

SFU Press Releases Collection

These archival copies have been generated from web press releases maintained and originally written by SFU Communications and Marketing. Where possible, an effort has been made to preserve the public comments left on the website as well as any included photos or other images. All textual content should be faithful to the original press releases; contact numbers have been removed but they have not otherwise been altered in any way. However, this collection of documents spans multiple generations of web authoring software and not all formatting will be exact.

Women shoppers prefer online warmth

Simon Fraser University Public Affairs and Media Relations (pamr) [Phone removed]

Contact: Dianne Cyr, [Phone removed]; dianne_cyr@sfu.ca

Marianne Meadahl, pamr, [Phone removed]

July 24, 2006

Online shopping that offers a warm and social environment is more appealing to women shoppers than to men - and that could have significant implications for web designers, according to a new study on gender differences in e-commerce.

A survey of 185 participants who were tested on five experimental web conditions shows that women were more influenced by the presence of social elements. The study also found that websites with a social presence were more likely to generate e-loyalty among potential shoppers.

While more women are accessing the internet intending to shop online, little is known about gender differences in e-commerce, says study researcher Dianne Cyr, a business professor at SFU Surrey.

"Compared to offline shopping, e-shopping may be viewed as more impersonal, anonymous and generally absent of face-to-face interactions - making it more difficult to understand how to create customer loyalty," says Cyr.

Research shows that women are less likely to purchase online than men. "This may be the result of websites that are not compatible with women's design preferences, and because women perceive websites differently than men," Cyr adds. While the study showed that perceived social presence influences women's e-loyalty, Cyr says men may also benefit from websites with a more personal feeling.