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To Buy or Not to Buy: Indian Consumers' Choice of Online Versus Offline Channels for Air Travel Purchase

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Abstract

The Indian aviation industry has seen significant developments since the deregulation in 1994. The industry now has several major airline firms operating in both full-service and limited service (low cost) segments. By 2014, it is projected that India's airline sector will service nearly 100 million passengers spread over 200 million flight tickets. The Internet has also accentuated the growth and evolution of the market by facilitating greater transparency of prices combined with ubiquitous reach. However, little is known about this evolving domain of purchase behavior in the Indian context where multiple channels (both offline and online) prevail. The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that determine offline versus online purchase behaviors of air travel tickets. Findings indicate that age, education, nature of Internet usage orientation, and the time spent online serve as key differentiators between offline and

online options in the purchase of air travel tickets. Conceptual and practical implications for industry are discussed.

Keywords:

Online travel purchase behavior air travel India online versus offline buying

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