

# “How I Find out What to Expect of a Product”: Investigating the Consumers’ Product Inspection Process in Forming Product Expectations in Online Shops

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## **Abstract**

More and more people order products over the Internet these days. To get an idea of the products, the presentation of these in online shops plays a decisive role in determining what expectations consumers have of these products. However, it is still unclear what role the product presentation in online stores play in forming expectations about a product. Thus, the present research aims at investigating consumers’ usage of information presented about products in online shops in shaping expectations about those products. A qualitative study was run conducting interviews including browsing sessions. The results indicate that expectation formation of consumers in online shops is a multi-stage process firstly involving product pictures in forming expectations and afterwards adducing product descriptions to refine expectations. The current research contributes to the literature of expectation formation and can guide online retailers in how to shape their information in product presentation.

**Subject Areas:** *Consumer Behaviour, Electronic Commerce and Internet Marketing, Retailing*

**Track:** Retailing & Omni-Channel Management