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Shareable consumption

indications of a social collaborative lifestyle

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Abstract

- Title:** SHAREABLE CONSUMPTION
– indications of a social collaborative lifestyle
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- Keywords:** Collaborative Consumption, Online Communities, Redistribution Market, Social Collaboration, Collaborative Lifestyle
- Thesis purpose:** The purpose of this thesis is to explore the phenomenon of collaborative consumption through creating an understanding of why consumers engage in these consumption activities, and, if possible, relate their intentions to a shared collaborative lifestyle.
- Methodology:** A qualitative case study design has been applied and combined with netnographic observations and a focus group interview to explore the determining antecedents of consumers intention toward collaborative consumption. Conclusions could then be drawn through adapting a conceptual framework in combination with a qualitative grounded analysis to find commonalities that portray lifestyle choices.
- Theoretical perspective:** The main theories that this study is based upon refer to online communities, lifestyle and the determining antecedents of purchase intentions: motivation, trust, earlier experiences, perceived behavioral control and subjective norm.
- Empirical data:** Netnographic observations on ten online communities were combined with a focus group with six students who engage in collaborative activities.
- Conclusion:** The study revealed that people who engage in collaborative consumption activities share a common collective lifestyle in which usage is valued greater than ownership and the social dimension is important for trust to be built, as well as to socialize with other likeminded people about their shared interest. Their evaluation process is based on reputable factors that are gathered individually and collectively within the communities, thus forming a perceived communal control.

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1 Introduction

Back in the 18th century, consumption was only possible through the act of trading and exchanging. This was done between people who knew each other and were conducted face-to-face (Wood, 1991; as cited by Mutz, 2005). During these times, the role of social trust was less significant as there were personal relationships between the traders, thus if a product was not up to par, it would be easy for the buyer to contact the seller and reverse the exchange.

As stated by conventional economists, consumption was seen to satisfy basic human needs and improve quality of life; thus after the industrial revolution, increased productivity led to increased production levels and volume, and eventually to overproduction. Through this, prices fell to sell more, and further strategies were set to increase purchase and consumption in order to maintain profits. All this together led to further strains on the environment and on current resources. People were encouraged to purchase new products instead of repairing old ones; and instead of putting money on external labour services, they would much rather attain the benefit through investing their money on new products to own as it was much cheaper (Mont & Lindhqvist, 2003).

Then came the 1950's and the never ending production cycle, a means of rebuilding Europe after the Second World War. The answer to our prayers was called the Marshall Plan, a plan that would change the future as we knew it. A plan that made us question production, defined by Marx, as the driving force of contemporary society. Subsistence for the masses swiftly flourished into an even wider surplus production, yielding endless consumption opportunities. It was the beginning of the end of an era where consumption often was regarded as a measurement for class subordination, and the beginning of the new contemporary consumption movement where everyone could join the feast of hedonic consumption. Companies started to produce products in ever increasing volumes whilst consumers, on their end, collected these goods just as fast. However, companies soon realized that peoples' need for products of the same type and quality would become saturated and leave gaps in production, thus an increasing need for product innovation was evident (Corrigan, 1997). Whatever form these innovations took, the goal was the same: to shorten the life-cycle of the products. Here, the throwaway culture was born.

The desire to purchase refined goods and services, and the continuous rise in materialism, has given consumption a strong role in shaping society today. Most people in western civilizations now have the ability to show the world who they are through their products and level of consumption, but this freedom has come at a price. Economic crises and environmental issues have succeeded one after the other, generating concern as to whether our economic system can provide the degree of welfare we now take for granted. As a result, both states, researchers and ordinary people have started to act on their lost belief in the system and instead propose

alternative solutions that would benefit the world in the long term. Through the use of the Internet and social media, they can mobilize people from all over the world, breaking geographical boundaries (Botsman & Rogers, 2010).

1.1 The sharing economy¹

In 2004 a Professor of Law by the name of Yochai Benkler published an article called "Sharing Nicely" in the Yale Journal. In this article he proposes sharing as a modality of economic production. From an economic perspective, this "sharing economy" can be viewed as a shift from our current state of mass-consumption and ownership to one that is relearning to share, and relying more on social connections rather than price systems to help reallocate resources (Benkler, 2004). Sharing practices are no longer limited to a tight-knit network, instead the sharing economy argues for sharing with distant acquaintances or complete strangers, where contributing private goods and personal resources to create an effective system focused on usage is most relevant. This social sharing and exchange has grown in popularity in many areas such as information, education, communication and culture, thus brings greater attention on the sustainable social practice of exhausting existing resources. The technological state of our economy helps individuals engage in these activities of exchange and offers the opportunities to share material resources within our control; expanding independent networks to those accessed over the Internet further encourages our humanistic characteristics of sharing.

1.2 Introducing collaborative consumption

Today, more people than ever before have found alternative ways of gaining access to products and services they are in need of, and not only through companies but through other people in their community, state, country or even internationally (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). On a broad level this takes into account online auctions that provide easy access to secondhand items from other consumers, today a market that eBay alone has over 95 million active users (eBay.com: In Fast Facts). In addition there is the alternative of accessing secondhand goods through so-called swaps, a market that lets consumers trade their used goods for other goods that they could make better use of. Furthermore, there has also been a rise in rental services from which consumers can gain usage from products without the need of owning them through borrowing from other consumers, thus one person pays for the actual benefit whilst the other gets paid for their product's idle capacity. This also stretches into, for example, sharing land, where the landowners lend out their land free of charge to people who want to grow.

Botsman and Rogers (2010) have described the movement away from the conventional business-to-consumer models, and toward one that at the time being is

¹ Although the name resembles the 'gift economy' they are not to be confused as the sharing economy differs even from an ideological perspective through not distancing itself from capitalism, which the gift economy does (Wikipedia).

more centered around consumer-to-consumer (from here on discussed as peer-to-peer) sharing, as collaborative consumption. They propose that businesses have to catch up with the consumers to fully take advantage of the possibilities that this new model bears instead of only looking to the apparent neglect of volume production. However, to fully understand the advantages of collaborative consumption there is an obvious need to first of all understand why consumers engage in this type of consumption, but being a new phenomenon there is a lack of such knowledge today and we therefore find it crucial to further explore.

1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the phenomenon of collaborative consumption through creating an understanding of why consumers engage in these consumption activities, and if it is possible to relate their intentions to a shared collaborative lifestyle.

With our purpose in mind, this thesis aims to generate understanding of the following two questions:

- What are the determining antecedents of a consumer's intentions to engage in collaborative consumption?
- How do these intentions relate to a shared collaborative lifestyle?

1.4 Background to collaborative consumption

Botsman and Rogers (2010) describe collaborative consumption through three closely connected markets: Product Service Systems, Redistribution Markets and Collaborative Lifestyle. Since our purpose is lifestyle oriented, we have decided to give the latter market a more apprehensible name: Social Collaboration. It is important to separate the markets of collaborative consumption as the three submarkets deviate in many regards.

1.4.1 Product Service Systems

Product service systems, a form of collaborative consumption, can be defined as a new-thinking business model that minimizes the strain on resources through a joint focus on both products and services that greater fulfill a user's need and may lead to higher profits than just products alone. Goedkoop et al. (1999), the first researcher to attempt to define the term describes it as being "a system of products, services, networks of 'players' and supporting infrastructure that continuously strives to be competitive, satisfy customer needs, and have a lower environmental impact than traditional business models" (cited by Baines et al., 2007). This model stresses the "usage mindset" where consumers pay for the benefit rather than the ownership (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). Product service systems shifts consumption from buying

products to essentially buying services, thus having a “leasing society” (Braungart, 1991; as cited by Mont, 2002) that minimizes societal impact but requires more involvement from customers. It also relieves consumers from feeling the responsibility of maintaining the ownership of the product for its entire lifespan and thus not taking advantage of the product to its fullest capacity (Mont, 2002).

1.4.2 Redistribution markets

The most notable online market within collaborative consumption is the redistribution market. Botsman & Rogers (2010) describes it as a platform where used or preowned goods can be redistributed from where they are unneeded to somewhere or someone else where it will be needed. There are many examples of successful online marketplaces within this distinction including ones based solely on free exchanges (Freecycle), to trading goods for goods (Swap), trading for points (Goozex), trading for cash (eBay), or a mixture (Craigslist). Essentially, a redistribution market is an organization that provides a community, or virtual retail location, for people to trade products in a simple yet comprehensive manner. In return they often ask for a small fixed fee or percentage of the sales, although some marketplaces are free. The transactions and communication are conducted between the peers involved, and thus the company has no direct liability in case a transaction goes sour.

1.4.3 Social collaboration markets

Social collaboration, a term we use to describe the old tradition of exchanging intangible goods such as time, space, skills, and money, has been regenerated and placed onto an online platform where individuals are able to find others willing to engage in similar activities. The interactions are usually initiated online but are conducted on a local level which include activities such as sharing workspaces (Deskttime), goods (Neighborrow), tasks and errands (TaskRabbit), gardens (Landshare), food (Neighborhood Fruit) and parking spaces (ParkatMyHouse). Through these websites, individuals are able to find other individuals who want to collaborate together either through offering money for a skilled performed, or sharing resources without predetermined personal benefit. Furthermore interactions can also occur internationally, as seen through examples such as peer-to-peer social lending of money (Zopa) and travel lodging (Couchsurfing). These activities may or may not involve face-to-face interactions between collaborators due to the nature of the activity. This social collaboration is more than just trading and swapping as the human-to-human interaction is seen as the focus of the exchange, over just the product itself - helping to build relationships and connectivity from an online platform to offline means (Botsman & Rogers 2010).

2 Theory

Having only limited knowledge regarding both collaborative consumption practices and online communities, we have found it important to establish our study on a set of existing theories and distinctions that could guide our research. We do however also believe that it is a salient necessity that the study is not impeded by pre-assumptions raised through strictly followed theoretical postulations. Therefore the theoretical framework has been loosely adopted with the primary aim of guiding us in a manner that would aid a comprehensive observation and analysis. It will enable us to capture different, and important, aspects of collaborative consumption whilst also helping us to keep an open mind about the meanings that are created through interactions occurring in the communities that have been studied.

To fully depict an understanding of collaborative consumption, the theoretical framework will evolve from a description about the role of online communities and how it affects online consumption activities. We will then introduce the conceptual model from Dennis et al. (2010) in which we are adapting but slightly modifying in our study to explain the intentions of online consumption activities, highlighting a strong focus on motivational factors and trust issues. This will be used to help guide our observation and analytical work toward a deeper understanding of why individuals choose to engage in a collaborative lifestyle.

2.1 The role of communities

Although many people have tried to define what an online community entails, it has no exact definition as it means different things to different people. Online community is a term loosely used to describe a variety of activities pertaining to software support, a coming together of like-minded individuals, or a virtual space where people can come together to share information, ranging from local, national to international geography. Howard Rheingold (1994) attempts to describe virtual communities as “cultural aggregations that emerge when enough people bump into each other often enough in cyberspace. A virtual community is a group of people who may or may not meet one another face-to-face, and who exchange words and ideas through the mediation of computer bulletin boards and networks” (p. 57-58).

The importance of online communities exist due to people’s need to connect. The rise of this platform is from the sheer number of people who now have access to it and choose to engage in it for whichever reasons. The sociability of a successful community depends on three components as discussed by Preece (2000). First, it is through a shared purpose between those in the community that gives reasons for a member to belong. Second, people who interact with each other in the community choose to take different roles - such as leaders, comedians, moderators etc. and third, set policies in terms of language and protocols helps guide people’s interactions, codes of behaviors and community governance. These online communities act as a platform where users engaging in collaborative consumption are able to join to meet

individuals, ask questions, exchange opinions and discuss topics either related to, or unrelated to, the website. The reciprocity of information shared among members in a community attracts usage and sometimes interpersonal feelings of belonging (Jones 1997; Rheingold 1993; Wellman 2000). To retain members and create long lasting identification, there are two important factors to take into account. The first is the member's relationship to the consumption activity, referring to how closely linked the consumption activity is to the members' self-concept, which means that a more valued relationship will be fostered with other members if his or her self-image is closely related to the symbols of the consumption activity. The second factor instead refers to the strength of the relationship that the member has with other members. These factors are non-independent and often interrelate with each other (Kozinets, 1999). With this connection amongst members in a community, and the ability to have a different persona in the cyberworld (Turkle, 1995), the information obtained through these forums will likely be honest and insightful.

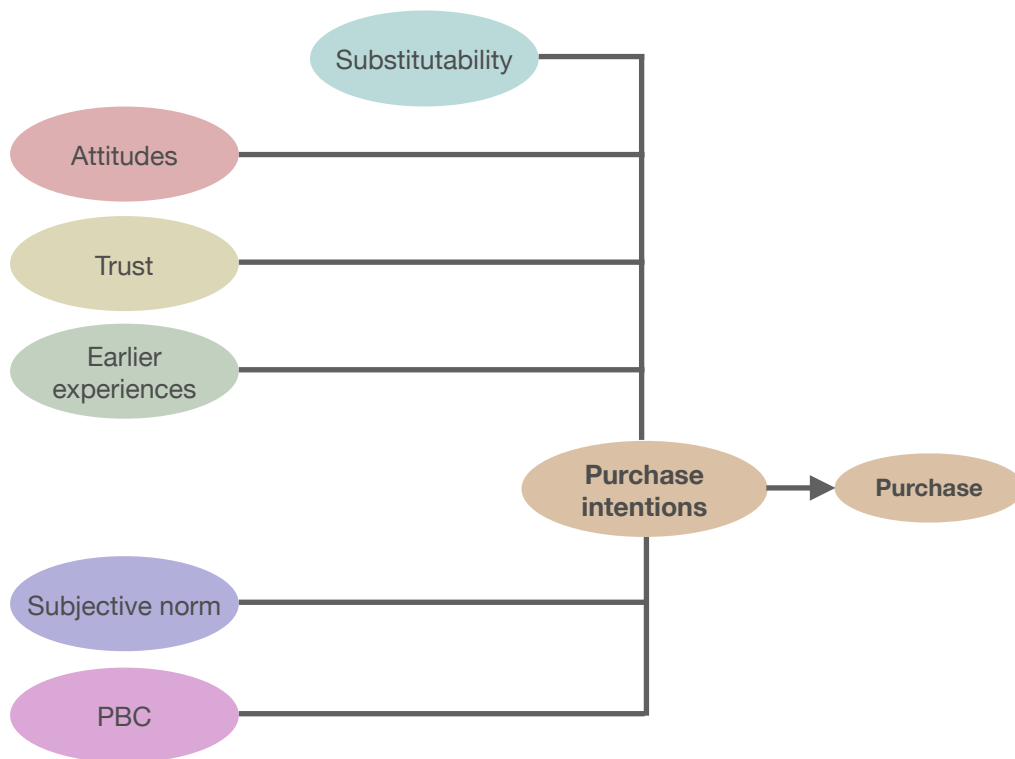
There are many motivations behind why an individual would choose to discuss and engage in online communities, but it is the material that results from these discussions that are of interest. Being able to enter into thoughts of users engaging in, or considering to engage in collaborative consumption through observing the discussion forums will provide us a deeper understanding into the phenomena described below.

2.2 A conceptual model for antecedents of purchase intention

Internet opened up to the public in the early 1990s and, soon after, e-commerce entered; Amazon.com in 1994 and eBay.com in 1996, to give two examples. Within shopping behavior research, this new retailing phenomenon was at first often argued to primarily attract people wanting to save time and money, as it was regarded as a cheaper and more convenient alternative to conventional store models (e.g. Alba et al, 1997). Yet later, researchers have applied theories that, from the beginning was constructed for the physical retail phenomenon (Dennis et al., 2010; Shim et al. 2001; Wolfinbarger & Gilly, 2001). Evidently this means that online shopping is supposedly used to fill both utilitarian and hedonic needs, although utilitarian needs are still often regarded as the primary reason (Wolfinbarger & Gilly, 2001).

Dennis et al. (2010) are some of the researchers that have applied former physical retail shopping behavior models to the online sphere. Their conceptual model is based on the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) which, in an online context, proposes that attitude and subjective norm together determine a person's intention to perform a behavior (Shim et al., 2001). However, it has been further developed to grasp other determining antecedents to online shopping behavior. As illustrated in Model 1, Dennis et al. (2010) suggest that attitude, trust, earlier experiences, substitutability, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control are the immediate antecedents of our intentions toward online purchasing. The different antecedents will be discussed in greater detail throughout the theory chapter, albeit attitudes will be discussed as motivators to further depict what it is that drives a person's attitude

toward a behavior. The reasoning behind this choice will be further discussed in the methodology chapter.



Model 1. Conceptual model over determining antecedents of purchase intentions to consumers online shopping behavior.

2.3 Motivation

The attitudes that influence intentions, and in turn behavior, are influenced through our motives to participate in a consumption activity. Tauber (1972), Seth (1983) and Westbrook and Black (1985, as cited in Parsons, 2002) early on recognized that a consumer's shopping behavior is the result from a set of functional and non-functional motivational functions that draws attention to participation in particular consumption activities. At that time, online shopping and virtual communities were at best hopes for the future, but Parsons' (2002) (focus on non-functional factors) and Alba et al.'s (1997) (focus on functional factors) have more recently conducted studies within the area, and found that these motivational functions apply to online shopping behaviors as well. Although the two types are described individually, they are interrelated and entangled, and therefore it is often a combination that creates the perception leading to a consumers intentions (Bridges and Florsheim, 2008).

The functional motives for shopping are more utilitarian and can be viewed as rational choices for why we choose to shop at one place over another. This would indicate that the store that can provide the best information, most alternatives in depth and/or width, lowest price, a convenient transaction and location would win

the customer. Whether the store is online or offline would not matter as it is about making a rational decision on available information (Burke, 1998; Alba et al. 1997).

The non-functional motives are instead based on psychosocial needs reflecting important personal and social attributes instead of those relating to product acquisition (Parsons, 2002). If these motives are taken into consideration, it becomes clear that choosing a consumption activity is rather complex and subjective, as not only the product but also the process of shopping is of great importance to shopping behavior.

Personal motives in this study are regarded as motives relating to diversion, self-gratification and the will to learn and be educated in terms of one's interest. Diversion refers to the act of shopping, or even browsing, and how that provides a state of relaxation from other daily activities that in itself can be a form of recreation. Diversion can however be negative as well if, for example, the browsing experience is considered tiresome. Self-gratification on its end refers that it is the process of buying and not the consumption that motivates a behavior, and as such, people can find motivation in the act of information searching or even waiting for a good to be delivered. The last of the three personal motives regards the ability to find information about aspects of the consumption activity that a person finds interesting. Chiang and Dholakia (2003) have elaborated on the act of searching for information and connected it with functional factors, finding that going through with consumption activities that are easy to find information about externally online (e.g. through reading about the product) provides convenience to the consumer. Furthermore, what we shop is argued to carry meaning for us, and the symbols of that meaning reflect attitudes and behavioral patterns. Whilst browsing online we learn more about trends and how different symbols support them (Parsons, 2002). Girgensohn and Lee (2002) agree with the notion of learning, or education, as an important determinant, but have also found advances of the common good as a key reason, thus presenting the case that motives other than personal needs should be reflected upon.

The second set of motives, social motives, turns the focus away from the individual reasons for participating in consumption activities and instead focus on the social dimension. In our adoption we regard three motivators here as well. The first one is the interaction with others who have similar interest, referring to the communities and support groups that allow socialization with others with the common interest. The second factor is the peer group attraction - online communities that an individual shows patronage towards indicates the desire of belonging to specific groups, and as such plays a big role in the choice of consumption activities that the individual chooses to engage (Parsons, 2002). Thus communities online are important to foster further social interaction (Girgensohn & Lee 2002), and enable people to form substantive relationships with other likeminded people (Karau and Williams 1993; Parks & Floyd, 1996). Through the bonds they create, social norms develop that act as pillars from which the community can organize itself, fostering deeper association to the subculture that evolves (Kozinets, 1999).

Lastly, the social motives of status and authority are regarded to affect how a person interacts with others in communities. As Parsons (2002) argues, it is foremost the

lack of status and authority that motivates online participation because people do not feel as self-conscious behind the computer screen. But as pointed out by Lampel & Bhalla (2007) this lack of authoritative status can also induce competition among members to gain status in the community that they are taking the time and effort of sharing their experiences in.

The presented set of motives have been adapted from Parsons' (2002) research on non-functional motives in online shopping, which in turn is an adoption from Tauber's (1972) set of motives for why we shop. This is combined with Alba's et al. (1997) fundamental idea on functional motivators for our research to cover the common grounds from which motives derive. We acknowledge that there have been other adaptations to Tauber's (1972) original set, but have found that Parsons' adoption is of most relevance because of its online focus. Furthermore, we also acknowledge that utilitarian motives are often regarded as more common online than the personal and social motives (e.g. Wolfenbarger and Gilly, 2001), but it is important to accept that shopping behavior is motivated by both functional and non-functional needs, thus requiring an analysis that considers both utilitarian satisfaction derived from the product, and psychosocial satisfaction obtained from the shopping activity.

2.4 Trust

Trust is regarded as one of the most salient necessities within the sphere of e-commerce since it acts as a catalyst to online behaviors and choice of product and seller. Lack of trust can therefore severely harm a seller's ability to profit from the sales activities. Using the word seller is a most evident acknowledgement since transactions not only occur between a company and its customers, but also between customers and businesses. Trust has been defined as "a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence" (Moorman et al., 1992).

Both Jacoby and Kaplan (1972) and Mitchell (1992) have acknowledge six components of types of perceived risk: financial, product performance, social, psychological, physical, and time/convenience loss. Out of those, Forsythe & Shi (2003) have acknowledged four main risks to be of pertinence amongst Internet shoppers - financial, product performance, psychological and time/convenience. The two most related to the redistribution market and to social collaboration is the risk of financial loss and product performance loss which will be further explained in our analysis.

2.4.1 Trust building

Trust is built from three components: trust beliefs, reputational trust, and trust intentions - willingness to depend (Rousseau et al., 1998; McKnight et al., 1998). Forming a strong trust belief that leads to trust intentions, and building a strong e-commerce website that minimizes one's perception of risk will help consumers engage in online web vendors and make purchases.

In a study that Hoffman et al. (1999) conducted, 64% of web consumers believe that it is not safe to give their credit card number over the web, 57% were afraid the

website will sell their name, and 18% thought they will not get what they ordered out of a study with 45 million American web users. Furthering this study by Hoffman et al., out of 12.6 million non-buyers (those who do not purchase online) they surveyed, 38% chose not to due to the risk of security issues, and 11% due to privacy issues. In a broader perspective, the perceived risk shows two main components: the probability of a loss, and the subjective feeling of unfavorable consequences (Cunningham, 1967; as cited by Mitchell, 1999).

McKnight et al. (2002a) has presented a Trust Building Model that showcases and links the relationships between the antecedent factors, trust, and behavioral intentions. A customer's behavioral intention has been found to strongly correlate with their actual behavior (Rousseau et al., 1998; McKnight et al., 1998) and is seen to engage in three main activities within this scenario if trust is formed: follow advice from the web vendor, share personal information with the web vendor, and purchase goods or services from that vendor (McKnight et al., 2002). Understanding how each component relates to one another and the risk involved with forming trust if carried out, will lead to actual trust behaviors by the consumer. This is important in understanding how consumers within online communities and online platforms form a sense of trust with one another and essentially rely on strangers with their money, goods, skills and dependency.

Wu & Tsang (2008) have also attempted to divide trust building into three stages through the adoption and combination of both Moorman et al. (1993) and Butler's (1991) expert views: building, process and consequences. In terms of building trust with participants, Wu & Tsang believes a main attractor and core reason as to why a trustor would trust a trustee is their belief that the trustee could and would be willing to do something that benefits them; thus benefit is a main factor in building trust. Sharing the same cultural values and understanding of each other's beliefs and expectations through the commitment to the sale relationship also increases members to trust one another (Morgan & Hunt, 1994)

Trust beliefs

Trust beliefs are the perceptions from the trustor of how trustworthy a trustee is and what characteristics they may have to lead one to place such a reliance on them (Mayer et al., 1995; McKnight et al., 2002b). Many researchers have proposed various types of trust, but with focus on e-commerce, the importance of initial trust and forming initial relationships with web vendors will persuade first time consumers to transact with them (McKnight et al., 1998). The more common types of trust mentioned through McKnight et al.'s (2002a) integrative trust building model (TBM) includes trust intentions, trust beliefs, disposition to trust and institutional-based trust. Using this framework in combination with Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), we can identify which beliefs lead to attitude, thus leading to behavioral intentions, and then to actual behavior. McKnight has clustered the many types of trust beliefs mentioned in literature onto a chart and found the three trust beliefs used most often to be: competence (ability of the trustee to fulfill the trustor's needs), benevolence (trustee voluntarily caring to act in the

trustor's interests), and integrity (trustee is honest and keeps promises) (Mayer et al., 1995). Having a web vendor that empowers these traits shows one's ability to fulfill agreements and of one that would not harm a consumer intentionally, thus proving to be trustworthy and dependable in the eyes of a consumer. An explanation of the different realms of trust mentioned above will be discussed.

Competence, also known as ability, describes a group of skills or characteristics in which a party is capable of fulfilling and can be trusted on completing (Mayer et al., 1995). However, it should be noted that competencies in one area of expertise may be limited to only that area and should not be attributed to another area. Belief in one's level of expertness is what leads to trust.

Benevolence can be described as to what extent a trustee wants to care for a trustor's needs and interests out of goodwill and not for any egocentric gains (Mayer et al., 1995). The trustee portrays a level of strong willingness to help the trustor without any extrinsic reward, thus this loyalty enables a personal orientations and intentions towards the trustor influencing the behavior of trust (Mayer et al., 1995).

The integrity of trust originates from the perception in which the trustee follows a set of principles the trustor finds acceptable and promises to fulfill what he or she was expected to do (Mayer et al., 1995). Integrity is separated into personal integrity and the integrity to follow through with a specific role or duty. The trustee's ability to adhere to a set of principles represents their personal integrity to complete a task, but if these principles are not seen to be acceptable to the wants of the trustor for the specific task, then the integrity of that purpose has not been fulfilled (McFall, 1987) It is the perception of the level of integrity that is important along with its consistency, more so than the reasons as to why those perceptions were formed (Mayer et al., 1995).

Reputational trust

Extending traditional e-commerce trust, many peer-to-peer system relies solely on the reputation and reliability of the users as the middleman of the company between transactions has been taken out. This reputational trust presents itself both in terms of how a user profiles themselves online and how other community members have provided feedback in terms of their performance. It is a way for trust building through social conduct, taking advantage of community-based feedback, reviews and past experiences of peers along with their judgements, and recommendations on certain transactions and its reliability (Xiong & Lui, 2004).

Trust intentions

Following trust beliefs, a trustor must be willing to depend on the trustee with a relative sense of security even in the possibility of negative results to develop trust intentions. To gain trust intentions, there are five components involved: 1. the possibility of negative consequences or risk, making trust in unfamiliar environments problematic, 2. a readiness to rely on others, 3. a feeling of security - trustor needs to feel safe and comfortable in depending on the vendor, 4. it is situation and person specific, and 5. willingness that is not based on having control or power on the

vendor (McKnight & Chervany, 2001). The last point mentioned is especially applicable in the Internet world where there is a lack of control from the buyer to the vendor given the distance. In Fishbein and Ajzen's Theory of Reasoned Actions (1975; TRA), a trust belief is supposed to influence trust intentions; intentions are the outcomes of attitudes and the subjective norm.

2.5 Earlier Experiences

Yoon (2002) uses a Model of Relations Among the Online Consumer Trust, Consumer Satisfaction and Purchase Decision to explain the properties of a website that helps build trust, awareness and satisfaction, which then leads to intentions of online consumption activities. Through this framework, personal variables are included which reflects on the degree of personal experience and satisfaction with e-commerce. Having previous satisfying experiences with e-commerce, paired with one's familiarity of using e-commerce and one's receptivity to new innovations, helps to determine their future intentions of continuing with this behavior (Yoon, 2002). As this type of shopping is seen as being of higher risk than brick & mortar shopping, customers rely heavily on experience acquired through prior purchases (Lee and Tan, 2003). Once purchasing behavior becomes familiar, a level of trust can be acquired, thus trust and e-shopping intentions grow (Chen & Barnes, 2007).

Dickerson and Gentry (1983) have found that consumers who have engaged in similar categories or have exhibited behaviors similar to those of a new innovation, were more likely to adopt. This is due to a built familiarity in terms of the knowledge of the product, and the ability to predict what its likely usage outcome would be. An assumption is placed that having previous experiences with online purchasing helps judge to which extent one would likely repeat the behavior of further online purchase; while one's receptivity to innovation shows lower resistance in accepting and adopting new, and perhaps unfamiliar technology. Assessing a user's familiarity with e-commerce acts as an important indicator of their electronic learning efficiency, thus if successful, the extension of this factor in terms of other online transactional engagements such as swapping may be possible. If a user is familiar and comfortable with e-commerce through previous transactions, it is likely that their satisfaction, experience and trust online will induce further usage, and consequently lead to greater familiarity (Yoon, 2002).

Klein's (1998) Interaction Model also expresses the importance of past experiences in antecedents of search. Certain consumer characteristics such as product knowledge and prior experience influences information-seeking behavior on the Internet. Although it is not included in Ajzen's (1991) TPB, other researchers have based their research off of his, with the inclusion of past behavior in predicting future behavior (Bentler & Speckar, 1979, 1981; Sutton & Hallet, 1989; as cited by Shim et al. 2001). It has been found that consumers who have strong intentions to shop online have had previous experience with other unconventional out-of-store shopping formats along with previous experience in using personal computers (Shim & Drake, 1990). These past online purchase experience may be of direct influencers and predictors to future online consumption intentions. Analyzing one's previous

knowledge and experience of online shopping, along with their prior time spending on search, search intentions and shopping history can help unravel trends that can therefore help indicate one's future purchase intentions.

What information can a user base their trust on if they do not have any prior experience or similar experience in a specific behavior? If in the example of Couchsurfing where a Couchsurfer plans to meet another Couchsurfer for the first time in person before any prior relationship has been built, Bialski & Batorski (2010) explain it through a user's perception of familiarity - familiarity in terms of understanding a user through their online profile, previous experiences the user has had, and with the help of recommendations. This familiarity is usually strongest when connected with the mechanism of homophily - an attraction to those who are similar.

2.6 Subjective Norms

Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) Theory of Reasoned Actions (TRA) will be used to put the explanation of subjective norms into perspective. By using this theory as a backdrop, the importance of how subjective norms play in relation with attitudes to explain behavioral intentions can be showcased and thus, further exemplified in our analysis.

2.6.1 Theory of Reasoned Actions

Based on a social psychology setting, TRA is aimed to find a relationship between attitudes and behaviors. This theory contains three components: behavioral intention (BI), attitude (A), and subjective norm (SN), and suggests that a person's behavioral intention depends on the person's attitude about the behavior and subjective norms ($BI = A + SN$). Shim et al. (2001) demonstrated that attitudes towards e-shopping was a predictor of intention to shop online.

Research has found that although people shop online, they are still highly reliant on human interaction (Dall'Olmo et al., 2009). This is seen in the form of communicating with others of similar interests, joining peer groups and viewing other's status and authority; thus Dennis et al (2010) introduced the concept of "social e-shopping". This element of human interaction contributes to one's influence of social pressure in helping their decision of purchase intentions as explained through subjective norms.

Subjective norms plays a role in whether or not an individual feels social pressure or influence from others around them to perform or not perform a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This can be viewed both in one's strong desire to fit in and their perception of social pressure, or it can be of those that are close to an individual who approves or disapproves of a certain behavior. As Ajzen (1991) found from his research, subjective norms contribute to one's decision but does not take control of it; thus one's personal considerations tended to overpower the influence of social pressures.

2.7 Perceived Behavioral Control

To further Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) TRA, Ajzen progressed his research to include the Theory of Planned Behavior (1991). This extends TRA by including one's perceived behavioral control (PBC) in terms of control over behavioral performance against internal and external barriers. Klafft et al. (2008) describes it as assessing whether or not one has the skills or knowledge to do so internally, or whether they have the time or cooperation from others externally. As a general rule, the greater the attitude and subjective norm with respect to a behavior, the greater the PBC; thus the stronger one's intention will be in performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the case of e-shopping, this is seen through people's perception on the ease or difficulty of performing a behavior like shopping online.(Ajzen, 1991). Intention and PBC should interact to predict behavior in the context of TPB. The ease and difficulty of performing a behavior can also be seen in terms of advantages and disadvantages. Taking less effort to perform a behavior would be advantageous to a person, while taking more effort to surpass the difficulty of performing a behavior would be a disadvantage.

Other researchers have further analyzed Ajzen's earlier work and believe that PBC also takes into account one's perceived ability to take control over certain actions (Ajzen, 2002a). In Ajzen's later works, he believes that TPB contains two components: *self-efficacy* and *controllability*. Self-efficacy is described in terms of one's belief of the ease or difficulty of performing a behavior, thus whether he or she feels confident in doing so if the want was there; while controllability describes one's control of performing or not performing the behavior – how much control one has in terms of deciding whether or not they would or would not like to perform a behavior (Ajzen, 2002b)

2.8 Lifestyle

Lifestyle has long been viewed as a way to display class belonging (Featherstone, 1987), but in today's society, the extensive freedom of choice enabled by mass-consumption, have changed the focus of how we portray ourselves individually and in a group. Therefore lifestyle can be viewed as a result of our individual activity pattern and the larger social behavior of the group we belong to or wish to be a part of (Veal, 2000). Holt (1997) proposes that consumption practices reflect a person's taste structure which can be related to others of similar taste, as well as create boundaries toward those having different taste. Within these boundaries, collective lifestyle patterns develop that serve to bring people of similar interest closer, while distancing the collective from others.

Marketing researchers have long tried to segment consumers based on lifestyle, and the concept of lifestyle segmentation has been shown useful in a number of studies (Kaynak & Kara, 1998; Kucukemiroglu, 1999). It is most commonly used to describe how individuals or groups behave and interact in activities, but has also been used to determine patterns with regard to interests and opinions. The most important factors when studying lifestyle patterns addressed within lifestyle segmentation research are how consumers spend their time, what they are interested in, how much they value their immediate surroundings, how they view themselves and the social and symbolic reality, as well as demographic characteristics of the individual (Kucukemiroglu, 1999).

Through analyzing the above factors, it is possible to identify trends and influences that affect the way people live their lives, both at work and in leisure times. However, it is important to acknowledge that it is a broad segmentation and that individuals still differ within a group, yet the segmentation process provides imperative knowledge about feelings and tendencies towards a wider phenomenon that can help both researchers and managers to gain better understanding of consumers and their behaviors (Kaynak and Kara, 1998).

3 Methodology

The aim of this paper is to explore determining antecedents of consumers intentions to participate in collaborative consumption, as well as finding if there is an emerging collaborative lifestyle, or Co-lifestyle. Following Botsman and Rogers' (2010) definition of collaborative consumption as an economic model based on sharing, swapping, bartering, trading or renting access to products as opposed to ownership, we argue that this paper continues to explore collaborative consumption as a phenomenon and that it provides new knowledge to the area. In the following chapter we will, in detail, disclose the methodological approach of the study, allowing the reader to trail the research and its outcome in a transparent manner.

Exploring behaviors within communities requires an inclusive methodological process that increases the understanding of social behavior in community life. To gather such knowledge, we have applied the philosophical perspective of social constructionism - we assume that the participants of collaborative consumption give meaning to the behaviors of others, and through that process develop their own structure of truth and reality. As such, the social life within collaborative consumption is not absolute (Bryman & Bell 2007).

3.1 Research design

Assuming that there is no pre-existing reality, we advocate that the essence of social life can be gathered through interpretive and natural talk data. (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). Choosing a qualitative method is therefore suitable, especially because a social constructionist position accompanied by a qualitative method is argued to produce description-rich data (Easterby-Smith et. al, 2008), which our study will require to make a comprehensive and interpretative analysis.

Furthermore, the research has an explorative and inductive approach to research, basically because there is a lack of earlier research within this field and as such our observations will help to put forwards empirical knowledge that in time can help to create new theory. At the end of this study, we will have developed hypotheses regarding this new and emerging new phenomenon of collaborative consumption (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Yet, as we will use existing ideas about antecedents of intentions we also believe that their is a degree of deduction in this research, but instead of letting those ideas create hypotheses, we use them as guidance through socio-psychological realms that we are novice to, as well as a tool to structure our analysis.

3.1.1 Demarcations

Before further describing the design of this research we want to clarify the demarcations that have been made in efforts to limit our research. First of all we have

chosen to omit Product Service Systems (PSS) from further analysis. Although PSS is a main market for collaborative consumption, it is a topic that has been heavily studied on and discussed in the past (e.g. Mont, 2000; Baines et al., 2007) as seen through our theoretical review. The rental system pertains many traditional forms of sharing and has faced little change over the years, thus not being a new concept in our study. Furthermore, majority of PSS places a stronger focus in terms of renting from organizations as opposed to the redistribution market and social collaboration which emphasizes the sharing between peers. Understanding this, we wanted to bring more focus on the newer trends developing in collaborative consumption that touches into elements involving peer-to-peer interaction.

Secondly, as traditional auctioning marketplaces such as eBay.com has been around for over fifteen years, and a number of different researchers have exhausted its exploration (eg. Bajari & Hortaçsu, 2003; Melnik & Alm, 2003; Houser & Wooders, 2006; Resnick et al., 2002) we have decided to not analyze markets such as these. Instead we will focus on such communities that embrace swapping of goods, either directly or through the use of 'points'. The communities in question will be disclosed in the next chapter.

3.1.2 Case study design

With the intention of providing a rich picture of consumers in the chosen markets we will apply a case study design based on the redistribution market and the market of social collaboration. Case studies have been argued to be useful in inspiring new ideas (Siggelkow, 2007 as cited in Easterby-Smith et al., 2008), and as our goal is to explore a new trend within consumption practices we believe that this structure can help bring understanding to, and also vividly illustrate this new concept. Together, these two cases also gives the research more convincing arguments as opposed to one since we are able to look into a wider range of collaborative consumption activities. However we would like to distance ourselves from the idea of generalizing the outcomes of our analysis (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). Moreover, the design also also enabled an in-depth study where we elucidate the unique futures of the two cases (Bryman & Bell, 2007) to fully understand the meanings that are created by individuals within communities of collaborative consumption, as is important for a social constructionist position.

Within this case study design we have chosen two methods for conducting our research. By choosing two methods instead of one we put less reliance on a single approach to provide more reliable results (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

3.1.3 Research methods

For the two markets we have chosen to look further into, we have conducted observations in online communities as our primary research method. The focus has been on the discussions within the communities as they are argued to provide honest and insightful data reflecting the minds of collaborative consumers (Kozinets, 2002).

It has also enabled us to study what customers are really talking about and follow their discussions both historically and contextually in a shorter amount of time (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). Through analyzing discussions in a qualitative manner, we have then been able to draw conclusions about interesting and common aspects that can be regarded as important elements of collaborative consumption, and later relating this to a common lifestyle.

In addition to this primary inquiry, we have also conducted a semi-structured focus group interview with the intent to use it as an exploratory tool that can either confirm or question the findings from the online observations (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). This will add a new dimension to the analysis as we are able to collect data of consumers' initial thoughts when discussing their intentions and reasons for practicing collaborative consumption activities.

Furthermore, observations and interviews are common in relationship with a case study design and we argue that they are valuable to enforce an intensive and detailed examination of the two cases (Bryman & Bell, 2007). To give further insights to our process we will now discuss our methods in detail.

3.2 Netnography

To gain understanding through our observation of the discussions and interaction among users on carefully selected communities, we will apply the use of netnography. Netnography is a qualitative research methodology that incorporates ethnographic research techniques to study communities and culture through Internet communications (Kozinets, 2002). This method allows us to observe conversations in a completely unobtrusive manner as it is not affected by an interviewer or researcher that may subjectively fabricate the context. Given the pure observation technique, this method may also reveal more truthful and insightful conversations that are naturally occurring between consumers. This has enabled us to observe and interpret the interactions and meaning creation between members, and through saving all the relevant discussions onto our computers we could continue this process when convenient (Kozinets, 2002).

To take advantage of the benefits of using netnography, it is important to have the research questions in mind before approaching the online communities. With the observation our goal was to discover views and opinions of individuals within the groups through studying their naturally occurring discussions to further increase the general understanding of antecedents of intentions toward collaborative consumption.

3.2.1 Finding online communities and research informants

When choosing suitable online communities to observe, Kozinets (2002) proposes a set of criteria that is helpful in determining how relevant the communities will be in providing valuable information to the research. Therefore we have chosen communities that have (1) focused and relevant discussions related to collaborative consumption, (2) high and frequent traffic of postings, (3) larger number of

individual message posters, (4) more descriptive-rich data and (5) more discussion and conversations between members.

To further analyze the data, posters have been categorized based on their online activities and involvement within the online communities, which allows us to gain further understanding of how previous knowledge affects the interactions (Kozinets, 1999). The participants were separated into *Tourists* (lack strong social ties and often post casual questions), *Minglers* (have strong social ties but little interest in consumption activity), and *Insiders* (strong ties to the online group and to the consumption activity, commonly referenced by other members within the group) (Kozinets, 2002). We have decided to not adapt the *Devotees* category (strong interests but few attachments to the group) from Kozinets' (2002) study as we felt it would be too difficult to categorize members who have minimal involvement in the community with our choice of methodology. The insight attained from these online communities have not only been based on the high traffic and number of posts, but more through the in-depth knowledge provided by the discussions; thus, we have been able to draw useful conclusions from a relatively small number of posts because they contain descriptive-rich content that could be analyzed and interpreted with depth.

3.2.2 Pilot study

In efforts to achieve a valid and comprehensive netnographic study, we decided to first conduct a pilot study. Such feasible studies often embrace the form as a small scale version of the main study, a sort for trial that can help prepare the researchers for the major study. However, it can also be used to try out intended methods for data collection and analysis (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Since we are novice to netnographic studies, we found a pilot study important to gain more insights as to how online ethnographic studies are conducted operationally, as well as to help us navigate methods of choice in collecting and analyzing the empirical material for the main study.

With the research question in mind, we decided on a larger scope of markets within collaborative consumption, that initially was believed to carry the five main community criteria that were described earlier, as pointed out by Kozinets (2002). This resulted in a vast variety of marketplaces and stand-alone communities (not affiliated with a webpage that enables collaborative consumption), focused on everything from swapping goods and auctioning, to peer-to-peer banking and skill-sharing. However, as we deep-dived into the discussion threads, it became clear that far from all of these communities could provide descriptive-rich data, while other communities were insufficient in member participation. In addition to these, there were also a large amount of communities that required us to become members in order to observe. Since we believe closed communities are unethical to observe, without consent from all parties involved, they were avoided. Ethical considerations will be further discussed shortly.

As we moved along, observing threads that were related to our theoretical framework, we one-by-one started to filter out and discard the communities and

discussions that we found insignificant to our research. The discussion posts that could be useful were instead copied together with the community address, the member's username, the date of posting, the number of posts made by the particular member, and finally the title of the discussion thread. This information is vital, not only for the validity of the data, but also to enrich the analysis of the members behavioral patterns. Through cataloging and categorizing the members as Tourists, Minglers, and Insiders, we have been able to make slight, but important, generalizations within the communities (Kozinets, 2002).

Conclusively, the pilot study gave us the advantage of finding communities early on, that have high relevance and description-rich discussions, as well as those with high traffic and a multitude of participating members. Secondly, it provided important feedback regarding the feasibility of our particular research questions and the design of our study, thereby enabling us to establish realistic and effective techniques, including categorizations and market diversifications, that captures the essence of our research - the antecedents of intentions toward collaborative consumption and a shared collaborative lifestyle. Since the outcome of the preliminary study was in line with the techniques used for the main study, we found that parts of the collected data was useful for the main study.

3.2.3 Conducting the observation and collecting data

The data was collected between April 18th and May 13th, 2011. During this time, we frequently visited the communities to attain new information, and looked further into archived posts that allowed us to get more in-depth about topics they discuss that we found relevant to understand their intentions and opinions. Although our timeframe for data collection is small, we have been able to observe discussions within a much wider timeframe.

There were times of long visits up to five hours in a row reading through, and observing the threads posted, while some visits lasted for shorter periods of time. When going into the forums and discussion boards, we first glance at the title of the thread to assess whether or not the information within could potentially be relevant and on-topic for the research questions. We then look to see how many posts are within each thread to see how thorough each discussion is, and whether or not there is more than one person 'talking'.

When a thread within the forum appears to be relevant and of value to the study, we copied the posts onto an Excel spreadsheet including the other information as mentioned in the pilot study above (see Appendix I). Through this, we have been able to attain a steady track of each discussion, keep a frame of reference in mind as to when each message was posted, and find trends in terms of frequent posters, and similar discussion topics. We tried to keep whole discussion threads as much as possible throughout our data collection; however, we removed ones that were off-topic, irrelevant or were not value-added. This is necessary due to the mass quantity of posts made by users – especially on websites such as Goozex.com and Swap.com,

where further analysis would be difficult to make without limiting the threads to relevant topics.

Looking into more than 80 websites, through 150 pages of threads, through more than 1,600 discussions and reading through more than 8,500 posts to weed out irrelevant topics, we have used a total of 343 posts by 200 users from 10 websites as our basis for analysis. This shows that each user made approximately two posts; however, there is a disproportion of how these posts are distributed as many users placed only a single comment, question, or post; while some dedicated forum members placed more than five. The greater number of posted comments a user makes, and the frequency he or she spends on the forums, is a likely display of his or her commitment to the consumption activity and the community.

3.2.4 Ethical considerations

Before the observations we found it useful, if not necessary, to consider ethical guidelines of using this method. While we consider disclosure to be an important aspects when observing social constructs, we also find that full disclosure would interfere with the naturally occurring talk. If the members where aware of our observation we would lose the ability to passively analyze natural talk, as they try to act in manners believed to be positive for the research; or worse off - stop discussing altogether. However, members of forums might find it incriminating to be observed without knowledge, and therefore it is of uttermost importance to have a clear understanding as to where to draw the line between private and public discussions. This is problematic since there is no consensus on specific guidelines for qualitative online observations, albeit some early scholars, such as Eysenbach & Till (2001) and Kozniets (2002), touches upon the ethics of such online research. When considering privacy, Eysenbach & Till (2001) argue that communities requiring the participator to sign in to the forum should be regarded as private, and therefore an informed consent should be gathered before the observation is conducted. Also, the size of the member base is a measurement of how private the discussions are: the more members there are, the more public a discussion. At times it is also possible to find relevant privacy norms on information pages in the community. Although we consider this to be a good guide for conduct and trustworthiness, it is also important to acknowledge that a passive analysis can surpass the need for individually informed consent as long as the collected data is anonymized early on in the process (Bertilsson, 2009).

3.3 Focus group interview

Our online observation has been accompanied by a focus group interview to further elaborate on the determinant factors of collaborative consumption. Focus groups are often compared with in-depth interviews, and promoted as an effective method to quickly compile data from a larger set of people simultaneously. Although this is

true, they also have the advantage of clarifying and exploring views in a group process (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). Using this method enables the subjects to share thoughts in a manner that goes beyond their knowledge and experiences within collaborative consumption, and instead it also reveals how and why the participants think the way they do through empowering them to ask their own questions and challenge each other (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Kitzinger (1995) also points out that a focus group gives access to different forms of communication, such as jokes, provocations, anecdotes and other day to day interactions that are hard to come by through other interview methods. The interpersonal communication between the participants can therefore help decipher cultural values and norms (Kitzinger, 1995) within collaborative consumption and provide further knowledge of antecedents to intentions.

3.3.1 Finding the participants

Having defined the overall purpose, we wanted to make sure that we could find participants that fit the profile for the research before we started manufacturing the required tools. We wanted them to facilitate an open and honest discussion, and therefore the people should complement each other and generate a group dynamic where everyone felt safe to speak their mind (Morgan, 1998). The research often takes favorable and unexpected direction when group dynamics work well but if one or a few participants has a dissent opinion they might be afraid to speak their mind in the group (Kitzinger, 1995).

With this in mind, we set out to find people that in one way or another were active consumers of collaborative consumption. Collaborative consumption is yet in its early stages in Sweden which as a result, led us to a smaller number of relevant and available subjects. We therefore adapted a snowball selection technique, which means that we first got in contact with a few eligible participant that then recommended other people (Wibeck, 2000), resulting in a group of six participants.

3.3.2 Conducting the focus group and collecting data

When it had become clear as to who our participants would be, we also made the final adjustments to the tools required. This is a crucial stage because without the right tools there is a risk of participants drifting off topic and losing focus (Kitzinger, 1995), and therefore we needed to be able to bring them back on track. For that reason we manufactured an interview guide with open ended questions, facilitating the moderator's ability to steer the discussion if necessary (Kitzinger, 1995). It is important, if possible, to not let the participants discuss and elaborate with each other on more than a small amount of predetermined questions. To avoid a loss of focus and to also allow a distinctive amount of freedom for the participating individuals, we decided on a semi-structured method. The role of the moderator then becomes more passive, and as the interview went smoothly there was no need for extensive participation to guide the participants back on track (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

Krueger (1998) argues that a semi-structured focus group interview guide (see Appendix II) should be developed around five main question categories, starting with opening questions and then followed by introduction questions, transitional questions, key questions and final questions.

With reference to Krueger, our interview guide consists of twelve questions that have been divided into four categories, yet a fifth category, opening questions, is also accounted for but instead of asking opening questions straight out, we wanted them to socialize in an unstructured manner. After an initial ten minutes we continued with the other four categories, starting with the introduction questions. The introduction questions are a combination of questions that we have used to let them familiarize with the different markets, and to see how they view the Internet as a platform to proceed with and attain different forms of collaborative consumptions. We also prepared a laddering technique in case they would lose focus (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008), the laddering questions are presented in the guide as a set of indented bulleted questions. It is also appropriate to address here that other laddering questions that concerns 'why' they feel a certain way would have been added if necessary. The third category involves transitional questions and have been used to broaden the perspective to make it easier for the participants to understand the meanings that different individuals within the group have put on collaborative consumption. As such our transitional question was meant to lead the way into the key questions (Krueger, 1998). At this point just about half of the focus group timeframe had passed, which as intended left more time to deal with the key questions. These questions were lesser in numbers but our intention was that the participants should discuss more around these three topics. Whilst the introduction questions regarded separate feelings toward parts of collaborative consumption, we now wanted them to express their feelings toward overall engagement, experiences, and how it has affected them. It ended up being a very constructive discussion that touched upon many of the elements we had hoped for. To conclude the focus group interview, we ended with two final questions. The first one was used to understand if the drivers that they had portrayed earlier as being reasons for engaging, would also reflect in what they thought was important for others; followed by asking them if they have anything to add, or anything they would like the moderator to explain. After this, a casual discussion continued for a short time while everyone finished their drinks.

3.3.3 Ethical dilemmas

With the intention of getting a constructive and descriptive-rich discussion surrounding our research questions we found it important that the participants feel confident that they can say whatever comes to mind. For that reason we have followed Kvale's (1997) ethical guidelines regarding informed consent and confidentiality. The participants were therefore informed about how the material would be used and we also made it clear that their identities would be held anonymous throughout the transcript and in the research paper, as such they should not feel violated by the information that they have provided (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

3.4 Analysis and Interpretation

3.4.1 *Online communities*

The micro-level discussions and discourse obtained through the analysis of forums will be studied in terms of what Kozinets (1999) describes as one of the three general ways in which netnography may prove to be useful: as an exploratory tool to study general topics. The micro-level discussions gathered, seen both as single comments as well as together in the realm of whole discussions, will be interpreted to bring these micro-level conversations to a macro level.

The conversations and interaction among community members will be paired with wider socio-psychological theories to relate the individual's intentions within the case study and then put in context of collaborative consumption as a whole. The comments will help to explain the thoughts and opinions of community members and can be used to help further explore consumer experiences in this field. It is important that the revelations discovered should only be used in the context of virtual communities and cyberculture, and should not be generalized to offline mediums where the behavior of individuals who regularly use the Internet can differ greatly to consumer behavior of individuals who spend more time offline (Kozinets 1999).

3.4.2 *Focus group*

We first transcribed the recordings from our focus group to a transcript document that allows for easier references and quotations used through our analysis. This transcript of findings will be studied through a grounded analysis that allows natural language data to be examined. Through this approach, the data will be left to speak for itself, while we will rely on our self-intuitions to guide and make sense of the information (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). Taking a more holistic approach with this analysis will allow for an easier exploration of the phenomenon than to be strictly following a predetermined construct that leaves little room for improvisation, such as seen through the content analysis approach. Through grounded analysis, the findings will help structure the data by unraveling themes, patterns and categories that will allow us to better make sense of the discussions.

In order to make the process of going through the data more practical and mannerly, Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) has suggested seven steps to such analysis. The first is to familiarize yourself with the information by re-reading the data in order to determine themes and better understand the material. Second, a reflection of the initial study question and an evaluation of the material's revelation will help determine what light to research the discussions have brought. Third, the concepts used to explain the data, as for us - the antecedents adopted from our conceptual framework - will need to be coded, and as a fourth point, be transferred to a database which organizes the concepts with labels. As this process is highly iterative and leaves room for error, it is important to go back and check the transfers with the

original data to ensure of concise interpretations. If discrepancies were to arise, a re-coding may be necessary as a fifth stage. Sixth, the analytical framework should be linked to theory to argue the concepts, thus theoretical codes need to be developed. Lastly, if more work is needed, or some factors may be overlooked, a re-evaluation of the process and the steps taken may be considered.

3.4.3 A conceptual model for antecedents of purchase intention

To guide our analysis, we have adopted Dennis' et al. (2010) conceptual framework that was presented in the theory chapter. Within more quantitative research it is often used to predict behavior through a person's intentions, although it can also be used in efforts to gain general understanding of certain behaviors. For this research it is the latter that is of importance, and the framework will act as a tool to help us gather more inclusive data through qualitative methods while still keeping a degree of structure. This structure is important because of our limited knowledge within the field of collaborative consumption, and without structure the exploration could therefore produce very shattered data, consequently obstructing a comprehensive analysis. We also want to make it clear that it is not the causation between antecedents and intention that is of relevance for this research, rather we have applied a framework that proposes the causation, and instead our focus lies with what form these antecedents have taken and if they indeed are part of a shared lifestyle between the participants of collaborative consumption.

Furthermore, as the aim of Dennis et al.'s (2010) study was devoted to understanding how a set of antecedents influence consumers intentions toward online shopping in opposition to physical bricks-and-mortar stores, we found it necessary to modify the framework to suit a study that has a clear focus on online collaborative consumption activities. First of all we exchanged 'purchase intentions' with 'consumption intentions'. We argue that consumption is a more justifying term because it reflects both purchase and use, while a purchase is the explicit act of acquiring something by paying for it (New Oxford American Dictionary). Since collaborative consumption can be conducted with and without the explicit need of money transfers, it is found more representative to describe how antecedents form consumption intentions, yet we still believe that the framework as a whole is not effected by this minor change.

Secondly we have exchanged 'Attitudes' with 'Motivators'. The meaning behind 'attitudes' is that a person who believes that a behavior will have positive effects also has a positive attitude towards that behavior, and vice versa. While we agree with this view we also see a need to further depict attitudes towards collaborative consumption, and have therefore chosen to look at 'Motivators'. Attitude is the outcome of the motivation that a person has for engaging in a behavior, and as such we have not removed attitudes but rather depict it into smaller pieces to come closer to what it is that drives people to participate in collaborative consumption. Motivation has been discussed in greater detail in the theory chapter.

Lastly we have removed substitutability as a separate antecedent in the analysis. In Dennis et al. (2010) research substitutability stood for factors that influence the

choice between shopping in physical bricks-and-mortars stores and shopping online. Since our study has the purpose of understanding why consumers choose to engage in collaborative consumption there will be occasions throughout the paper where substitutability is touched upon. Thus, we argue that this antecedent is included in e.g. motivational factors and therefore does not need to be further elaborated on in a separate section. To clarify, we believe that removing the antecedent has no greater impact on the findings since substitutability is integrated with motivators, trust and earlier experiences (Dennis et al., 2010).

The structure of the analysis is divided into three sections. The first and second section will go through redistribution and social collaboration separately, while the third brings them together and relates the found similarities with consumer lifestyle theory. This is believed to give the reader a picture of the separate markets and follow our conclusions in a clear and transparent manner.

The theory behind this framework has been presented in the theory chapter, and the three sections will be analyzed as follows:

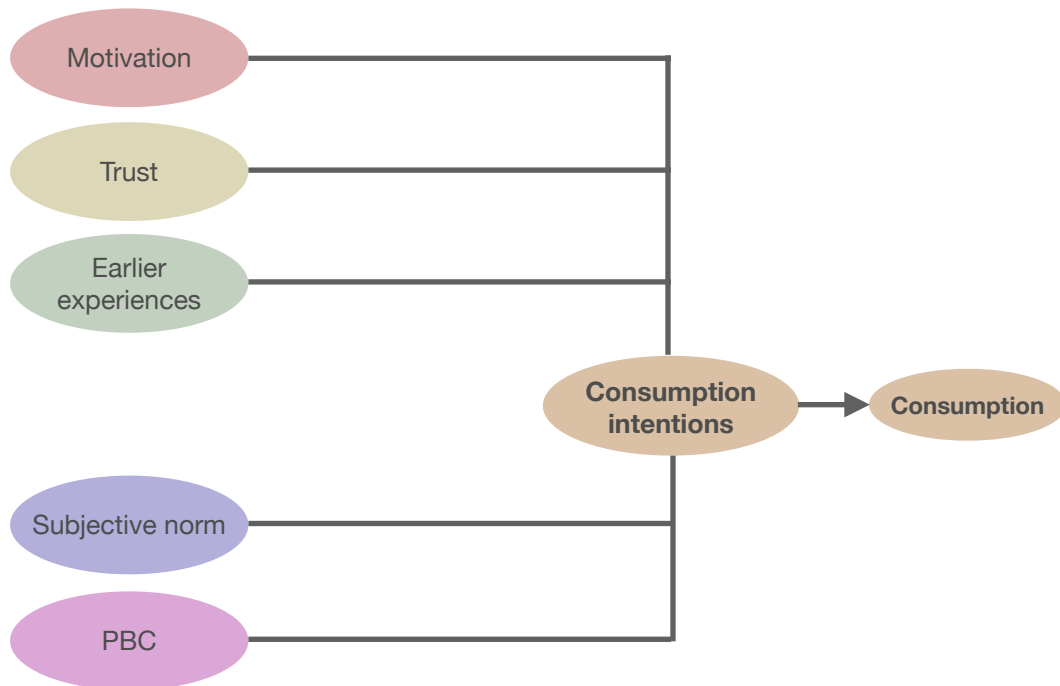
Motivators will be analyzed through an adoption from Parsons' (2002) non-functional factors; that is, personal and social motives of participation in online shopping, which will be accompanied by, what used to be argued as the main drivers for online shopping, functional utilitarian factors. The categories are broad and leaves room for interpretation, as is important for a qualitatively explorative study like this.

Trust will be evaluated through McKnight et al.'s (2002a) Trust Building Model that links the relationships between the antecedent factors, trust and behavioral intentions which can lead to actual behavior. Three main types of trust belief will be used to explain social collaboration - competence, benevolence and integrity, while Wu & Tsang's (2008) three stages of trust building will also be used to explain why a trustor would present trust to a trustee.

Earlier experiences will then be analyzed through Yoon's (2002) Model of Relations Among the Online Consumer Trust and Consumer Satisfaction and Purchase Decision to explain how personal experiences plays a role in affecting one's satisfaction with e-commerce.

We will then go into the subjective norms for further analysis of how other people can affect the choices made by individuals. Therefore we use Fishbein & Ajzen's (1975) TRA as a backdrop to explain how subjective norms can influence behavioral intentions through social pressure.

The last of the six determining antecedents regards individuals' PBC, which will be discussed through following Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior that incorporates PBC as a main component to predict consumption intentions based on internal and external behavior control. Model 2 illustrates our adaption of Dennis' et al. (2010) conceptual framework.



Model 2. Conceptual framework of customers intentions towards collaborative consumption activities (adapted from Dennis et al., 2010).

Evidently these antecedents of intention will be compared and put in a lifestyle context in the third section of the analysis. We are interested in shared tendencies within the separate markets and how they relate to each other, thus bringing understanding of the shared commonalities that would indicate a collective lifestyle, that we term Co-lifestyle (Holt, 1997). For these reasons we connect commonalities found in the analysis with the factors of lifestyle segmentation (presented in the theory chapter). As it is the lifestyle of collaborative consumers we are interested in and not separate lifestyles, it will be presented in the last section of the analysis.

3.5 Limitations and implications on reliability and validity

In efforts to be as thorough and transparent as possible with our research we now want to conclude the methodology section with discussing limitations and the overall reliability and validity of the study.

First of all, a number of limitations arise due to the newness of this topic. The phenomenon coined as collaborative consumption made its debut in 2007 but gained wide recognition and further depiction first after Botsman & Rogers's (2010) published their book "What's Mine is Yours". Therefore there is a lack of scholarly research made within the field, and especially within the specific areas of interest. As a consequence we decided on an exploitative research design based on case studies, discussions among consumers and a focus group, all typical within this type of research. This however, also entails that our research does not have the external validity to draw generalizing conclusions outside of the communities of study. Our intention has been to focus on finding typical cases that are representative of the

collaborative markets, and then to make a detailed study of these cases (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

The fact that we are studying the interactions between people in a group through the role of a passive and undisclosed observer, it is clear that we are observing the natural talk of individuals, thus our research holds a strong ecological validity because netnography indeed can capture opinions and values that are applicable in the collaborative consumers everyday life (Bryman & Bell, 2007). But despite of this we still have to acknowledge that the study is concentrated on customers that are engaging in collaborative consumption online, and that this is not applicable to the offline world.

In terms of the focus group component of our methodology, we succumbed to the snowball technique in terms of finding participants. Retrospectively, this snowball technique was important to find people of similar interest under a short amount of time but it also generated a homogenous group in terms of occupation, age and gender. As such, all participants were students and only one was female, but on the other hand they came from different parts of the world and used different types of collaborative consumption (see Appendix III). Because the purpose of this study is to explore tendencies in a new phenomenon rather than to generalize over a population, we believe that the outcome of the focus group has been of great value for the analysis and further validates the results (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

In terms of the analysis we chose to view determining antecedents of intention through the view of Dennis et al.'s (2010) framework, and used related theories to develop an understanding of how consumers make their choices. This structure has added reliability and enhanced the understanding of how the analysis has been conducted, thus affecting the trustworthiness and transparency of the study.

We would like to conclude by saying that our intention with this study should be viewed as a move in direction into a new phenomenon to inspire further research within the field that can provide more generalizing conclusions.

4 Case Study of Websites Used

Before diving into the empirical derivation, we want to introduce the reader to the most important components of collaborative consumption, and describe its linkage with social media. This section will therefore describe the two markets of collaborative consumption in which we will discuss, and relate it to the activities we have studied through our analysis of discussion forums that act as the empirical material for our work. We want to give a fruitful description of the companies, consumption styles, and websites that are important for the study. We have therefore conveyed information from websites and relevant literature, reflecting what is believed to be essential elements of these consumption activities.

4.1 Social media and collaborative consumption

As explained earlier in the method section, the three main markets for collaborative consumption are Product Service Systems, Redistribution Markets and Social Collaboration, but we will only go further into detail with the latter two markets, providing a description of the specific websites we chose to analyze and what relevance we found through the forums. A full reference list of the companies we chose to analyze in our study can be seen in Appendix IV.

4.1.1 Once yours, now mine

In the redistribution market, many forms of exchanges can take place, but most common items for similar swaps are clothes, DVDs, CDs, books and toys. These items are light, renewable, easy to send, and are often put to use for only a single or limited time. With the connection and enablement, exchanges are often conducted between strangers.

In our study, the redistribution forums we looked closer into were Swap.com, SwapStyle.com, Rehash.com, Goozex.com, ReadItSwapIt.co.uk, and SwapItShopForum.net. While each site has a niche as to what goods they're offering, many of these websites are quite similar in terms of how they operate, thus we will go further into Swap.com and Goozex.com as examples.

Swap.com

Swap.com describes themselves to be the world's largest swap marketplace where users can swap and trade used books, music, movies and video games with more than 1.9 million users, saved members more than \$11.9 million, and reduced carbon footprint by 10.7 million pounds. Their whole mantra surrounds the idea that "every one person knows someone else with something to swap" and advertises themselves



to be the “eco-friendly way to share your items, try out new authors, musicians, films and games without spending top dollar” (Swap.com, 2011). Trade is facilitated through an algorithm that determines the value of your goods and tries to match it with others of similar value - thus a trade is initiated when a ‘want’ on your list is a ‘have’ on someone else’s list and vice versa. Unlike most other swapping sites, Swap.com charges a small fee of either \$0.50 to \$1.00 per swap depending on your item, plus the cost of postage which is common for other sites as well.

Goozex.com

Goozex.com is an online trading community that allow users to trade video games and movies, as well as buy new ones without a monthly subscription fee. The name comes from a shortened version of “Goods Exchanged” (Wikipedia 2011). Essentially, they operate like Swap.com; however, instead of trading goods for



goods, users trade what they own for points. This internal point system acts as currency and works as a middleman matching buyers and traders instead of having the direct goods swapped (Wikipedia, 2011). These points can then be used to purchase other goods in which a user may want.

4.2 Sharing is caring

In social collaboration, the resources being shared can range greatly, and the intangible exchanges are agreed upon due to the value one places on a certain skill, time or space. The Internet acts as a channel that allows individuals who are of close proximity to find one another as individuals are disconnecting themselves more and more from their immediate communities. Through this initial connection, individuals are then able to potentially meet offline to engage in consumption activities together. The Internet has also allowed those living far away to connect, thus enabling offline meetings to occur when one individual is at the other individual’s city, or simply a connection through online conversations.

In our study, the social lifestyle forums we looked at closer were Landshare.net, Zopa.com, Travelpod.com, and Wiseclerk.com. Through explaining this market, I will further elaborate on Zopa.com as well as Landshare.net as examples.

Zopa.com

Zopa.com (Zone of Possible Agreement) is a lending and borrowing exchange in the UK where people are able to surpass the middleman of banks and lend or borrow



money directly from each other to get a better deal (Zopa.com, 2011). This peer-to-peer lending network facilitates the loans process and allows user who have money to lend it to those who wish to borrow - saving the cost of loan applications and the bureaucracy of dealing with traditional banks (Wikipedia, 2011).

Landshare.net

Landshare.net, a website dedicated to the idea of garden sharing and has more than 60,000 members, helps bring together those with a strong passion to grow their own food with those who have extra land to share. Growers who want to grow their own



vegetables but do not have their own land to cultivate food are now able to with the help of others sharing their land and lending their plot. With this connection, it helps bring benefits to both parties as an owner's plot will

now be tamed, while the growers can enjoy a hobbie and/or enjoy fres crops. The arrangement usually occurs when one party supplies the land, the other supplies the labour and the proceeds of the grown goods are shared (Wikipedia, 2011).

5 Analysis

Discussions on online forums resembles communities where people meet in real life, and as such there are power balances that might affect how attitudes are affected through communication and informal or formal hierarchies. It is therefore important to evaluate the social structure to gain perspective of how, and maybe who, affects the interpretations of collaborative consumption. We acknowledge and adapted three distinctive types of interaction based on Kozinet's (1999) analysis of users in online communities, along with their involvement mentioned earlier in our methodology of netnography: *Tourists*, *Minglers*, and *Insiders*. This reflects interactional roles between users and conveys an understanding of social structure and consumers' attitudes through micro level interactions in which we will use in our analysis.

5.1 Who decides whats right and wrong

After entering Goozex.com's forum and going through a couple of threads, you can easily see the passion and addiction one has of the gaming world and understand these individuals' appreciation of sites like Goozex.com that provides them with further opportunities to 'play'. Unlike typical 'gamer talk' that one might expect from these forums, users interact in a well thought-out and professional manner, addressing help from the community in a considerate way, and advising new users ("noobs" or "noobies") on how the website works politely and welcomingly. The rating system implemented on the websites are taken very seriously, thus attaining positive feedback that contributes to your ability to further trade is of utmost importance to users. They also use these forums as a way to meet other users, ask questions regarding problems they're facing, help welcome new users to the community, vent when they've been scammed, as well as showcase their love and addiction to the website. The overall purpose of the online forums are fully taken advantaged of by users as a means to help integrate themselves in a peer-to-peer sharing network, further understanding the advantages of redistribution, and express their thoughts and opinions with other like-minded individuals.

Using Goozex.com as an example, one can easily detect the distinction between new users and experts based on their writing style when giving advice, the questions they ask community members, and merely on the number of posts they have written. Based on observations, the range of posts from a user can be from one (*Tourists* who may be asking for help in the beginning, or perhaps those that only observes and reads the threads without commenting), to a couple hundred (*Minglers* who occasionally check out the forums but do not surround their daily routine on the website) to a couple thousands (*Insiders* who may spend hours on the forums both for personal pleasure as well as enriching the public domain with information). For

example, one user has written 14,632 posts as of May 9th, 2011. However, the flat hierarchy and mix of conversations being discussed clearly shows the laid back and cooperative culture within the community and all its members. As Parsons' (2002) had mentioned, it is this flat hierarchy and lack of authority that encourages online participation.

5.1.1 Who do we choose to listen to?

With websites such as Swap.com, implemented staff and moderators who are essentially “expert users” of the site, and the “SwapCaptain” who is in charge of the site, watches over the forums and occasionally posts replies to questions asked by community members, as well as provide insider information on the development and the know-hows of the company. This gives the appearance that the company is actively listening to their users and acknowledges their opinions, but also allows Swap.com to gain a user’s perspective on what is or is not working with their website. For example, a user suggested extending Swap.com’s portfolio into women’s fashion on a thread, and the SwapCaptain commented:

SwapCaptain (moderator)

The best is in front of us. We are working on some very cool new functionality to enhance the site. We are already jumping in on womens fasion...last night 400 women gather in Boston for an offline swap. It was awesome! We promise not the mess up the media swapping economy as we look at other cool categories.

But all members will be able to participate as we expand.

So glad to see this thread.

The SwapCaptain acts as the highest in power of the social hierarchy on the forums, but maintains minimal interaction into the forum to allow honest and free flowing conversations. As those of a higher ‘status’ are monitoring the threads, many users turn to the forums as a channel to ask the company direct questions relating to personal experiences or rants regarding the company’s lack of initiative with their problems. Understanding that lack of authority in the forums encourages online participation, the SwapCaptain’s role is to merely help answer questions directed to, or pertaining of importance to the company, but does not interfere in other peer-to-peer discussions. Following down this hierarchy are the Swap.com staff who direct users to the right information, and deals with problems they face and share on the forums. However, since many of the Swap.com staff who monitor the sites have been a member for less than a year, we would categorize them on par with *Insiders* that have earned their status on the forums through countless numbers of posts and trades. With few users in ‘of status’ positions, the rarity as Bourdieu (1984) puts it, allow the recognition and prestige with the given title.

5.1.2 Who helps out the noobs?

From reading through recent threads posted, all the way to those 1,600 discussion threads back, there are many recurring questions regarding the usage of the website asked numerous times. With certain users being of ‘higher status’ and deemed as ‘experts’, they are surprisingly unselfish with their knowledge but rather find

pleasure in sharing it. The following thread shows the diverse range of usage based on the initial poster (*Tourist*) inquiring about whether or not he or she should start using Goozex.com, to *Insiders* who answers, followed by a *Mingler*.

Johnny (Tourist)

So I have a question, a few of my friends tried this site out and they said it didnt work out to well for them. Is it really worth it? What percent of transactions would you say are successful, cause i don't want my games to get lost in the mail and then lose money you know.

Sorry...noob question

Willy (Insider)

Well...Goozex is the greatest thing that has happened to me in a long time.

There's just a few things you can do to prevent things like games getting lost in the mail.

BUY DELIVERY CONFIRMATION!

Cherry (Insider)

Getting DC for everything will greatly reduce your risk. If you decide to include Canada in your trading region, keep the Custom Form as this will serve as DC (even though it only gets tracked to the border) as far as Goozex is concerned. I always try to keep my receipts until the trade clears in case I do run into some issues. That may be something you want to do, but I've been involved in 95 transactions and have never had an issue that wasn't worked out.

Pierre (Mingler)

Yeah, all my issues have worked out. This site is great, and most of the time the games you request are in great condition. Well, they have been for me so far.

Users like Cherry take the time to help users like Johnny because he or she is passionate about the site and want to encourage other users. Although Cherry may have nothing tangible to gain, the motivation of 'status seeking' (Harbaugh, 1998) proves as a strong incentive to provide free advice and information to those in online consumer communities (Lampel & Bhalla, 2007). The time they invest in these communities shows a direct link into their passion to keep the online community alive.

Unlike in the real world, social hierarchy and social structure within online communities do not separate individuals, but rather groups them together towards a common interest or theme in discussion. It is through these common discussions that allow users within different social standings in the communities to collaborate - first to discuss, and perhaps later become better acquainted. Social hierarchies allow individuals to learn to play their role, and it is through these recognizable distinctions embedded in one's profile such as number of posts, number of trades, and how long one has been a member since, that helps an individual find status and satisfaction in the role they take. From our research, lack of authority in communities encourage participation, and thus with minimal authority from the organization, participants find some sort of social structure in themselves. The element of social dimension, along with a number of other factors will be developed and explained further in our next section.

5.2 Redistribution

The previous section have provided a depiction of the social structure in the online forums, giving attention to how the participants form meanings together in the virtual realms. From this, we now move toward more particular distinctions between the two markets within collaborative consumption, and what the consumers find important. The aim is to understand what intentions and motivations consumers have toward redistributed consumption through looking at how they use the forums and what they see as possible problems and advantages. This involves how they perceive risk, the direct benefit from engaging, how they interact and what they find to be interesting to discuss, thus providing a more holistic picture of the forum discussion.

5.2.1 Motivation

As discussed in the theory chapter, motivation is a driver of our intentions to pursue a behavior, but what is it then that drives a person to pursue secondhand goods in the redistribution market online? Here we will try to answer that question through relating discussions from redistribution communities and the conducted focus group with an analysis based on functional and non-functional motivation factors.

I have time, I have stuff, I have excess

One of the characteristics of physical stores is that to reach them, you need to travel there. You can use whatever transport available, and maybe the store is just around the corner, but you still have to get there physically. If you instead choose to shop online, the physical travel distance is now diminished to the closest available computer. For that matter, we assume everyone can agree that there is a convenience to shopping online. However, travel distance is only one of many attributes that affects purchase motivation and therefore the full picture is not black and white. It is therefore important to remember that, as we described in the theory chapter, functional and non-functional motives are entangled, and together create perceptions of what, for example, convenience really means (Bridges & Florsheim, 2008).

It has been argued that the time between the shopping activity and time of delivery is in fact an important reason for why many people choose to not shop online (Alba et al., 1997). From our findings in online discussions, it is suggested that delayed time of delivery could as anticipated have a negative impact on future patronage and that they enjoy fast delivery. In the focus group discussion, it was also proposed that the delivery time, whether fast or not, requires a person to think in advance about what to get and to wait for the book to arrive. That in itself would negate an individual's will to shop for books online. However, this is interesting since we have found that books are common swapper items, and that they often are the area of discussion. The time to delivery should therefore be treated carefully, especially since other convenience factors also need to be accounted for that can potentially have greater

impact in the overall motivation. Such factors are information availability, the ability to talk with others about their shared interest, as well as the accessibility of switching what one does not need for something that one wants or needs. The nature of these findings indicate that not only the instant gratification of closing a swap is important, but also that the process in itself should be beneficial. An excerpt from a thread taken from Swap.com vividly illustrates how the process is viewed by members.

Miranda (Mingler)

[...] *Packages in the mail is like crack! Even though I know its a book - it's like christmas morning 2-3 times a week! Also, the look on my family members' faces when they say "Lauren - you got another book" and roll their eyes since they can't relate to my love of books and reading.

*My addiction leads me here any spare moment and what was supposed to be 5 minutes checking to see if I have any new interesting choices, ends up turning into an hour of intense book finding research. [...]

Sally (Mingler)

[...] I love being able to feed my book addiction and aslo get games and movies for my loving husband and my kids. It makes getting mail something to be happy for (it's just not bills in the mailbox). [...]

[thread continues]

It is suggested that participants of redistribution markets find incentives for participating in swapping throughout the entire process - from the moment they enter the community to the moment they can start enjoying their purchases at home. One of our focus group participants described the way she felt when browsing for used goods in online communities as a feeling that is hard to describe, and suggested that you get something extra in comparison to physical stores. Others have described it as being the feeling of doing something good as you do not have to use additional resources, whilst some see it as a mean to free space at home. Evidently this entails that owning a good is only important as long as it is in use, and that when the resource no longer provides any value, we view it as being unnecessary. This is a clear indication of where mass-consumerism have brought us as it has made it easy for us to buy new things, whilst never really creating a functioning system for the disposal of those redundant objects (Botsman & Rogers, 2010).

Give something, get something

Yet another reason for swapping is that of monetary concern. The participants of the studied communities tend to find swapping and buying secondhand items a much cheaper alternative to purchasing goods they want or need directly from wholesalers. The same information could be derived from the focus groups as the first thing that popped out of their heads while discussing the gains of this phenomenon was it being cheap. The online consumption communities often charge a low fee for their services and as the swap involves swapping one good for another, the money involvement is low. It may feel elementary, but the focus group proposed an interesting thought on perceived value. One participant was unsure of how value should be decided on for a product; he received an answer explaining to him that it depended on what the individual would be willing to trade for it. So if one participant finds his kitchen mixer to have the perceived value equaling that of a book held by another participant, a trade can be conducted as long as the one holding the book agrees. It is

an interesting concern as there is no monetary system that upholds the value of certain products, and instead is reliant on the participant's truthful information. Therefore swapping in actuality carries vast resemblance to the oldest of trades - bartering - revitalized through the infrastructure of the Internet and online communities (Botsman & Rogers, 2010).

Overall, the value, or if you like price, that is put on products in redistribution markets can be argued to act as positive motivators seeing its perception of being cheap and therefore saving people money, a notion that is consistent with earlier findings about online shopping in general (Burke, 1998; Alba et al., 1997) The value within the markets of this study is however most often not set through the common price mechanism that our monetary-system is used to, but rather through the perception of participants who can choose to agree or ignore the offers they receive, thus being able to decide the proper or equal value of exchange in which they see fit.

Educate yourself

Collaborative sharing needs more than a combination of geographically unconstrained swapping and perceived value added to function. Girgensohn and Lee (2002) have found that fulfillment of personal needs, the will to learn, as well as to advance the common good are key reasons for participating in online communities. One important factor for this to function is the width and depth of the discussions, and the product assortment made available by the participants. Chiang & Dholakia's (2003) argues that products which can be evaluated on through externally searched information are more likely to be purchased online given its convenient information and lack of geographic boundaries. The type of products that seem to be most relevant for swapping in redistribution markets online are those that convey stories to the recipient, e.g. books, movies, games and music. In their discussions about such products they can touch upon anything from actors and screenplay, to galas and animal cruelty.

Olivia (Mingler)

Has anyone seen the movie yet [researchers acknowledgement: movie of topic is: Water For Elephants]? I did and it was exceptionally well done and Robert Pattinson did the role justice. A few months ago I stated that I couldn't see him in the part of Jacob now I stand corrected. He is so much more than a vampire!

Angelina (Insider)

No, but I did read about a girl with whom I'm Internet acquaintances who won a contest where she got to interview Reese and get dressed up to do a photo shoot with the elephant who played Rosie. (I thought you'd think this was cool.)
[thread continues]

The excerpt above reflects the casualness that is often found in the forums and, in addition to showcasing social acts, also provides insight as to what it is that makes media products the swapping of choice. Not only can the members discuss a piece of fiction, but also how it is portrayed and other trivia surrounding the particular media, whilst conveniently engaging in swapping activities to easily gain access to the items they discuss. Our research therefore suggest that the collaborative redistribution markets are as much a search and purchasing channel as they are a part of the participants' more personal motives, as she can learn more about symbols that are

found important for herself and her lifestyle (Holt, 1997; Parsons, 2002). Evidently, it can be argued that participants of swapping sites often have a deeper motivation than to save money, and instead also use the service as a mean to research similar products and learn more about their interests.

We exist, therefore I am

At an overview, online communities are viewed as effective means to sustain participants' interest and to foster further social interaction (Girgensohn & Lee 2002), thus subsequently enforcing a large variety of motivations behind participation. The communities in this study, related to redistribution, indicates that people not only trade products and search for information, but also use the forums as a way to interact socially without geographic boundaries. The infrastructure enables them to communicate with other like-minded people and create friendships that might be hard to come by in the offline world. In the focus group, it was suggested that we have come to a stage in our society where we have been disconnected from or community as a result of our self-sufficiency and that today "you don't need your mother any more, and your mother doesn't need you". The online communities have however evolved into a tool to go back in time and find that feeling of commune once again. As the excerpt entails, they feel connected and spend much time chatting on the forums about their shared interests. In the discussion thread where the below excerpt was taken from they exchange reasons for swapping.

Sally (Mingler)

[...] I don't make friends very easily so I love the fact that I have made some really cool friends. [...]

There is always something interesting being discussed on the forums. I am a very early riser so someone is usually on the forums to talk too.

I can go on forever but I am gonna stop with

Thank you swap for making my life more interesting.

James (Tourist)

The community. Plain and simple. And cheesy. But true. REALLY cheesy, alright, yes. But still very true. The people are the reason I come back here. Everyone except Karen [Researchers acknowledgement: Sarcasm].

Bryan (Mingler)

I've talked to great people and even gotten into "borrowing" from people since meeting them on Swap. I am always feel proud to turn people onto Swap.com and feel good about giving them a new avenue for reading.

As illustrated, the participants' motivation can derive from the people within the community. We find it interesting that the community itself, and the people within it, are given much attention when they themselves describe why they swap, and as earlier research would suggest, this indicates that it is possible to form more substantive relationships online (Parks & Floyd, 1996). Even members like James, who is fairly new to swapping, have already gained acceptance and feel a part of the community; Sally was also happy to be able to meet friends easier, while Bryan has gone as far as to meet people 'offline' to participate in borrowing transactions, also referred to as a product service system. The like-mindedness of the people found

within these communities also reinforces Karau and Williams' (1993) earlier findings, that more similarity among members result in more positive contributions from individuals. The participants in the focus group regarded communities to be of great value but if they were to contribute to the discussion, it would have to be easy and they would first want to feel that they get something in return from the website. One participant thought that connecting Facebook to the swapping community would be great because it would make it easy to share with everyone simultaneously, thus connecting back to the convenience factor.

In general, the idea of sharing knowledge or information has been found important and that elaborate discussions in communities are very much appreciated. It is also a tool that joins together people with similar interests easily, and as a result help the members to socialize around these shared interests. Therefore, it could be suggested that similarities are important motivators to the collaborative sharing of goods and that constructive (descriptive, rich and positive) and casual discussions online therefore enforces peer group attraction.

5.2.2 Trust

Online communities act as a gateway for users to garner trust with a specific website. To attract users to swap or purchase any item from a website, it is necessary to first gain the trust of the user as this will act as a stimulus in determining their choice of product, seller, and behavior during the process. Gaining trust is essential within the sphere of e-commerce as the perceived risk of purchasing online is much higher than traditional brick & mortar shopping (Laroche et al., 2005). The interaction between strangers, and from international geographies, provides little assurance to the buyer and little ownership to the sender if anything were to go wrong. McKnight et al. (1998) believes that the importance of initial trust and forming initial relationships with web vendors will help to persuade and reassure first time consumers to transact with them. Thus, building trust through initiations in online forums, understanding the potential risk of the website and what to avoid, as well as building relationships with other online community members will help bridge the hesitation gap.

As peer-to-peer communities interact and exchange with one another, omitting the need for a third party or entity to act as the trusted source may increase the perceived risk. Thus what differs in this type of network than in typical e-commerce websites is trust built from reputation (Resnick et al., 2000; as cited by Xiong & Liu, 2004). It is through these valuable feedback systems that determine one's reputation and reliability that allows all members (even new ones) to be aware of any malicious and misleading behaviors by other peers in the community trying to scam the system; thus online forums acts as a grounding platform to build this initial trust.

Through reading the forums and taking an overview of the discussions, we were quick to notice the number of scams or 'swaplifteners' preying on these sites, taking advantage of this new form of exchange where a sense of honesty is needed. Both users expressing their anger in fear that they have been scammed, as well as community members working together to list out "swaplifter" names to prevent further misconducts from happening have been identified. The thread below from SwapStyle.com helps to showcase the collaboration of online community members

in minimizing the risk and fear of security issues that may act as a deterrent for some to use the site:

FashionGirl (Mingler)

Back in April i was swaplifted by a girl named LizbethM. She stole my AUTHENTIC CHANEL. I know that we also swaplifted from a couple other girls on here, thats why im writing this forum.

SO THE GIRLS THAT WERE SWAPLIFTED FROM HER SEND ME AN MSG, BECAUSE I THINK WE CAN GET OUR STUFF BACK... i FOUND HER!!! I'LL LET YOU KNOW MORE DETAILS. I JUST DONT WANT TO WRITE THEM ALL OUT HERE. LMK BECAUSE I KNOW ALL OF OUR STUFF WAS VALUABLE AND NOBODY DESERVES TO GET AWAY WITH IT

Laura (Mingler)

Im pretty sure ive seen lizbethm or something similar on makeup alley...if i find the username i will let you know. And i was swaplifted on another site by a girl...she stole my coach baghow can you possibly seek justice? Anyone know? cuz i asked the local police and they said theres no way of doing it because ppl go by diff names, and theres no way of finding them unless you can prove they stole ur stuff and prove their identity,,which would have to involve someone with the software to track ip numbers from their computer..and im pretty sure the fbi dont want to mess with our swapstyle beefs lol. But ok, DONT BE MAD AT ME FOR SAYING THIS lol, but personally, if i ever find the girl that has my bag, im gonna swaplift it back!

Linda (Mingler)

it is VERY VERY easy to find out someone's IP address if you have her email address. I'm pretty sure that when a swap is finalized, you are given her email address right? So what you have to do is email her.. Dont tell her what you are doing, just send some type of obscure email that will elicit a response. Think of something clever. When she replies to you you will have it. All you have to do is, in your email program's software find a setting that says VIEW FULL HEADERS. In the full headers is the IP address that the email address comes from. VERY easy to find. [...]

Chic (Tourist)

LizbethM actually stole money from me:(She offered me a cash deal(I think it was back in April or May), I accepted, and she sent me a message saying she got the \$\$\$\$\$. Well, after waiting a rather long time, and many Pms and email messages, I still haven't received my items or heard a word from her....very diappointing:([...]

Helen (Mingler)

I'm sorry you all have been swaplifted. I wasn't swaplifted by her but she was very rude and inconsiderate when we were dealing with our trade. Which never happened due to her never responding for a month and a half during our swap, bunch of excuses on her end, "accidentally blocking me" , left me a retaliatory feedback, told me to change her negative token or she won't remove mine so I did, left me rude messages, then trading the items with someone else probably because she was mad at my negative token at first? Which was her fault for not responding for a month and a half while I see her logging in all the time and adding new items. Hmmmph!!

After this incident with her, I never bothered with her again. That is horrible that she swaplifted you guys and stole your \$\$\$. I hope there is justice to her behavior..

[thread contains more posts]

Through this discussion, the collaboration of online community members to increase security of the website is evident, offering personal experiences and advice to help others avoid it in the future. However, as hard as a community works to deter swaplifters and other scammers from preying on their sites, there is still a high perceived risk in using peer-to-peer networks. According to both Jacoby and Kaplan (1972) and Mitchell's (1992) six components of perceived risk, the components most relatable to peer-to-peer swapping is the case of financial risk in having a net loss of

money due to the risk of posting material, or the possibility of having your credit card information misused; as well as product performance risk of not having a product perform up to its expectations both in terms of functionality and in quality (Horton, 1976).

With websites like Swap.com that charges a fee for swapping and has a “SafeSwap” security function that guarantees your item if the other party does not ship it, users must provide their credit card information. Giving this information provides further risks from a user’s perspective as issues in terms of privacy and trust is at hand. In Hoffman et al.’s (1998) study, providing credit card information was at the top of the list in terms of one’s perceived risk in online security, and because of this, security and privacy concerns were the top two antecedents of why non-users chose to not shop online. Websites that ask for more personal information from users can therefore both be seen as a barrier for one to engage in these consumption activities, but can also be of an encouragement to others seeing that companies are taking more of an initiative to weed out fraudsters.

Programs such as SafeSwap works in favor of users to increase security to build a higher level of trust. Through this assurance, users are further encouraged to engage in these collaborative consumption activities as the risk of losing out on a swap, or having to rely on others to be honest has been diminished. Personal trust in others is important to overcome as an initial barrier with trying these websites, but afterwards, having the trust in programs such as SafeSwap that acts as a guarantee entices users to stay if one loses out on swaps over and over again.

As consumers, we place a reliance on trust. However, it is through the creation of false trust made by malicious users where community members fall into the willingness to rely on them as exchange partners, and depend on their promise to deliver. These manipulative acts are done strategically well to the extent where one is willing to place their reliance on them, only to be disappointed when the transaction fails to deliver. Although users are aware of these risks, and are skeptical of the amount of reliance to place on a trade, they seldom believe it will happen to them.

Further discussions from the forum regarding the ethics of swapping with a known swaplifter is also quoted, where it is interesting to see community members gaining insight into the thoughts and intentions of swaplifters as to what their strategies may be:

Cat (Mingler)

Would you say it’s ethical to swap with someone who is a known swaplifter? For example, let’s say the swaplifter in question wants to swap – you have nothing to lose because they must send first and you have earned the right to send second. If you do get your end and send out – do you really want to leave good karma and mislead others – especially new rehashers this swaplifter is sure to “prey” on?

Kate (Mingler)

I would say that the person swapping (person A) with the known swaplifter (person B) should think twice about the swap. There really isn’t a nice way to say “Hey, we had a great trade, but watch our for person B. She’s a known thief.” And like a lot of people have done, person B could be just building up karma so he/she can start stealing again from new rehashers.

Cat (Mingler)

That’s what I think, too, Kristin. I think it weakens the community when people choose to swap with known swaplifters. It’s more or less allowing, and dare I say

‘encouraging’, swaplifting. Are there really items posted for swap on rehash that are worth it?

Or is this allowed because some don’t really feel part of the “community” so they disregard the welfare of others. [...]

[thread contains more posts]

The conversation mentioned above regarding trading with fraudsters is a common problem and risk in peer-to-peer communities. To trick the feedback system, many swaplifters will choose to first engage in a number of honest transactions to build up a reliable facade before attempting to scam. As there are no support in evaluating the trustworthiness of peers, many can fake their reputation by building up their honesty through small transactions in the beginning, and then earn profit through cheating and scamming larger transactions afterwards (Malaga 2001; Dellarocas 2003; Resnick et al. 2000; as cited by Xiong & Liu, 2004). It is also common for these users to discard their old online identities and create new ones to rid themselves of their bad history time and time again. Although the development of online sharing and e-commerce is continuously growing through numerous examinations of online peer-to-peer networks, there is yet no clearly identified mechanisms that can completely prevent the attacks of peers being compromised (Xiong & Liu, 2004).

From our focus group discussions, trust and the security of a marketplace has been mentioned to be huge barriers that must be overcome. The assurance of a reputable website, or one that many people use from an international perspective is enough to be a basic indicator of this placed reliance. This can also be referenced in terms of users following the subjective norm of others’ behavior as predictors for their own. However, after reoccurring behavior and a trust between a user and a website is formed, trust must then shift from the website to the redistributor or seller. Cases have been found where too much trust on a website has been formed, thus members automatically trust the seller of an item, but fail to receive the good in the end. One focus group participant sums up the discussion on online trust well by using our generation as an explanation as to why the motion and phenomenon of collaborative consumption is so strong; it is because of our grown trust in the Internet that all this is enabled.

5.2.3 Earlier experiences

The online redistribution market is still perceived by many to be riskier than traditional conventional stores. Omitting key sensory cues that are important in gaining a better understanding of the product, along with posing a number of uncertainties that cannot be showcased through an online medium, prevents users from feeling comfortable in engaging in these online communities. However, as Dickerson and Gentry (1983) has found, having been involved in similar previous activities builds up a familiarity in terms of what a likely usage outcome would be. Purchasing online, or engaging in swap activities through a social online platform, requires a learning process. It is the familiarity or experience with engaging in similar communities or in similar consumption activities that may increase one’s likeliness to adopt to these behaviors. When a user becomes accustomed to the usability, functionality and built trust of, for example, Swap.com, their likeliness of

feeling comfortable in using Goozex.com would be high. The previous knowledge and experience gained from purchasing on Swap.com gives a user the perceived knowledge of understanding what the results would be if they were to purchase on Goozex.com. It is the earlier experiences and prior knowledge of what they may expect that will increase the motivation towards using these online communities.

In the initial scenario prior to experiencing a situation or purchasing on a website, users rely on their friends or in people they trust to give the first push. "People they trust" can be used loosely to also include reputable blogs and websites. In our focus group, one focus group participant mentions that they would try an unknown website in terms of redistribution if a friend has had a good experience with it. If so, they would allow themselves to try it, and if they personally have a good experience with it, they would likely use it again, thus the building of trust slowly begins. Unfortunately, not all occurrences dealing with purchasing online ends up being positive as another participant mentioned receiving a vase that was crushed in the mail. However, this one unfortunate incident did not deter her away from continuing to buy online as she knows it does not always happen, and the money invested in these products are low. Thus, having previous positive experiences with a consumption activity will likely reinforce one's motivation for future participation; and as proposed in the focus group with regards to those exceptions, "If you have a strong belief in this kind of consumption, you would do it anyway."

Living in a generation that breeds new ideas and new innovations, majority of individuals are receptive to trying new things. It is with this receptivity, along with the gained trust from prior online purchases, that lead users to understand the protocol and expected result of such actions, thus continuing to shop online and engage in these redistribution communities. Conclusively, it is our comfort and trust in the Internet, and the trust we put in the hands of others, that allows us to use our positive earlier experiences in this activity to continue our usage.

5.2.4 Subjective norms

In redistribution markets, as would in traditional e-commerce markets, subjective norms influence one's decision of whether or not to purchase a particular good, or whether or not to engage in consumption activities. As Ajzen (1991) explains, it is the social pressure that an individual feels, for example one's crucial need for a new video game that all his friends has played and only talk about, that further pushes an individual to feel the need to have it as well. Depending on one's receptivity, or as others may put it, vulnerability to social influences, subjective norms may play either a strong or weak role in affecting purchase or consumption intentions. It can also be used to either encourage a behavior to occur, or to negate one.

An example of when subjective norms can be used to disincline behaviors is when those around you do not approve or support your choice of activity. This can be seen in a forum discussion on Swap.com when one user noted a close one's disapproval of her using swapping as she quotes, "My partner doesn't want me using this site, rather I'd join a library!". If a she views the subjective norm to be against her current behavior, perhaps it may lessen her engagement in the activity over time, thus driving down her motivation to complete a task such as swapping.

In terms of using subjective norms as an encouragement tool, it does not necessarily have to be from friends or people you know. One participant from our focus group states that if four out of five people recommend a product, they would be much more inclined to try it; while another participant mentions that for her to find trust in a particular redistribution market website, it would usually be the one most people use - it's as simple as that. Of course, recommendations and suggestions from friends perhaps hold a greater influence of one's behavior as many focus group participants admit that they would be much more willing to try a new experience, trust a website, or engage in collaborative consumption activities if their friends had tried it first and provided good reviews. In a socially inclined generation where people's opinions matters to most, subjective norms clearly plays a role in influencing one's behavioral intentions.

5.2.5 Perceived behavioral control

PBC plays a role in predicting one's behavior. One's PBC can be strengthened through intensifying the motives behind the attitude towards an action and improving the subjective norm (SN). With a stronger PBC, the perceived action to perform a task becomes easier, thus one would likely be more willing to complete it.

Relating this to the redistribution market, improving the ease for a user to swap an item with another user through simple features on the website, connecting 'haves' with 'wants' on members' lists, and having straightforward instructions on how to complete the trade would likely increase one's PBC. When referencing the forums, many users express their love of these sites due to its usefulness and ease of swapping which can be seen by the following posts:

Samantha (Insider)

"I like the simplicity. And IMO [in my opinion] the value is really good. eBay fees can start to rack up quickly, and then you have to list them, etc. I rid my hands of that when I joined Goozex earlier this year and my gaming budget has increased considerably because of it..."

Kent (Mingler)

"Goozex for me is like....

I trade when I can

when I can't I just use the forums

when I use the forums I usually only make 3-4 posts a day but I find that I've had such a positive experience with Goozex that in some cases I'd rather give them my business then to go get a game somewhere else, even if it's a little cheaper or easier to get somewhere else. Goozex: Not perfect, but I'd be lost without them"

Daphne (Insider)

"...I'm a big ebayer but sometimes its a pain to setup everything and wait for an auction to end(sometimes at a lower price). Goozex is amazing I'm really really happy this site exists! Thanks to everyone who has helped guide me through the first week of this service!"

Through these posts where community members express the ease of engaging in the activity of swapping and Goozex.com's platform that helps them to further perform in these activities, it deepens our understanding of the motives of these individuals,

which favorably affects their attitude, and thus intentions to continue with these consumption activities. The cooperation from others within these online communities also showcases the common passion they share for the website. Having gone through a majority of the Goozex.com forum and reading through more than 800 posts, we have yet to find one post that expresses one's disapproval or contemplation of leaving the community due to difficulties in using or understanding its features. Not having to use extra effort to overcome external barriers and complications of acting upon these consumption activities acts as an incentive to perform.

Furthermore, there is a second component of PBC that Ajzen (2002a) describes in his later restructured TPB framework with the controllability of whether or not an individual wants to perform in that behavior. Going into the communities, many users express their addiction to the community and to the behavior of swapping. Although collaborative consumption ideas may help save money, or act in goodness on one hand, there are negative aspects that may be in one's disapproval. Analyzing the forums which clearly expresses one's addiction and love for a specific site can be seen as a success for the community, but it can also be viewed as a problem for others. If the *addiction* of spending more than \$100 every month in shipping books, and having more than 1,400 swaps with bookcases of books taking over the house is uncontrollable, then perhaps this uncontrollable factor plays a role in affecting your PBC in a negative way. Through the forums, users have expressed some compulsive behavior they have encountered after joining swapping sites such as Goozex.com and discussed with other community members as to whether or not these are 'normal' behaviors. One community member claims to have been on Goozex.com for a few months and "can honestly say that [they] check [their] requests, offers, tracking (coming and going) forums at least 20 times a day" while another member agrees replying, "though I will check more often when I am getting close on a title I really want... for a while I was well aware that checking Goozex 25 times a day for my MW2 position wasn't helping, but I did it anyways...".

This loss of control in terms of one's PBC can also be interconnected to one's perceived subjective norm of engaging in these behaviors, especially if they are turning to the forums for confirmation as to whether or not their addiction to the site or to the behavior of swapping is 'normal'. In a more positive light to predict a user's intentions of continuing this behavior, the loss of one's PBC may also be an indication of the intensity in a specific behavior that takes over you, thus being a clear display of the importance and value you find in its engagement.

Conclusively, PBC is a good determinant to predict intention of behavior. It is an equation that takes into consideration one's confidence in their own knowledge and skills, together with having the time and cooperation with others to engage in redistribution. However, this action would not be as likely or easy to complete without the enablement of the Internet and a website that contributes to helping with this behavior. Being able to conveniently shop online through the Internet, find items you are looking for, save money and have them delivered to your door together touches on the main points as to why many engage and are so "addicted" to this new twenty-first century form of bartering.

5.3 Social collaboration

This section will continue the analysis of collaborative markets, focusing on what we call social collaboration. This takes us away from tangible goods and the redistribution market, and instead lets us rethink why we share less tangible and more personal assets, such as our knowledge, space and money. The nature of this market presents a variety of sharing possibilities: traveling, landsharing and peer-to-peer money lending. Although these are three distinctions we want to gain understanding about the intentions and motivations of social collaboration as a whole rather than of how people react to particular marketplace and therefore we are analyzing to find patterns that can provide a better perspective to explore a Co-lifestyle in the next section. Furthermore, the structure of analysis that was used for the redistribution market have also been applied to social collaboration to give a clear overview of the differences and commonalities that might arise.

5.3.1 Motivation

Could the same motivational factors as for the redistribution market also be the reason for engaging in Social collaboration? Although they both are part of collaborative consumption they separate in that one regards the exchanging for a product and the other involves services. In the following we will continue our examination of functional and non-functional motivational factors.

I have time, I have space, I have excess

The geographic placement of participants proposes one interesting difference from the redistribution market, namely that the collaboration often occur on a local level even though it is set in motion through interactions online. Many discussions on such sites as Landshare.net therefore incorporate people from different places but relate to issues or ideas for specific geographic locations. Other consumption activities, such as Couchsurfing and carpooling are also location bound, although this time to the participants' intended travel destinations. Yet, it would be misleading to say that all types of social collaboration are bound by the participants' geographic positions, as for example peer-to-peer banking, crowd-funding, and certain skill sharing schemes can be collaborated without people meeting face-to-face. Consequently this means that location is a convenience factor for some markets whilst other are unaffected. For the markets that are affected it should be regarded as a motivator for participating in the online communities as they provide the means necessary to get in contact with others to engage in the act of collaboration.

Parsons' (2002) suggests that the Internet enables consumers to reach out to consumption activities that otherwise would be hard to participate in because of location, opening hours and other more personal motives, for example, the inaccessibility that some activities portray. Evidently this means that it is hard to

make a categorization based on only functional factors, such as time, and make assumptions for the social collaboration markets as a whole. This complexity was also portrayed in the focus group as some of them regarded searching for alternatives and other time related factors to be reasons why they could not see themselves making the effort for social collaboration while having full-time jobs. However, others perceived online browsing as allowing for a wider range of activities to be found, thus making it easier to get in contact with for example carpoolers that could help them get from point A to point B, or in finding a nice host to stay with on a trip. The convenience factor therefore touches upon the same two dimensions of shopping that the redistribution market does: the process and instant gratification.

People who prefer not having to plan for a trip, or cannot be bothered to find others with the right skills within a network, can be regarded as individuals searching for instant gratification. Those participants from our focus group that were more uncertain about social collaboration were those who found it ineffective and therefore lacking instant gratification. On the contrary, those that found the process of searching for alternatives as an enjoyable activity, found gratification through the excitement or thrill of finding others that could help out. If we relate this to the discussions from the forums, it becomes clear that people searching to participate in social collaboration find the process just as important as the outcome, and enjoy the diversion to such an extent that time is not of essence, or at least find perceived time to be reduced.

The time factor can also be connected to having excess space. From the discussions on, for example Landshare.net, we found that having too much of something, or having something that is not being used to its full capacity is one of the driving forces behind sharing. Most often the landowner does not have time to take care of his or her garden, or have spare space for additional growing, whilst growers instead lack their own space and would like to devote their time to help out wherever they can.

Sophie (Tourist)

Hi I am new to this site and can't make heads nor Tails as to where the right place to put this would be, or if. Indeed there is already a place to offer your help but I Don't have the time to keep my own patch of land at the moment but would like to be able to help out on someone elses along with my 3 children.

We used to have a garden big enough that we have a veg garden and kept chickens for years but no longer is this the case but would love to be able to help anyone who needs it we live in the salisbury area so if you have a patch you could use some help with please let me know.

Thanks all for reading.

[thread continues]

As the excerpt indicates, Sophie is having some difficulties to find the right settings for her service-listing, but is still very interested in helping out, making it a social activity with her children, while she also indicates that time is the factor for not being able to keep her own allotment. Instead she is hoping for someone to share a garden with, someone that has more then needed, and through the act of collaboration make better use of available resources. The findings therefore indicate that people who find

themselves with excess time and space - whether it be in the car, at the office, in the back yard, or with one's own skills - can collaborate through the online realms and find others willing to help or help those in need. As these have been found to be common concerns, we find that lack of, or excess of space and time are two main drivers that motivate social collaboration.

Give something, get something

It might sound like acts of kindness at first glance but as indicated in the focus group these consumption activities are much more than that. It is a giving and taking that most often require some sort of compensation for the time spent or resources borrowed; however, not always resulting in a monetary compensation. Since it is not always clear what compensation that can be expected, confusions arise that make people hesitant towards social collaboration. An example of this inherent confusion can be drawn from Couchsurfing, essentially a free service but more experienced users tend to believe that some kind of compensation would be fair:

Matt (Tourist)

I'm trying to plan a 7-month trip around the world and want to do it as cheaply as possible. I'm considering Couchsurfing, but my one friend who did it had a negative experience. He said that he ended up spending way more money Couchsurfing than he would have at a hostel because he felt he had to give his host something in return for his stay. How common is this? What do people expect in return for your stay? I know that the mantra is that they don't expect anything, but, in practice, is that really true?

I've seen other posts that suggest cooking for your host. Does that mean you buy the ingredients? That can be pretty expensive, too, and you might not know where to go to get the ingredients. Other posts have suggested bringing a gift you got from somewhere else. If I'm planning on Couchsurfing for most days, then I'd have to buy a ton of gifts! Whatever advice you have for me would be greatly appreciated.

Ray (Insider)

I'm the sour puss on this one. I think planning to leech for that long would be a little irresponsible. I never got the impression the point was to get a free ride. It has more to with meeting people than using them.

Maybe I missed the point though. That happens sometimes.

Juli (Insider)

Firstly, what on earth was your friend buying for his hosts? Diamond rings? Most of the time, I'll help buy groceries and have a nice meal with my host people. Or if I don't have time for that, I'll leave a bottle of wine, if I think it'll be appreciated. Last time I surfed, I didn't have that much time, so I left nothing. I still got a good reference, so I don't think my hosts were upset or anything.

[thread contains more posts]

As the excerpt entails, Couchsurfers should show their appreciation toward the homeowner through the act of giving. This was confirmed in the focus group and is further elaborated later in the Trust section when discussing benevolence. The gift that one participant could give can be anything from sharing stories about their travels to cooking cultural food. It is however apparent that the compensation should be focused on exchanges that need not be measured in monetary terms or of extrinsic value, which has been found to be true for the most part, but with the exception of peer-to-peer lending that clearly is founded on monetary transactions being made. Users either participate to earn money or borrow money, which evidently is intended

to benefit both the lender and the borrower financially. Hence, we can not exclude the possibility that participants in social collaboration are indeed in it to make money.

In addition to compensation, it would be naive to disregard other monetary concerns relating to social collaboration. As Alba et al. (1997) suggests, saving money is a common motivator for people to search for consumption online, and the same is applicable for social collaboration. Interestingly it was proposed in the focus group that this was only applicable when money is scarce. They argued that time is also money, and therefore the opportunity costs of the time invested in consumption activities should be evaluated. One of the participants made the connection between working ten hours a day, making good money, and therefore not having enough incentive to engage in social collaboration to a wide extent since time, in this case, is the scarce resource and not the money. In other words, the participant viewed it as a way to save money only when it is scarce to them, but as soon as they start to receive a steady income, it would be more convenient to purchase the services through conventional service providers. Other participants' shared the view of social collaboration as being a mean to save money but most of them would not regard it as the primary goal. Matt's concerns, from the excerpt above, also indicate a will to save money. Yet, according to more experienced users, such 'leeching' behavior is not welcomed and should therefore be avoided if the participant wants to receive a good rating, and thus be able to Couchsurf again.

The discussions online and the overall decisive agreement from the focus group indicates that some form of compensation is needed as incentive to engage in social collaboration, although it is often not the monetary value that is in focus. Yet adding observations from marketplaces that conduct peer-to-peer lending and crowd-funding, leads us to argue that it is impossible to repudiate the influence of monetary compensation for social collaboration as a whole since these activities are founded on the premise of money transactions. Furthermore it is also clear that saving money could be a motivator in itself, although seldom the primary intention. The apparent need for compensation and the possibility of saving money would suggest that not everything is done simply because of goodwill or altruistic belief, and that we seek individual satisfaction through the act of collaboration regardless of which position we're in.

Educate yourself

In the same way that members collectively help to increase the range or depth of services provided by a community, they also increase the amount of information related to new trends, services, and other information that could be of interest for those who find the collaboration activity intriguing. According to Parsons (2002) this type of information is an important reason for engaging in online consumption activities since it conveniently and effortlessly enables participants to learn more about what is happening in the area of interest. Judging by the information that is brought up and discussed in the studied communities, it is apparent that such educating practices are seen within social collaboration communities as well. For

instance it is illustrated in the excerpt above when Matt asks others for help and others join in to give him a better understanding. Matt himself continues:

Matt (Tourist)

Well, I guess if the mentality is one of leeching, then I'd agree with you. I was planning on "paying back" by offering up my own couch to couchsurfers, at least for the equivalent amount of days that I stayed on other people's couches, if not more. I don't really think that that's leeching, and I'm sorry you see it that way.

Another side of the coin is that it'd be cool to meet the people who actually live in the countries you're visiting, rather than just hanging out with other travelers like yourself. I was thinking of doing a mix of both hosteling and couchsurfing, but I really wanted to understand the expectations first. I do think a lot of people couchsurf because it's supposed to be cheaper--I believe that's one of the selling points--so I don't think it should be left out of the equation.

It is interesting to see how careful Matt is in the way he posts, and it is a clear example of the social hierarchy that has been touched upon earlier in the analysis. Yet, Matt asks the question and although he trembles lightly this is a good example of why we argue that Internet circumvents traditional social etiquettes (Parsons, 2002), and that the nature of these collaborative online communities decreases the social barrier of self-consciousness and as a result, makes it easier for individuals to reach information, as well as expand their network quickly and create connections with people having similar interests.

We exist, therefore I am

It could be argued that people become members of social collaboration communities to find and share their resources, and after the connection is made there is actually no need to keep coming back to the community for reasons other than to continue sharing resources, yet many do come back to engage in nothing more than casual talk. In, for example, landsharing communities the members find themselves discussing everything from how to get rid of weeds and the right tools for hedge trimming, to resolving uncertainties about building permits and how to produce 'slow gin with a twist'. None of these actually concerns the sharing of land or physical help with growing and gardening; instead they are casual questions and topics that in one way or another can be connected with the life of a landowner and/or grower.

The same type of discussions are found in forums relating to collaborative traveling, and as a result, the discussions are more concerned about traveling and their experiences, ranging from discussions about nice places to visit and strange encounters, to how to plan a trip. The peer-to-peer money loaning forums show a slightly different way of interacting with each other. The forums are very valuable but the questions and topics often require deep factual financial knowledge. In comparison to the often very casual conversations in other communities these may feel formal, but through the perspective of an individual who lends or borrows money, it becomes quite clear that these discussions, similar to other communities, are there to help one another. For example, discussions regarding taxation issues, new phenomena on the market and other insightful ideas help lenders and borrowers

gain more knowledge. The social collaborative communities we've studied are very similar in the way that members interact with each other, clearly showcasing their strong connection to the community that goes beyond the mere consumption activity the community was founded on. These consumers engage in a social information exchange where they create meaning together for the group and the products or services it surrounds. This initiates deeper association to the subculture and formats social norms from which they organize their community (Kozinets, 1999).

5.3.2 Trust

As social collaboration involves more than just tangible assets to be directly exchanged, and human-to-human interaction between individuals act as the focus (Botsman & Rogers 2010), the integrity and personality of the exchange partner becomes important. Having a connection that goes beyond a mere few conversations online followed by a transaction, and instead involves further in-person contact, it is perhaps of even greater importance than in the redistribution market to attain a level of trust. Following Wu & Tsang's (2008) three stages of trust building, this trust begins with the attraction of a benefit (whether it be accommodation, gardening, or the potential for high return on investment), then by the process of maintaining this trust and building of a relationship through the social exchange, and ending with a consequence which can be either positive or negative. The consequence of this collaboration is where perceived risk plays a factor. From our focus group, participants agreed that before a trust is built, or an act of collaborative exchange is developed, they must first see some sort of benefit for themselves; however, as mentioned before this reward must not necessarily be of extrinsic value but is often times intrinsic with something as little as personal satisfaction or personal interest. The relationship built between both collaborators are important to maintain the trust. For example, in terms of landsharing, a commitment by the grower to show up when stated to help maintain the garden is important to build a trust of reliability and competence. If the criteria above are met, and thus a high level of trust is built, these activities often end in favorable consequences. If not, the risk of unfavorable results that may decrease both parties' intentions to continue with social collaboration in the future may occur.

Furthermore, with the need to trust an individual beyond the action of sending out your item, Mayer et al.'s (1995) three most commonly used types of trust belief is important in this market. A trustee's competence in their skills and characteristics can be seen by using the money invested through peer-to-peer lending intelligently to bring forward profits, or having the skills to properly grow a garden of healthy vegetables when given the land to do so on. The trustor expects the trustee to perform and has placed a reliance on them. The trustee's benevolence is shown in the example of Couchsurfing where the roles of trustee and trustor are switched. The Couchsurfer being the trustee must have a level of respect for the trustor (host); however, it is the trustor who should help the trustee through the offering of their couch without any expectations of extrinsic rewards. When asked, a good Couchsurfer always states that they do not expect any extrinsic reward for their

offering if they are a host, but the implications of an offering is always appreciated. However, what most Couchsurfers revel in is the *intrinsic* rewards they receive through having different individuals sleep at their place. The intrinsic benefits of experiencing new cultures, hearing exciting stories and making new friends is important. This expectation is explained further through a thread when a Couchsurfer asks the community what the expectations are from a host's perspective when lending their couch. These members respond:

Wanda (Insider)

Being that I've never couchsurfed (not from the site anyway) I still have an opinion!

I agree with Louise. 1/4 of the time Couchsurfing seems like a good estimate. I don't think those offering their couch do it b/c they expect anything. I think they think it's cool to meet others from around the world too! When it's appropriate, a small gift is nice, but not necessary or expected. I think being respectful while you stay, and being a friendly face willing to swap stories and enjoy a good experience with hospitable peeps is pretty good! The smallest gesture is always appreciated but I don't think you need to spend big bucks at all on that! The best things in life are free, don't forget! [...]

Frank (Tourist)

I host Couchsurfers all the time. If you are only hosting people because they bring gifts then you shouldn't be couchsurf-hosting. I do it purely because I enjoy meeting people. Most surfers stay 2 days (I live in a transit city with international airport but no tourist attractions), and some give me nothing, others bring a bottle of wine. [...]

Stacy (Insider)

Yep, I agree with you Frank. Don't host people if you expect monetary or physical reimbursement...honestly, it's rewarding in itself. It sounds cheesy, but it's really true.

[thread contains more posts]

Mayer et al.'s (1995) third trust belief, *integrity*, can be performed personally given the goodwill of the trustee, or through their felt obligation to a specific role or duty, thus playing the role of having integrity. For example, the host expects a Couchsurfer to respect their home and personal belongings, and to not abuse their privilege to stay. The Couchsurfer can oblige to these rules given their genuine values, or because of the repercussions that may arise if they do not obey. In the trustor's point of view, it is the perception of one's integrity by following these principles that is important - not so much as to the reasons why it was performed. Below is a thread from the Travepod.com forum that discusses the lack of integrity by a Couchsurfer, consequently abusing a level of trust:

Stacy (Insider)

Wow!... Long story, but while I was gone, I had two surfers who didn't know each other, at my house together. One of them invited a man over to the house. The other Couchsurfer came home and basically caught them in the act. I heard this story from the second CSer after the first one left. I'm not mad or disgruntled or anything, but I think this is rude and inconsiderate, especially since she knew the other CSer would be coming back to my place to sleep that night (she knew that I wasn't going to be sleeping there that night).

On top of that, she is supposed to be getting married in a week! I'm not giving her a bad reference, because I think she is generally a nice person, but really... WHO DOES THAT? [...]

Fin (Insider):

What! I'd give bad feedback for bringing a guest uninvited when you've opened your home. That is crazy rude. The further circumstances are too much to consider ignoring. What an ungrateful guest. I'm guessing this person did not have many references? That

is exactly the sort of thing I'd want to be warned about. Strangers having sex in my bedroom goes Wayyy beyond a polite visit. Disgusting and shameful.

[thread continues]

With reference to peer-to-peer lending, a greater extent of trust comes into the equation given the monetary value, of sometimes high amounts. Peer-to-peer social lending of money contains a high risk factor and can be judged from both the deal in which the money is being invested into, as well as by assessing who is responsible. From our focus group discussions, one user believes that monetary inclusion to the equation of peer-to-peer exchanges acts as a disincentive to trust. With money involved, people have more of an incentive to lie to get a desirable outcome.

Contrary to the redistribution market, peer-to-peer money lending poses more risk in the hands of the lender as opposed to the borrower. It is difficult for lenders to judge the quality of the deal being offered, and they are solely exposed to the default risk if the borrower is unable to pay back their debt obligations (Heng et al., 2007; as cited by Klafft, 2008). Just like playing with the stock market, the return on investments are never guaranteed. These peer-to-peer money lending companies take no responsibility in managing risks, but merely provide a detail profile of each borrower and it is up to the lender to mitigate their risks (Klafft, 2008). In Zopa.com's online communities where users discuss the rates, risks and in turn, further understanding on how the peer-to-peer lending works, community members compare Zopa.com's network with a competitor's. In this, a forum user concludes that regardless of which network one chooses to use, "there is no guarantee that you will receive money from the fund if you get a bad-debt (especially if the fund does not have sufficient money) in which case the lender clearly suffers the cost". This proved to be a big problem in the past as many lenders were unable to see returns on their investments due to a high level of loan defaults, thus many angry lenders threatened to quit or boycott the platform (Rose 2008; as cited by Klafft, 2008). The risk involved with participating in online collaboration tactics may be a deterrent for users to engage in these activities; however, through our focus group, it is also clear that some participants do not even think about the risks involved anymore. In reference to a carpooling system one, user in our focus group argued that so much trust in terms of the website and the integrity of the carpoolers has been formed that trust is no longer an issue for him when searching for a ride. At first, people were skeptical on its usage as with any community that needs to build reputation. However, the participant no longer checks carpoolers' profiles before choosing a ride, but only looks for the most convenient time. Thus, the trust and faithfulness of such a successful community has extended their values from the website platform to its activities.

Relating the activity of carpooling to what was hitchhiking before, the revelation of trust comes into discussion. In the past, the significance of trust was much stronger due to perhaps a closer network and less exposure to crimes. It seemed to almost be a necessity in order to survive. However, trust in these activities is now seen as a risk due to changing perceptions and changing values of individuals, thus, although the issue being discussed is evidently not new, having to trust others in terms of these activities is seen to be new as it takes more persuasion and efforts to do so. One

focus group participant puts it, “I feel like it’s such a new thing even though it’s not a new thing but we don’t really have to do it anymore’ given our lifestyle of disconnecting ourselves from our community of networks.

5.3.3 Earlier experiences

Although the exact act of what we refer to as social collaboration is based off old behaviors, it has been regenerated into a fairly new idea with only a few years of existence. Understanding this, there is a lack of familiarity or experience in prior knowledge due to its newness, thus individuals must rely on other means such as judging online profiles to gain first impressions to form trust.

Bialski & Batorski (2010) argues that trust can be formed through a sense of familiarity. The initial online platform of Couchsurfing or landsharing acts as the familiarity builder where users are able to get to know one another to build trust before moving offline. Although earlier experiences of the actual act may be unfamiliar to a user, the sense of connecting with a person online, or gaining an impression of them through their online profile is nowadays very common through social networks such as Facebook and LinkedIn. This behavior to search and find knowledge on a certain individual, or on a community, has been practiced, thus the reliance on the self in trusting that you have found reliable information is high.

As one member of our focus group mentioned, people who engage in activities such as Couchsurfing are usually those that are more alternative. The activity is not open for everyone, but it is for those who are willing to accept the Couchsurfing ideology - being open to people they do not know, and believe that people are inherently good. This acts as a self selection process to weed out those who do not agree with the ideology, thus strengthening the trust between community members who do (Bialski & Batorski, 2010). But what draws users to continue with this activity is the experience and understanding of the practice gained from the ‘first time’. After a while, the practice of sleeping on other people’s couches, meeting individuals from different cultures, or offering yours up to host someone, becomes familiar. The act soon will become a “heightened reality” where trust between individuals becomes the norm and no longer an exception (Bialski & Batorski, 2010, pg. 183).

Relating this to other social collaboration phenomenons such as peer-to-peer money lending and landsharing, it all begins with using one’s experience of assessing another user’s profile in distinguishing the amount of trust you would like to place on them. However, over time and having experienced successful trials, the resistance to be skeptical becomes lower, and the barrier to trust becomes thinner. This can be explained with the example of carpooling discussed in our focus group. When carpooling in Germany was a new idea, people were unsure of their safety and who they were able to trust, but through built trust in the company along with a number of satisfying positive experiences, it has now become such a common practice to use it to find a ride from point A to point B. These prior experiences that ended well, and through the discussion and recommendations of others within your community, acts as a predictor of future motivations to continue with these behaviors. If a negative

experience were to have occurred, perhaps the intention to engage in these activities would be low. It is together with one's openness towards meeting other participants and inviting them into one's personal sphere, along with their prior knowledge in collaborating with strangers or reliance on their judgement of strangers that help predict future behavior through earlier experiences.

5.3.4 Subjective norms

Consumers' intentions that motivates their choice of consumption activity is also influenced through norms of a more subjective nature, as opposed to more practical (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980 as cited in Dennis et al., 2010). For instance, if one community participant is easily influenced by other members, then his or her behavior will be affected by others' opinions. Relating this to the TRA, we indicate that purchase intentions are highly affected if members would regard each other as friends, albeit in a broader definition. Therefore, word-of-mouth spreading through active communities could drive consumers to either pursue or negate the intended consumption activity (Parsons, 2002). The following excerpt from *Travelpod.com* illustrates how word-of-mouth (online and offline) and convenient information can affect a person's intentions of using a service such as Couchsurfing:

Ralf (Tourist)

I've heard the term before. I was in a hostel in Cádiz where a German girl told me whole stories about her couchsurfing. She assumed I knew what she was talking about and I kept her in the illusion, because I thought it sure would be something with water involved and eh...couches...couches on water? I don't always ask for details, I know surfing so this would probably be just another type of surfing, right? [...] So I still don't know what it is and would appreciate someone explaining to me what the heck is couchsurfing?

Laura (Insider)

www.couchsurfing.com - take a look here first. There are plenty of topics around the forums that talk about it. See what you think and let us know your thoughts.

Many people swear by it. And for many people it's a safety blanket. Personally I think it's healthier to mix it up with independent travel, as it's important to avoid clinging to comfort zones..

Ralf (Tourist)

Ahhhh. Wow, awesome, great it got me enthusiastic and I just signed up on that website. [...] I would like a combination, I don't need a personal guide with me 24 hours a day, but I do love to get to know people and have someone showing me around the important stuff. Since today i'm looking for a host in Tarragona and Barcelona jeje.

Juli (Insider)

It's true, mixing up Couchsurfing with other types of travel is important, I think. I couldn't do it ALL the time, but it's fun to do it sometimes. It's just not practical to always make your schedules match up with your hosts, it gets to be too tiring after a while.

This power of subjective norm was also expressed in our focus group as one participant mentioned that he heard about Couchsurfing on a dance floor in Berlin when someone invited him to stay over at his house. Eight days later, he tried out Couchsurfing because he liked the sound of the idea and has been both a guest and a host ever since.

Although in Dennis et al.'s (2010) research, it was not proven that subjective norms played a definite role in affecting one's purchase intentions, we found that it indeed has an impact both through our focus group and our analysis of the online community. Especially with activities that require such interaction and involvement with other individuals, there is a higher tendency to spread opinions and feedback through word-of-mouth

5.3.5 Perceived behavioral control

Similar with the redistribution market, for one to engage in social collaboration, a user has to perceive the behavior to be easy to perform and have confidence in terms of completing it. As social collaboration requires finding other individuals willing to work together to complete an action, as well as requires a degree of interaction, the ease of finding that connection or relationship acts as the first stage to further collaboration efforts.

To find other members to engage in different social collaboration activities, a suitable website that meets the needs of the users and their desired activities must first be found. From our focus group discussions, participants mentioned that they would look through forums (both internal and external) to see what others say about specific websites to assess their decisions. The website has to be simple, understandable, and "have some kind of design or functionality that a two year old would be able to understand" as quoted by one focus group participant. To increase one's behavioral intentions of using a website to start their collaboration process, it is in the simplicity and ease of the learning process that is important, thus minimizing any external barriers that would prevent the performance of this behavior.

Through the Landshare.net forums, many members discuss their difficulties in finding a match between landowners and growers from both sides. In terms of growers, their frustration of having applied to free plots and not hearing back from landowners, or walking through their community and seeing untamed weeds in gardens increases. One community member expresses,

Riley (grower)

"Sadly, there is only one person on this forum offering land for use in the area I can get to. And they have 6 applicants including me. And I applied months ago. And they haven't responded to anyone. What is more frustrating, whenever I walk past the allotments near me, there are loads of plots that are clearly abandoned; overgrown, everything dead, weeds everywhere. Why doesn't the council free up these plots to the people that want them?"

From a landowner's point of view, the frustration of the difficulties in finding a match is also prevalent as another member voices,

Becca (landowner)

"I have decided after a few sets of people have let me down over land share im going to keep the rear garden and use it myself for veggie growing, it get a bit to much when they say yes then dont bother to turn up and dont call or start then change there minds, its a shame really as it is a good plot oh well more work for me but more rewards to i guess has anyone else had the same problems?"

The inability to find cooperation from others nor availability of plots becomes an external influencer that may decrease Riley's motivation, as her PBC over the situation has decreased. After having dealt with a number of undesirable events and being unsuccessful with using the website as a platform to find others to engage in social collaboration efforts with, one's self-efficacy to actually performing the behavior will be lessened given the many external obstacles one must prevail in order to perform. The disadvantages of using the website becomes stronger as the difficulty of finding a desirable result through it increases. If this stage of initiation to social collaboration is unsuccessful, the relationship between users cannot be built, thus the likeliness of engaging in the activity will be low.

In terms of Couchsurfing, a host's internal control of their willingness and knowledge to, for example, show a tourist around their own city, as well as the external control of how much time they have and how likely they will be able to get along with the Couchsurfer, will act as predictors on how likely they will want to offer their couch to a guest. With the Couchsurfing website, and through the enablement of Internet that allows people from all over the world to be connected, finding someone that is willing to offer their couch up for a guest becomes easy. The connection of two individuals from very different geographic locations, exchanging online discussions to familiarize themselves before meeting through offline mediums, has been heightened because of websites such as Couchsurfing.com or Landshare.net that allow these collaborations to occur.

As a second component of PBC, one's internal control of their confidence, skills and ability to perform a behavior is important (Armitage et al., 1999). Having the internal belief that if given the opportunity to engage in social collaboration, your skills and ability to perform to the needs required will be met is essential to increase your PBC and your intention of performance. For example, a grower posts her strong confidence and want to engage in these activities,

Rachelle (grower)

"ive applied to many people applying to share but not one has replied and i dont know why. i may only be 25 but i have my own gardening business and from the point of walking i was given a trowel and i used to follow my grandad round. i've already converted part of my garden to veg and i have an allotment but i'd like someware bigger to grow more for the freezer and possibly some livestock."

The confidence presented above acts as a clear indication of Rachelle's attitude and behavioral intentions of performing. This perceived internal control over her personal resources presents a higher likelihood that she will follow with her intentions and act upon it. The relationship between the external and internal controls that work together to determine one's PBC, relay off one another. Thus if someone has strong internal control of their behavior, regardless of the external influences that may detract a user from it, they would still likely go forward with the consumption activity. Similarly, external influences can help determine one's own internal PBC and enhance their perception of what skills they can offer if external factors are not strongly inhibiting such behavior.

5.4 Collaborative consumption - in between

This final section of the analysis chapter is an attempt to group the determining antecedents of collaborative consumers intentions that can be applied for both the market of redistribution and social collaboration, and which could indicate whether a conspicuous collaborative lifestyle has emerged. We will discuss the commonalities within the two markets through the use of previously described functional and non-functional motives for participation, trust, earlier experiences, perceived behavioral control and subjective norm, using the same structure as before to help the reader follow our reasoning; at the end presenting the relationship to, and how this can be viewed as a lifestyle. In Appendix V we will present the conceptual framework in relation with a short summary of the five determining antecedents of consumption intentions.

5.4.1 Motivation

As the motivational factors underlying both redistribution and social collaboration in online communities have been uncovered, this next part will propose their similarities using the same structure.

I have time, I have space, I have excess

The nature of a redistribution market and one of social collaboration, suggests that motivation to participate is affected by a number factors relating to time, space and location. In one way or the other, these factors are concerned with having too much or too little of the resource, thus making participants eager to somehow try and find more effective ways of using these resources, or to try and get ahold of them for beneficial usage. Therefore, if one individual has excess space in her garden, and another wishes he had a garden to grow in, there is an ability for these individuals to collaborate and make use of their skills, time and space to use the otherwise redundant resources. The same motivational factors are also drivers for swapping goods between one another, and evidently this indicates that the participants put less emphasis on owning the good and more on actually using them, thus also transferring the burdens and costs of ownership from the individual to the supplier (Hirschl et al., 2003).

In addition, the two types of markets also face the same issue of how to make others aware of what they have to share, and as such, it is apparent that online communities play a crucial role as a tool to spread the word among others who share similar interests or concerns. Collaborative consumption communities therefore provide convenience for all parties involved.

Give something, get something

Convenience is part of the more functional motives that drive consumers' choices, and its most salient companion is price (Alba et al., 1997). 'Price' is usually presented in monetary terms and has therefore been found hard to apply to collaborative consumption without modification. There does exist markets within both redistribution and social collaboration that actually have prices attached to products and services, but there are also marketplaces that provide solutions outside of our usual price system, thus making the notion of perceived value more important. Yet, our findings show that whether you pay or swap for resources, it is motivated by the fact that collaborative consumption can save money for the participants. It is also interesting that participants of these markets seldom view the act as altruistic, and rather believe that they always get something back, and as such compensation is an important factor although not necessarily in monetary terms.

Educate yourself

Yet another motivator that has been found important for both markets reflect more personal motives that is derived from the participant's will to find, assess, and learn more about their interests. The online communities provides a service that the members can use to share much more than just problems and bad experiences. Instead they also share news, ideas and other casual topics that in different ways relate to the community and their interests. Therefore, these communities can be viewed as information hubs that makes otherwise unattainable information accessible for people all over the world, whether they themselves are active or not is in this case unimportant.

We exist, therefore I am

However, to create information that can be of benefit for all, some must socialize and share their knowledge as well as their resources, and as such an essential part of collaborative consumption is the social dimension of these online communities. This is found true for both the redistribution markets and social collaboration markets, as members of these collaborative online activities commonly uplift the community itself as being the reason for why they keep coming back, irrespective of whether it is because they are very helpful or just nice to talk with. They find friendship through their discussions and motivate each other to continue using the services, thus forming long term incentives for participation.

5.4.2 Trust

Relationships that motivates participation in collaborative consumption is founded on the trust that is bestowed upon the members. Trust is regarded important for online shopping overall but it is of even greater concern within these peer-to-peer markets as consumers often deal with different individuals that they most often never have met. However, the complexity of this determinant suggests that trust is

integrated with many other different antecedents. It is therefore the trust relating to the community and Internet as a whole, along with initial evaluation of possible traders that proposes the importance of trustworthiness. Furthermore, having values of competence, benevolence, and integrity allows the important level of trust between a trustor and a trustee to be formed, helping to set the stage for future exchanges.

Both participants from the focus group and discussions in the studied communities suggest that rating and recommendations are important for trust to be built in the communities, and for that reason there is an apparent need for a rating system that helps to evaluate other members. Combining the two indicates that what is important is actually reputation, thus in reputation they trust.

For rating systems to work, participants from the focus group argued for transparency so that everyone knows what the rating actually entails. They argued that they judge individuals based on their online profile and their experience on the website or consumption activity to provide a better idea for which trust can be formed. This trust in reputation and community is fundamental as it is through these that connections are made and trades are sealed.

5.4.3 Earlier experiences

Following trust, we have explored the importance of earlier experiences for the collaborative markets. It has been argued that the users are often afraid to initiate the first contact with a community if no friends or trusted websites have recommended it beforehand, but as soon as the first connection has been made the confirmation needed from friends decreases and previous experiences gain more importance. Yet the most interesting finding is that participants of collaborative consumption seem to be very forgiving and often anticipate that it is not going to be perfect every time. At an overview this is related to the fact that users of these markets are receptive of trying new things and are open to meet new people, a notion that is further induced as a result of feeling disconnected from the society and that they therefore want to engage with other likeminded people.

5.4.4 Perceived behavioral control

Even though a prospective participant might have the motivation and trust needed to engage in collaborative consumption, it is also important that he or she feels a sense of control in the situations he or she will face. The community can, on their behalf, try and make the website as simple as possible to understand for that initial control to be granted; however it is the social nature of the consumption activity that proposes most difficulties. It is never as simple as click-and-buy within swapping and social collaboration because both parties need to be confident enough to agree to the transaction. Thus swaplifeters and leechers, non-responsive participants, and other inconveniences can make people feel a lack of control. To counter these negative feelings participants work together to help out with site related problems, as well as

try to solve problems that could hinder the realization of the consumption activity for individuals. As such, it is the communities that enforce a sense of perceived behavioral control through collaboration, thus forming communal control.

5.4.5 Subjective norm

As collaborative consumption activities require at minimal, interaction through the Internet, and at times offline human interaction, to fulfill social collaborative activities, subjective norms influences an individual's consumption intentions. Participants in collaborative consumption activities tend to be receptive of social pressure as they often turn to these communities for opinions and recommendations. Word-of-mouth spread through recommendations and opinions from friends, as well as ratings on websites placed by strangers, has an affect on the consumer's decision due to the basic nature that we tend to place trust on majority decisions. It is with these recommendations of others in which we form our judgement of whether or not an activity is worthwhile doing, or a product is worth attaining. As such subjective norms bridges back to reputation as a major reason for participation.

5.4.6 Lifestyle

The emerging commonalities of those participating in redistribution markets and social collaboration markets to attain goods and services reflect why they feel encouraged to engage in collaborative consumption. The act of consumption is a social activity (Kucukemiroglu, 1999), and as found in this study, not only the outcome of the consumption is a mean to interact but also the process and the time in between consumption activities. As proposed by Holt (1997), consumption practices reflect a person's taste structure, and those of similar taste have a tendency to group together and form similar lifestyle patterns. If this is true, consumers of collaborative consumption practices indeed do share lifestyle patterns that can be illustrated through the elements of lifestyle segmentation: how consumers spend their time, what they are interested in, how much they value their immediate surroundings, and how they view themselves and the social and symbolic reality (Kucukemiroglu, 1999). Firstly, members tend to spend a lot of time in their communities to either search for opportunities, intrigue their minds, or simply socialize for fun. Secondly, they have shared interest that makes the community an important part of their immediate surrounding, either because they want to share something of theirs, swap or talk about the latest book they read. Thirdly, they are trusting of people and want to help those in need through sharing bad experiences and giving tips for the future, which shows that they view each other as equals. They also show similarities concerning how they create meaning in what they do, for example, most people think it is good that resources are being better used but they still see the activity as a means to get what's needed rather than doing it by altruistic belief.

These patterns imply a collective lifestyle built on similarities in intentions; relying on reputational trust to uphold norms and a feeling of security, it is evident that they have formed a social collaborative lifestyle.

6 Conclusion

The analysis of the determining antecedents of consumers' intentions have indicated that the reasons for engaging in collaborative consumption are many. First of all, customers perceive usage as being much more important than ownership and find benefits deriving from both personal and monetary motives. Yet, it is the community feeling that makes their sharing hearts tick. The social dimension within these communities is therefore of uttermost importance and acts as the main driver that repeatedly attracts individuals, creating long term bonds. It is through these much invested relationships in both time and interests that ties users to these forums, helping them find their role in a social structure without organizational hierarchy. This is further appropriated through their need to feel in control of the situation and in their behavior; but instead of carrying the full weight of control by themselves, it is through the sense of communal control in which they feel comfortable.

With respect to a shared social need, it is evident that trust between practitioners is vital. They entrust their land, housing, money or any other good or service with each other, thus if one party is uncertain of whether they can trust the other or not, it is increasingly difficult to go through with the deal. This is especially of greater importance as an individual's trustworthiness is harder to decipher through the anonymity of the Internet. However, it is interesting to note that these users can be very forgiving, and would not want to blame others for someone else's mistake. As such, once they have had their first positive experience through their consumption activity, they tend to stick with a perspective on other participants as being inherently good.

Furthermore, the Internet's role has enabled these contacts to be formed, and as such, participants take it as an opportunity to discuss a multitude of topics that is of interest with one another; some dedicating an enormous amount of time and passion into these relationships. They listen to each other and rely very much on the recommendations and opinions of others, thus the participants' subjective norms are connected to trust and communal control. These two notions together create a system reliant on reputation.

Conclusively, these antecedents of consumers' intentions toward collaborative consumption create a set of characteristics that reveal a collective lifestyle where community and collaboration are the fundamental driving forces to co-create value with other likeminded individuals.

6.1 Discussion

What does this revelation of an emerging collaborative lifestyle actually entail? From this research, it is clear that those participating in the consumption activities of collaborative consumption are in it for the long run, but are others willing, or even interested in following? The vast research that have been conducted earlier within

product service systems and online auctioning sites indicates an interest from the world of academia, and as this study is a result of an increased usage of such services, it is clear that we are, to some extent, willing to turn the page and enter a new era of consumption.

Instead of focusing just on the act of sharing, perhaps the question should be focused on which goods we are willing to share. As of currently, the centre of exchange in the swapping communities have been focused on products with lesser monetary value. However, seeing that we are also willing to share land, space and time; and that product service systems have been known to enable car rentals and laundry services, the collaborative market then becomes much more complex as it is adaptive to different needs. These needs can be motivated through both utilitarian needs or recreational hedonic wants.

In our focus group, it was proposed that society today has brought us to the peak of individualism; encouraging independency without a need to interact with many others around us. Perhaps this is seen as an extreme view, but it could partially explain for why a strong social life within online communities are important to some as found through our research. It could be that those participating in collaborative consumption have come to realize that the communal feeling of giving and receiving brings much more to one's life, and finds relief through exchanges in these activities that yields a sharing sensation.

We may even want to ask ourselves if whether or not we are moving back to a time of commune, indicated not only by geographical scope which has been enhanced with the invention of the Internet, but by shared interests, needs, and wants. If this is the direction we are heading towards, then the issue of trust is at large. As indicated by our research, participants of collaborative consumption are very openminded and trusting of individuals, as well as growing up in a generation that is also very trusting of the Internet; thus perhaps this trust acts as the final steps in bringing us closer to an overall communal life.

Referring back to the introduction it is possible to argue that collaborative consumption is bringing us back to the type of trades that took place in the 1800s, yet with the big differentiating factor of technology. On the other hand it does not necessarily mean that we are moving away from mass-consumption. Rather it is a move away from mass production and the strain it puts on our resources. Through sharing what we have, new or old, we can still have the things we want and need, but with less importance on ownership and thus production. For it to work, reputation is a salient necessity and as of now, it is in other consumers they trust, but what does that entail for the companies that our economic system relies on?

In discussing the determinant factors of intentions toward collaborative consumption, we suppose the real question at hand is why these determinant factors are so important (e.g. why is it important to create social bonds with people online around a collaborative consumption activity?) However, the answer to this question lies only in the eyes of a customer's perspective.

6.3 Market disruption

Having taken the consumer's perspective in our study, we would now like to discuss the phenomenon from a company's perspective. It is our belief that collaborative consumption is more than just a reaction to overproduction and environmental concerns, implied through our research as it was only briefly mentioned in the online discussions. Within our focus group, it was seen as a positive factor but was not the main reason for participating; thus bringing us to the most important benefit: usage. Product service systems is a prime example of how companies are able to make a living within the realms of collaborative consumption, and so do sites like eBay.com; but we believe that this can be the case for companies in other markets as well. In many ways this is about changing the focus of consumption from product to services, yet as our research concludes, there are other important factors that drives the consumers motivation into collaboration.

The Internet is an easily accessible tool; and through building on ideas found in this research, we argue that companies can create their own communities designed to make the most out of peer collaboration. Through adding further knowledge of socio-psychological behavior together with marketing efforts and the power of Internet, it could bring forth new innovations that could become the business models of tomorrow. In broad terms, collaborative consumption activities have already started to disrupt marketplaces. The question now is whether or not it will go forward, and if companies today will join in or leave it to the new and more flexible companies to take part.

6.4 Future research

Building on the definitions of Botsman and Rogers (2010), we have elaborated on a new and exciting category of consumption that has the potential to disrupt the market as we know through a changed mindset from individual to collaborative, and from owning to using. In this thesis we have explored and provided a first insight into the intentions of consumers and proposed a shared collaborative lifestyle. Yet this is only the first step to understanding collaborative consumption.

At the time being, the extent of research within the field of collaborative consumption is at best minimal, but future research could find useful ideas to elaborate on in online peer-to-peer networking, product service systems, online auctioning and customer behavior theories to name a few. In our methodology we discussed the limitations of this study and argued that one missing part is the ability to generalize our findings over a larger population, and to move it offline. This would be an important contribution for the future, not only to grasp the phenomenon theoretically, but also to help companies take advantage of the possibilities. Furthermore it would be interesting to examine collaborative consumption in relationship to our economic system, arguing whether or not a reputation-based economy could in fact be better suited to handle the strain on our resources as opposed to a monetary-based economy.

One fundamentally important question to ask is how to reverse our culturally embedded and deeply engrained individualism for the sake of a new collaborative era. Would it be a necessity for collaborative consumption to flourish? Or is self-interest and collaborative consumption consistent with each other? Our study touches on the notion with regard to the need of compensation and how giving also entails receiving, though not necessarily in monetary terms. However, efforts to provide empirical evidence and to further elaborate on the idea would require an incorporation of more culturally embedded theories that could evaluate individualism and collectivism, or if collaboration is a mix of them both – fulfilling self-interests whilst also serving the community.

Last but not least, it would also be interesting to see how far this collaboration can stretch, is private ownership an obsolete concept that soon has lost its purpose, and what could this mean for our greater economic system and the political pillars it stands on?

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www.travelpod.com
[www.wikipedia](http://www.wikipedia.com)
www.wiseclerk.com
www.zopa.com

Appendices

Appendix I. Netnographic observation

Snapshot of data collection from online communities

	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Site	Date and time	Member	Nb. of posts	Thread	Post
1	swap.com	Apr. 24, 2011, 11:50 AM	mysteecg	852 trades	Does swap ever monitor accounts????	I have been wondering if swap ever monitors accounts and actually suspends any for continu
2	swap.com	Apr. 24, 2011, 2:40 PM	Myke007	85 trades	Does swap ever monitor accounts????	f someone has a high number of neutrals and still getting trades, that's the swap community's
3	swap.com	Apr. 24, 2011, 3:41 PM	paulnaff	433 trades	Does swap ever monitor accounts????	There is no incentive for the site to suspend traders who are completing trades. A lower trade
4	swap.com	Apr. 24, 2011, 7:38 PM	mysteecg	852 trades	Does swap ever monitor accounts????	t doesn't only affect the person that is receiving the item, but all parties in a 3 way trade. Mos
5	swap.com	Apr. 24, 2011, 8:45 PM	paulnaff	433 trades	Does swap ever monitor accounts????	Of course you can express your opinion. I merely clarified why things are the way they are in
6	swap.com	Apr. 25, 2011, 4:58 PM	alenya	507 trades	Does swap ever monitor accounts????	Anyone who would take a chance trading with someone like you described Myst...well...they
7	swap.com	Apr. 25, 2011, 5:51 PM	ohrvankellev	15 trades	Does swap ever monitor accounts????	There are automatic triggers in place that monitor all INR claims, rejected trades and trade re
8	swap.com	Mar. 30, 2011, 5:52 PM	parrishrayn01	147 trades	fair trading habits?	message to me...from trader that I left neutral feedback
9	swap.com	Mar. 30, 2011, 6:14 PM	alenya	507 trades	fair trading habits?	Good for you!
10	swap.com	Mar. 30, 2011, 7:48 PM	DazeDMatt	195 trades	fair trading habits?	Shame on the OP
11	swap.com	Mar. 30, 2011, 8:18 PM	ullomrts	109 trades	fair trading habits?	matt, you had me running in circles. OP i take it means "other person"? kept seeing it as orig
12	swap.com	Mar. 30, 2011, 11:59 PM	alenya	507 trades	fair trading habits?	Me too!
13	swap.com	Mar. 31, 2011, 12:10 AM	twilightliver	138 trades	fair trading habits?	Rating traders
14	swap.com	Mar. 31, 2011, 3:32 PM	dafodil	65 trades	fair trading habits?	In your case it is fair since the trader took almost two weeks to mail it. Media mail can take 21+ days
15	swap.com	Apr. 22, 2011, 3:11 PM	ohrvankellev	15 trades	How big is your decreased carbon footprint	In the spirit of eco-friendly swapping and to help ring in Earth Day 2011 right we want to know how t
16	swap.com	Apr. 22, 2011, 3:15 PM	mysteecg	852 trades	How big is your decreased carbon footprint	I'll go first decreased carbon footprint by: 1,763 pounds
17	swap.com	Apr. 22, 2011, 3:17 PM	allicatstrut	891 trades	How big is your decreased carbon footprint	At time of posting
18	swap.com	Apr. 22, 2011, 3:20 PM	grannypants	1458 trades	How big is your decreased carbon footprint	carbon footprint
19	swap.com	Apr. 22, 2011, 3:35 PM	ohrvankellev	15 trades	How big is your decreased carbon footprint	While I'm not sure about the calculations I did want to share some other statistics. Collectively our s
20	swap.com	Apr. 23, 2011, 8:42 PM	macknmoses	231 trades	How big is your decreased carbon footprint	How big is your decreased carbon footprint?
21	swap.com	Feb. 14, 2011, 6:56 AM	tamajinn	58 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	I would like to know if SafeSwap goes into effect automatically or if it must be initiated by the receiv
22	swap.com	Feb. 14, 2011, 7:29 AM	Driscoll	272 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	To the best of my knowledge, an INR has to be initiated by a swapper in order for the SwapSafe pro
23	swap.com	Feb. 14, 2011, 8:30 AM	ullomrts	110 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	how would swap.com ever know if the book was not received? the other trader would have to tell th
24	swap.com	Feb. 14, 2011, 8:44 AM	zeke68	189 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	You have 90 days to file an INR
25	swap.com	Feb. 14, 2011, 12:31 PM	fredm	31 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	You asked if SafeSwap goes into effect automatically or if it must be initiated by the receiver. The ar
26	swap.com	Feb. 14, 2011, 2:47 PM	tamajinn	58 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	Thank you for the feedback. I use Swap.com because I'm cheap, and since I never had a problem w
27	swap.com	Feb. 14, 2011, 3:06 PM	ullomrts	110 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	when it comes to traders, no news is good news. trust me, if they thought they were getting t
28	swap.com	Feb. 14, 2011, 6:41 PM	grannypants	1458 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	On the contrary, I was just notified today that 2 givds I mailed 7 weeks ago have not been received b
29	swap.com	Feb. 16, 2011, 7:56 AM	tamajinn	58 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	Wow Grannypants , seven weeks??? That is an outrageous amount of time to wait to complain abou
30	swap.com	Feb. 17, 2011, 2:30 AM	grannypants	1458 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	I too keep all my dated USPS receipts showing the weight, city, state and zip code each item was s
31	swap.com	Feb. 17, 2011, 8:47 AM	tamajinn	58 trades	SafeSwap Question -- Seriously!	I never thought about that... if anyone is a habitual liar, they may never get caught. Let's hope that t!

Appendix II. Focus group participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Nationality
A	M	27	German
B	M	27	Australian
C	M	26	German
D	M	27	German
E	M	24	Italian
F	F	26	Swedish

Appendix III. Focus group guide

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

The group that has been gathered are all users of collaborative consumption. To make the discussion more dynamic we have chosen users with varying experience.

While discussing collaborative consumption we will make it clear that they do not need to address all of the markets involved, rather to elaborate on their own thoughts regarding whatever markets they have experienced.

Opening Questions:

Let the participants familiarize themselves with one another to ease the atmosphere

Introduction Question

1. When you think about collaborative consumption, what is the first thing that comes to mind?

Transitional Questions

2. What can you see as being the reasons for engaging/participating in collaborative consumption?
3. How has your experience of collaborative consumption lived/not lived up to your expectations?
4. How, if at all, has collaborative consumption affected you?

Key Questions

5. What are your feelings towards borrowing/renting products or services?
6. What are your feelings towards swapping/bartering?
7. What are your feelings towards lending your skills? your space? your money?
8. What is important to you when choosing a website to find others willing to engage in collaborative consumption?
9. What could, if at all, persuade you to use a website in which you have never heard of?
 - How do you go about finding relevant information regarding these websites?
 - What would deter you away from using a specific website? (layout of site, security measurements)
 - How can a specific website gain your trust?
10. What do you see as your reason for participating/not participating in communities and discussion forums relating to collaborative consumption?
 - If so, how active are you? for what reasons?

Final Questions

11. What do you think would be the main driver to encourage other people to engage in CC markets/Co-lifestyle?
12. Is there anything else you would like to discuss or have questions about?

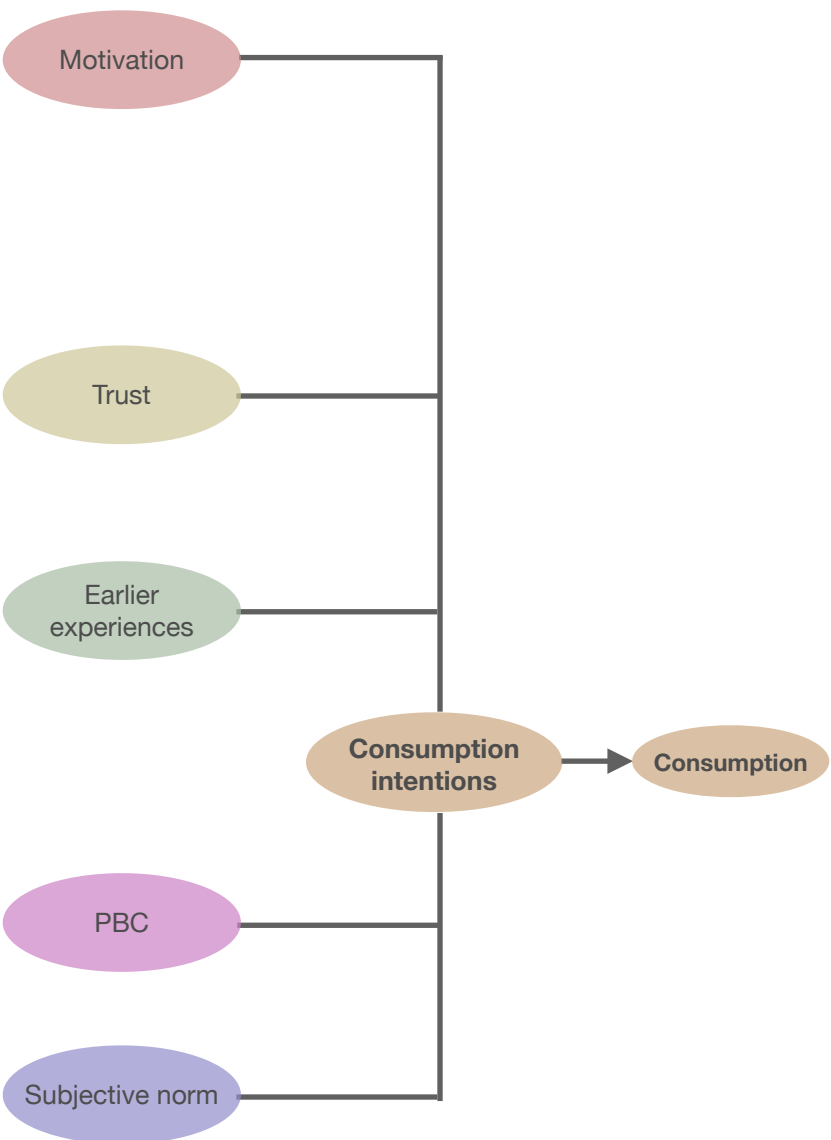
Appendix IV. Company reference

Reference list of companies and communities that have been used in our study.

Company References	
Analyzed	
<i>Redistribution Market</i>	
Swap	www.swap.com
Goozex	www.goozex.com
Rehash	www.rehash.com
Read It Swap It	www.readitswapit.co.uk
Swap It Shop Forum	www.swapitshopforum.net
Swap Style	www.swapstyle.com
<i>Social Collaboration</i>	
Landshare	www.landshare.net
Zopa	www.zopa.com
Travelpod	www.travelpod.com
Wiseclerk	www.wiseclerk.com
Mentioned	
<i>Redistribution Market</i>	
eBay	www.ebay.com
Freecycle	www.freecycle.org
Craigslist	www.craigslist.com
<i>Social Collaboration</i>	
Neighborrow	groups.neighborrow.com
Desktime	www.desktime.com
TaskRabbit	www.taskrabbit.com
Neighborhood Fruit	neighborhoodfruit.com
Park at My House	www.parkatmyhouse.com
Couchsurfing	www.couchsurfing.org

Appendix V. Modified framework

An adopted and modified version of Dennis et al's (2010) conceptual framework that showcases what we found to be the determining antecedents of consumption intentions.



Usage instead of owning, online communities are effective tools that provides convenient sharing opportunities.

Participants are interested in getting something back even if it most often is personal in nature rather than measured in monetary terms, yet they do see it as a chance to save money. The act should therefore be seen as an alternative solution to conventional business models.

Enables people from vastly different places to create relationships with others through sharing information and having casual discussions about their interests.

They feel a strong connection with others in the community and therefore find reason for coming back. The process is argued to be very social.

Participants find trust as an essential factor to assess before any engagement in collaborative consumption activities. Due to the high level of risk in basing one's trustworthiness from interacting and transacting through the Internet, individuals want rating systems, recommendations and online profiles as a basis to form their judgement. Thus they trust in reputation.

Participants often rely on earlier experiences but that does not entail that the previous experiences always have to be good. It is therefore argued that the participants are more forgiving because the consumption activity is based on a peer-to-peer community, and as such they understand that problems can occur that is hard to control for the other party.

Participants are afraid of losing control and therefore work together to try and solve and inform each other about problems that occur. Thus collaborative markets induce PBC through communal control.

Participants' behavior and intentions are affected by others through recommendations and opinions spread through word-of-mouth because they are receptive of social pressure. The reputable information they attain helps participants learn more about interests within collaborative consumption.