

CORONA(COVID-19 VIRUS) PANDEMIC AND ITS IMPACT ON E-COMMERCE

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Abstract:

The outbreak of the new Corona virus “Covid 19” has negatively affected all aspects of life, economic, social and political. It had tangible effects on trade in its traditional and electronic forms, as the first was hindered and deteriorated. While e-commerce found its way in this cautious atmosphere, and it became the most appropriate and correct choice. And it became a glimmer of hope for traders who rushed towards it, to keep their shares and their presence in the commercial markets under the closure of shops and commercial compounds because of the closure and quarantine. And to facilitate access of all companies in the world to consumers who are in need of goods and various services, and who are committed to quarantine in their homes to avoid intermingling that traditional commerce entailed. They tended to buy their needs by electronic ways, since e-commerce takes place without touching and crowding in a digital and non-material environment, bypassing spatial and time barriers between different markets and countries. Electronic stores in various countries of the world have been featured under the successive waves of Corona and the continuing health crisis witnessed great forthcoming and growth to buy Products through websites and electronic stores via the Internet, which have become an important role in the current era that is witnessing a revolution in the field of information technology and the low cost of communication. As the Internet has contributed to changing the face of the world of commerce and business and contributed to the realization and strengthening of the actual existence of e-commerce and its developments.

Key words: Coronavirus, e-commerce, electronic transactions, electronic medium

Introduction

E-commerce is the result of technological developments in the field of communications and information technology through the development of production, marketing and means of payment from banknotes to electronic payment mechanisms by means of networks and electronic money, which is the prevailing method in most commercial transactions, which has made the world a market in which companies of all sizes have equal opportunities to enter the markets. globalization through network marketing, which made it more influential in the growth of the economies of countries and the prosperity of their trade internally and externally. The spread of the Corona virus constituted a turning point and recovery in the history of e-commerce, as a result of partial and total bans, fear of infection and avoidance of crowds. The

increasing demand of consumers to purchase the necessary materials from products through electronic shopping sites, but perhaps it is worth mentioning the first diseases or changes that occurred in the world before we delve into the details of the impact of the emerging corona virus on electronic commerce, if we go back and specifically to the year 2003 During the spread of the SARS epidemic, traditional sales in the Chinese market witnessed great restrictions, which had a clear impact on driving the digitization process, and it also caused the growth of one of the most popular e-commerce sites, which is “Alibaba” or the “Taobao” platform. Since that time, e-commerce has continued to grow, this growth that started like lightning with the emergence of the Corona epidemic, as the turmoil caused by the new Corona virus contributed to a decrease in the demand for traditional trade in light of this pandemic, which forced many stores and companies to close their doors and freeze or terminate their business. , which promoted the transition from the traditional method to the electronic method in light of the dominance of modern information technologies on the mechanism of concluding commercial deals through e-commerce platforms that bring together companies and customers to contract remotely, purchase necessities and pay for them electronically through specialized electronic websites and banks on the Internet. Through a computer or a mobile phone, where goods are presented in a visible and intangible way, the contracting parties negotiate about them remotely without contact, exchanging information and looking at specifications and other data very quickly in a virtual contract council.

E-commerce has become everyone's refuge even after the closure has stopped due to the epidemic. Rather, it has become the only outlet for trade and sale at the present time. In view of the health conditions and what customers have experienced in electronic shopping in terms of saving effort and time, speed in contracting and implementation is one of the most important advantages and characteristics of electronic commerce, which has a major role in its growth and spread.

Hence, this research came to identify the concept of e-commerce and its main features, and the extent of the impact of the Corona pandemic on e-commerce.

Research objective:

The research aims to identify the extent of the impact of the continuation of the Corona pandemic on electronic commerce, and to know the reality of the global economy from electronic commerce, and to try to develop some proposals to take advantage of the boom in the demand for electronic contracting to develop electronic commerce, and to make recommendations to address the shortcomings that may hinder the hoped-for future prosperity in e-commerce environment.

Research problem:

The research raises a question about the extent to which e-commerce will be affected in light of the ongoing Corona pandemic? This calls for an answer to the sub-questions that arise from it:

What is e-commerce and its characteristics? and its obstacles?

Does the Corona pandemic have a positive or negative impact on e-commerce?

To answer the previous problem, we adopted the comparative analytical approach to analyze and study the concepts of the subject in order to reach the details of its aspects and put forward proposals to confront the obstacles of e-commerce, by dividing the subject into two chapters. Electronic and its obstacles in the second topic.

The first topic

E-commerce “establishment, nature, legal nature”

E-commerce is one of the most important economic activities resulting from the modern technological boom, through which the global economy aims to overcome the obstacles and obstacles of traditional trade, by concluding all commercial transactions through electronic means, particularly the Internet.

Distance trade is not a new phenomenon, but it has been known to people for a long time, as merchants practiced it in manual ways that did not depend on technical means, and it necessarily required physical transportation to complete transactions and conclude deals (Kahlon, 2002).

However, in our modern era, and with humanity entering a stage of development in which all transactions that were performed exclusively in a traditional way in the past can be completed electronically, the information and communication revolution has contributed to the spread of electronic commerce, which relies on an information system whose tools are all electronic. In dealing with the computer and its accessories, which is connected to the Internet, which includes an infinite number of websites dedicated to various purposes, through which various deals and transactions are concluded such as buying and selling, etc., the aforementioned development showed electronic transactions as an alternative to traditional transactions, and electronic commerce is considered the cornerstone. In electronic transactions, electronic contracts are the legal tool through which electronic commerce is achieved and becomes a legal reality. Also, the fulfillment of the value of transactions in e-commerce is done in an electronic way, by means of an electronic transfer of money.

After introducing the origins of e-commerce, we use this topic to clarify the concepts and legal forms of e-commerce.

The first requirement: the emergence of electronic commerce

E-commerce is closely linked to the international Internet, so it is called Internet trade, online trade, digital trade, online trade, distance trade, and other names. It is a term consisting of two words, the first is commerce, which is the practice of buying and selling and the professionalization of commercial business, and the second is “electronic”, which indicates that commerce takes place through modern means of communication processed electronically.

The Internet is due to the main role in the emergence of electronic commerce, which would not have appeared had it not been for the terrible spread of the Internet, and the ease of browsing various websites and virtual markets from anywhere in the world, as the beginning of the emergence of the first Internet in 1969, which was established by the US Department of Defense to serve its military interests. Where the US Department of Defense entrusted the Agency for Advanced Research Projects with the task of establishing a network of computers that are connected to each other. The US Department of Defense established its network for educational institutions, and then for commercial users (Al-Roumi, 2004), which contributed to the emergence of electronic commerce, three decades ago, and then the development of its concept during the last quarter of the last century with the development of electronic devices that serve the interests and desires of the consumer.

Electronic commerce is one of the modern methods and technologies for completing and implementing commercial transactions and deals using electronic technologies, through which various companies and institutions display their products of goods and services using the means and tools of presentation provided by computer technologies and other electronic media, to allow buyers to review the advantages of using them, and then contact is made. Buyer and seller via the Internet

using e-mail, to complete the transaction without the need to move and make the consequent financial transactions and settlements.

The growth of e-commerce is due to the scientific and technological development in the field of communications and transactions, and the spread of the Internet, which offers its services at competitive prices, represents an opportunity to increase e-commerce applications. Also, the continuous development of networks and software contributed to enhancing consumer confidence in e-commerce, as well as contributing to its spread and development. Competition Among the companies to obtain the largest share of the market. Online advertisements and auctions have started since 1995 until virtual reality experiences, to the extent that most small and medium-sized commercial enterprises have created a website for them, through which they display their products and advertisements to compete with large institutions that have electronic portals, and many of them have sites full of information.

The second requirement: the definition of electronic commerce

Electronic commerce represents a form of commercial or economic dealing represented in the sale and purchase of goods and services between parties via the electronic field, using information and communication technology, electronic media and methods, and a part of jurisprudence (Kafi, 2009) defined it as “the electronic global market that allows all workers And the beneficiaries in the production circles have the ability to deal in real time and immediately through an open market that forms the basis for the integrated management of practical and informational human relations.

It was also defined as “the process of buying and selling via electronic networks at the commodity and service levels, along with information, computer programs, and other activities that assist business practices, and carry out some or all commercial transactions between goods and services that take place between one business project and another and between one business and a consumer, using information and communication technology.” (Mujahid, 2002). And that it is “all exchanges and transactions that one of the modern means of communication is used in the completion and implementation of a modern means of communication on the part of a trader – natural or legal – who acts within the framework of his professional activity directed to the consumer – natural or legal – and includes the conclusion of contracts, payment and delivery, and everything related to commercial transactions when using electronic means.” in whole or in part in its conclusion” (Said, 2010).

Accordingly, we support the jurisprudential definition (Ibrahim, 2001), which considered that electronic commerce is “all commercial activities for products and services that are carried out using information technology, and through an international communication network using electronic data interchange to carry out commercial operations, whether they take place between individuals or between individuals and organizations, and whether they are at the local or international level. The fact that it is a definition that is not limited to the Internet as a network on which commercial activities are conducted only, as electronic dealing includes any other electronic means similar to the Internet, through which commercial transactions are concluded remotely.

Some Arab legislation has defined electronic commerce, including what the Tunisian legislator described as “commercial operations that take place through electronic exchanges” (The Palestinian Official Gazette, 2018). While the Tunisian legislator defined it as “the activity by which an electronic supplier proposes or guarantees the provision of goods and services remotely to an electronic consumer, through electronic communications” (The Palestinian Official Gazette, 2018),

while the Palestinian legislator defined electronic commerce as: “every commercial transaction that takes place remotely using an electronic means” (The Palestinian Official Gazette, 2018). Finally, the Saudi legislator defined it under the e-commerce system issued in 2019 as “an economic activity that takes place in whole or in part through remote communication technology using an electronic medium to provide a good or service.”

What is meant by the electronic medium in this definition is often the Internet, through which the purchase order is submitted, the value of purchases is paid electronically, and some types of purchases are delivered through the electronic medium such as books, magazines, electronic games, computer software, accounting programs, music, videos, and medical consultations. And health...

As for the definition of international organizations of electronic commerce, the World Trade Organization (OMC) defined it as: “It is the process of producing, promoting, selling and distributing products through a communication network” ([ecom_brochure_f.pdf \(wto.org\)](#)). Through this definition, it is clear that electronic commerce includes all activities arising from relations of a commercial nature, and that electronic commerce is based on two points: generality and inclusiveness. by a specific means (Eldado, 2012).

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development defines electronic commerce as “all types of commercial attributes that are held, whether between departments or between individuals, through electronic processing, whether that data is read, sounds, or a visual image.”

While the European Union defined electronic commerce as “all activities that take place by electronic means, whether they take place between commercial enterprises and consumers or between each of them separately and between government departments,” European Directive No. 27/97 issued on May 20, 1997 defined it as “every contract related to goods.” Or services concluded between a supplier and a consumer within the scope of a system for the sale or provision of remote services organized by the supplier who uses for this contract only one or more rationing of remote communication to conclude and implement the contract” (Hegazy, 2001).

Most of the laws have subjected electronic contracts to the system of written contracts in terms of expressing the will, its legal effect, validity, and enforceability in a manner that does not contradict the provisions of the two laws that regulate the provisions of the electronic document, the electronic signature, how to deal with them, and take the necessary precautions to avoid all illegal use of encryption elements or personal equipment. related to the signature.

The third requirement: forms of electronic commerce

Thanks to the revolution of the Internet and information technology, we have the cyberspace environment, which is one of the main elements affecting the international system and the economies of countries, with the technological tools it carries (Khalifa, 2017), and commercial activity in its various forms has had the most prominent role in this cyberspace, as the forms of E-commerce has been changing and changing, especially in our current era, as soon as the automatic opening of a small device reveals the world with its markets, factories and companies(Kafi, 2009). As e-commerce is represented in all types of commercial transactions that take place electronically through the international information network “the Internet”, and these transactions take place whether between projects to each other “between companies and suppliers of production inputs, or marketing or distribution facilities”, or between companies and their consumers, or between Official establishments and devices. Below are the forms of e-commerce:

The first branch: from company to company(B2B)

E-commerce usually takes place through pure commercial dealings between commercial establishments, but the most important part is what is done by managing the supply chain between companies, through electronic information exchange systems that have many forms, these chains exist in major industrial companies such as Toyota and Airbus And others, and are associated with a large number of large, medium and small companies, while international trade is considered the ideal model for this type of e-commerce business.

The second section: e-commerce between a company and a consumer(B2C)

It is the electronic sales operations between a commercial establishment and a consumer through the various offers that the establishment provides to consumers through marketing centers on the Internet, as the consumer can make purchasing tours from all over the world, and buys the goods and services he needs without moving or traveling, and payment is made through the network As for receiving, only the nature of the commodity and the wording of the agreement. This type was widely known with the emergence of virtual commercial centers and electronic markets on the Internet, such as: the electronic commercial complex located in Sri Lanka, which displays various types of tea, clothes and precious stones, as well as the Amazon.com website, which specializes in selling books, and Dell, which has become one of The most famous companies that have a distinct supply chain linked directly to their customers (Kahlon, 2002).

The third section: from consumer to consumer(C2C)

This form appeared with the widespread use of the Internet and the emergence of modern technologies, in which auctions take place in which buying and selling takes place via the Internet, between two different people. The most famous example of this section is eBay.com. The main type of this form is transactions between consumers, through the electronic shelf, in which the consumer provides the goods to the consumer, and other consumers can bid on the price, and the electronic shelf serves as an intermediary as it allows customers to put their goods for sale on the website of the electronic shelf, and often comes the role of The mediator as a third party, given that most individual consumer sellers do not have a website on the Internet, so they rely on institutions that have specialized websites on the Internet that display the products of individual sellers and receive purchase orders, for a commission or for free(Kafi, 2009).

And there are those who add another form of electronic commerce that is from the government to companies and to individuals, and we see that this type does not fall under the forms of electronic commerce, and that it is considered as electronic transactions, and if the state charges money in return, it is just a fee for administrative transactions and traditional licenses, but in an electronic manner, and therefore it is not a form of electronic commerce

The fourth section: Business to Government (B2G)

This aspect of e-commerce is still in its initial stages in most countries, and most of this activity is focused on electronic interaction between commercial and government institutions, such as proofs, tax payments, and commercial license payments. And customs fees and import clearance of goods from them, in addition to the purchases that government institutions make from commercial institutions electronically

The second topic:

E-commerce in light of the Corona pandemic “Covid 19”

To confront the recession that struck trade in the world and was left behind by the outbreak of the Corona epidemic, which with the entry of the year 2021 is still killing the lives of many people;

Many commercial establishments and companies, large and small, have resorted to using websites to market their products, and shop owners have resorted to social media platforms in order to market their goods by providing advertisements that contain offers and discounts and granting facilities to customers such as the free delivery service that saves the customer the process of moving to buy what he needs of commodities, whether it is related to medicines, sterilizers, food, clothing, accessories, cosmetics, or any other products. Which significantly contributed to the prosperity of e-commerce compared to the past years that were devoid of such a pandemic, and we will present below the extent to which e-commerce was affected by the Corona pandemic, and then we will present the characteristics of e-commerce.

E-Commerce Is Growing

Global E-Commerce Jumps to \$26.7 Trillion, Covid-19 Boosts Online Retail Sales

The pandemic has, however, resulted in mixed fortunes for some e-commerce companies, reversing the fortunes of firms offering services such as ride-hailing and travel.

Geneva, Switzerland, 3 May 2021

The dramatic rise in e-commerce amid movement restrictions induced by COVID-19 increased online retail sales' share of total retail sales from 16% to 19% in 2020, according to estimates in an UNCTAD report released on 3 May.

UNCTAD released the report, (unctad, 2020),.

According to the report, online retail sales grew markedly in several countries, with the Republic of Korea reporting the highest share at 25.9% in 2020, up from 20.8% the year before (Table).

Meanwhile, global e-commerce sales jumped to \$26.7 trillion globally in 2019, up 4% from 2018, according to the latest available estimates.

This includes business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) sales, and is equivalent to 30% of global gross domestic product (GDP) that year.

"These statistics show the growing importance of online activities. They also point to the need for countries, especially developing ones, to have such information as they rebuild their economies in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Shamika Sirimanne, UNCTAD's director of technology and logistics.

Table : Online retail sales, selected economies, 2018-2020

Economy	Online retail sales (\$ billions)			Retail sales (\$ billions)			Online share (% of retail sales)		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
Australia	13.5	14.4	22.9	239	229	242	5.6	6.3	9.4
Canada	13.9	16.5	28.1	467	462	452	3.0	3.6	6.2
China	1,060.4	1,233.6	1,414.3	5,755	5,957	5,681	18.4	20.7	24.9
Korea (Rep.)	76.8	84.3	104.4	423	406	403	18.2	20.8	25.9
Singapore	1.6	1.9	3.2	34	32	27	4.7	5.9	11.7
United Kingdom	84.0	89.0	130.6	565	564	560	14.9	15.8	23.3
United States	519.6	598.0	791.7	5,269	5,452	5,638	9.9	11.0	14.0
Economies above	1,770	2,038	2,495	12,752	13,102	13,003	14	16	19

Source: UNCTAD Online retail sales, select economies, 2018-2020

Advantages of E-Commerce for Customers

There are quite a few advantages that e-commerce provides to customers. You can look at all of the product choices all at once, and you usually won't miss out on a product because the store is out of stock.

Shopping From Home

If you shop online, you won't need to spend your weekends or evenings driving to different stores to run errands. You can also buy products from anywhere in the country, and sometimes from other countries, from the comfort of your couch.

Shop at Any Time

If you work odd hours or are just extremely busy, you can still buy products online at any time of the day or night. A website can be open 24/7, even though most stores close at night.

Product Information

If you're purchasing a product online, you can take a look at reviews from previous customers, check out similar products on other websites to see if there are cheaper options, and read the product description and any warranty information.

Advantages of E-Commerce for Businesses

While consumers gain many benefits from buying products online, businesses also benefit from lower business costs and access to customer data.

Lower Business Costs

An e-commerce business doesn't have to pay rent or pay to maintain a physical storefront and make it appealing to customers. A sole proprietor may be able to handle orders on their own and might not need to hire employees until their business has already had some success.

More Potential Customers

This is especially helpful for small businesses, which otherwise would have been limited to a small geographic footprint. Search-engine rankings can also help businesses better compete by allowing them to get in front of new customers.

Customer Data

E-commerce helps businesses by allowing them to collect customer data. Businesses can use customer buying habits, demographics, and preferences to better market their products. They can use e-commerce data to predict when demand for a product will be higher or lower, which reduces the risk of overstocking or understocking a product. Companies may also be able to use this information to make the shopping experience easier for the customer.

Disadvantages of E-Commerce

E-commerce is a powerful tool for buying and selling, but there are some downsides. If the website is slow, or if a customer is having internet problems in their area, a business could lose a potential customer. Customers may also have online privacy and security concerns when shopping online, and some people may prefer to buy products in person.

Concerns for Businesses

If there are any problems with your site, you could lose dozens of customers in a short period of time and never get them back. You have to make sure that your site works well and is user-friendly on mobile and on a desktop. You also can't rely on foot traffic. Instead, you'll need to drive customers to your site through social media strategy, online advertising, or by making sure your company's website ranks near the top when people search for products you sell. You'll also need to make sure that your customers receive their products in a timely manner.

Security Concerns

In 2019, 73% of internet-using households in the United States had significant concerns about online privacy and security risks, and 35% of households said their concerns held them back from some online activities.

Customer Preferences

Some customers still prefer to shop in brick-and-mortar stores. Raydiant's 2021 State of the In-Store Experience survey revealed that 47% percent of responders estimated that they had spent just over half of their shopping budget when making in-person purchases, and 48% of responders still preferred to shop in-person rather than online.

The first requirement: the impact of the Corona virus on electronic commerce around the world

Trade in the world has received painful blows due to the spread of the Corona virus, which is a force majeure that paralyzed all aspects of life in different regions of the world, as a result of which many countries of the world imposed a state of emergency, and prohibited the movement of people to prevent crowding and mixing in order to avoid the transmission of infection. The reason is that markets, airports, and ports have stopped, and commercial traffic and freight, transportation, and unloading operations have stopped, with the exception of receiving medical products. The only winner was the electronic markets or what is known as virtual stores, which benefited from the demand of individuals around the world for online shopping sites and applications, due to the quarantine and prevention measures, which contributed to a significant increase in the turnout for e-commerce over the past years. Before the emergence of the Corona virus, it was estimated that e-commerce traffic would grow by 25% annually in the countries of the Arab region, to exceed \$28 billion by the end of the year, amid expectations that global spending on e-commerce would reach about \$3.5 trillion at the end of 2020, an increase of 18%. % of the figures achieved during the year 2019, and based on this large spread of e-commerce during the past two years, it is estimated that the volume of e-commerce will reach \$ 28.5 billion by the year 2022, as e-commerce enters a pivotal period in the region, and represents an important opportunity for consumers companies and investors (2020, report).

It also contributed to the increase in the trend towards electronic shopping during the outbreak of the epidemic. It is a state of confusion and lack of transparency in the interpretation of how the infection is transmitted. Is it transmitted through droplets through the air or by contact with external surfaces, such as traditional currencies? Cash and paper, as the World Health Organization announced at the end of January 2020 the outbreak of the coronavirus – Covid 19, classifying it as a “public health emergency of international concern,” and then re-announced it on March 11, 2020 a global pandemic, calling on countries of the world to unite and cooperate in confronting it. And limiting its spread, which contributed to the reluctance of many consumers to deal directly with shops and stores, and they tended to buy electronically and pay for goods purchased by electronic means or digital currency, avoiding paper or metal currencies, especially after the issuance of a report that they remain carriers of the virus for several days and cause In the transmission of infection and infection with the virus, the World Health Organization has warned that paper money may contribute to the spread of the emerging kurna virus “Covid 19”, which contributed to a major shift towards contactless digital payment operations, and a recent study indicates that about 26% of consumers prefer to avoid The use of paper money since the outbreak of the pandemic, which eventually caused a decline of about 30% in the use of paper money in monetary transactions and the trend towards

contactless payment processes that ensure the prevention of the spread of the virus. The epidemic (Research paper, 2020.).

This warning about the impact of the Corona virus was credited with the growth of e-commerce around the world, as with the entry of the year 2021, Corona waves are still ravaging a large number of countries, forcing a large number of companies to conclude their contracts electronically, and many people to stick to their homes and adopt electronic purchase, as At the height of the epidemic, statistics indicated that the demand for health products rose at lightning speed, the most prominent of which was the increase in sales shares of masks and respirators by 590%, hand sanitizers, their shares increased by 420%, gloves by 151%, and hand soap reached 33% of the increase, and the lion's share was Among these heights is Amazon, which, despite the imposition of precautionary measures, was looking for 100,000 part-time employees to work all over the world, in order to meet the very high demand for electronic stores, and the increasing demand for online shopping([Al-Moselhy, 2020]). This confirms the increasing growth of e-commerce as a result of the Corona pandemic, as expectations indicate that e-commerce grew by 56% in the past year 2020, while traditional trade grew by 2% over the same time period.

The second requirement: the characteristics of e-commerce in light of the Corona pandemic

E-commerce is characterized by several characteristics that distinguish it from traditional trade, and it is also hindered by some obstacles, some of which are caused by the Corona virus, and accordingly we will show the characteristics of electronic commerce, by

The impact of the Corona virus on e-commerce around the world

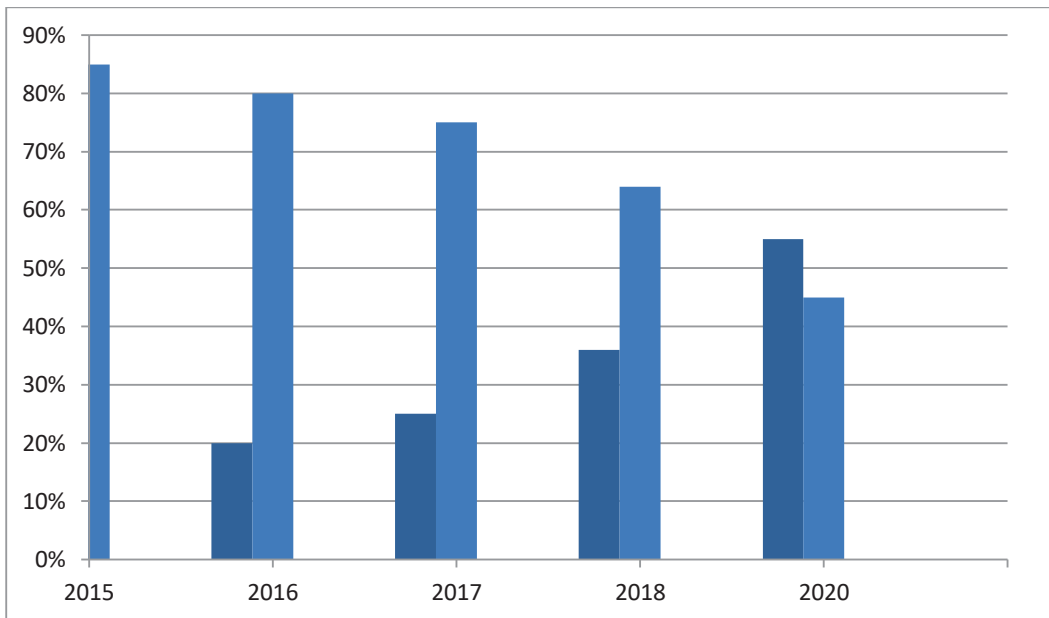
According to the statistics, health products had the largest share of purchases. Sales shares of masks and respirators increased by 590%, hand sanitizers increased by 420%, gauze by 151%, and hand soap reached 33% of the increase. The lion's share of these increases was It is the Amazon site that, despite the imposition of precautionary measures, Amazon was looking for 100,000 part-time employees to work all over the world in order to meet the very high demand for electronic stores, and the increasing demand for online shopping. Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon, spoke About this in a tweet, he said: "We are seeing a huge increase in demand, which means that our staffing needs are unprecedented for this time of year."

The rate of increase in some states of the United States of America from March 10 to March 20, 2020

State	percentage increase
New York	158%
California	230%
Washington	157%
Louisiana	167%

An increase in the rates of online purchases and e-commerce in the United States of America appeared prominently in the percentage of buying food products from the Internet. In 2015, for

example, 15% of online shoppers bought food and grocery products. The percentage gradually increased until it reached 55% in 2020. of buyers while in 2018 it was only 36%, see the picture.



The most famous global e-commerce site

Amazon

It was launched in 1994 AD, and is currently visited by approximately 524 million visitors per month, (Nguyen,2022). as it is considered one of the largest and most famous electronic stores in most countries, and it was dedicated to selling books only at the beginning

Many services and features are now available on the Amazon website, and it also includes various products for different groups and ages, including various electronic devices, clothes, accessories, sporting goods, books, movies and much more.(Shahid,2022)

To visit the Amazon website, click <https://www.amazon.com/>.

eBay

It was launched in 1995 AD, and is visited by about 819 million people per month, and it is considered one of the e-commerce markets of the type (C2C) and (B2C), where consumers can buy and sell a wide range of different products and services, and it should be noted that buyers can use it for free, but Sellers must pay a sum of money to be able to display products on eBay.(Nguyen,2022).

To visit the eBay website, click <https://www.ebay.com/>

Alibaba website

It was launched in 1999 AD, and is visited by about 601 million visitors per month. It is considered one of the e-commerce and retail markets of the type (B2B) and (B2C), as it provides many diverse and different products to more than 200 countries around the world.(Nguyen,2022).

To visit the Alibaba website, click <https://www.alibaba.com/>.

Rakuten

It was established in 1997 AD, and is visited by about 533 million visitors per month, and it is considered the best e-commerce site in the world in terms of sales, and it also includes many diverse products between clothes, shoes, electronic devices, mobile phones, home décor, and more. (Nguyen,2022)

To visit the Rakuten website, click <https://www.rakuten.com/>.

Target

The site visits about 258 million visitors per month, and it is considered the second largest online store in the United States, and it includes many products and services, including furniture, home décor, electronics, clothing, home and garden tools, cleaning products, and more. (Shahid,2022)

To visit the Target website, click <https://www.target.com/>.

Macy's

The site visits more than 165 million visitors per month, and it is considered one of the most prominent international brands on the Internet dedicated to women's, men's, and children's clothing. The site also includes other categories, such as accessories, cosmetics, shoes, home appliances, and decoration. (Shahid,2022)

To visit Maki's website, click <https://www.target.com/>.

Best Buy

The site visits about 192 million visitors per month, and the first thing that started was dedicated to electronic devices, but now it includes many other products, such as travel products, furniture, baby products, fitness products, and so on. (Shahid,2022)

To visit the Best Buy website, click <https://www.bestbuy.com/>.

The following table shows corporate sales during the period from 2018 to 2020.

Table 2: Top B2C e-commerce companies by GMV, 2020

Rank by GMV		Company	HQ	Industry	GMV (\$ billions)			GMV change (%)	
2020	2019				2018	2019	2020	2018-19	2019-20
1	1	Alibaba	China	E-commerce	866	954	1,145	10.2	20.1
2	2	Amazon	USA	E-commerce	344	417	575	21.0	38.0
3	3	JD.com	China	E-commerce	253	302	379	19.1	25.4
4	4	Pinduoduo	China	E-commerce	71	146	242	104.4	65.9
5	9	Shopify	Canada	Internet Media & Services	41	61	120	48.7	95.6
6	7	eBay	USA	E-commerce	90	86	100	-4.8	17.0
7	10	Meituan	China	E-commerce	43	57	71	33.0	24.6
8	12	Walmart	USA	Consumer goods retail	25	37	64	47.0	72.4
9	8	Uber	USA	Internet Media & Services	50	65	58	30.5	-10.9
10	13	Rakuten	Japan	E-commerce	30	34	42	13.6	24.2
11	5	Expedia	USA	Internet Media & Services	100	108	37	8.2	-65.9
12	6	Booking Holdings	USA	Internet Media & Services	93	96	35	4.0	-63.3
13	11	Airbnb	USA	Internet Media & Services	29	38	24	29.3	-37.1
Companies above					2,035	2,399	2,890	17.9	20.5

Source: UNCTAD based on company reports.

Section one: Advantages of e-commerce:

E-commerce is characterized by many characteristics and advantages that make it distinct from traditional trade, and one of the most important advantages of e-commerce at **the present time - in light of the spread of the Corona epidemic - is that** it avoids the movement of contractors and crowding to buy, so the merchant can manage his business from his office in his company, and the consumer from his home This leads to reduced overcrowding and mixing, thus reducing the high incidence of infection and transmission. The main advantages of e-commerce are:

Advantages of E-Commerce for Customers

There are quite a few advantages that e-commerce provides to customers. You can look at all of the product choices all at once, and you usually won't miss out on a product because the store is out of stock.

Shopping From Home

If you shop online, you won't need to spend your weekends or evenings driving to different stores to run errands. You can also buy products from anywhere in the country, and sometimes from other countries, from the comfort of your couch.

Shop at Any Time

If you work odd hours or are just extremely busy, you can still buy products online at any time of the day or night. A website can be open 24/7, even though most stores close at night.

Product Information

If you're purchasing a product online, you can take a look at reviews from previous customers, check out similar products on other websites to see if there are cheaper options, and read the product description and any warranty information.

Advantages of E-Commerce for Businesses

While consumers gain many benefits from buying products online, businesses also benefit from lower business costs and access to customer data.

Lower Business Costs

An e-commerce business doesn't have to pay rent or pay to maintain a physical storefront and make it appealing to customers. A sole proprietor may be able to handle orders on their own and might not need to hire employees until their business has already had some success.

More Potential Customers

This is especially helpful for small businesses, which otherwise would have been limited to a small geographic footprint. Search-engine rankings can also help businesses better compete by allowing them to get in front of new customers.

Customer Data

E-commerce helps businesses by allowing them to collect customer data. Businesses can use customer buying habits, demographics, and preferences to better market their products. They can use e-commerce data to predict when demand for a product will be higher or lower, which reduces the risk of overstocking or understocking a product. Companies may also be able to use this information to make the shopping experience easier for the customer.

Disadvantages of E-Commerce

E-commerce is a powerful tool for buying and selling, but there are some downsides. If the website is slow, or if a customer is having internet problems in their area, a business could lose a potential customer. Customers may also have online privacy and security concerns when shopping online, and some people may prefer to buy products in person.

Concerns for Businesses

If there are any problems with your site, you could lose dozens of customers in a short period of time and never get them back. You have to make sure that your site works well and is user-friendly on mobile and on a desktop. You also can't rely on foot traffic. Instead, you'll need to drive customers to your site through social media strategy, online advertising, or by making sure your company's website ranks near the top when people search for products you sell. You'll also need to make sure that your customers receive their products in a timely manner.

Security Concerns

In 2019, 73% of internet-using households in the United States had significant concerns about online privacy and security risks, and 35% of households said their concerns held them back from some online activities.

Customer Preferences

Some customers still prefer to shop in brick-and-mortar stores. Raydiant's 2021 State of the In-Store Experience survey revealed that 47% percent of responders estimated that they had spent just over half of their shopping budget when making in-person purchases, and 48% of responders still preferred to shop in-person rather than online.

The second section: obstacles to electronic commerce

E-commerce faces legal and technical obstacles that impede its practice from a practical point of view, and from a legal point of view, we find that e-commerce transactions are linked to private international law, as they are practiced through the Internet, which makes the place of conclusion or disposal unspecified because it took place outside the borders of the state, and that it often includes On a foreign element, which makes it difficult to apply the rules for determining international jurisdiction and the applicable law, not to mention the technical obstacles, which we summarize through the following clauses:

1. Legal obstacles related to determining the applicable law We showed in the advantages of electronic commerce that it is distinguished by its international character, and that it often includes a foreign element, which raises the question of the applicable law in the dispute that takes place in its regard. Electronic commerce, and this is evident in the inability to determine the place where the disposition took place, or the place from which the data message was sent or to whom it was sent, as determining that place is essential for the implementation of the rules of conflict of laws, which depend mainly on the spatial reference officer (Sadiq, 2004).
2. The problem of language and awareness: It restricts e-commerce activity, especially in the Arab region, given that most of the shopping sites are in English, and also the lack of awareness of e-commerce means such as electronic payment and credit cards.
3. Weak trust: Consumers' lack of trust in electronic transactions and in the security aspects of information protection were critical factors in the low prevalence of this new pattern of commercial activities(<https://www.academia.edu/9792264>).
4. The weakness of the technical infrastructure of e-commerce and the lack of interest in the media and technical advantages and characteristics that give websites attractiveness and the consumer's desire to contract electronically to buy what he needs.
5. The dangers of piracy, which poses a danger to electronic transactions and confusion in the movement of commerce via the Internet, which affects the reputation of commercial companies, and reinforces the consumer's rejection of not buying via the Internet due to his belief in not providing complete protection for his dealings through electronic commerce and the possibility of hacking access to confidential consumer data, And for the password of companies and their websites, and changing them, or for the theft of information and credit card numbers by Internet "hackers", as hackers sometimes occur to damage and destroy websites with the information virus by intruders and vandals, which constitutes a major challenge facing e-commerce.
6. The difficulty of proving cybercrime; Because it is committed by computers and via the Internet by a person with high experience in the field of information technology. On the other hand, the victim often refrains from informing the competent authorities of the occurrence of the crime, because of his ignorance of the perpetrator, or he fears that the authorities will reveal a secret he hides, or He does not want to forfeit the trust of his clients, especially if they are from banking institutions(Ibrahimi, 2017).
7. The presence of some fictitious companies, whether they are companies displaying their products or consuming companies, leads to the contractors falling into the trap of fraudsters, especially with the inability of the contracting parties electronically to verify the identity and identity of each party.
8. The possibility of contracting for goods that the law prohibits from selling in local markets, especially those that can be delivered directly on the Internet.

These were the most important obstacles to the advancement of e-commerce, which appeared evidently during the period of the Corona epidemic, and which should be overcome by paying attention to the infrastructure of the information and communication sector to develop the electronic environment by encouraging investment in the field of communication technology, preparing trained and qualified human resources in the field of

information technology, networks and communications, and providing and developing Effective payment or electronic payment systems, and enhancing consumer confidence in electronic commerce by working to secure it from various crimes such as information theft by hackers and electronic forgery, destruction of electronic funds, and seizure of electronic payment tools, by setting the criminal text for it through the issuance of a law regulating provisions Technical crimes, the development and modernization of the current legislative system to keep pace with commercial developments, to facilitate electronic contracting and to remove and avoid all legal problems that impede the spread of electronic commerce such as problems of defining international jurisdiction, conflict of laws, if electronic contracting includes a foreign element, and the establishment of dispute resolution mechanisms through the development of Arbitration Laws Electronic and others, as well as the development of electronic authentication means such as electronic certification bodies and electronic notaries in documenting electronic transactions by setting laws or adding an article to existing e-commerce laws, and supporting electronic coding systems to provide protection for e-commerce and overcome the obstacles it faces (Ibrahimi, 2017).

Conclusion

Now, after more than a year has passed since the emergence of the Corona virus, and with more confusion that appeared at the beginning of the year 2021 regarding the feasibility or uselessness of vaccines against the disease due to the emergence of new strains of Corona, and news of a new virus, we need more prevention and caution against infection, Orienting more towards electronic commerce as the supreme option in these circumstances, due to its comparison with traditional commerce, which is represented by the owners of traditional stores and shops on the ground, who were the groups most affected by the emergence of the emerging corona virus “Covid-19” in its first wave; Due to the precautionary measures and measures taken by governments and the World Health Organization to combat the faster and dangerous outbreak of the epidemic, which led to a huge and severe stagnation in the movement of buying and selling within traditional stores and shops and inflicting huge losses on many of them, and the situation is still continuing and the losses are increasing. On the other hand, electronic stores and online sales sites flourished, and their trade witnessed a great popularity.

As consumers turned their attention towards electronic markets, which avoided them risking violating the quarantine and going out to buy their needs of goods, merchants also resorted to the websites of electronic companies to conclude commercial deals and contracts electronically, and pay the value of their orders and invoices by electronic means as well, in order to avoid infection that may be transmitted to consumers or merchants during Traveling and commuting to buy goods.

We have made it clear that electronic commerce, which is a modern means of dealing with local and international trade, is among the fastest growing sectors in the global economy. And when compared to traditional trade, it has many advantages because it is done electronically without the need for the physical presence of the contractors, which limits mixing and infection, but in return it presents many challenges and obstacles, the most important of which is the weak electronic infrastructure in many countries of the world, and the legislative veto that preserves rights Providers and consumers, so countries and major companies should be keen to develop the electronic environment and its technologies to gain the satisfaction of the electronic consumer and enhance his desire to purchase goods and services through electronic commerce.

In light of these current times, and with the return of movement in many countries around the world, e-commerce is still increasing in popularity and spreading more, and it seems that e-commerce is the next glimmer of hope for the world. Global trade did not stop during the days of the world war, but it stopped because of the Corona virus for a long time, With different fields and different cultures, it seems that e-commerce gives hope to the global economy, until a cure and an antidote to the Corona virus is discovered. E-commerce is a medicine for many markets and shops around the world, and it will help countries to keep the economy moving despite crises.

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