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Personalized Advertising Online and its Difficulties with Customer Privacy

Business Administration
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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of this paper is to explain and to create an understanding if personalized advertising online creates value for customers.

Design/methodology/approach: A qualitative study through 14 semi-structured interviews.

Findings: The study found personalized advertising to be seen as value co-creation in some cases, but because privacy concerns exist and affect the perception of advertising, it can in many cases lead to value co-destruction instead. It is thus a consideration between privacy concerns and the perceived value of the personalized advertising that decides if the offering will co-create or co-destroy value.

Research limitations/implications for future research: Our study did not involve respondents' younger than 21 years old, which could have affected the result as this is a generation seen as technology savvy. Through a quantitative study, future research could try to find extremes in personalities by conducting a survey with a large sample of people in different ages, nationalities, gender, active online, etc. in order to see if there are correlations between for example age and privacy concerns.

Practical implications: One purpose of the study is to provide companies with insights of how different customers perceive personalized advertising online in terms of customer value in order for companies to know how to think when targeting their customers.

Keywords: online advertising, personalized advertising, personalized-privacy paradox, privacy concerns, value creation, value co-creation, value co-destruction.

Sammanfattning

Syfte: Syftet med uppsatsen är att förklara och att skapa en förståelse för om personlig annonsering online skapar värde för kunder.

Design/metod/förhållningssätt: En kvalitativ studie med 14 semi-strukturerade intervjuer.

Resultat: Studien visar att personlig annonsering kan anses samskapa värde i vissa fall men att eftersom det finns en oro över kunders integritet som kan påverka uppfattningen av annonseringen så kan det i många fall leda till värdeförstörande istället. Det är en övervägning mellan denna oro och det uppfattade värdet av den personliga annonseringen som bestämmer om den kommer anses som värdeskapande eller värdeförstörande.

Begränsningar i studien/förslag till framtida forskning: En begränsning i studien är att respondenter under än 21 år inte är inkluderade vilket kan ha påverkat resultatet eftersom denna generation anses som tekniskt kunniga och aktiva online. Framtida forskning kan fokusera på att göra en kvantitativ studie för att hitta olika extremer i personligheter genom att utföra en enkät med ett stort urval av människor i olika åldrar, nationaliteter, kön, internetvanor m.m. för att se om det finns några samband mellan till exempel ålder och oro över integritet.

Praktiska implikationer: Ett syfte med studien är att tillhandahålla företag med insikter om hur olika kunder uppfattar personliga annonser online vad det gäller kundvärde för att företag ska kunna veta hur de ska rikta den mot sina kunder.

Nyckelord: online advertising, personalized advertising, personalized-privacy paradox, privacy concerns, value creation, value co-creation, value co-destruction.

Table of contents

1. Introduction

The introductory section begins with a background to the problem, followed by a problem discussion. Then the purpose and contribution of the study is presented, and the section concludes with describing the disposition of the study.

1.1. Background to the problem

The development of the Internet and social media have changed the way businesses are promoting their brands and products. Companies today have other conditions than they had a decade ago (Lamberton & Stephen 2016). The development of the Internet and social media have helped companies to easier reach and adjust their offerings to their customers. According to Lamberton and Stephen (2016), online advertising has created new ways of reaching, engaging, informing, and learning about customers, thus making companies able to offer them something different.

Companies have not only changed the way they promote, but also what promotions they are offering. Earlier, companies focused on delivering the same message to one segment (Simonson 2005), today companies use personalized advertising, where they collect data about their customers in order to deliver personalized offers to each customer (Estrada-Jiménez et al. 2016). They continue, arguing that personalized advertising is the most effective and profitable advertising as companies can display more relevant offers to each customer, thus creating greater customer value. As a result, many companies today use personalized advertising on social media to get in touch with their customers with relevant offerings.

As the way of communicating with customers has changed from a traditional one-way communication to communicating through social media and personalized advertisements (Jordaan & Van Heerden 2016), the problem of protecting customer privacy has arisen (Mosteller & Poddar 2017). This privacy paradox is described as the gap between a person's privacy concerns and the behavior of sharing information online (Norberg et al. 2007). Previous researchers have discussed the problem of protecting users' privacy in social media with a focus on customer behavior (Yongick & Yeuseung 2016; Chang et al. 2017). They show that people are worried about what information that is collected and how it is being used. Furthermore, it is clear that the fear of people's privacy online is a big problem in personalized advertising today, and needs to be further addressed how it affects the perception of personalized advertisements.

1.2. Problem discussion

Previous researchers have studied how different social media platforms are working with regulations to secure users' privacy and how companies are working with social media as a way of reaching their customers (Tucker 2014; Chang et al. 2017; Mahmood & Sismeiro 2017). However, less research has been conducted to understand if customers value personalized advertising in consideration of privacy concerns. Jung (2017) means that customers are concerned about what information companies are collecting. This is important to study further as business is about creating value for customers and if customers do not value the offerings, companies will not get any profit (Kumar & Reinartz 2016). In order for customers to value personalized advertising, it needs to create more benefits than disadvantages (Kumar & Reinartz 2016). Consequently, customers may be more concerned about their privacy than they value personalized advertisements. As a result, personalized advertising may create dissatisfaction for some customers.

The discussion about privacy concerns leads to an interesting paradox, namely if companies really co-create value together with their customers in personalized advertising, or if the value is rather co-destroyed for some customers when their integrity is affected. If personalized advertisements lead to value co-destruction, personalized advertising may not be as profitable and effective as previous findings have suggested (Estrada-Jiménez et al. 2016). Moreover, Kannan and Hongshuang (2017) suggest that future studies should examine how privacy concerns can affect customers' valuation of personalized services. Thus, there is a need to understand when the value is actually co-created with the customer, and when it is taken too far and becomes value co-destruction. Hence, our findings will contribute to a better understanding of the privacy paradox and the value creation in terms of value co-creation and value co-destruction.

1.3. Aim

The aim of this paper is to explain and to create an understanding if personalized advertising online creates value for customers.

1.4. Disposition

The paper is organized as followed. First, the development of online advertising and social media platforms is explained. Second, a review of previous personalized advertising research is presented followed by an explanation of how value creation is considered throughout the paper. Thereafter, privacy concerns and the privacy paradox are further discussed. Then, the methodology of the thesis is defined. To analyze the data, an empirical analysis is presented followed by a deepening discussion of the findings. To conclude the paper, theoretical insights and limitations are presented, and future research and managerial implications are suggested.

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework presents previous research and theories that underlie our empirical study. The chapter is initiated with the development of online advertising and social media platforms, and continues with a discussion of personalized advertising and the privacy concerns it induces, and concludes with suggestions how to solve these problems. Since the study focuses on how customers value personalized advertising, value creation will penetrate the entire chapter.

2.1. Online advertising

Digitalization and the Internet have had a great influence on how companies advertise today. During the past two decades, promotions have gone from traditional to digital media channels, such as social media platforms, (Lamberton & Stephen 2016). However, they continue to argue that it is no further distinction between traditional and digital today as digital media channels are integrated in businesses and is a common tool in companies' promotion strategies.

Today, online advertising is seen as the most significant way of promoting a brand, where most companies have implemented it and are continuously improving it. Zarouali et al. (2017) argue that companies are using online advertising as a technique for understanding the customer's behavior and characteristics. Notably, online advertising creates the opportunity for companies to reach, inform, engage, sell to, learn about, and provide services to their customers in new and easier ways (Lamberton & Stephen 2016). In just a few of seconds, companies can reach their customers with information, which makes online advertising time efficient (Shukla 2010). By using online advertising, companies can collaborate with their customers to communicate, create, deliver, and sustain value for all stakeholders (Kannan & Hongshuang 2017). As a result, customers are a part of the advertising process and are now more empowered and informed than ever before. With empowered customers, there is greater pressure on companies to provide effective and accurate offers.

2.1.1. Social media platforms

Social media platforms are sites where people can communicate with each other and share personal information (Jung 2017), such as home address, phone number, income, weight, date of birth, political and religious views, and search history (Kokolakis 2017). In the years of 2005-2010, companies started to use social media platforms as digital media channels (Lamberton & Stephen 2016), since they could take advantage of personal information about their customers to further develop their businesses (Chang et al. 2016). This type of communication enabled customers to be more interactive with companies rather than a one-way communication (Lamberton & Stephen 2016). With this

development, social media platforms have become a big part of promoting brands and has changed the way communication is done by companies (Mosteller & Poddar 2017). Online brand messaging, such as blogging or posting on social media platforms, has grown to be significant for businesses (Cruz et al. 2017), as it helps them to easier reach their customers.

During 2011-2014, social media platforms expanded at a fast pace (Lamberton & Stephen 2016). Some social media platforms that are commonly used today are Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. With over 1 billion users, Facebook, and other sites have become the most influential online channels. Social media is built-up and dependent on users' personal information (Chang et al. 2016). As a result, the key information in business has changed from being the professionals' intelligence to the customers' information (Penni 2017). This has changed the way companies are advertising as the customers have a greater influence (Hallam & Zanella 2017). Lamberton and Stephen (2016) mean that customers can be seen as both advertisers and customers in social media since they can share information about companies. Likewise, customers have an active role in advertising, resulting in greater customer engagement (Wang & Kim 2017).

Consequently, the digital development has enabled several advantages for companies (Mahmood & Sismeiro 2017), where Tiago and Veríssimo (2014) mean that companies need to use social media in order to fully utilize the advantages of digitalization. Most companies have understood this shift and are using social media in their businesses today (Mahmood & Sismeiro 2017). One way companies have taken advantage of social media is by using influencer marketing. According to Sudha and Sheena (2017), influencer marketing is the process where a company finds individuals with influence over others and engage them in the company's promotions. They argue that it is an extension of word-of-mouth marketing, but also relationship building.

With the development of online advertising, customers have new and various expectations that companies need to meet. Aguirre et al. (2016) argue that online advertising does not assure companies to reach their customers on an individual level, in response to this, companies are using personalized offerings. Jung (2017) concurs, meaning that in order for businesses to be recognized and remembered, they need to offer customized offerings based on the customer's information. However, Cruz et al. (2017) argue that there are ongoing challenges as there are no distinct guidelines to follow.

2.2. Personalized advertising

The previous focus of targeting the whole market or segments with impersonal offerings has changed to focus on designing individual offerings to each customer, called personalized advertising or customized advertising (Simonson 2005). Estrada-Jiménez et al. (2016) define personalized advertising as offers

designed to each specific customer presented together with the content on the website so the offer seems to be a part of the website the customer is visiting. Personalized advertising is designed from personal information about the customer (Awad & Krishnan 2006), which means that it would not be possible without customers sharing their information. Personalized advertising is commonly used on social media platforms since it is possible to gather information from the users' personal pages about education, occupation, interests, communities, living conditions, and friends (Jung 2017). Jung continues, stating that new technologies have improved and simplified the way of collecting customer data. As a result, personalized advertising is the most effective and profitable promotion technique today (Estrada-Jiménez et al. 2016), where companies spend an extensive amount of their budgets on it (Cruz et al. 2017).

Personalized advertising is a good way of providing customers with the right type of offers (Jung 2017). Zhu and Chang (2016) mean that the right type of offer is relevant to the customer. Relevant advertising can be seen as offers related to the customer's values or life goals (Zhu & Chang 2016). Krafft et al. (2017) argue that customers are preferring communication matching their interests, which is relevant and personalized. Moreover, if a customer gets relevant personalized offerings, it will create greater customer value than regular advertising (Simonson 2005). In fact, if the customer finds the offering to be relevant, the customer is more likely to pay attention to it (Jung 2017). Cruz et al. (2017) suggest that by addressing the customer directly, it will increase sales by 31 percent. They also advocate that personalized brand messages will increase customer involvements. On the contrary, Shen (2014) means that personalized advertising can be considered annoying or irritable as it disturbs the customer's visit to a webpage. Treiblmaier and Pollach (2007) also mean that if companies contact customers too often, they will begin to ignore the offers.

One type of personalized advertising is retargeting, which Yang et al. (2015) explain is to target online users with what they have previously searched for or seen on a website which did not result in a sale. This information of the customer is collected through "cookies", which stores the customer's browsing history (Yang et al. 2015). Retargeting is commonly used today, and Zarouali et al. (2017) suggest that future studies should focus on this. According to them, retargeted advertisements lead to a higher purchase intention among customers than non-retargeted advertisements. However, this has led to security and trust issues by customers due to the collection of customer information (Chang et al. 2016).

2.3. Value creation

Kumar and Reinartz (2016) argue that for a company to be profitable, their offerings must create value for their customers. Without customer value, the

customer will not be satisfied with the offerings. They continue saying that customer value is the benefits from the offering after the costs have been subtracted. By using personalized advertising, it is easier to create customer value as it targets each customer with individual preferences (Simonson 2005). Jung (2017) means that personalized offerings must be relevant to the customer in such as personal needs or values in order to create customer value. For example, a relevant offer is being offered a vacation trip when looking into somewhere to go for the holidays. Treiblmaier and Pollach (2007) mean that the valuation differs for each individual, and more so for highly personal services (Karwatzki et al. 2017).

As discussed, customers are more informed and empowered today due to the digital development and social media platforms. This results in customers being co-creators of value together with companies in personalized advertising (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004). Without customers sharing their information, the value would not be created, and therefore, co-creation is significant. Through the interaction between the company and the customer, the customer will be able to co-create value (Grönroos 2008; Vargo & Lusch 2008). With personalized offers, it is easier for companies to co-create value by providing relevant offers and unique value to each customer according to the individual's preferences (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004).

On the other hand, if customers are not perceiving personalized offerings positive and create value, but rather an intrusion of their privacy, the value can instead become co-destroyed. Echeverri and Skålén (2011) mean that value co-destruction is taking place in the interaction between the company and the customer when the value of the service is destroyed. In the personalized advertising setting, value co-destruction takes place when a customer's privacy concern is higher than the perceived value of getting relevant and personalized offerings. The value can also be seen as co-destroyed when the customer perceives the advertising to be annoying or irritable as the negative aspects of it is more significant than the positive. Thus, it is interesting to study when this takes place and if personalized advertising can be seen as co-destroyed rather than co-created for some customers.

2.4. Privacy concerns

Mosteller and Poddar (2017) suggest that companies can create value by offering personalized advertisements that are more likely to fulfill the customer's needs. This, however, can also lead to value co-destruction, as customers are concerned about their privacy and how their information is being stored (Jung 2017). In 2016, 92 percent of American Internet users were in fact worried about their privacy online (Karwatzki et al. 2017). Krafft et al. (2017) state that customer privacy concern is a challenge for businesses. Chang et al. (2016) describe privacy concerns to be associated with collecting, accessing, using, and controlling sensitive and private data.

Companies online collect a great deal of personal information about their customers through search histories and locations (Aguirre et al. 2016), but also from social media about personal data, interests, and friends (Jung 2017). Kokolakis (2017) claims that some data is more sensitive, including one's health, weight, and browsing history. The information is used to learn about the patterns of customers (Awad & Krishnan 2006), predicting their actions, targeting them, and creating customized advertisements (Mahmood & Sismeiro 2017). Xu et al. (2010) also mean that the data is sold to a third party, where Debatin et al. (2009) continue saying that Facebook and other social media platforms are also selling users' information to third parties.

As technology advances and businesses are collecting more information about their customers, their suspicions grow (Koohikamali et al. 2017). Pagani and Malacarne (2017), studying privacy within the mobile context concur, stating that when privacy concerns occur, the customer is going to change the behavior when using the phone to protect the integrity, for example by turning off the location settings. Karwatzki et al. (2017) found that customers who value their privacy are less willing to be profiled online. Chang et al. (2016) concur, arguing that a customer who feel more privacy concern is less likely to disclose information on online, and more likely to take security precautions (Aguirre et al. 2016). A study by Rainie et al. (2013) found that all of 86 percent of American Internet users have taken actions to protect their privacy online.

Even though customers are concerned about their integrity, they continue sharing information. Hallam and Zanella (2017) argue that this is because customers expect the benefits to outweigh the risks. Moreover, Jordaan and Van Heerden (2016) argue that those who are quitting Facebook are doing so because they believe the risk to be higher. A customer who has been a victim of privacy violation is less likely to trust social media (Culnan & Armstrong 1999). Fortunately, Rainie et al. (2013) only found that six out of 93 respondents had been a victim of an online scam. Xu et al. (2010) argue that innovators and early adopters are more likely to perceive personalized advertising as relevant. Aguirre et al. (2016) concur, stating that innovators value the benefits of personalized advertising higher.

2.5. The privacy paradox

The most common concept in the literature about privacy concerns is the privacy paradox. The privacy paradox explains the gap between the behavior of sharing information online and the concern of customer privacy in collection and usage of customer data (Norberg et al. 2007). As advertising has changed to be more personalized and co-creates value for each individual customer, an extension of the privacy-paradox has developed, called the personalization-privacy paradox. Like the privacy paradox, Awad and Krishnan (2006) describe the personalization-privacy paradox as the gap between privacy concerns and

information sharing, but focuses on the value of personalized offerings. Xu et al. (2010) describe further the phenomenon as on the one hand personalized offerings might create value, but on the other hand, might cause privacy concerns as it results in sharing personal information. For the customer, it is all about a trade-off between using the free service (in this case social media) and the risks of one's privacy (Culnan & Armstrong 1999). They continue, stating that as long as the benefit is perceived higher than the potential risk, the customer will continue to use the service.

There are plenty of different theories explaining the privacy paradox, one being privacy calculus (Aguirre et al. 2016). Privacy calculus suggests that customers weigh the risk of losing their privacy and the benefits of getting personalized offers against one another. Another one is the context-based perspective, which Aguirre et al. (2016) suggests is that customers' concern about privacy is situational. For example, some might share more information if they believe that others also have done so, or when it is a more well-known website or company. A third theory trying to explain the privacy paradox is the construal level theory, which states that customers tend to value near-future intentions more than distant-future events (Hallam & Zanella 2017), meaning that customers want the quick social reward, not thinking about the possible negative effects that might occur in the future.

2.6. Solving the privacy-paradox

Companies are dependent on customers' information to sustain their current customers and attract new (Culnan & Armstrong 1999). This, however, might cost customers their privacy (Awad & Krishnan 2006). Zhu & Chang (2016) suggest that marketers need to understand customers and how they are perceiving personalized advertising and privacy concerns. Furthermore, Lee and Cranage (2011) mean that by having privacy practices to protect customers, personalized services will create more value. More so, the previous research argues that marketers need to understand customers' view on privacy, what is being sacrificed by sharing information, and in turn offer something of value (Krishen et al. 2017). Otherwise, the customer will opt-out of the service if the risk seems to be higher than the benefits (Culnan & Armstrong 1999).

Many researchers (Awad & Krishnan 2006; Karwatzki et al. 2017; Krafft et al. 2017) have discussed customers wanting more transparency and information of how their personal information is being used by companies. However, more transparency might create fear when customers understand just how much information is being collected and used (Karwatzki et al. 2017). Awad and Krishnan (2006) continue on this thread, arguing that those requesting more information are also those who are less willing to be profiled. On the other hand, Mosteller and Poddar (2017) suggest that companies should give customers more control of how they use their information and through that create trust. With higher trust and lower concerns, they argue that customers

will be more likely to share their information on social media, thus, leading to reduced privacy concerns.

Krafft et al. (2017) suggest permission marketing as a potential solution to privacy concerns. Permission marketing is based on that the customer either has requested or accepted getting personalized offerings, usually through e-mail (Tezinde et al. 2002). Reimers et al. (2016) mean that permission marketing is based on the customer providing a company with information, and in return, the company will only send accepted messages. They continue, stating that in order to create value, the messages need to be relevant to the customer's needs, if not, the customer is likely to opt-out of the email list. Reimers et al. (2016) mean that a customer's email inbox is personal, and companies need to remember this in order not to overstep. Jung (2017) continue to argue that if customers get unwanted emails, it will lead to negative feelings towards the company and them opting out of the email lists.

Furthermore, Krafft et al. (2017) state that permission marketing aims to let customers know more about how their information is being used, but it also makes it easy for the customer to opt-out, meaning that they are not obligated to anything. Permission marketing leads to a more positive attitude towards advertising since customers better understand the value of it (Aguirre et al. 2016), making them more likely to share their information. Kokolakis (2017) also promotes permission marketing, arguing that customers are more likely to purchase, even at a premium price, from a company who protects customers' privacy. However, since most social media platforms are paid through advertising, it leaves users with few options to fully opt-out (Estrada-Jiménez et al. 2016).

2.7. Summary

The focus throughout the paper is the value creation in personalized advertising in terms of value co-creation and value co-destruction. The research within the privacy concern concept mostly states that customers are concerned about their integrity, but the theory leaves questions regarding the consideration of relevant advertising and privacy concerns and how to solve privacy issues. The analysis is thus based on the theories discussed in order to get an understanding of the problem in online advertisements and what co-destruction leads to.

3. Methodology

This section provides a description of how the empirical study has been conducted, including a description of the choice of research design, data collection, and data analysis. The section also contains a discussion on the ethical considerations as well as the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study.

3.1. Introduction to the study

As stated in the introduction, the aim of this paper is to explain and to create an understanding if personalized advertising online creates value for customers. This is interesting since previous researchers have only touched the surface of this topic (Kokolakis 2017). They have mostly discussed the privacy paradox, which explains that customers are scared of sharing their information online but simply does not do anything about it (Norberg et al. 2007). However, we hope to take it further than just stating that the problem exists. Rather, we want to create an understanding when the value actually is co-created with the customer, and when personalized advertising is taken too far and becomes value co-destruction instead. By doing this, we will provide additional theoretical knowledge to the privacy concern issue, which today has grown a lot of attention within business research.

A lot of previous research in this field has been quantitative (Xu et al. 2010; Mosteller & Poddar 2017; Krafft et al. 2017), however, we believe privacy concern should be studied further through a qualitative study to create a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. Moreover, we believe it is possible through an explorative study with a qualitative research design. Patel and Davidson (2003) argue that an explorative study is relevant when the purpose is to assemble knowledge in a field with less previous research, as in our case where the past theory has focused on the privacy issue as a whole, but not how it affects the perceived customer value. Since we want to explain and create an understanding of customers' perception of personalized advertising, a qualitative research design was a natural choice. Hartman (2004) argue that a qualitative research design is suitable when the aim is to understand the behavior of people and how they visualize the world they are living in. Moreover, value creation is subjective and individual for each customer, what one person value, someone else might not. Therefore, this needs to be studied in context, which is possible through a qualitative research design.

3.2. Research design

Since we are studying customers' perception of their integrity and privacy concerns, it is important to take into consideration that integrity is perceived differently by different people depending on context, feelings, and experiences. It is important to remember that our result is not the "true

reality" of all customers, but rather reflecting the perceptions of the individual respondents. Furthermore, there is a need for an interpretation of these behaviors and imaginations in order to understand what intentions affect customers' behavior (Hartman 2004). Therefore, we have had an interpretive approach when we collected and analyzed the data.

Moreover, we chose to be skeptical towards the problem and question the value creation of personalized advertising as it is deficient in former studies. Patel and Davidson (2003) argue that a critical perspective is relevant when the aim is to criticize a phenomenon in the society, to inform people about their conditions, or to achieve a change. We believe that the privacy issue online is a big problem in today's society and needs to be addressed further. Akpojivi and Bevan-Dye (2015) suggest a critical approach to be necessary for this field since one cannot withhold information for too long in this global age. Most people are affected by these privacy issues when surfing the web (e.g. getting exposed to different offerings online). By being skeptical of how companies are approaching customers, we are able to collect present data about the problem in order to further analyze it and present how customers actually perceive this issue. Bryman and Bell (2013) concur to this, stating that the results of the critical study should aim to be used to bring about social change, which companies should do once they understand their customers.

3.3. Data collection

When the focus of a study is fairly clear, semi-structured interviews are suitable as more specific topics can be discussed (Bryman & Bell 2015). As a result, we used semi-structured interviews with an interview guide to get the respondents to talk freely about the topic, but at the same time getting answers to the subject in matter (Patel & Davidson 2003). The interview guide is available in appendix 1. We let the respondents know that we were really listening by nodding and humming. This was in accordance with Bryman & Bell (2013) as they believe that the interviewer should show enthusiasm, but not interrupt the respondent. We choose to use face-to-face interviews to get a deeper understanding of how customers perceive personalized advertising online. Patel and Davidson (2003) mean that interviews are suitable when the aim is to get a deeper understanding of how people think about a specific phenomenon. They also argue that it is important to have previous knowledge before interviewing, therefore, we searched for articles in this specific area to get a deeper understanding of the problem before conducting the interviews.

We first conducted a test interview to see if any question needed to be changed or made clearer. Although we believed our interview guide to be rich, the test interview was only about 15 minutes and gave us insufficient answers. We then decided to change some questions to be more open and make the interview guide less structured. By doing so, we noticed that we got broader answers about the respondent's feelings and perceptions, which is what we

wanted all along. After the test interview was conducted, we began booking the interviews where most respondents were contacted through Facebook.

The original interview guide consisted of three topics. Starting off the interview, we asked the respondent to introduce him-/herself to get to know their background, as it helped us in the analysis to understand their answers. Thereafter, we continued to topic one, "personalized advertising online". We asked the respondent where he/she had been in contact with these advertising and what products were shown. After this, we continued to topic two, "customer information". Here we asked questions such as if they knew that businesses are collecting information about them, for what use, and how that made them feel. We also asked if some information was worse than others, thus getting to know what is sensitive information for the respondents. This led to a natural transit into topic three, "the value of personalized advertising". We started off the topic by simply asking if the respondent perceived personalized advertising as something positive or negative. Depending on the answer, we tried to argue for or against their answer to spur the conversation and thus get those more critical viewpoints. By doing this, the respondent could go deeper into the subject. However, after the test-interview we decided to eliminate the third topic since we did not get any in-depth answers and this topic made the interview feel heavily structured. Instead, we choose to developed topic one and two and decided to transfer topic three to the data analysis, where we interpreted the statements into positive or negative feelings.

When the aim is to understand the characteristics of a group of individuals, Hartman (2004) means that it is important that the interviews are personal. Therefore, we decided to make the interviews in person, both of us participating. By having both of us participating, we were able to get a better flow in the interviews as it became more of a conversation, rather than just the respondent answering questions. The interviews were made in relaxing, or laid-back environments, in order for the respondent to feel relaxed. To accomplish this, we started off by buying the respondent coffee and something to eat. While consuming the food, we chatted with each other, mostly about their background and current situation. When the time was in for the interview, the respondent was relaxed and felt safe sharing the answers with us. Using a laid-back environment also made it possible to record the interviews on our telephones without being disturb. The reason why we chose to record the interviews was to get the results as similar to their statements as possible. After each interview, we listened to the recording and transliterated the interview into words. We chose to transliterate and code each interview close to the interview date to get it as accurate as possible. By processing the data directly, we got new ideas and inputs for the upcoming interviews. When transliterating the interviews, we decided to write down every pause and emphasis to get it as similar to what the person actually said and expressed. This is something Bryman and Bell (2013) insist is important if the researcher wants to use the citations and expressions in the analysis.

3.3.1. Respondents

The respondents were chosen on a mix of comfort selection and purposive selection. Bryman and Bell (2015) describe comfort selection as to choose respondents that are easy to get hold of, while a purpose selection is to choose specific people to interview who has something to do with the area that is being studied. Previous researchers on this topic have mostly focused on students (Jeong & Kim 2016; Kokolakis 2017; Koohikamali et al. 2017), a generation that is seen as technology savvy (Hun Lee & Cranage 2010). Kokolakis (2017) argues that further studies should include all ages as privacy concerns are not only something adolescents experience. To get a broader understanding, and thus more depth in our study, we decided to interview people who are active on social media. By active, we referred to those who use social media on a daily basis, no matter the purpose. The respondents consisted of 14 people of different ages, stretching between the age of 21 and 67, including both males and females. When we had completed a few interviews, we began to analyze the answers. After 14 interviews, we had enough answers to analyze and create an understanding of the subject.

3.4. Data analysis

The analysis of the data was conducted by combining different concepts that were singled out from the interviews and thereafter analyzed. We combined different concepts, categories, and codes as suggested by Hartman (2004). An example of this can be found in table 1. By doing so, we found common topics from the different interviews, as well as differences that were later present in the empirical results. The concepts were based on our original interview guide, and the categories and codes reflected the more detailed answers from the respondents about each concept. Furthermore, when adding more interviews, we found new concepts, categories, and codes, which was added and modified to get a clearer view of the data. This is in accordance to Bryman and Bell (2013), who state that by constantly comparing new data with existing, it will help to develop already existing categories. We also used the same data examples for more than one code, as it made it easier to find common topics in different areas. To make sure we did not interpret the data wrongly, both of us coded the data. Bryman and Bell (2015) argue that one problem with coding is the possible problem of losing the context of what is said, which is why we chose to code the data as close to the interviews as possible to get a clearer and better understanding.

Table 1: An example of the coding

Theme	Category	Code	Example
Personal offerings	Relevant offerings	Inspiration & Ideas	*R1: I can find it rather good with personalized advertising since I'm probably interested of it and I can get inspirations and ideas, like advices.*

We chose not to have a separate empirical chapter, instead, we present the data as an empirical analysis, in order to not repeat ourselves too much. We also attached an appendix with a longer description of each interview for the reader to get a fuller overview of the respondents. The structure of the empirical analysis was based on the topics of the theoretical framework and the concepts of the coding, in order to get a common thread throughout the whole paper, which was the first step we took in analyzing the data. The empirical analysis includes detailed descriptions of the respondents' thoughts, which is something Nylén (2013) suggest is important to get a trustworthy empirical presentation. The empirical analysis also highlights certain quotations to get a clear and fair view of the respondents' answers. To extend our empirical analysis, we chose to have a separate chapter discussing the bigger picture of the problem.

3.5. Ethics

3.5.1. Ethical considerations

The research topic can be sensitive to some people as it has to do with personal information and customers' integrity, making it important to consider the ethics during the collection of data. Therefore, it was important to be ethical when introducing the research to the respondents and only use the collected data for the research purpose (Ekengren & Hinnfors 2012). Before the interviews, we chose to only mention the purpose of the study to make sure the respondents' answers were not affected by us. After the interviews, we opened up for questions about our paper or the topic itself. This often led to a further discussion of the topic and curious thoughts of what companies actually are collecting, and the respondents seemed to be positive towards our research. We were also accurate in informing the respondents that it was optional to be a part of the study, in accordance to Patel and Davison (2003).

To make the respondents feel comfortable answering our questions, they were kept confidential in this paper. According to Patel and Davidson (2003), confidential interviews are unidentified in the paper, but the interviewers know who they are. We informed the respondents about the confidentiality when we first contacted them, but also at the beginning of every interview. Ekengren and Hinnfors (2012) mean that it is important to actually be confidential in the interviews and that it should not be possible to identify the respondents. We have been careful in naming the different respondents, calling them "R1, R2, R3 etc." and deleted information about them that was not relevant for the study or that could be connected to the individual. Only the researchers of this study know the identity of the respondents.

3.5.2. Trustworthiness and authenticity

When conducting a qualitative research study, Bryman and Bell (2015) argue that trustworthiness and authenticity are suitable concepts to use as the focus

is to understand a socially constructed reality. We will further discuss our choice of research design through these terms. One part of trustworthiness is credibility which Bryman and Bell (2015) mean is to ensure that the results are reflecting the social reality of the studied problem. Thus, we have been accurate in describing that people perceive integrity differently, which leads us to a result of how the specific respondents perceive privacy concerns and it is not the true reality. For the study to be more credible, Nylén (2013) suggest to continuously question the material, something we have done by letting outside people, such as our supervisor, professors, and other students, read and comment our study throughout the process.

Another part of trustworthiness is dependability, which is to ensure that the researchers have described the study in detail so it can be duplicated (Bryman & Bell 2015). We have described the research process in depth to strengthen the dependability. However, as this is a subject that is changing with the digital development and changes in Internet usage, we believe that it will be hard to conduct this study again and still get the same result. We believe that the respondents change their perceptions from day to day, depending on what they have experienced recently. Moreover, we only interviewed acquaintance, which can affect the dependability of the study since the respondents may be similar in such as age, background, life situations etc. To ensure that this would not affect our results, we tried to have a wide range of respondents, thus getting a mix of respondents. We do not believe that by not knowing the respondents it would have given us more authentic answers as some subjects are delicate, no matter who is asking. We also believe that it was to our advantage that we interviewed acquaintance, as they are more confident in sharing personal information with us and expressing their opinions freely, thus getting as authentic answers as possible. By knowing the respondents, we already knew a little about their life situations and their Internet usage, which made it possible to modify the questions for each respondent.

A third part of trustworthiness is confirmability where Bryman and Bell (2015) state that the researcher's personal valuation should not affect the result of the study. Moreover, we needed to make a trustworthy interpretation of the results, as suggested by Patel & Davidson (2003). This has been a challenge for us as we are two researchers interpreting the results. In order to increase the confirmability, we have worked closely with one another throughout the whole paper with both of us participating in the interviews, coding the data, and writing the analysis. One thing that can have affected the confirmability of the study could be that sometimes the respondents did not understand the question, or did not have an answer to it since this subject can be considered complex for individuals. Consequently, we had to help them understand the question by clarifying and giving examples. This might have led us to steer them into statements they would not have thought of themselves which might have had an effect on the results. To ensure our opinions were not too

strongly, our examples were based on the respondent's previous answers during the interview.

Furthermore, authenticity certifies if the result of a study presents a true perspective of the studied phenomena and respondent's thoughts (Bryman & Bell 2015). In order to ensure this, we conducted a carefully estimated coding where we made sure not to twist anyone's answers. Since we chose to have the interviews in Swedish to make the respondents feel more comfortable speaking in their native language, it might have affected the authenticity of the study as we had to translate the statements into English. With this in mind, we decided to only use citations that had the same meaning in both languages in order to get the data as true as possible.

3.5.3. Method limitations

One limitation of our choice of method is that a qualitative study is not possible to generalize (Bryman & Bell 2015). We think that this may be the reason why a lot of previous studies in this field have been quantitative. Even though it is not possible to generalize these results, we believe that this phenomenon should be studied with a qualitative research design as it has to do with integrity and personal questions, which requires deeper interviews. We believe that there is a knowledge gap within this area and that through qualitative studies, researchers will better understand the feelings and behaviors of customers. To strengthen the results, we could have triangulated it by using more sources of data (Bryman & Bell 2015), but we did not have the time or resources. Moreover, we believe that future studies could use individual interviews combined with focus groups to get broader discussions on the subject, and thus triangulate the result.

4. Empirical analysis

This section connects the empirical data with the most relevant research presented in the theoretical framework. The analysis process started when choosing the concepts, categories, and codes from the interviews and is the foundation for the structure of the empirical analysis. It is a close empirical analysis with quotes from the respondents in order for the reader to better understand the reasoning. If the reader would like to get a more extensive description of each respondent, see appendix 2.

1. Online advertising

Several respondents associated online advertising with personalized advertisements, giving examples of searching for something on Google, liking something on Facebook, or visiting a website, and then getting personalized advertisements in their social media feeds, on news sites, and on blogs, which according to Yang et al. (2015) is called retargeting. This is an interesting observation since online advertising has not always been personalized, but today seems to be deep-rooted in everyone's conscious. As several respondents associated online advertising with personalized advertisements, personalized offerings can be considered effective, which Zarouali et al. (2017) argue for as it has reached and been recalled by many. However, one respondent found this strange, saying,

"Google has nothing to do with Aftonbladet for example, they are different sites, but somehow everything is connected".

Another did not understand at first that this type of advertising is personalized, expressing,

"... all suddenly it appears a lot of sofas and shoes and then you think that this is strange".

It might not be a strange reaction as personalized advertising is supposed to blend into the content of the website and reflect one's interests (Estrada-Jiménez et al. 2016). Customers might not have had the time to see the shift from segmented offerings to personalized offerings. Some also believed that advertisements are usually targeting them individually, but not always. Some of the respondents meant that the advertisements are targeting different segments, for example by gender or age. One respondent seemed not to understand why certain advertisements were shown, stating;

"Sometimes things are shown that I haven't even searched for, like why do I get this, why does this appear for me?".

This might be since they target a segment, not the individual. Another believed these advertisements to be irrelevant and not of interest. A few respondents found it very offensive when advertisements were based on their gender and age, offering weight loss products, wedding products, or women's magazines. One expressed,

"A long time ago, I could get advertisements for all the Hemmets Journal magazines, which I think is offensive to me as a person. They assume I like to read weekly magazines just because I'm middle-aged women. It's insulting".

This may argue for personalized advertising being better than segmented advertising as it does not insert people into different categories. This also confirms previous research stating that personalized offerings are more relevant and more likely to be recognized by customers (Jung 2017). Moreover, personalized offers are also more likely to co-create value since the value is unique to each customer's preferences (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004).

4.1.1. Advertising channels

The context-based perspective explains that customers are more likely to share information if others have done so, and on more familiar websites (Aguirre et al. 2016). This can be an explanation why all the respondents have Facebook accounts even if many are concerned about their privacy. More so, a few respondents found it to be more acceptable for personalized advertising to appear on member sites than on non-member sites, expressing,

"Member sites are more okay since I create an account there, and they will get my information".

Some respondents thought that non-member sites should not even have their information. On the contrary, a few also thought that member sites are more personal and their opinion was that it should be more private and not contain advertisements. They believed that advertising in social media felt more personalized than on news sites and blogs, thinking it targets the reader of the blogs and new sites instead of the individual. One respondent did not see any differences whether it is a member or a non-member site. In conclusion, there are no similarities in the study where it is acceptable for the customer to get personalized advertising or not. If there would have been similarities, companies would know what websites to focus on and where to display their offerings in order to gain more value from their customers.

Furthermore, one believed it to be fine for advertisements to appear on Facebook but not sent as emails. Another agreed, meaning that the email is more holy in a way and is not supposed to contain lots of advertisements. A third found it to be more acceptable for personalized advertisements to appear on Instagram than to get personalized emails. Another never looks at email

offerings as they mostly end up in junk mail or get unsubscribed. This might be due to as Reimers et al. (2016) expressed, "the inbox is private", and that customers are receiving unwanted emails (Kumar et al. 2014; Jung 2017). On the contrary, other respondents believed email advertising to be better as they have actively asked to receive new products and offerings from the specific company, but also that there is a choice of unsubscribing, unlike social media and other websites. This could be explained by Reimers et al. (2016), stating that these emails are requested by the customer who expects to get relevant offerings in return, thus creating customer value. If the company oversteps, the customer will unsubscribe from their email list (Reimers et al. 2016). It is the last part, the possibility to opt-out which makes permission marketing likable amongst customers (Kumar et al. 2014). However, Estrada-Jiménez et al. (2016) argue that there are not so many options to fully opt-out from all advertising since social media platforms are dependent on the revenue from companies advertising.

4.2. Collection of customer data

Nearly all respondents felt that companies collect too much information and were concerned about it, which is in accordance to Jung's (2017) findings, and what Karwatzki et al. (2017) established in their study, stating that all of 92 percent of American Internet users are worried about their privacy online. Some respondents said,

"It feels creepy that they know everything I look at."
"...it's like big brother is watching."

A few also got reminded that companies are collecting information when advertisements appear in their newsfeeds, where one worried if others could see these advertisements too. One meant that the digitalization and the collection of data makes the respondent not wanting to be a part of the Internet today, expressing,

"Where's the limit for integrity?"

One respondent wished advertisements were less targeted and to have more options to surf privately. Another respondent also argued that companies are insulting one's integrity by collecting customer data, which Awad & Armstrong (1999) mean that customers are paying a high price sharing their information. One discussion that can be illuminated from this is if customers have the right to some privacy and if there should be a limit to customer integrity. Moreover, one respondent argued that it is not possible to be anonymous anymore, while another said,

"Facebook knows more about you than you do yourself".

A few respondents believed that companies ask for too much information when signing up for a website or purchasing something online. Some respondents did not even know why companies need to collect all this information, meaning that information of one's interests should be enough without collecting personal information. This is in accordance to Aguirre et al. (2016), saying that companies collect information about their customers from search histories and locations, and Jung (2017) continues saying it is collected from shared information on social media. This data is thereafter used to predict customers' actions, target them, and create personalized advertisements (Mahmood & Sismeiro 2017). One respondent was mostly concerned about what companies do with the information next. It can be questioned what information companies need to collect in order to predict, target, and create advertisements for their customers. Is it really necessary to collect all this information for the purpose of the website, or is the information for third parties, where Xu et al. (2010) mean that some companies are selling customer information.

There is a widespread unpleasant perception about companies collecting customer data. At the same time, Awad and Krishnan (2006) argue that personalized advertising would not be possible without customer information, and Chang et al. (2016) mean that companies are dependent on it. This makes customers co-creators of value (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004), as personalized advertising is not possible without them sharing their information. Consequently, companies need to be careful and treat customer information with caution to make customers feel safe in sharing information. Echeverri and Skålén (2011) argue that if the personalized offering is perceived as a violation of one's privacy, it will instead lead to value co-destruction, which one respondent confirmed stating to sometimes exit a webpage when companies ask for too much information. This shows that the respondent is more concerned about the integrity than using the website.

4.2.1. Personal information

According to Kokolakis' (2017) findings, sensitive data is one's health, weight, and browsing history. A number of respondents found their contact information to be private, such as home addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses. They wished companies would not collect that information and try to get in touch with them. One thought that customers should have to give consent in order for companies to collect this information. However, being against this type of information is rather striking as it is usually standard information when signing up for something. A few also found their personal numbers to be extra sensitive since everything is connected to it and can lead to ID-cuttings. They felt like their personal numbers have to do with them as individuals and is therefore more sensitive. One respondent even wished that member clubs would remove personal numbers and another pointed out that there are specific laws that prevents companies from saving this information.

On the contrary, one respondent stated that personal numbers are a public record and are not hard to find. It is interesting that some respondents are careful of their personal numbers even though it is possible to find it elsewhere. One respondent talked about what information is okay to collect and stated that;

"It's important to separate personal information and personal interests when collecting data and designing advertisements. I understand that they may need to collect personal information, but that it's important that they follow specific laws about that the information should not be sold to a third party or be misused by sending messages to the customer that he or she has not accepted".

Numerous respondents thought it was more acceptable to collect information about their interests and products they have looked at because they felt that this information is not connected to them as specific individuals. Another did not care that companies collect information about age or gender. Some found it rather uncomfortable that companies know their behavior patterns where one expressed;

"It feels creepy that they know everything I look at".

They meant that it is uncomfortable that companies know their Internet habits and buying behavior as it makes it possible for companies to see patterns, and can recognize someone's behavior, which is in line with Kokolakis' (2017) findings. A couple of respondents did not find it acceptable to collect information about political views, credit card information, sexual preferences, or family relations. This is not a surprise as it can be considered typical sensitive information that some people do not want to share with others. Furthermore, we can establish that people have different thoughts on what is sensitive information and that it is subjective. Treiblmaier and Pollach (2007) continue to argue that value is perceived differently by each individual. What is worth being highlighted is that some of the respondents expressed that they do not know what information companies are collecting, meaning they have not really thought about what information is more sensitive to share. If they have not been in contact with this before, it may be hard to picture how it would actually feel to share information that gets misused.

4.3. Value of personalized advertising

4.3.1. Relevant

A lot of respondents thought of personalized advertising to be positive, and therefore value creating as it is based on their interests and can give them inspiration and recommendations. This is in accordance with previous findings by Krafft et al. (2017), stating that customers want relevant advertisements based on their interests. Simonson (2005) also means that personalized

advertising creates value for the customer when offered something of interests. One respondent who was positive towards personalized offerings said,

"... I'm probably interested in it and then I can get some suggestions and ideas".

Another argued to rather get relevant personalized advertisements than irrelevant common advertisements, which Jung (2017) verifies in her study, stating that customers prefer relevant advertising since it will attract their attention and increase their purchase intentions. Xu et al. (2010) took this further, explaining that those who are more likely to recognize it as relevant are early adopters and innovators. Aguirre et al. (2016) concur, stating that innovators value the benefits of personalized advertising higher. This is an interesting point, as this question was not directly addressed to the respondents, but some of the respondents talked about it. We tried to see if these people had some similarities in such as age or personalities but could not find any distinct similarities. Therefore, this needs to be studied further in order to see if there truly is a connection between those who value personalized advertising and their personality.

According to Zhu and Chang (2016), personalized advertising saves both time and resources for customers. Some respondents agreed with this, saying that they do not need to put the effort in searching for things as their previous searches will generate in relevant offerings. This is also in accordance with Mosteller and Poddar's (2017) findings, which suggest that by offering personalized products, companies will be more likely to satisfy the customer's needs. Moreover, Xu et al. (2010) argue that personalized offerings can either create value or cause privacy concerns. In our study, some respondents expressed to be concerned about their privacy, which can be explained by the personalization-privacy paradox (Awad & Krishnan 2006). They mean that this can be seen as the gap between a person's privacy concerns and sharing their information, with a focus on the value of the personalized offering. In order for personalized offerings to be relevant and value creating, the benefits of the personalized offers must be higher than privacy concerns (Culnan & Armstrong 1999). The question is if the value of personalized advertising is higher for people who consider personalized advertising to be relevant in our study, or if the privacy concerns outweigh. This can be described through privacy calculus, which Aguirre et al. (2016) explain as the consideration of on the one hand getting the benefits through personalized offerings, and on the other hand the possible risk of losing one's privacy. For some respondents, we believe that personalized offerings are value co-creating, but not for all as some thought it was relevant but also seemed to be concerned about their privacy, where one expressed that personalized advertisements are;

"...probably good but still a bit uncomfortable".

For these respondents, we believe that the value is rather co-destroyed. Thus, it is important that companies understand this gap and prevent the risks outweighing the benefits, which Krishen et al. (2017) and Zhu and Chang (2016) concur.

4.3.2. Hateful and annoyed

Some respondents described themselves to be overall anti-commercials. One explaining;

"... *it's probably because I've taken different marketing and consumer behavior courses. If not, I probably wouldn't have been as critical.*"

A couple of respondents described how companies have collaborations where they collect data in some kind of Internet log, but only a few respondents seemed to be certain of what information companies are collecting, one saying,

"*They collect everything you do, if you click on something, and if you don't complete a purchase, they'll see your behavior patterns*".

These people were more anti-commercials or concerned about their privacy and can be explained by Karwatskit et al. (2017), who state that knowing what information is being collected might cause fear. One respondent, who works in marketing, know how personalized advertising works and said that it is important for companies to use this advertising as it works, but at the same time does not want it. Another respondent did not believe that Facebook was meant to be a marketplace, and a third described Facebook as a commercial flow.

Several respondents found advertisements to be interrupting their reading, which Shen (2014) confirms, arguing that personalized advertising becomes irritating when it disturbs the visit on a webpage. One respondent thought that advertisements usually pop up when doing something else, and therefore chooses to look up the things whenever it is more suitable. This respondent, and others, usually never click on advertisements. One respondent found the advertisements too disturbing, resulting in not reading newspapers online anymore and instead gets them the old fashion way. A number of respondents also found it to be too many advertisements at the moment, and found it annoying and disturbing when they appear for a too long period of time. They believed that it is unnecessary to keep on reminding them of past searchers as it will not lead to a purchase. This goes along with the findings of Treiblmaier and Pollach (2007), who argue that when the customer has to deal with too much advertising, the customer is likely to start ignoring the offers. A few also found the amount of advertising to give a reversed effect, and instead of clicking on the advertisements, they almost felt hateful towards the company, not wanting to buy from that company at all. One respondent said,

"They put a lot of money on marketing, and who pays it? Well, it's always the same, the consumer".

They meant that it is easier just to look up a product by themselves if they are in need of something. One thing to mention is that these two respondents are between the ages of 59 and 62, which might be interesting to discuss further if the age has something to do with this. It can be discussed if personalized advertising is more accepted by the younger generation who may find it easier to just ignore it, while the older generation has a harder time keeping up with the revolution of the Internet and new ways of promoting brands.

4.3.3. Naive

Even though a number of respondents believed that there is too much information being collected about their searches and shopping behaviors, they also stated that they have not thought about exactly what or where information is being collected, and a few said they do not let this bother them when surfing online. One respondent expressed,

"I haven't thought much about exactly how much or how much details they have, they certainly know exactly where in Sweden I've searched for something, that I'm in Gothenburg".

This can be explained by customers expecting the benefits to outweigh the risk, and therefore still share their information (Hallam & Zanella 2017). Some respondents were a bit naive when it came to personalized advertising and collection of customer data, where one expressed,

"What you don't know doesn't hurt you, a bit of that mentality [...] I guess I probably trust these websites".

A different person did not feel unsafe but did not know what information companies are collecting or how it all works. A third person said,

"I guess I've been a little naive and just thought that now they see I've been on H&M so next time I'm going to H&M maybe it's automatically what will come up when they see it's my data log, but if there's anything else I may not have thought about it deeper and I don't really know if I want to think about it either".

This might be explained by Mosteller and Poddar's (2017) findings, where they concluded that a respondent who has experienced privacy intrusion is less likely to trust websites. Maybe the answer to this is simple, the respondents have never actually experienced this invasion, which goes along with the findings of Rainie et al. (2013), stating that only 6 percent of their respondents had been victims of online scams.

Moreover, one respondent expressed that one is not anonymous anymore but did not actually care, and another meant that if companies want to collect information, they can do it. A great number of respondents found it easy to just scroll past the advertisements in their feeds without thinking about it. Some have accepted that advertisements appear, one stated,

"I've given up, there's nothing to do about it".

It is interesting that they have accepted these advertisements and are not doing anything about it. One reason for this response could be that these people may think they cannot do anything to affect it, that the companies have more influence than them. On the other hand, it is important to remember that customers have a great impact of the value creation as they are co-creating the value together with the company (Grönroos 2008; Vargo & Lusch 2008). Consequently, customers decide if they want to share their information or not, which affects the possibility to create personalized advertising. Customers that feel desolated may have the mentality that it is easier to close their eyes and scroll past the advertisements than actually try to get rid of them.

4.4. Solving the privacy paradox

A few respondents argued that one cannot be anonymous anymore, which they found intimidating, believing that the society is going the wrong way. Some of them thought that everyone deserves some privacy where companies do not know their every move. Lee and Crange (2011) argue that if companies develop privacy practices to protect customer information they will be able to create more value. This could be done by giving customers more control of how their information is being used, thus creating trust, and the value will consequently outweigh the perceived privacy concerns (Mosteller & Poddar 2017). Krafft et al. (2017) believe permission marketing to be a possible answer to customers' privacy concerns, which one respondent said to be fine for companies to collect information if they have gotten an approval. Without an approval, the respondent will be irritated when getting email advertising and becomes negative towards the company. Tezinde et al. (2002) explain permission marketing as personalized advertising that the customer has requested. Some preferred this advertising, as;

"It's something I've actively said yes to and chosen to get"
"... since it's possible to opt-out if you don't find it interesting".

Reimers et al. (2016) mean that the aim of permission marketing is to only send relevant messages to the customer, and Aguirre et al. (2016) and Kokolakis (2017) mean that customers are more positive towards this advertising, which makes them more willing to share their information. This also goes with the findings of Krafft et al. (2017) and Kumar et al. (2014), stating that permission marketing makes it easier for customers to know more

about what information is being collected about them, and is also possible to opt-out. This could be a way for companies to provide customers with relevant offerings, thus co-creating more value.

Several researchers (Awad & Krishnan 2006; Karwatzki et al. 2017; Krafft et al. 2017) have also discussed giving the customers more transparency and disclose more of how they are using the customers' information. Our findings also came to this conclusion, where some respondents thought there should be more information of how and what information companies are collecting when visiting a webpage. However, this is done through for example cookies, which Yang et al. (2015) explain is the storing of a customer's search history. One respondent was very suspicious of cookies, saying,

"It's just a way of moving people's suspicious... when in fact the information is sold to a third party, all the regulations are not compelling anymore".

Some also said that they did not know what it means to accept cookies. One did not seem to understand the purpose of cookies, saying,

"I haven't gotten deeper into if there's something between the clauses but I know that cookies are for simplifying searches for myself".

This is interesting as they answered that they want more information, but most of them just accept cookies without reading what it actually is and what the company is doing with their information. The respondents have the possibility to click for more information before accepting cookies, but no one seemed to be doing so. It can be questioned if they believe that the information is fuzzy and hard to understand and that companies should be even clearer. It can also be questioned if it is up to the companies to be even more transparent, or if the customer has some responsibility to know what companies do with their information.

4.5. Customer responsibility

The customer has a responsibility to question companies' ways of collecting information if they believe it to be a privacy issue. Some of the respondents stated;

"You have to be aware of the potential risks."
"It's the individual's responsibility to know what it means to sign up to a webpage".

A few respondents have chosen to not become a member of some sites or share as little personal information and interests as possible online in order to protect their privacy, one stating;

"... I choose not to share as much information and that might be because I don't want them to get that information and use it".

This is in line with Karwatzki et al. (2017), who discovered that customers who value their privacy are less willing to be profiled online, and Aguirre et al. (2016) who say that they are therefore more likely to take security precautions. One respondent said,

"It would be good if one could pay for Gmail or Facebook so you don't need to share your information with companies".

Another expressed having bought apps and tried to get paid versions of sites to get rid of the advertisements. A study from 2013 found that all of 86 percent of American Internet users had taken actions to protect their privacy online (Rainie et al. 2013), which is interesting as only a few of our respondents were doing it. Some of our respondents chose to use private windows or delete their history since they might let others use their computer.

"I use private windows for some things I believed shouldn't be in my register".

One had an encrypted IP-address and used Adblock on the computer to get rid of advertisements, and another avoided shopping online as much as possible. It can be highlighted that most respondents did not know what information is actually being collected about them, but at the same time, they are trying to find solutions to reduce their information from being shared. It can be questioned where they found out about these solutions, and why are they taking these actions when they do not know what companies are doing with their information. Are they doing it for preventive purposes in order to be on the safe side? This can be explained by Koohikamali et al. (2017), who argued that customers are getting more and more suspicious towards companies. Pagani and Malacarne (2017) continued on this, saying that when customers are getting more suspicious, it will lead to them changing their behavior, and in them being less likely to disclose private information (Awad & Krishnan 2006). This is something that will be further discussed in the next chapter together with the personality traits that can be distinguished from the empirical analysis. Customer value will also be discussed more thoroughly through both value co-creation and value co-destruction.

5. Discussion

By using the empirical analysis as a foundation, this discussion section is able to take the analysis a step further in order to review the bigger picture of the studied problem.

5.1. Value co-creation and value co-destruction

In conclusion, some respondents believed that personalized advertising could be relevant, but most respondents thought personalized offerings were disturbing or were concerning their privacy. Consequently, the value of personalized offerings for these customers can be seen as co-destroyed instead of co-created. One reason for the differences in perception could be that value differs for each individual, which is explained by Treiblmaier and Pollach (2007). It can be questioned if Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) is right in personalized offers being an easier way for companies to co-create value when the respondents believed personalized advertising to be a violation of their privacy. Echeverri and Skålén (2011) continue on this thread, meaning that if personalized offerings are perceived as a violation of one's privacy, it will lead to value co-destruction. We tried to find similarities to the respondents who like to look up the products themselves, in order to present what customers who do not value personalized offerings feel, but we could not find any distinguishing features. Thus, future research needs to address this problem in order for companies to co-create value with their customers in personalized advertising.

Kumar and Reinartz (2016) argue that for a company to be profitable, their offerings must create value for their customers. With this in mind, would it be more profitable for companies to avoid targeting these customers and instead focus on the customers who believe personalized offerings to be value creating? Or should they try to understand how they can make these customers more positive towards personalized advertising? Estrada-Jiménez et al. (2016) mean that personalized advertising is the most effective and profitable advertising technique today as it is time and resource efficient. It can be questioned if personalized offerings really can be seen as the most profitable way when many customers do not value it. How should companies work to increase the value co-creation in personalized advertising? On the contrary, companies may not lose profit by targeting negative customers as those who are positive may be of majority, thus making it worthwhile. The advertisements may create profit for those who do not value personalized advertising as they are being exposed to it, hence being aware of the company and therefore affecting them anyway.

We also found that the respondents want more transparency, which is in line with what previous researchers have established (Awad & Krishnan 2006;

Karwatzki et al. 2017; Krafft et al. 2017). It can be further discussed how this will affect the customer's perception as Karwatzki et al. (2017) argue that more transparency increases fear. Moreover, as customers are getting more informed, will it result in them being more cautious about their information and not sharing it, thus possibly making personalized advertising disappear in the future? If this is the verity, the solution presented by Mosteller and Poddar (2017) to create trust by giving customers more control of their information collection may not be the right solution. In the present study, those who know what information companies are collecting are more cautious in sharing their information. On the other hand, personalized advertising is based on customers co-creating value together with the companies, which requires customers to be engaged and share their data without any distrusts. Some respondents in our study also believed that customers should be informed and know how to avoid being exposed to risks connecting customer privacy online.

Furthermore, a discussion could be made of how customers can live up to all these expectations to be both engaged and informed, but also careful in sharing their information when using the Internet and social media platforms. It can be questioned if customers will value personalized advertising with all these responsibilities as it comes with? Or if the risks will outweigh the benefits of the service argued by Culnan and Armstrong (1999), and consequently stop using it? There is a need for future studies to understand how the responsibility is allocated in order for customers to not be exposed of risks online and to understand the customer's position in the privacy discussion. By discussing these questions, we believe that personalized advertising, and the collection of data, will change during the next years when more people notice the consequences of it.

5.2. Two extremes in personalities

What can be established is that a person's values and perceptions are subjective and dependent on the context (Treiblmaier & Pollach 2007), which makes it hard to create an understanding of how customers truly feel. Furthermore, is it possible to find similarities in people's perceptions in order for companies to understand the complexity of value co-creation in personalized settings? From the present study, two extreme personalities have emerged that will be presented and described below. What can be further questioned is if these two extremes are always the same people or if the extremes are shown in different situations for different people. It is important to note that there are most likely more personalities in between these two extremes, but also other personalities, which future studies could seek to find.

The first extreme, which recurred in many respondents' answers, was the one who perceives the privacy invasion negatively but does not do anything to protect his or her private information, possibly because this personality did not seem to understand what and where the information was collected. A

feature of this personality was also to act naive or indifferent in order to not let the fear take over, for example by simply accepting cookies without reading what it means. This extreme personality seemed to believe that it is easier to avoid the problem as it that might occur in the future, while right now they can enjoy sharing posts and chatting with friends online. This can be explained by the construal level theory which argues that people value more close happenings than events that might occur in the future (Hallam & Zanella 2017). Another discussion that can be made is that this personality may not have been in contact or thought about privacy issues before, resulting in not knowing how it affects them. It can be further addressed that we as individuals are not always as rational as we would like us to be, and it is clear through this study as this extreme personality seemed concerned, but does not take any concrete actions. Instead, it is easier to turn a blind eye to the problem and deal with it when it is affecting us, often too late. This can be an explanation of why a lot of the respondents did not know much about this problem, but that it may become a bigger problem in the future.

The second extreme personality is the anti-commercial-person. This personality seemed to know more about what information was being collected and tried to prevent it from being used. This was done by sharing as little information online as possible or through protection services such as paying for apps or websites, using private windows, deleting search history, having encrypted IP-addresses, using Adblock, and avoiding shopping online. This can be explained by Koohikamali et al. (2017), who argued that customers are getting more suspicious towards companies, and therefore are taking security precautions. Despite arguing to have this negative attitude towards all commercial, this extreme still seemed to think that certain personalized advertising could be relevant. This makes us question if they are as negative as they claim to be, or if it is something they say to make up for actually using services which collect their information. It can be further addressed if personalized advertising is value creating for these people due to its relevance, as argued by Jung (2017), or if the negative side is really dominating as the respondents are indicating.

5.3. New ways of promoting brands

Krafft et al. (2017) state that customer privacy concern is a challenge for businesses. If companies do not care about this problem and try to reduce privacy concern, customers may choose not to share their information if they have the possibility. This is in accordance with Culnan and Armstrong (1999), who argue that if customers perceive the risk to be higher than the benefits, they will opt-out of the service. If customers do this, companies would not be able to co-create value in personalized offerings. If more customers who are concerned about their privacy are willing to pay for apps or websites to protect their information, social media and other websites dependent on revenues of companies advertising on their sites need to get it from elsewhere to stay in business.

32

As customers are feeling more concerned about their privacy online, companies are starting to take different approaches when promoting their brands and products. One type of permission marketing that has been growing tremendously during the past years is influencer marketing. Influencer marketing is when a company promotes its products through a famous person (i.e. an influencer) who either post videos or pictures with the product on their Instagram or YouTube channel (Sudha & Sheena 2017). As word-of-mouth is a powerful tool to affect customers, using their favorite blogger, athlete, or celebrity will drive their purchase intention more than just posting advertisements in their feeds. If a person the customer likes is posting something, saying that he or she uses it, this customer will be more likely to buy the product. This is also a technique where the company actually has gotten permission to advertise, as the customer chooses who to follow online, and thus can easily opt-out of it by unfollowing that influencer. Mosteller and Poddar (2017) suggest that by letting customers have more control of their information, it will create trust which leads to value creation. It is therefore interesting to see how this promotion technique might develop and if it will outshine personalized advertising in the near future.

6. Conclusion

This concluding chapter reconnects the study with the purpose and addresses the most important finding of the study. The section contains theoretical insights and practical implications as well as limitations and suggestions for further research.

6.1. Theoretical insights

The purpose of this study refers to explain and to create an understanding if personalized advertising online creates value for customers, which can contribute to an increased understanding of the privacy paradox and value creation in personalized advertising. The present study found that personalized advertising can be seen as value co-creating in some cases, but because privacy concerns exist and they affect the perception of advertising, it can in many cases lead to value co-destruction instead. It is a consideration between privacy concerns and the perceived value of the personalized advertising that decides if the offering will co-create or co-destroy value. Customers are afraid of their information being collected, but at the same time, they simply do not have the knowledge about the information collection. The study did not explain what information they were referring to, but rather that they are afraid of the fact that it is being collected. For personalized advertising to be value creating, companies need to know what customers value personalized advertising and target them. They also need to understand how customers who consider it to be value destroying perceive the advertising in order to adjust their offerings to create value for them instead. To do this, the study contributes by presenting two extreme personalities, the one who perceives the privacy invasion negatively and the anti-commercial-person.

The first extreme personality is scared of the information being collected, without knowing exactly what is being collected, and therefore does nothing about it. The second extreme personality, the anti-commercial, knows what is being collected and is trying to protect private information from being collected by companies. Future studies should focus on finding if these extremes are always the same people or if the extremes are shown in different situations for different people, but also if there are more extremes than these two. Customers demand more transparency and ways to opt-out of advertising, which companies need to adjust to create value in their offerings. On the other hand, more transparency leads to more frighten customers or even more anti-commercial-people, which mean that it may not be the right approach for companies. They need to revise whether they will change their way of collecting data and advertising as customers are getting more informed and are questioning companies' data collection. Customers may not share their data in the future, resulting in companies cannot create value in personalized advertising.

6.2. Managerial implications

Aguirre et al. (2016) argue that there is a need for marketers to understand the personalization-privacy paradox in order to solve it. Zhu and Chang (2016) mean that if marketers know how customers perceive personalized online advertising and the intrusions of their privacy, they will be able to solve the privacy paradox. By solving the privacy paradox companies will be able to co-create value with their customers instead of co-destroying it. One of the aims of the study was to provide companies with insights of how different customers perceive personalized online advertising in terms of customer value in order for companies to know how to think when targeting their customers. The study showed that customers are concerned about their privacy which means that companies need to rethink their personalized advertising to create value. We believe that this is important as customers who do not value personalized advertising may choose not to share their information in the future, which would lead to companies not being able to co-create value with personalized offerings. Culnan and Armstrong (1999) agree with this, meaning that if customers perceive the risk to be higher than the benefits, the customer will opt-out of the service. With these findings, marketers can better understand the customers' perception of personalized online advertising and that it is not always co-creating value, thus know how to work with the collection of data and personalized advertising to create customer value.

6.3. Limitations

A limitation of our study is the choice of respondents. The study did not involve respondents' younger than 21 or older than 67 years old as we lacked acquaintances in those generations. We believe that the older generation is not as active online as the younger generations, which was one of the criteria to be a part of this study. The result did not show any relation between age and perception of privacy concerns, which mean that a wider age gap would not necessarily result in a different outcome. However, people younger than 21 years old have grown up with a phone in their hand, constantly connected to the Internet and social media, while the older generation might only recently have gotten a smartphone, and they also remember the times before the Internet and how much less advertising there was back in the days. With that in mind, the result would possibly have turned out differently if we would have interviewed a wider age range.

6.4. Future research

To continue our research, a comparative study between customers who know a lot about the collection of information versus those who do not know as much would be interesting to study. This could be done by first conducting individual qualitative interviews in order to get the overall view of the problem, and then divide the respondents into two groups and conduct a focus group with each group. Our study also only touched the surface on

extreme personalities, thus it would be interesting if future research will try to find these different personalities through a quantitative study. Through conducting a survey with a large sample of people of different nationalities, ages, active online, etc., future researchers might find if there is a correlation between for example age and privacy concerns. Xu et al. (2010) also state that innovators and early adopters are more likely to perceive personalized advertising to be relevant, which a qualitative study would be able to detect.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to study how companies are implementing personalized advertising and working with customers' privacy concerns. We propose that future research conduct a qualitative study through in-depth interviews with marketers to see if they take the customers' feelings into consideration when collecting customer information and carrying out their promotions. Lamberton & Stephen (2016) also suggest studying if it is ethically correct of companies to collect information about the customers without their consent, which could be done in the same research as just mentioned through a company's perspective.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Interview guide

Background
We are two students in business administration who are writing our thesis in how customers perceive marketing online. The interview will be about 15-20 minutes and you will be anonymous in the thesis.

Let's start with you telling us a little bit about yourself
- *Age, what you study/work as, interests.*

- How do you use the Internet?
- Think about the last time you were surfing online; did you see any advertisements? Tell us about that and give an example.
    - Was the advertisement directed to you? Why do you think that?
- Except *(web page x)*, where do you see this kind of advertisements?
    - *(what web pages, social medias etc.)*
- Do you think that it is more/less okay that some products pop up? Why/why not?
- Do you think it is more/less okay that it pops up on social media compared to other sites? Why/why not?
- Has your judgment changed of these companies that are advertised?
- Are there any differences from personalized marketing that you have accepted compared to the one you have not accepted?
    - *(for example, emails vs. advertisements on social media)*
- Have you thought about what kind of information that is collected about you by companies? What do you think of that?
    - *Does it matter what kind of information they collect? Why?*
    - *What would make it feel better?*

Appendix 2 - Respondents

R1
Respondent 1 is a 25-year-old woman studying her 6th year of engineering at Chalmers University of Technology. She uses the Internet mostly for the school where she searches for articles and uses it for group projects. In her spare time, she likes to watch movies, find fun things and uses Facebook and YouTube. She often sees advertisements on Facebook from things she has googled, mostly decorations and clothes. The same advertisements are also shown on newspaper sites. She believes that Facebook is mostly a flow of advertisements. She finds it rather creepy that companies know everything she is looking at, but on the other hand, they see what she is interested in. She cannot understand why they need to know everything and how all sites are connected to each other. She finds it more acceptable for advertisements to show on Facebook than on newspapers since she has logged into Facebook, and that stuff is more okay than other things. She uses private windows if she wants to look for something she does not want to be stored in her history, for example, diseases. She has a positive attitude towards advertisements since it is based on her interests and can help her find ideas, inspirations, and/or things she would not have found on her own, which makes her more aware of the advertisements in her news feed, and if she finds it to be irrelevant, she can just scroll past it. Despite her positive attitude, she believes that companies know too much and that they try too hard to reach customers. She does not understand why they need to know her personal details like where she is, social security numbers, contact information etc. since that information is easily misused. She wishes it could be more up to her what kind of information she wants to share, but that it is also up to her as a customer to take her own responsibility in what she shares.

R2
Respondent 2 is a 21-year-old woman studying the Europe program and works part-time at an insurance company. She uses Internet on a daily base, both for school and pleasure. She mostly sees advertisements on Facebook, but she usually just skips them. She often gets irrelevant advertisements of things she has not searched for, like apartments or from cleaning companies. She is quite suspicious towards all advertisements, personalized and non-personalized. If a company would ask her for too many things, she would just forget about it and exit the web page. She believes that on Facebook, where you have signed in, users should know that companies collect everything you do, but that it is less okay for sites you have not logged into, but that it all depends on if the company has asked for the customer's consent, or that it is clear that the information will be used for advertisement. There should be more transparency in what the companies are collecting and what they are doing with your information, regardless if it is for their own objectives or to sell it to a third party. She says she is aware of what kind of information companies are collecting due to some university marketing courses, but she

did not think she would be as critical if she had not. Now when she knows the tricks, she believes that they do not work on her, but she believes that it can be positive for others. She also believes that it is up to the customer to make an active choice of continuing on the site or not. She knows that they collect your purchase history, but she does not think they should gather information about one's sexual preferences or political view.

R3

Respondent 3 is a 24-year-old man studying his last semester of business administration with a focus on accounting. He has previously worked in grocery stores and transportation. He mostly uses Internet for social media, but also to look for things, both for school and pleasures. He can also use it to purchase stuff or bank related things. When he is about to buy something, he always starts with googling it, and usually, a lot of advertisements pop up, both on Google and on Facebook. These advertisements usually remind him of what he has searched for. If he looks for a present for his girlfriend, he uses private windows to make sure advertisements of the things he looked for does not show when she borrows his computer. He does not find it negative that things he looked for, things he is interested in, show up on Facebook, but at the same time he gets reminded that everything is stored. He also finds it a little irritating that some companies constantly show up, even though he has not clicked on it. He believes that companies sometimes ask for too much when you are buying a thing from their website, as well as making you register, making him wonder what exactly they want with his information. He does not like when companies contact him, and he believes that his email is rather sacred and that companies should not be able to contact him without his permission, but thinks it is easy to unsubscribe from emails he does not want. However, he has the mentally, "what you do not know does not hurt you", and chose to trust companies.

R4

Respondent 4 is a 61-year-old man working at a bank. He uses the Internet a lot in his work, but also like everyone else for bank matters, different web pages, Blocket. He tries to avoid buying things online since he likes to touch and feel the products, even though he knows it sometimes would be cheaper. He is hesitant towards the payment and believes that there is a lot of "crap" online. He also believes himself to be a "normal user". When advertisements have a connection to his previous searches, it makes him more careful, and he takes a step back. He also gets more critical and tries not see it. He does not think Facebook was meant to be a marketplace, but rather a communication platform for private individuals, and he believes that Facebook will be gone in the future since most people he has talked to think it is mostly junk. He describes himself to be anti-commercial, and that we are drowning in information. When companies recur too often, he finds them to be greedy and decides to buy from others as a protest. He is scared of the digital development of the society and where it will take us. One cannot act in secret

anymore, every purchase is monitored in what you are buying, where you are buying it, how often you buy it, and for how much. He thinks the Internet is a fantastic tool, but one needs to be aware of the danger too.

R5

Respondent 5 is a 23-year-old woman studying law, working part-time as an injury advisor at an insurance company. She uses the Internet constantly, for work, school, and pleasure. For work, she uses it to look up the value of things, and for the university, she searches in different jurisdictional databases. In her spare time, she uses Facebook, Instagram, reads articles, reads blogs, and listens to podcasts. She finds that a lot of advertisements are based on her being a woman, resulting in advertisements such as weddings, wedding dresses, engagement rings etc. But she also sees things she has googled and believes it is about 50-50 that is directed towards her. It is more acceptable for her to get customized advertisements based on her search history, than products addressed to women, assuming that you as a woman want to lose weight, not just work out. While she believes it to be more okay for advertisements to be on the blogs she is reading, she thinks of her new feeds as more sacred and private. This is because she believes that the advertisements on blogs are not aimed directly at her, but rather on the readers as a whole. She is more bothered by the companies that appear in her Facebook feeds than other sites because she finds it to be a lot of unreliable advertisements there. She has not really thought of what companies are collecting more than shopping behaviors and what web pages she is visiting. She wishes they would collect less information and to surf the web more privately, and she is hoping they are not saving or analyzing her Facebook pictures. She also hopes that Google does not go into her Gmail account and collect information there since this could lead to potential problems in her future career as a lawyer. Regarding email, she finds it more acceptable to get personalized promotions there since she actively has subscribed to it, and she has the option of opting out if it gets too much.

R6

Respondent 6 is a 27-year-old man, studying a master in economics. He uses Internet for fun, but also to find sources, facts etc. for school. He mostly spends his spare time on YouTube, playing fantasy hockey, other leisure things, and talk to friends on Facebook. He does not see advertisements on his computer since he has ad blocker activated there, but gets all the more on his phone, but is trying to get rid of it there too. On different apps, he does not believe the content to be aimed at him as an individual, but rather at his age and gender, resulting in lots of Tinder advertisements. He does not really care what types of products are shown but wishes that one could pay for Gmail or Facebook in order for them to stop collecting information about you. He especially believes that Google, and other big companies, are villains since their market shares are due to collecting and selling information. He would be mad if he did indeed pay for an app, but they still showed

advertisements on it. He also dislikes when companies contact him, but finds it rather easy to unsubscribe from emails or move them to his spam folder. If he sees advertisements on Facebook, for example, he just scrolls past it. He is trying to share as little information as possible by not having Twitter or Instagram, and he does not share personal information or write stuff on Facebook. He also uses an encrypted connection on his computer so nobody can connect the IP address to him. He does not think that Facebook, or other sites, should be able to collect data that can put a person in a sensitive position, like having to come out of the closet due to certain advertisements showing on their news feeds.

R7

Respondent 7 is a 34-year-old man working at an insurance company but has previously studied public health science. He uses Internet for watching movies, online shopping, chatting, or social media. He sees advertisements on Facebook and YouTube of things he has googled or clothing stores he has visit online, thus believes that it is aimed directly towards him. The advertisements lead to irritation because he finds it to be disturbing and that it is bad that they encourage you to shop more. He does not like companies to be so pushy if he wants something he will get it himself. When more general advertisements pop up, he just ignores it since it is irrelevant for him. He does not really know what information is stored, but he has his concerns regarding who has access to the information, do his friends see what he has looked at. He might not care if they see that he visited H&M, but if he was looking for medical help, he would find it more disturbing He would like more information of what information is collected. He finds political views, family relations, credit card information, and one's locations to be more sensitive When a website ask about cookies, he usually just accept it, thinking that it is a way for companies to offer him personalized products, but he never reads the terms. He finds it very annoying to always have to register his email address when buying something since he will get spammed later on by the company.

R8

Respondent 8 is a 24-year-old man studying biotechnology and is using the Internet mostly for YouTube. He believes that most of the advertisements are not targeting him personally, but rather the segment of a man in that age. He gets irritated by all kinds of advertisements and would like to have the possibility to pay for web pages and/or apps to get rid of it, which he has also done for a few. He talks about Internet knowing too much about people, and that the society is going the wrong direction. He describes that Google is saving searches and that all web pages are connected and share information with each other. He also believes that it should be illegal to collect all of this data online, as companies today are making businesses on people's information without their permission. He finds it to be more concerning that news sites have to post personalized advertisements since they should not have that information in the first place. He thinks that cookies are just a way

of moving people's suspicious, when in fact the information is sold to a third party, all the regulations are not compelling anymore.

R9
Respondent 9 is a 59-year-old woman with a master in chemistry and works as a local manager at a chemical facility. She is connected to the Internet all day at work, but also at home through Facebook and email. She does not get advertisements on Facebook since she has deleted all her interest and clicked "not interested" or "insulting" on those that did show. The reason for that is that she finds it to be offensive to get advertisements of what a woman in her age should like, for example, tabloids. Further, she explains that if she has searched for a trip somewhere, it is then shown in advertisements on different sites. She means that it is unnecessary for the companies as she will not book the trip even if they are showing it in advertisements, direct advertisements do not affect her. She has gotten so fed up with advertisements online that she has stopped reading newspapers online, and today gets a physical copy every day. When a company constantly is popping up, she gets almost hateful towards it and refuses to visit their sites. She takes for granted that companies look at her age, where she lives, and her relationship status. She hopes they do not have her social security number and would like for it to be removed from all member sites as it contains all her information. When it comes to emails, she does not subscribe to much, and if she does she has a specific email account for it. But at the same time, she wishes that there would be a service where if she searches for "black dress", it would show the sites where she has a member card to make it easier to find. She does not know who this would actually be possible and instead goes directly to the store.

R10
Respondent 10 is a 23-year-old woman with a degree in business administration and now works with influence marketing. She is constantly using the Internet, both at work and at home. During her spare time, she likes to look at clothes, read blogs and be on social media such as Snapchat, Facebook, and Instagram. She says that their advertisements are everywhere, all the time. These advertisements are both customized to her, as well as more general. She does not want this kind of targeted advertisements, but at the same time knows that it is important for companies since it work for them. She finds it disturbing when she is on social media and advertisements is everywhere. She knows that Facebook, for example, is collecting information about where you are, your age, who you hang out with, what you like, and pretty much everything. She believes that Facebook knows more about you than you do yourself. As a result, she has chosen not to share much information about herself online. She believes that it can be unpleasant that companies know so much about her in order to target her, but at the same time, she says that she does not think about it that much. She mostly uses emails from companies as inspiration, if she even opens the email at all that is.

She does not, however, think she is affected by the companies, and therefore she does not unsubscribe from them.

R11

Respondent 11 is a 25-year-old man studying engineering. He uses the Internet to get information, buy things, and contact people. He thinks advertisements are everywhere, and he feels like they are targeting him as it is always based on his Internet log. He thinks that it is a little bit unpleasant with this kind of advertisement but at the same time, it is more relevant than getting general advertisements. Overall, he believes them to be more positive than negative, at the same time, he says it can be annoying as the advertisements are showing when he is doing other things, interrupting him. He has learned to "erase annoying advertisements from his mind" so he can just scroll past it. He is not scared of sharing his information and he does not know what kind of information they are collecting or where. He just hopes that they do not have his personal number or bank information.

R12

Respondent 12 is a 53-year-old woman who is working at a bank. She is using the Internet daily to read Aftonbladet, google things, and online shopping. At first, she did not understand that it was based on her searches, and she does not know what kind of advertising that she has accepted. These advertisements appear on Aftonbladet and Facebook. She believes that customized advertisements can be good as they can contain something interesting, and sometimes even clicks on them, but she finds it is easy to just skip the advertisements if she is not interested. She finds it a little weird that they show up on Facebook, as it is her private account. She thinks it is scary that companies know everything about her since she feels that someone is watching over her all the time. However, she finds it most annoying when companies get her contact information like email address or phone number.

R13

Respondent 13 is a 26-year-old man with a bachelor's degree in economics, and today works at a bank. He mostly uses Internet for social media and reading news. He believes that most of the advertisements he sees appear on Instagram and news sites, and are based on his previous searches. He thinks that it is both good and bad that the advertisement is targeting him as it can be interesting and relevant but also irritating and sometimes disturbing his read. If he could decide, he would prefer not to get any advertisements, but if he still gets it, he would rather get an advertisement that he has approved. He does not like if companies get his contact information, as he believes that it is his choice to give out. Overall, he believes that it is scary that companies know so much about his Internet habits, but at the same time, he does not know what kind of information the companies are collecting about him. He has not given much thoughts about it.

R14
Respondent 14 is a 67-year-old retired woman who loves spending time with her grandchildren. She is using the Internet daily and mostly for reading the news and Facebook, where she is active in different groups. She constantly answered about the content of Facebook instead of the advertisements like they were the same. She says she is not interested in the advertisements she gets and usually just scroll past it or delete it if she finds it disturbing. But at the same time, she finds it interesting when there are suggestions for different wine or vacations. First, she argued that she only gets advertisements on Facebook, but when asked if she reads newspapers online she said yes and that she just scroll past the advertisement there. She does not seem too concerned about companies collecting information about her, and just expressed, "then they can do that".