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**Article**

# To what extent household members influence the purchasing decisions of facebook users in case of selected products? : new Facebook ads tool consideration

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# TO WHAT EXTENT HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS INFLUENCE THE PURCHASING DECISIONS OF FACEBOOK USERS IN CASE OF SELECTED PRODUCTS? NEW FACEBOOK ADS TOOL CONSIDERATION

*IWONA LUPA-WÓJCIK*

## Abstract:

Facebook has played a significant role in the advertising budget of companies for a long time already. This social network provides complex advertising tools for organizations. For example, there is a possibility to target one advertisement to all family members or only to that household member who has a decisive influence on consumer decisions in a given household. Identifying people who actually make decisions about household purchases means more effective advertising for businesses. The article presents the results of surveys reaserch conducted on Polish Facebook users. The research concerns consumer decisions taken in relation to various types of products. Different household sizes and different incomes were included.

## Keywords:

Consumer decisions, Facebook, Advertising, Household, Social media

**JEL Classification:** M00, M21, M30

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## 1 Introduction

There are many factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions. Household members can often play a significant role here. Based on this assumption, Facebook has provided an advertising tool that allows to target the ad message to customers' household members. However, the usefulness of this tool will be determined by many aspects.

The aim of the article is to determine the usefulness of using Facebook ads targeted at customers' household members in selected industries. To achieve this goal, it was investigated to what extent household members influence the purchasing decisions of Facebook users in case of selected products.

The article consists of four parts. The first one discusses issues related to factors affecting consumer behavior. The second part presents selected aspects connected with the use of Facebook in advertising. Next, methodological assumptions of research was mentioned. The last part describes research results, adequate to the research problems raised.

## 2 Factors affecting consumer behavior

The problem of factors influencing consumer behavior is extremely complex. It was investigated by many researchers from various fields, especially in the areas of marketing, economy, psychology and sociology (Bayton, 1958; Glock, Nicosia, 1964; McGuire, 1976; Roy Dholakia, 1999; Weiner, 2000; Strack, Deutsch, 2006; Gajjar, 2013; Rani, 2014; Haugtvedt, et al. 2018). Generally, the determinants of shopping behavior can be divided into internal and external (Wiktor 2012). Internal factors include human needs, motivation, perception, personality and attitudes. In turn, external factors can be divided into: economic factors (especially income), cultural factors (e.g. religion, nationality, etc.) and social factors. In the last group one should distinguish a family, especially the closest members, living with the consumer in one household (Ibid). Numerous studies have been conducted in this area, including in the context of gender roles, the influence of partners and children on consumer behavior, the impact of the family life cycle, family structure, etc. (Ferber, Lee, 1974; Fry, 1967; Szybillo, et al al 1979; Swinyard, Peng Sim, 1987; Ekstrom, et al. 1987; Douthitt, Fedyk, 1988; Fischer, Arnold, 1994; Roberts, et al. 2004). They show that the family is definitely one of the most important factors determining purchasing behavior.

Researchers have also looked very closely at the problem of determinants of online consumer behavior (Phau, Meng Poon, 2000; Koufaris, et al. 2001; Park, Kim, 2003; Yu, Wu, 2007; Kukar-Kinney, Close, 2010; Javadi, et al. 2012). Social media has shown a very large impact on shopping behavior, which is closely related to the popularity of these media. In January 2019, 3.4 billion people in the world had active social media accounts, representing 45% of the world's population. Compared to the same period of the previous year, this number increased by 288 million (9%). Countries with the highest social media penetration rate in the world are: U.A.E. (99%), Taiwan (89%) and South Korea (85%). In Europe, there were 463 million active social media users (55%), an increase of 3% compared to the previous year, with the largest percentage of the population constituting social media users observed in Northern Europe (67%) (e.g. in Sweden 72% and in Denmark 71%) (Global Digital Report 2019). Social media users are diverse based on gender and age. The largest group consists of men aged 25-34 (19%) and 18-24 years (16%), as well as women aged 25-34 (13%) and aged 18-24 (11%) (Ibid). On average, in the world, users in social media spend about 2 hours a day and this time is systematically increasing. One person in the world has on average 9 social accounts (Ibid). The largest number of users in the world are on Facebook (2,271 millions of users). YouTube comes second (1,900 millions), followed by Whatsapp (1,500 millions) (Ibid). In Poland, 47% of the population has active social media accounts (18 million), an increase of 5.9% over the same period last year. Users are diverse based on gender and age. The largest group consists of women aged 25 to 34 (15%), as well as men in this age range (14%). The most active social media platforms in this country include: YouTube (89%), Facebook (85%) and Messenger (64%). Instagram (43%), Skype (33%) and Whatsapp (32%) are also popular (Ibid).

The opinions of consumers left in social media influence the shaping of attitudes and views of other consumers (Forbes, 2013; Godey, et al. 2016; Stephen, 2016; Berger et al. 2012; Hudson, Thal, 2013). Research shows that almost 9 out of 10 users follow content about brands in social media, every third user does it sporadically or searches for it only when they intend to buy a product or service. Every fourth Internet user (26%) follows brands on the internet. This activity has a significant impact on the decision to buy a product / service of a given brand (80%) and on the individual opinion about the brand (76%) (Lubię to czy kupuję to?..., 2016). Among more than half of Internet users, brand tracking also affects brand recommendations to other users and the willingness to express opinion about the brand on the Internet. The content tracked about it has a significant impact on the decision to buy a product or service for a given brand (as many as 80% of respondents say who track information about brands online). Eight out of ten respondents say that branding content left on the internet by other users has an impact on their brand perception. Importantly, if an Internet user plans to buy a product or service for a given brand, and reads negative opinions about it in social media, 41% of respondents would give up their purchase (Ibid). Negative opinions do not have to prejudge the company's lost position. The situation can be always fixed. If the company apologizes or promises to improve the situation, only 28% would resign from the purchase.

Research shows that opinions contained in social media (including online forums) convinced Poles to: purchase household appliances (74%), choose a specific restaurant (71%), destination for a vacation (68%), how to buy a car ( 57%), choosing a bank account (59%) or mortgage (48%). At the same time, in result of opinions collected in social media, some Polish consumers gave up purchasing a given product. This was the case with cars (30%) or household appliances (29%), going on vacation (26%), choosing a restaurant (26%), taking a mortgage (25%) or choosing a bank account (23%). This also shows that the information contained in social media has a real impact on Poles' consumer decisions. Social media enjoy great trust (Finansowy Barometr ING, 2013).

One can observe different impact of individual social networking websites on consumer behavior. Almost every third respondent makes their purchasing decisions based on information obtained from Facebook (31%), and every fourth - from YouTube (27%) and LinkedIn (27%) (Pasternak, 2014). It means that among social networking websites in Poland, Facebook has the largest impact on consumer purchasing decisions.

## 3 The use of Facebook in advertising

In August 2019, more than 16 million Polish users were registered on Facebook (i.e. 42.3% of the total population), of which 53.5% were women and 46.5% were men. Officially, people who are at least 13 years old can be registered on this social network. In Poland, the largest group consists of people aged 25-34 (28.6%; including women - 14.9% and men - 13.7%), the second group consists of people aged 35-44 (21.8%; women - 11.8%, men - 10%), third group - people aged 18-24 (20.5%; women - 10%, men - 10.6%), fourth - people in ages 45-54 (11%; women - 6.2%, men - 4.8%). Other groups are aged 13-17 (7%; women - 3.9%, men - 3.2%), 55-64 years (6.8%; women - 4.3%, men - 2, 6%) and over 65 (4.2%; women - 2.4%, men - 1.8%) (Facebook users ..., 2019). As one can see, all generations have their representatives on Facebook. This is a great business potential for companies that increasingly use Facebook (and other social media) in marketing activities, especially in advertising.

In Poland, the share of expenditure on advertising in social media in expenditure on online advertising was 16.7% in 2018. It was an increase of 22% compared to the previous year. Social media ads industry is growing extremely dynamically, it is one of the fastest growing sectors of online advertising (Internet 2017/2018..., 2018). According to the Stelzner (2019) report marketing specialists most often regularly use the Facebook platform (72%) as well as Instagram (38%) for social media ads. In the B2C sector, Facebook ads (76% B2C vs. 65% B2B) and Instagram (43% B2C vs. 30% B2B) are more often used. In the B2B sector, advertising on LinkedIn is more popular (24% B2B vs. 9% B2C) (Ibid). Facebook is the world's second major global digital ad seller. As of February 2019, its net digital ad revenue was USD 67.37 billion. Only Google was ahead of him (USD 103.73 billion) (What’s Shaping…, 2019).

The effectiveness of advertising on Facebook (as well as in other social media), understood as the ratio of the profit from this advertisement to the expenditure incurred on this advertisement, depends on many factors. These include industry, type of products, type of customer, type of advertisement, its creation, etc. (Lupa, 2017). Table 1 presents examples of effects of an advertising campaign for selected companies on Facebook.

**Table 1: The effects of the advertising campaigns on Facebook on the example of selected companies**

| Company / industry | Goal of advertising campaign on Facebook | The effects of advertising campaign on Facebook |
|---|---|---|
| Modbis / women's clothing | Conversion rate increase | — 22x return on advertising expenditure,<br>— Sales increase by 29%,<br>— 27% increase in conversion rate |
| Meliá Hotels International / hospitality industry | Presenting selected groups of hotels to potential clients. | — 6,7x return on advertising expenses,<br>— A 79% drop in the overall cost of one booking |
| Tostitos / producer of tortilla chips, dips and salsa sauces with many flavors | Increasing recognition and sales of the limited version of the Lucky Bag, prepared on the occasion of the NFL league finals | — 1.7% increase in sales,<br>— 0.9% increase in popularity in households,<br>— 9-point increase in brand favor,<br>— 1.6x return on advertising expenditure,<br>— 22% higher reach due to advertising material rules compared to standard segmentation,<br>— 37.8 million ad recipients |

 

| Company / industry | Goal of advertising campaign on Facebook | The effects of advertising campaign on Facebook |
|---|---|---|
| MuteSix / digital marketing agency | Increase sales and return on investment in advertising | — 4-x increase in revenue for the JibJab brand,<br>— 33% decrease in the cost of one action (purchase) for the JibJab brand,<br>— 7-x increase in revenues (over USD 1 million) for the BauBax2 brand,<br>— 21% decrease in the cost of one action (purchase) for the BauBax2 brand,<br>— 4.21x return on advertising expenses for the Mott & Bow brand,<br>— A 27% decrease in the cost of one action (purchase) for the Mott & Bow brand. |
| Molecules / producer of air purification technology | Increasing sales among new customers; optimization of the advertising budget | — As a result of optimization, the cost of buying Facebook ads is 19% lower<br>— 1.25x higher return on advertising |
| Free Fly Apparel / bamboo clothing brand | Increasing the number of purchases on the website; budget optimization | — 11% higher return on advertising expenditure compared to the previous Facebook strategy<br>— 50% increase in the number of purchases compared to the previous Facebook strategy<br>— A 50% increase in revenues compared to the previous Facebook strategy |
| Bella Bridal Boutique / boutique with wedding accessories | Recruitment of wedding consultants | — obtaining 60 candidates as a result of job offers on Facebook,<br>— 3 employees employed as a result of Facebook job offers. |
| Bake'n Babes / bakery | Recruitment of bakery employees | — 7 days (on average) from publication of a post with a job offer to employment<br>— 18 applications (on average) within 48 hours of publication of the job offer<br>— 8 out of 9 team members employed via Facebook remain with the company |

*Source: (Facebook 2019).*

The case studies presented in Table 1 prove that properly conducted advertising campaigns on Facebook can be very effective and efficient. It is also worth noting that Facebook ad tool allows to optimize budget, so one can reduce the cost of the campaign and thus increase its efficiency (see, e.g., Molekule or Free Fly Apparel case study). Increasingly, social media is also used to recruit employees. Examples of Bella Bridal Boutique and Bake'n Babes show that it can be also very effective.

The high effectiveness of Facebook ads is due to the fact that this social networking website can use very comprehensive advertising tools that can be used to increase reach and gain more users with a message. These tools can be divided into two groups: simple advertising tools (available directly on the company's Facebook fanpage in the form of the "Promote" or "Promote post" button) and an advanced tool - Ads Manager, which allows to configure ads independently, especially in terms of audience selection or budget optimization.

Ad configuration in the Ads Manager begins with the selection of a marketing goal (e.g. building brand awareness, increasing website traffic, increasing user engagement, gain new leads, or conversion (encouraging customers to take desired actions, e.g. purchase). The second step is to select audience. Here one can specify various parameters of the audience: age, gender, relationship status, education, job position, interests, etc. (Facebook Business, 2019) Then one should specify where the advertisement should be displayed. It is possible to place it not only on Facebook but also on Instagram, Messenger and Facebook partner websites (the so-called Audience Network). In the final stage, one need to specify the budget and choose the format of the ad (e.g. image, video, link, etc.). Such created advertisement goes to the ad auction, during which Facebook algorithms choose the best ad for a specific user in at the moment, which is designed to maximize value for both advertisers and audiences (Ibid).

At the stage of audience creating, one can apply various additional options in the form of, among others "Custom Audience". This feature allows to use various sources of customer data, such as mailing list, website traffic, mobile app traffic or Facebook activity. By using this function, it is possible to activate the "Household Audience" option, which allows to reach client's household members. To identify these people, Facebook uses various data sources, e.g. relationship status, family members (published on user's Facebook profile), location or IP address from which the given user logs in (Hušková, 2017). All data is of course anonymous. Taking into consideration the huge impact of the family on purchasing behavior, this option can be of great importance in the marketing activities of the company. This will be discussed in the article.

## 4 Methodology

The aim of the research was to investigate to what extent household members influence the purchasing decisions of Facebook users in case of selected products in order to examine the usefulness of the new Facebook ads tool.

The following research problems were adopted:

1. With whom do respondents consult the purchase of selected products and services (i.e. furniture, car, telephone, massage, etc.)?
2. What decision about purchasing the product for themselves would the respondents make if their partner strongly discouraged them?
3. What role do members of respondents' household play in their purchasing decisions?
4. How do respondents assess their role in making decisions about buying products for the whole family?
5. Whose opinions are more valued by respondents: household members or others?

As the hypothesis, it was assumed that household members of Facebook users play a key role in their purchasing decisions. However, the strength of this impact depends on many factors, such as: gender, household type, product type, product characteristics or product purpose. Therefore, the analyzed Facebook advertising tool is very useful, although its effectiveness depends on many determinants.

The survey was used to verify the hypothesis. The questionnaire consisted of 26 questions regarding the attitude of respondents to the influence of household members to Facebook users's purchasing decisions in case of selected products. In addition, the questionnaire contained 7 metrics questions about gender, age of the respondents, their marital status, education, number of persons in the household, number of children in the household up to the age of eighteen and net monthly income per family member in the household.

To distribute the questionnaire author used a Facebook ad tool directed at women and men over 18 years of age, living in Poland. The questionnaire could only be completed by people whose households consist of at least two members.

The research sample included 240 people. Respondents were mainly women (94,2%). Men constituted clear minority (5,8%). The respondents were mainly aged 26-32 (51%). Every fourth surveyed person was at the age of 18-25 (23.3%), and almost every fifth - at the age of 33-39 (17.5%). Other researched people were 40-49 years old.

Half of the respondents were married (51.7%). Every fourth person was in a partnership (29.2%). The remaining respondents were single (17.5%) or divorced (1.7%).

Most of the respondents have higher education (67.5%). In addition, 28.3% of respondents have secondary education. Other people have vocational (2.5%) or primary (1.7%) education.

Almost 42% of respondents live in a household consisting of two people. Every third respondent lives in a three-person household (30%), and every sixth in a four-person household (16.7%). 6.7% of respondents live in a five-person household, and 5% in a six-person household.

Half of the households of the respondents are not inhabited by children under 18 years of age (50%). One child lives in every fourth household (25.8%), and two in every sixth (16.7%). Moreover, three children up to the age of eighteen live in 4.2% of the analyzed households, and four or more - in 3.3%.

The monthly net income per family member in the households of respondents varies and amounts to:

- PLN 3001-4000 for 20.8% of surveyed households,
- PLN 1501-2000 - 18.3%,
- PLN 1001-1500 - 13.3%,
- PLN 4001-7000 - 12.5%,
- PLN 2001-2500 - 11.7%,
- up to PLN 1,000 - 10%,
- PLN 2501-3000 - 7.5%,
- Over PLN 7,000 - 5.8%.

The research was carried out in August 2019.

# 5 Findings

## 5.1 With whom do respondents consult the purchase of selected products and services?

The aim of the research was to investigate to what extent household members influence the purchasing decisions of Facebook users in case of selected products in order to determine the usefulness of the option of targeting Facebook ads to customers' household members. To achieve it, the author first examined with whom respondents consult the purchase of products and services such as: furniture for the living room, furniture for the children's room, phone for themselves, laptop for themselves, car for themselves, car for the whole family, shirt or trousers for themselves, a dishwasher for the kitchen, TV for the living room, insurance for own car, last minute trip for the whole family, massage or other care treatment for themselves.

The purchase of furniture for the living room in the vast majority of cases is consulted with the partner (82.5%; in the group of women 83% respondents said so, and in the group of men 71.4%). In addition, decisions in this respect are supported by: children (11.7%), people outside the household (10%) or other members of the household (6.7%). Only 7.5% of respondents decide to buy furniture for the living room without consultation, of which 7% for women in the group of women and 14% for men. This means that in the case of living room furniture, men more often than women make decisions on their own, but both groups definitely take into account the opinions of their household members. Furniture ads on Facebook should therefore include the option of targeting customers' household members.

The situation is similar with the purchase of furniture for a children's room. This type of purchase is primarily consulted with a partner (52.5%) and with children (30%). In addition, 4.2% of respondents consult such a purchase with people outside the household, 2.5% consult with other members of the household, and similarly 2.5% - buy without consultation. One should note that nearly 40% of researched Facebook users said that the question about furniture for a children's room did not apply to them (mainly due to the lack of children).

In case of buying a phone for own needs, respondents most often rely on the opinion of a partner (57.5%), while in the group of women this answer was given by 60% of the respondents, and in the group of men - only 14%. Moreover, 35.8% of all respondents make independent (without consultation) purchases of this type of product. However, it is much less common among women (32.7%) than among men (85.7%). It is worth noting that many people consult a phone purchase with people outside the household (13%).

The results for buying a laptop for own needs are very similar. This type of purchase is also most often consulted with a partner (66.7%; of which in the group of women 70.7% of respondents gave this answer, and in the group of men - none) or bought alone (23.3%; in the group of women 83% respondents said so, and in the group of men - 100%) or consulted with people outside the household (15%; of which 15.9% gave the answer in the group of women, and none in the group of men). Sometimes this purchase is consulted with other household members (6,6%).

Therefore, in case of phone or laptop purchase, women more often than men consult it with a partner or other household member. Men rather make such decisions without consulting their household members. Facebook advertising for products such as laptops or phones targeted at men should not include members of their household. It is different in the case of women - if these ads are targeted at them, then it would be worthwhile to include their household members (especially partners) at the same time, as they are likely to consult them.

 

The next product is a car. Respondents even if they buy it for own purpose, consult the purchase with a partner (61.7%). In the group of women such answer was given by 63.7%, while in the group of men - 28.6%. However, opinions of people outside the household are also important for respondents (20.8%). In the group of women, 20.4% gave such an answer, while in the group of men - 28.6%. Some consult this purchase with other household members (5.8%) and with children (1.7%). There are also Facebook users who do not consult such a purchase with anyone, but buy independently (4.2%) and - which is surprising - 100% of these people are women. It should be added that many respondents (22.5%) indicated that question about car purchase did not apply to them (they probably never bought a car for own needs).

When it comes to buying a car for the whole family, the respondents' answers are quite similar to car purchase for own purpose: 71.1% consult it with a partner (including 73.4% of respondents in the group of women, and 42% in the group of men), 20% - this issue does not apply, 16.7% - consults the purchase with people outside the household. It is worth adding that in case of buying a car for the whole family, respondents more often consult it with children (7.5%) and with other household members (6,7%) than in case of buying a car for own purpose. Therefore, if the car is typically intended for a family, it is worth targeting the advertising of such a product to customers' household members, regardless of whether audience are men or women.

In most cases, the purchase of clothes (shirts, pants) is not consulted with anyone and Facebook users buy them indepently (68.3%; in the group of women 69.9% respondents said so, and in the group of men - 42.9%). In addition, 26.7% consult this type of shopping with a partner (there are 13% of men in this group). Taking into account gender, it should be noted that among the surveyed women, 25% consult the purchase of clothing for themselves with a partner, and among the surveyed men - 57%. Therefore, men twice as often as women value the opinion of their partner when buying a shirt or pants for themselves. This is a very important conclusion in the context of Facebook advertising for clothing products.

The purchase of a kitchen dishwasher is most often consulted with a partner (70.8%; in the group of women 71.7% respondents said so, and in the group of men - 57.1%). Sometimes the opinion of people outside the household (9.2%) or other household members (6.8%) also matters. Men much more often than women buy dishwashers without consultation (5.8%; including 28.6% in the group of men, and only 4.4% in the group of women). Therefore, advertising for dishwashers targeted at women may include other household members more often than men.

In case of buying a TV for the living room, most often respondents consult with a partner (73.3%). However, in the group of women, 77.9% of people gave such an answer, and in the group of men - 42.9%. Sometimes the purchase of the TV is consulted with other household members (9.2%) or with children (4.2%) and at other times people outside the household help in making a purchase decision (9.2%). 4.2% of respondents make independent purchases of a TV set without consultation (including 2.7% of respondents in the group of women and 28.6% in the group of men).

Therefore, women twice as often as men consult buying a TV with a partner. Men, in turn, more often than women make such decisions themselves. Therefore, advertisements targeted at women on TVs for women should also cover their household members. However, it's also worth doing for men.

Another product is car insurance. In general, respondents most often consult its purchase with a partner (48.3%), but also with people outside the household (18.3%) or it is an independent purchase (18.3%). 19.2% of respondents do not apply this question. However, taking into account the gender structure, it should be emphasized that all surveyed men (100%) buy insurance for their car themselves, without any consultation. This means that the option of targeting Facebook car insurance ads to customer household members should only apply to women, never men.

The purchase of last minute trips for the whole family is consulted with the partner by the majority of respondents (70%; including 72.7% in the group of women and 42.9% in the group of men), as well as with children (15%). In addition, decisions on this type of purchase are also consulted with people outside the household (5%). 2.5% Of the respondents buy such trips themselves, without consultation (including 1.7% for women and 14.3% for men). Therefore, this type of product should be targeted on Facebook not only to customers, but also to their household members, while for women this option will be a little more desirable than for men

The last analyzed product were care treatments (including massage treatment). Among the respondents, 67.5% make the purchase decision alone, without any consultation. In the group of women, this response rate was 67.3%, and in the group of men - 71.4%. Only about 15% of respondents consult this purchase with their partner or other members of the household (in the group of women this ratio is 14.2% and the same in the group of men - 14.2%). The conclusion is that in the case of products such as care treatments, the use of Facebook targeting options for members of the customer's household may be of little use.

The conclusions and relationships described above were presented in the form of matrix of support for purchasing decisions in case of selected products (Table 2). It should be emphasized that the column "All" applies mainly to women, as women dominated among the respondents.

The table shows that men are more likely than women to make independent purchasing decisions. This means that the option of targeting Facebook ads to household members can be much more useful for women. In addition, among the household members, the partner has a definitely dominant influence on purchasing decisions. This leads to the conclusion that advertising for household members can probably be more effective for two-person households, consisting of two partners (possibly also for larger households if the other members are not registered on Facebook), provided that the cost of such advertising increases as the number of household members increases. It's definitely worth using this type of advertising for products dedicated to couples. Then such advertising can be particularly beneficial for the company. In addition, partner has by far the largest impact on purchasing decisions, especially in the case of women, also when it comes to people outside the household. This would lead to the conclusion that the option of targeting advertising to other members of the household is particularly useful. Although it will be still verified later in the article.

**Table 2: Matrix of support for purchasing decisions in case of selected products**

| **Who supports purchasing decisions→** | **partner** | | | **other household member (including children)** | | | **non-household member** | | | **Non consultation / self-decision** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Product↓** | **All** | **W** | **M** | **All** | **W** | **M** | **All** | **W** | **M** | **All** | **W** | **M** |
| Furniture | x | x | x | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mobile phone / laptop | | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cars | x | x | x | | | | | | | | | |
| Clothes | | | x | | | | | | | | | |
| Dishwasher | | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| TV | | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Car insurance | | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Last minute trip | | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Care treatment | | | | | | | | | | | | |

<u>Legend:</u>

All – all respondents (mainly women - 94%), W – women, M – men

x – a situation when targeting the Facebook ad to customer's household members could be useful

| | |
|---|---|
| | 90% of respondents* and more |
| | 80-90% of respondents* |
| | 60-79% of respondents* |
| | 40-59% of respondents* |
| | 20-39% of respondents* |
| | less than 20% of respondents* |

* For women (W), their percentage of all women's responses was taken into account, and for men (M) their percentage of all men's responses.

*Source: own.*

### 5.2 What decision about purchasing the product for themselves would the respondents make if their partners strongly discouraged them?

To examine the role of household members in the purchasing process, respondents were also asked what purchasing decision they would make if the partner strongly advised against buying them. The results of the research in this area are presented below (Table 3).

**Table 3: Respondents' responses regarding whether they would resign from purchasing the selected product if their partner strongly discouraged its brand or color**

| | Definetly agree | | Rather agree | | Do not know | | Rather disagree | | Definitely disagree | | Not applicable | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| selected brand of the phone | 84 | 35 | 76 | 31.7 | 24 | 10 | 20 | 8.3 | 34 | 14.2 | 2 | 0.8 |
| selected color of the phone | 20 | 8.3 | 18 | 7.5 | 22 | 9.2 | 46 | 19.2 | 130 | 54.2 | 4 | 1.7 |
| selected brand of the laptop | 94 | 39.2 | 64 | 26.7 | 34 | 14.2 | 18 | 7.5 | 28 | 11.7 | 2 | 0.8 |
| selected color of the laptop | 14 | 5.8 | 28 | 11.7 | 22 | 9.2 | 48 | 20 | 124 | 51.7 | 4 | 1.7 |
| selected brand of the car | 96 | 40 | 60 | 25 | 34 | 14.2 | 18 | 7.5 | 16 | 6.7 | 16 | 6.7 |
| selected color of the car | 18 | 7.5 | 32 | 13.3 | 38 | 15.8 | 48 | 20 | 84 | 35 | 20 | 8.3 |
| selected brand of the shirt / pants | 24 | 10 | 26 | 10.8 | 30 | 12.5 | 58 | 24.2 | 90 | 37.5 | 12 | 5 |
| selected color of the shirt / pants | 16 | 6.7 | 34 | 14.2 | 24 | 10 | 50 | 20.8 | 102 | 42.5 | 14 | 5.8 |
| selected brand of the perfumes | 34 | 14.2 | 28 | 11.7 | 34 | 14.2 | 34 | 14.2 | 86 | 35.8 | 24 | 10 |

*Source: own.*

It can be clearly seen that if the partner strongly advised against buying, respondents are willing to give up their chosen phone brand (35% definetly agree, 31.7% rather agree), laptop brand (39.2% definetly agree, 26.7% rather agree) and car brand (40% definetly agree, 25% rather agree). However, considering the gender diversity, it can be noted that this only applies to women. Men are unlikely to suggest the opinion of a partner in this matter. In the group of men, the answers were as follows: change of phone brand under the influence of a partner - 42.9% definetly disagree, 28.6% rather disagree; laptop brand change - 42.9% definetly disagree, 28.6% rather disagree and car brand change - 42.9% definetly disagree, 28.6% rather disagree. For comparison, the answers in the group of women were as follows: change of phone brand under the influence of a partner - 36.3% definetly agree, 32.7% rather agree; laptop brand change - 40.7% definetly agree, 27.4% rather agree and car brand change - 42.5% definetly agree, 25.7% rather agree.

 

The situation is different if the partner advised against the color of the phone (54.2% definetly disagree, 19.2% rather disagree), the color of the laptop (51.7% definetly disagree, 20% rather disagree), or the color of the car (35% definetly disagree, 20% rather disagree). In this case, both men and women are hardly susceptible to partner's suggestions. In the group of men, the answers were as follows: change of phone color under the influence of a partner - 57.1% definetly disagree, 43.9% rather disagree; laptop color change - 57.1% definetly disagree, 43.9% rather disagree and car color change - 28.6% definetly disagree, 28.6% rather disagree. For comparison, the answers in the group of women were as follows: change of phone color under the influence of a partner - 54% definetly disagree, 17.7% rather disagree; laptop color change - 51.3% definetly disagree, 18.6% rather disagree and car color change - 38% definetly disagree, 19.5% rather disagree. At the same time, men have a much less firm stand on the color of the car than the color of the laptop or phone.

Respondents are not sensitive to the partner's negative attitude towards the chosen shirt or pants brand (51.7% definetly disagree, 20% rather disagree), their color (51.7% definetly disagree, 20% rather disagree), or the chosen perfume brand (51.7% definetly disagree, 20% rather disagree). Considering the gender diversity, the results are more similar. Regarding clothing brands in the group of men the answers were as follows: 42.9% definetly disagree, 14.3% rather disagree, and in the group of women: 37.2% definetly disagree, 21.2% rather disagree. In turn, regarding the color of the shirt or pants, among men the answers were: 28.5% definetly disagree, 14.3% rather disagree, and among women: 43.4% definetly disagree, 21.2% rather disagree. So when it comes to the color of the shirt or pants, women less than men suggest their partner's opinion. Regarding the choice of perfume brand, in the group of men the answers were: 28.6% definetly disagree, 14.3% rather disagree, and in the group of women: 36.3% definetly disagree, 14.2% rather disagree. In the case of the perfume brand, women are slightly less likely to suggest according to their partner than men.

The conclusions and relationships described above were presented in the form of matrix of support for purchasing decisions in case of selected products (Table 4).

As it turns out, men are unlikely to give up buying a brand or color product under the influence of a partner's suggestion. This is especially true for the color of the phone or laptop. Women, in turn, are more susceptible to the opinions of partners in the case of a phone, laptop or car brand. In this case, the option of targeting the advertisement to members of her household (partner) at the same time can be extremely useful. Companies advertising women's clothing are unlikely to use this option. However, it can be considered by companies that advertise men's clothing or perfumes.

**Table 4: Matrix of purchase resignation under the influence of a partner**

| | **Resignation in a situation when a partner strongly discourages the purchase** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **All** | | **W** | | **M** | |
| | **Yes*** | **No*** | **Yes*** | **No*** | **Yes*** | **No*** |
| Phone brand | | | x | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Laptop brand | | | x | | | |
| Car brand | | | x | | | |
| Phone color | | | | | | |
| Laptop color | | | | | | |
| Car color | | | | | | |
| Shirt / pants brand | | | | | | |
| Shirt / pants color | | | | | x | |
| Perfumes brand | | | | | x | |

*”Yes” – the sum of responses “definetly agree” and ”rather agree”; “No” - the sum of responses “definetly disagree” and ”rather disagree”; the responses 'not applicable' and 'don't know' were not taken into account.

Legend:

All – all respondents (mainly women - 94%), W – women, M – men

x – a situation when targeting the Facebook ad to customer's household members could be useful

| | |
|---|---|
| | 90% of respondents** and more |
| | 80-90% of respondents** |
| | 60-79% of respondents** |
| | 40-59% of respondents** |
| | 20-39% of respondents** |
| | less than 20% of respondents** |

** For women (W), their percentage of all women's responses was taken into account, and for men (M) their percentage of all men's responses.

*Source: own.*

## 5.3 What role do members of respondents' household play in their purchasing decisions?

The respondents were also asked directly about how they assess the role of other household members in making decisions about buying products for the whole family (Table 5).

 

**Table 5: Assessment of the role of other households' members in the decision about buying products for the whole family in the respondents' opinion**

| | All respondents | | Women | | Men | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % of all respondents | N | % of women | N | % of men |
| Very large | 82 | 34.2 | 82 | 36.3 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Rather large | 102 | 42.5 | 92 | 40.7 | 10 | 71.4 |
| Average | 44 | 18.3 | 42 | 18.6 | 2 | 14.3 |
| Rather small | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Very small | 12 | 5.0 | 10 | 4.4 | 2 | 14.3 |
| Total | 240 | 100 | 226 | 100.0 | 14 | 100.0 |

*Source: own.*

Respondents believe that members of their household play a large role in making decisions about buying products for the whole family (rather large 42.5%, very large 34.2%). Men ("rather large" - 71.4%) slightly less definitely admit it than women (rather large 40,7%, very large 36,3%).

### 5.4 How do respondents assess their role in making decisions about buying products for the whole family?

Respondents highly value their role in making decisions about buying products for the whole family: 63.3% think it is very large, and 25.8% - rather large. The surveyed men and women have a similar opinion in this respect (Table 6).

**Table 6: Assessment of own role in making the decision to purchase products for the whole family in the opinion of respondents**

| | All respondents | | Women | | Men | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % of all respondents | N | % of women | N | % of men |
| Very large | 152 | 63.3 | 148 | 65.5 | 4 | 28.6 |
| Rather large | 62 | 25.8 | 54 | 23.9 | 8 | 57.1 |
| Average | 20 | 8.3 | 20 | 8.8 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Rather small | 2 | 0.8 | 2 | 0.9 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Very small | 4 | 1.7 | 2 | 0.9 | 2 | 14.3 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 240 | 100 | 226 | 100.0 | 14 | 100.0 |

*Source: own.*

Slightly different case looks for purchases of products that respondents do for their own needs. According to respondents, the role of their household members in making decisions about purchasing products for them is medium (30.8%) or rather low (28.3%). There are some differences in the responses of men and women (Table 7).

**Table 7: Assessment of the role of other household members in making decisions about purchasing products for respondents in their opinion**

| | All respondents | | Women | | Men | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % of all respondents | N | % of women | N | % of men |
| Very large | 16 | 6.7 | 14 | 6.2 | 2 | 14.3 |
| Rather large | 34 | 14.2 | 33 | 14.6 | 1 | 7.1 |
| Average | 74 | 30.8 | 66 | 29.2 | 8 | 57.1 |
| Rather small | 68 | 28.3 | 66 | 29.2 | 2 | 14.3 |
| Very small | 48 | 20.0 | 47 | 20.8 | 1 | 7.1 |
| Total | 240 | 100 | 226 | 100.0 | 14 | 100.0 |

*Source: own.*

Over half of the surveyed men stated that their household members play an average role in their purchasing decisions (57.1%). Among women this view is shared by 29.2% of people and the same number of respondents claim that this role is rather small (29.2%).

In general, the results presented show that household members have a large impact on purchasing decisions made for the needs of that household. This shows that targeting ads for products that can be used by the whole family to all household members of customers can be extremely useful and effective. Slightly less effective it can be in the case of products that are dedicated to specific people.

### 5.5 Whose opinions are more valued by respondents: household members or others?

Nowadays, in the era of social media, opinions about products that are posted there have a huge impact on consumer decisions. However, are they more important than the opinions of household members (e.g. a partner)? Opinions of respondents in this area are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: Respondents' most valued opinions in their purchasing decisions**

| *Whose opinions are more valued by respondents: household members or others?* | All respondents | | Women | | Men | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % of all respondents | N | % of women | N | % of men |
| Partner | 186 | 77.5 | 178 | 78.8 | 8 | 57.1 |
| Children | 44 | 18.3 | 40 | 17.7 | 4 | 28.6 |
| Other members of the household | 32 | 13.3 | 30 | 13.3 | 2 | 14.3 |
| People outside the household | 76 | 31.7 | 74 | 32.7 | 2 | 14.3 |
| Reviews on the internet | 94 | 39.2 | 88 | 38.9 | 6 | 42.9 |
| Friends | 82 | 34.2 | 80 | 35.4 | 2 | 14.3 |
| No one | 8 | 3.3 | 6 | 2.7 | 2 | 14.3 |
| Total* | 522 | 217.5 | 496 | 219.5 | 26 | 185.7 |

*The sum may be greater than 100%, as the respondents could choose more than one answer.

*Source: own.*

As it turns out, respondents value their partner's opinions the most (77.5%). Twice less valuable are the opinions of the Internet (39.2%), opinions or friends (34.2%). However, the partner's opinions are more appreciated by women (78.8%) than men (57.1%). Men (42.9%) slightly more than women (39.2%) value the role of opinions on the Internet. They also more appreciate the role of children in making purchasing decisions (28.6% vs. 18.3%). In general, men taking purchase decisions relay on their partner opinion as well as opinions on the Internet and opinions of children. Women, in turn, take many other opinions into account, including friends (34.2%) or people outside the household (31.7%).

To finally determine whose opinions for respondents are more valuable: persons from the household or opinions of other people (e.g. those on the Internet), the respondents were directly asked about it (Table 9).

**Table 9: The position of respondents to the statement: "When you buy products for yourself, you value the opinions of your household members more than other people (e.g. friends, opinions on the internet, etc.)"**

| | All respondents | | Women | | Men | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % of all respondents | N | % of women | N | % of men |
| Strongly agree | 62 | 25.8 | 62 | 27.4 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Rather agree | 66 | 27.5 | 60 | 26.5 | 6 | 42.9 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Don't know / hard to say | 72 | 30.0 | 66 | 29.2 | 6 | 42.9 |
| Rather disagree | 22 | 9.2 | 22 | 9.7 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Strongly disagree | 18 | 7.5 | 16 | 7.1 | 2 | 14.3 |
| Total | 240 | 100 | 226 | 100 | 14 | 100 |

*Source: own.*

Respondents uncertainly admit that when they buy products for own purpose, the opinions of people from the household (mainly a partner) are more valuable than the opinions of other people (27.5% rather agree; 25.8% strongly agree). Women are more decided in this case (27.4% rather agree; 26.5% strongly agree) than men (42.9% rather agree; 42.9% doesn't know). Certainly much depends on the type of buying products, which has already been illustrated in this article. Undoubtedly, however, in many cases, the people we live with have a great impact on our purchasing decisions. Therefore, the option of targeting ads to household members on Facebook is very useful.

## 6 Conclusion

Research clearly showed a large impact of household members on the purchase decisions of Facebook users for all products that were taken into account. However, it has been observed that the strength of this effect depends on many factors. This article focuses on several of them:

- gender of consumers (e.g. women much more often than men consult purchasing different products with a partner; men are more often independent in making consumer decisions than women),
- type of household (e.g. the partner has a much greater impact on consumer decisions than children or other members of the household),
- the type of products (e.g. purchase of a telephone may be consulted less often with household members than a car),
- product features (e.g. due to the partner's suggestions, we may be more willing to change the product brand than its color),
- the purpose of the product (whether we buy it for ourselves or for the whole family; e.g. the purchase of furniture for the living room is usually consulted with a partner, and the purchase of a care treatment for ourselves not necessarily).

The research results allow to accept the hypothesis that household members of Facebook users play a key role in their purchasing decisions. However, the strength of this impact depends on many factors, such as: gender, household type, product type, product characteristics or product purpose. Therefore, the analyzed Facebook advertising tool is very useful, although its effectiveness depends on many determinants. It is definitely worth targeting such ads if the products are dedicated to couples or whole families (e.g. last minute holidays, furniture, etc.). If we want to increase sales of such products as e.g. phone, laptop, car, etc. among women, then using this advertising option can definitely be very effective. Men often know more about these types of products, so women will advise them on these matters. On the other hand, it is not worth using this option when targeting men, because they often make decisions for purchasing these products on their own or based on online reviews. Similarly, it is not worth using this option for women in the case of advertising women's clothing, cosmetics for women, etc., because ladies often make such purchases themselves. However, if we want to sell e.g. clothing or cosmetics for men, then it is worth targeting such ads not only to men, but also to their partners, because ladies are often better able to advise on this topic.

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