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Introduction: online grocery shopping – current and future challenges and opportunities

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As Guest Editors for the special issue of Electronic Commerce Research on “Online Grocery Shopping – Current and Future Challenges and Opportunities”, we are delighted to announce its release. Online grocery shopping (OGS) has surged in popularity and significance in recent years, with the COVID-19 pandemic accelerating this trend. Although OGS offers numerous benefits, such as convenience and flexibility, many questions remain about its impact on the retail industry and consumer behavior. The rise of OGS necessitates new insights for retailers and manufacturers, as they may need to adapt their marketing strategies and analytics to this new sales channel. To reduce the current uncertainty in the field of OGS, this special issue is dedicated to presenting new research on this broad topic.

This special issue features numerous high-quality research papers covering a wide spectrum of electronic commerce research. Kumar et al. [1] provide a comprehensive literature review on OGS, offering readers a holistic overview of the developments in OGS research within the scientific literature. Other publications in this special issue focus on technology in the context of OGS. For instance, Bruni et al. [2] examine how the metaverse impacts marketing and competition in both offline and online retail. Upadhyay et al. [3] analyze the influence of customer experience in mobile food ordering applications on reuse intention. Additionally, Rohden and Espartel [4] investigate consumer reactions to recommendation agents in their research on technology related to OGS.

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In addition to technology-related topics, this special issue delves into consumer reactions to various settings and situations in OGS. Lima et al. [5] conduct an empirical study on how to enhance customer satisfaction in online subscription-based services. Their findings offer valuable insights for improving user experience in such services. Acknowledging the detrimental impact of negative reviews in OGS, Kim et al. [6] employ scenario-based experiments to investigate how the responses of online store managers to negative reviews influence potential shoppers' perceptions and behaviors.

Further research in this issue introduces an intelligent retail system centered on the consumer, leveraging the Internet of Things (Ala et al. [7]). Building on analyses focused on improving the value chain, Ekren et al. [8] propose strategies to enhance fulfillment in OGS. Additionally, a crucial factor for the long-term success of OGS, especially beyond the initial surge prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, is customer loyalty. Against this background, Kuikka et al. [9] investigate the drivers of customer loyalty toward grocery retailers before, during, and after the pandemic.

Moreover, this special issue explores various consumer-related differences in OGS. Wang et al. [10] investigate how emotions, gender, and immersion impact impulse behavior in OGS. Braun and Osman [11] conduct an empirical study examining the factors that influence the adoption and non-adoption of OGS among individuals over 50.

We believe this special issue will greatly enhance the understanding and development of OGS, providing valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers alike.

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