

Visual Browsing: How Consumers Search over Visual Content in Online Retailing

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Abstract:

In the online fashion industry, product images play a pivotal role in shaping the consumer search process by providing essential visual information that influences consumers' purchase decisions. However, previous literature on consumer search typically focuses on structured information about the product such as the price and product category. In this paper, we examine the relationship between customer search behaviour and product visual information through individual-level customer search journeys on a fashion website. We demonstrate that clicked and purchased products do not look similar. Additionally, we show that most visual features affect search, but do not affect what products consumers purchase. Finally, we discuss implications for modelling consumer search decisions and for managers.