

[13]

## THE MEDIATING ROLE OF GENDER IN THE PROCESS OF PURCHASING IN ONLINE “BUY-IT-NOW” AUCTIONS

Cypryański, J<sup>1</sup>, Grzesiuk, A<sup>2</sup> and Rudawska, E<sup>3</sup>

*<sup>1</sup>University of Szczecin/ Institute of IT Management*

*<sup>2</sup>West Pomeranian Business School/ Faculty of Economics and IT*

*<sup>3</sup>University of Szczecin/ Institute of Management and Marketing*

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines gender differences of customer behaviour in online “buy-it-now” (BIN) auctions. The aim of the research was to assess whether there is a relation between customer experience and the choice of the type of BIN auction (highlighted vs. ordinary) with the use of such demographics like gender as well as the relation between a gender and the selected characteristics of online auction. These include product description, retailer’s credibility, the quality of product picture, the way auction title is written, costs of an offer as well as the herd effect. In Poland online auctions are becoming more and more popular form of buying. Customers deciding to buy online expect more than instant information about the seller and his offer. They also find the content and the form of offer’s presentation on the site important. This is the reason why nowadays creating clear and simple sites containing clear and attractively presented information about the sellers’ offer determines purchase. Thus, the rapid development of online auctions calls for a better understanding of potential gender differences in online auction purchasing patterns. The research enabled to understand if online marketing managers could still affect consumers’ decisions in online auctions and how they should allocate marketing resources to become more effective. To achieve these goals a field (natural) experiment was chosen as the investigative empirical method. Our research used transactions data from Allegro platform (the most powerful auction platform in Poland), from the retailer who is a professional online auction seller of pouch for mobile phones. Specific data were collected for each buyer, such as the gender of the buyer, the experience as far as auction buying is concerned and the number of products bought. Also, data regarding determiners of customer behaviour in online auctions in terms of a gender were collected. We found that there is a significant relation between the gender and customer experience as well as the choice of the type of auction. Our evidence suggests that males are more often prone to the effect of herd behaviour. Furthermore it had been proved that gender does not mediate the influence of product description, retailer’s credibility, the quality of product picture, the way auction title is written as well as costs of an offer on the purchasing process in online auctions.

**Keywords:** BIN, gender, herd behaviour, online auction, Poland, quality signals