig. 10.3 demonstrates how social shopping may be impacted by social interactions on social media and within retail stores. Mobile technology is the access point to social media and may take place at any point in the consumer journey – pre-purchasing (searching) purchasing (buying) and post-purchasing (showing off products purchased) in store or elsewhere. When consumers join social network sites of retail brands, the content on the fan pages was found to have a direct impact on store visits. Fans were more willing to visit stores and online product information has a direct impact on offline purchase intentions (Jang, Chang, & Chang, 2015). Hence, a key objective in understanding social shopping interactions accessed via mobile technologies should direct fashion consumers towards the retail store as an integral part of the shopping journey. Each of the four dimensions presents opportunities for social interactions on social media and in stores.

*Social browsing* refers to exploring new fashion trends and products. Browsing is defined as the ‘examination of a retailer’s merchandise for information and/or recreational purposes without an immediate intent to buy’ (Bloch & Richans, 1983, p. 67). Consumer browsing is a major activity within the retail environments and it may have a considerable effect on store traffic and sales (Bloch, Ridgeway, & Sherrell, 1989). Browsing or searching for information, for example, latest brand information and

trends is a key dimension of social media within fashion (Kim & Ko, 2012). Browsing is viewed as a solitary experience on mobile technology where the consumer may at any time elect to use social media to catch up with latest trends and fashion inspirations ideas. This may be achieved by reviewing a brand's communities on social media networks such as Facebook, YouTube or Instagram, brand app or looking for the latest updates from a favourite fashion blogger/influencer. Social browsing could make information seeking more efficient and provide for a satisfactory experience (Paridon, 2004). Those shoppers who engage in social browsing in a retail environment are more likely to feel their shopping outcomes are successful (Kang & Park-Poaps, 2011b). When browsing in stores, shoppers may take pictures of the products of interest and share these on personal networks for instant feedback from family and friends. Hence, social browsing may occur in stores and on social media simultaneously or in different time frames.

*Social bonding* refers to socialising, spending time together and communicating with close friends and family in fashion shopping (Kang & Park-Poaps, 2011a). Shopping provides an opportunity to engage with peers and family and an opportunity to build relationships, for example, in the pre-purchase stage such as sharing tastes, discussing choices or sharing comments. Retail stores should provide opportunities for social bonding to take place such as fashion brand Lulu Lemon offering Yoga classes on site (Fitzsimmons, 2017). Such experiences could be shared with family and friends and posted on personal networks. In this way, social bonding can take place in stores and shared online.

*Opinion showing* refers to showing off knowledge and expertise or delivering fashion information to others. Many fashion consumers like to influence decisions and enjoy being recognised for their fashion tastes (e.g. Sproles, 1979). On social media, consumers may elect to join an online brand community of a fashion brand. These communities are created and sponsored by the brand with the aims of (i) proactively enable members to exchange fashion information and opinions and (ii) building a collaborative community that serves both the brand and the community (Okonkwo, 2010). Online brand communities provide opportunities for brand-to-consumer and consumer-to-consumer (C2C) interactions (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). It is the C2C social interactions of liking, commenting and sharing brand information within personal networks that is valuable to consumers within the decision-making journey (e.g. Adjei, Noble, & Noble, 2010). Whilst the brand is at the centre of the community, it ultimately exists due to the relationships forged between the members (Brogi, 2014). For example, Top Shop live stream their fashion show which is viewed and shared on social media and accessed through the mobile phone (O'Callahan, 2017). Consumers can share their opinions and knowledge with family and friends' personal or brand social networks. Social media networks provide ample opportunity for consumers to demonstrate their expertise in fashion within a wider arena, for example, Facebook, Instagram or Snapchat, more so that in stores where interactions may take place with just store personnel.

*Power seeking* indicates that individuals may be looking to influence or demonstrate authority over others during fashion shopping (Kang & Park-Poaps, 2011a). Online communities provide opportunities to demonstrate expertise in fashion. Social interactions such as liking, commenting, tagging and sharing activities with friends

can be achieved immediately across most social networks (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Fashion brands can use the stores to showcase the best of the brand offer by extending the idea of showrooming. For example, Nodstram local stores do not sell merchandise but serve as a place to pick up orders, tailor merchandise and enjoy spa treatments (Morgan, 2019). Fashion brands could evolve their stores as physical spaces where products may be tried, styled, discussed with store personal and ordered in store to be delivered to the home providing opportunity for consumers to demonstrate their influence within the shopping experience. Such store experiences could be shared on social media.

Hence, recognising social interactions opportunities on social media and in stores with mobile technologies at the centre of these interactions could enhance the retail store into a more strategic role within the consumer journey.

### **Practical Implications and Future Research Directions**

Social shopping helps to integrate social media and store shopping through mobile technologies. Understanding social shopping needs of the fashion consumer should be viewed as an opportunity to influence the consumer journey which may start and end on social media networks. Fashion brands should embrace mobile technologies and social media to develop social interaction strategies that enhance the role of the store within omni-channel retailing. Drawing from the discussion presented, some practical insights and future research directions are proposed:

1. The role of the store is still relevant for fashion shoppers and fashion brands could extend the store experience on social media. For example, the inclusion of multi touch screens could be used to view activities of social media within the retail store, thus providing a social interaction between the store and social media simultaneously. Fashion consumers could be encouraged to post and share their recent store experience on social media networks satisfying opinion showing and power-seeking social interactions.
2. Providing handheld technology to store personnel would empower the service provision presented in stores. Store personnel should be trained in accessing and viewing consumer conversations on the social networking sites of fashion brands. Such awareness of social interactions could be used to enhance the store browsing experience for consumers.
3. Showrooming and webrooming behaviour should be acknowledged in stores. Every interaction with a consumer should be viewed as an opportunity for a social interaction. Such behaviour will allow consumers to demonstrate opinion showing and/or power-seeking interactions.
4. Mobile technologies allow consumers to be connected to social networks consistently throughout the consumer journey. The framework presented in Fig. 10.3 recognises four dimensions of social shopping with access to social networks through mobile technologies social media playing a key role in the consumer journey. The framework suggests that fashion brands should be aware of consumer social motivations and how an understanding of these motivations would enhance the role of the store. Future research should focus on the dimensions of social shopping within the current landscape of social media and mobile technologies where the store is still relevant for the fashion journey.

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