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## THE DETERMINANTS OF LIVESTREAMING SHOPPING POPULARITY IN SOCIAL E-COMMERCE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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**Abstract.** In recent years, livestream shopping has exploded on social e-commerce platforms. This study highlights the need to identify the main drivers of livestreaming shopping popularity on social e-commerce platforms. Using a literature review method, this study identifies determinants driving this popularity: real-time interactive capabilities, significant reduction in consumer uncertainty, the connecting role of influencers, possible receiving product discounts, immersive shopping experience, and the development of the creator economy. By combining technology and behavioral psychology, livestream shopping has successfully transformed shopping from solitary technical transactions into an emotionally entertaining process. At the end of the paper, the author offered some academic and practical contributions based on the findings.

**Keywords:** social e-commerce, livestreaming, livestream shopping, live-streaming shopping, e-commerce, drivers of social e-commerce.

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## ФАКТОРЫ, ОПРЕДЕЛЯЮЩИЕ ПОПУЛЯРНОСТЬ ЛАЙВСТРИМ-ШОПИНГА В СОЦИАЛЬНОЙ ЭЛЕКТРОННОЙ КОММЕРЦИИ: ОБЗОР ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ

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**Аннотация.** В последние годы популярность лайвстрим-шопинга на платформах социальной электронной коммерции стремительно возросла. Представленное исследование подчеркивает необходимость констатации основных факторов роста указанной популярности. Используя метод литературного анализа, авторы выявили следующие моменты, определяющие востребованность платформ: интерактивные возможности в режиме реального времени, значительное снижение неуверенности потребителей, связующая роль влиятельных лиц, возможность получения скидок на товары, захватывающий опыт покупок и развитие креативной экономики. Благодаря сочетанию технологий и поведенческой психологии, лайвстрим-шопинг успешно превратил покупки из простых технических операций в эмоционально увлекательный процесс. В конце статьи нами предложено несколько научных и практических рекомендаций, основанных на результатах анализа.

**Ключевые слова:** социальная электронная коммерция, прямые трансляции, покупки в прямом эфире, лайвстрим-шопинг, электронная коммерция, движущие силы социальной электронной коммерции.

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**Introduction.** Social e-commerce is one type of e-commerce [1]. It utilizes social media platforms to facilitate purchasing activities [2]. The unique feature of social e-commerce is that customers can view products, add them to their cart, and make purchases, all within a single social media application [3]. This is one of the most notable differences of social e-commerce in recent years, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, the term social e-commerce has been mentioned in studies by many authors such as Wei et al. (2017) [4], Zhao et al. (2020) [5], Hewei and Youngsook (2022) [6], and Lv et al. (2020) [7]. According to the common understanding of social e-commerce, it refers to conducting e-commerce transactions on platforms with social interactions. On these platforms, consumers can access brands and make purchases of products and services. However, the shopping journey on these platforms may not be complete, for example, requiring users to switch to the business's website to place an order or complete payment through a third-party platform. A new approach, discussed by authors Lin et al. (2019) [3], Heiwei and Youngsook (2022) [6], citing to Zhang et al. (2020) [8], is to condense the shopping process within a single platform, eliminating the need for users to exit. Several popular social e-commerce platforms, such as Xiaohongshu and TikTok Shop, clearly demonstrate this feature. The authors argue that this feature aligns with the development trend of social e-commerce. This article will discuss livestream shopping tools on such social e-commerce platforms. Social e-commerce has undergone a rapid development process from its inception to the present day, transforming from a product-focused environment to an ecosystem focused on customers and social interaction. Clearly, while social media used to be primarily a channel for disseminating information, it now has the potential to become a true e-commerce platform.

Livestream shopping features have a direct and significant effect on purchasing behavior in e-commerce [9]. It fosters interaction, trust, and community engagement - key factors in driving consumer purchase intentions [9]. Livestream shopping plays a crucial role in social e-commerce. According to a report by Transparency Market Research (2025), the global live streaming e-commerce industry was valued at \$940.3 billion in 2024 and is projected to reach \$6079.8 billion by the end of 2035<sup>1</sup>. A strategic report by MRI-Simmons (a leading consumer data organization in the US) indicates that the percentage of purchases made through livestreaming shopping increased from 25% (2024) to 34% (2026), proved that livestream shopping has become a mainstream consumer trend in the US<sup>2</sup>. As of 2025, approximately 49 million Americans participate in livestream e-commerce<sup>3</sup>. In China, considered the leading market for livestream shopping in social commerce, by 2025, more

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<sup>1</sup> Livestream E-commerce Market Size & Industry Share to 2034 // Transparency Market Research [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.transparencymarketresearch.com/livestream-e-commerce-market.html> (accessed: 21.04.2026).

<sup>2</sup> Livestream shopping is now mainstream // MRI-Simmons [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.mrisimmons.com/2026/03/10/livestream-shopping-surges-in-popularity/> (accessed: 26.04.2026)

<sup>3</sup> TikTok Shop Statistics (2025): Revenue, Growth & Trends // Capital One Shopping [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://capitaloneshopping.com/research/tiktok-shopping-statistics/> (accessed: 26.04.2026)

than 600 million Chinese consumers regularly watch live shopping streams<sup>4</sup>. This speaks to the current popularity of livestream shopping. The development of this tool helps social e-commerce compete with other traditional e-commerce platforms.

In academic reports, some scholars have individually presented research findings on the influence of livestream such as hosts, engaging elements during livestreaming, and technology platform. It is necessary to systematically synthesize and analyze these findings to understand why livestreaming shopping on social e-commerce platforms has achieved unprecedented popularity. This also helps businesses/brands understand the necessity and grasp some key factors when conducting livestreaming shopping on social e-commerce platforms.

**Materials and Methods.** This study uses the literature review method to explore factors determining the popularity of livestreaming shopping in social e-commerce. Searches were conducted across several major academic databases and reliable sources such as Web of Science, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, ResearchGate and Scopus. Several different theoretical research methods were used by the author in studying scientific works, including synthesis and analysis. To maintain academic rigor, the author analyzed peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers. They are published mainly between 2015 and 2025.

**Results and Discussion.** The explosion in popularity of livestream shopping in social e-commerce is essentially driven by the real-time interactivity, influence of live streamers (hosts), the reduction of consumer uncertainty during shopping, getting discounts, immersive shopping experiences, and the development of creator economy.

*Real-time interactive capabilities in livestream shopping.* By participating in livestream shopping (joining the livestream room), consumers have the opportunity to enhance social interaction through real-time experiences. In livestreaming shopping, there are diverse interactive designs (such as comments, gifts, likes, and forwarding) attracting consumers [10]. This is very useful when online sellers can use live streaming to showcase their products in action [11]. Current social e-commerce platforms regularly update tools to increase viewer interaction, such as the ability to view product information and search for product categories during live streams. Therefore, any consumer with an account on a social e-commerce platform can participate by asking questions, tagging friends, viewing detailed product information, etc., right within the live shopping session. The high level of interaction (responsiveness, professionalism, informativeness, and personalization) can easily stir up emotions in consumers, leading to impulsive purchase intentions during watching livestream shopping [12]. This contributes to the shift of shopping from traditional e-commerce platforms to social e-commerce.

*The reduction of consumer uncertainty.* Online shopping buyers often face uncertainties (for example, imperfect product descriptions, hidden defects in real products, etc.) [13]. On social e-commerce platforms, multi-directional interaction is clearly demonstrated, including: interaction between buyers and sellers (brands), between buyers and Internet celebrities, between buyers and their friends, etc. Therefore, consumers are influenced by a multitude of different sources of information. These interactions, in turn, generate different streams of information that can either increase or decrease consumer uncertainty. The study by Kim and Park indicates that social commerce users rely on social reviews (information shared by other users) to make purchasing decisions [14]. In other words, consumer reviews of a product have a certain influence on the purchasing decisions of other consumers [15]. While on traditional e-commerce platforms, consumers can only refer to reviews from previous buyers (of the same product), in livestream shopping sessions on

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<sup>4</sup> Livestream shopping in China: how social commerce is reshaping digital retail experience // UXspot [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://uxspot.com/live-stream-e-commerce-evolution-in-china> (accessed: 22.04.2026)

social e-commerce platforms, consumers can receive direct reviews from other buyers (also watching the live session), including their friends. This can be considered a word-of-mouth (WOM) tool - an effective way to build consumer trust on social commerce platforms [14]. WOM helps reduce consumer uncertainty when making purchases.

In social commerce, livestream shopping is often a way for consumers to directly interact with seller representatives (livestream hosts) through electronic device screens (usually smartphones, tablets, or laptops) – where consumers receive official product information directly (authenticity), ask questions to clarify their needs (responsiveness), and even request the host to provide clearer product footage (visualization). This reduces uncertainty about the product and the seller's identity [16, 17]. A key feature of livestream shopping on social e-commerce is the ability for buyers to access and interact not only with representatives of the seller, but also to participate in livestream sessions of other users (often KOLs – Key Opinion Leaders and KOCs – Key Opinion Consumers) to increase objectivity. This group builds trust and emotional connection with their followers [18]. In addition to quality of information, transaction safety significantly impacts consumer trust in social e-commerce brands [14]. When social e-commerce platforms integrate e-commerce features (adding to cart, checkout, etc.) into a single platform, consumers can complete transactions seamlessly and synchronously across multiple purchases. This means that order processing by sellers/brands must also comply with the platform's regulations. This makes shopping via livestream easier, safer and more convenient for buyers.

*The ability to interact with influential people.* In livestream shopping, the ability to interact with influencers (Streamers/KOLs/KOCs) is one of the core factors determining the popularity and success of social e-commerce. Social platforms currently integrate tools such as live chat to promote engagement and quick responses between sellers and buyers [16]. Consumers may connect directly with influencers from their communities. This group is not simply a product promoter but also acts as socially endorsed leaders. They not only convey product information but also share life values and consumption experiences [18]. This is also an interesting point: consumers on social e-commerce platforms can join livestream shopping sessions because they are followers of influencers. In this case, the livestream session is like a "sharing" session between influencers and their followers - connecting their lifestyles with the goal of shopping. Thus, consumers don't feel like they're talking to a sales machine, but rather receiving advice from an expert or a trusted friend. This also can be explained based on Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) model [19], Internet Celebrity acts as a strong stimulus in livestream shopping. Furthermore, influencers not only interact during livestream shopping but also maintain connections with their fans on social media at other times. This helps them better understand their fans' preferences and price sensitivities, thereby optimizing conversion rates during livestream sessions [20].

*Receiving product discounts and immersive shopping experiences.* Yi et al. (2024) argue that product discounts are the main reason why many consumers who watch livestreams are choosing this new shopping method [10]. Several popular social e-commerce platforms in Asia, such as TikTok Shop, Mogujie, and Xiaohongshu, integrate tools to help consumers "hunt for bargains", such as flash sales and special discount codes. In reality, the motivation for these discounts goes beyond just the financial aspect. The pursuit of bargains and waiting for record-low prices gives consumers a feeling of having conquered a challenge or won a game [21]. This psychological motivation transforms consumer behavior from a routine transaction into a personal achievement, prompting them to return and participate more actively in subsequent livestream shopping sessions.

Besides its economic value, livestream shopping on social e-commerce also creates a turning point in the experience through entertainment and playfulness thanks to its social interactive advantages. Unlike traditional shopping, which is heavily transactional, livestream

shopping offers an immersive experience [22]. It allows consumers in fast-paced lives to shop efficiently while enjoying a sense of community and emotional connection [23]. For example, some social e-commerce platforms allow the display of names and the number of people currently shopping during a livestream session. This makes consumers feel that shopping is no longer a "lonely" activity through a screen, but rather involves the presence of dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of other people in the same online social space.

From a hedonic value perspective, the process by which consumers see how a product is presented, and explained in a creative way can bring them enjoyment and pleasure. These positive experiences are the foundation for building customer trust in the product, thereby strengthening trust in the seller [17]. When consumers feel happy and entertained, the psychological barrier of purchasing risk is removed, replaced by trust and longer term commitment.

*The development of the creator economy.* Besides the driving forces from consumers themselves, a crucial factor contributing to the explosion of livestream shopping in social e-commerce is the development of the creator economy. Social media is one of the key drivers of this economy [24]. It has created a robust ecosystem where influencers can monetize their content through direct sales, sponsorships, and fan engagement [1]. Platform operators have been providing revenue sharing and direct payment features to support creators [25]. One of the key tools this group of influencers uses to earn commissions is livestream shopping. As of April 2025, there were over 400,000 creators live-streaming daily and over 30 million users watching them daily on TikTok in the US market<sup>5</sup>. Meanwhile, the number of creators worldwide could reach 67 million<sup>6</sup>. TikTok Shop has created a successful social e-commerce platform not only for sellers and consumers but also for creators, it is called Affiliate. This platform allows sellers to participate in open or target collaborations (proposing partnerships with creators), or creators can choose the brands/products they want to affiliate with<sup>7</sup>. Affiliate creators often receive a commission of 5-10% on products sold by including those products in their videos or livestreams<sup>8</sup>. This encourages creators to use livestream shopping to promote goods and services for brands/sellers.

Social e-commerce platforms that integrate livestream shopping are providing excellent support for influencers/creators in monetization. Qi et al. (2020) pointed out that influencers are better able to predict market potential than manufacturers thanks to sales data analytics tools on livestream shopping platforms as well as their closeness to consumers [20]. The creative economy is truly shifting influencers' role from "brand ambassadors" to "sales drivers". Therefore, this can be considered a driving force behind the popularity of livestream shopping on social e-commerce platforms.

Based on the above analysis, the author summarizes the key factors contributing to the popularity of livestream shopping in social e-commerce (Table 1).

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<sup>5</sup> TikTok touts livestreaming as next big revenue stream for creators and agencies // Digiday [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://digiday.com/media/tiktok-touts-livestreaming-as-next-big-revenue-stream-for-creators-and-agencies/> (accessed: 01.05.2026).

<sup>6</sup> Bertoni S. Forbes Top Creators 2025 // Forbes [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevenbertoni/2025/06/16/forbes-top-creators-2025/> (accessed: 02.05.2026).

<sup>7</sup> Affiliate Marketing // Business TikTok Shop [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://business.tiktokshop.com/us/affiliate> (accessed: 06.05.2026).

<sup>8</sup> TikTok Statistics 2025: Global Trends in the Creator Economy // TelePrompter [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.teleprompter.com/blog/tiktok-statistics> (accessed: 02.05.2026)

Table 1. Determinants of livestreaming shopping popularity in social e-commerce  
(compiled by the author)

Таблица 1. Факторы, определяющие популярность лайвстрим-шопинга  
в социальной электронной коммерции (составлено автором)

Determinants	Short explanations
Real-time interactive capabilities in livestream shopping	Real-time interaction in livestreaming shopping allows users to experience products visually and connect socially instantly through a variety of supporting tools from the social e-commerce platforms. This quick and professional response not only fosters positive emotions but is also a major driver of impulsive consumer purchasing behavior
The reduction of consumer uncertainty	Livestream shopping helps reduce consumer uncertainty by providing visual, authentic product information and the ability to interact directly with sellers or highly objective third parties (such as KOLs/KOCs). In addition, integrating a secure and closed payment process on a single platform strengthens trust in transactions, creating a more transparent and convenient shopping environment
The ability to interact with influential people	The ability to interact with influencers/Internet Celebrities transforms livestream shopping from a purely commercial activity into a trusted platform for sharing life values and providing advice among friends. Influencers not only optimize conversion rates through deep understanding of their fan communities but also maintain lasting connections, personalizing the shopping experience for their followers
Receiving product discounts and immersive shopping experiences	Livestream shopping not only attracts users with direct financial benefits such as discounts or flash sales, but also transforms the shopping process into a game that offers a sense of accomplishment. This experience creates an immersive, entertaining, and highly connected shopping environment, thereby building trust and removing psychological barriers to consumer purchasing risks
The development of the creator economy	The creative economy has transformed the role of influencers from "pure brand ambassadors" to direct "sales drivers" through mechanisms such as affiliate marketing and revenue sharing. With data-driven market insights and strong community connections, this creative force leverages livestream shopping as a key monetization tool, delivering value to themselves, brands (sellers), and consumers

**Conclusion.** The rise of livestream shopping in social e-commerce is not just a passing trend, but a landmark transformation in the online business model. Through analysis, this paper identifies the determinants driving this popularity, including: the technological power of real-time interaction, the reduction of consumer uncertainty, the ability to interact with influencers, receiving product discounts, immersive shopping experiences during livestream shopping, and the development of the creator economy. This combination has solved the problem of consumer uncertainty, while transforming shopping from a solitary transaction into an emotionally rich and socially engaging entertainment process.

In terms of academic contribution, this study analyzed the determinants of livestreaming shopping on social e-commerce. These factors can form the basis for explaining several theories when applied to social e-commerce platforms, such as the stimulus in the S-O-R model or Source Credibility Theory (the role of Internet celebrities/influencers). In terms of practical application, businesses understand the importance of livestreaming shopping and can identify several important factors that influence consumer purchasing behavior during livestream sessions.

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