# Article information:

Understanding Markets as Online Public Places: Insights from Consumers with Visual Impairments - Carol Kaufman-Scarborough, Terry L. Childers, 2009  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1509/jppm.28.1.16>

# Article summary:

1. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates accessibility in physical stores, but commercial websites are not considered public places and do not fall under its jurisdiction.

2. People with visual impairments face constraints when interacting with online marketplaces, and there is a need for standards for website accessibility to create a level playing field.

3. Online shopping provides independence and enjoyment for shoppers with visual impairments, but poor website design can discriminate against them, highlighting the importance of incorporating accessibility guidelines into commercial websites.

# Article rating:

Appears moderately imbalanced: The article provides some useful information, but is missing several important points or pieces of evidence that would be required to present the discussed topics in a balanced and reliable way. You are encouraged to seek a more balanced perspective on the presented issues by exploring the provided research topics and looking at different information sources.

# Article analysis:

The article "Understanding Markets as Online Public Places: Insights from Consumers with Visual Impairments" by Carol Kaufman-Scarborough and Terry L. Childers examines the experiences of consumers with visual impairments in online shopping and challenges the view that commercial websites are not considered public places under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The authors argue that if the web is a marketplace, it should provide experiences and facilitate interactions between buyers and sellers in an enjoyable way, similar to physical stores.

The article provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by people with visual impairments when shopping online. However, there are some potential biases in the article that need to be addressed. Firstly, the authors focus solely on people with visual impairments, which limits their findings to this specific group of consumers. Secondly, while they acknowledge that their findings cannot be generalized to all types of access issues or all people with disabilities, they do not explore other types of disabilities or access issues.

Additionally, the authors present a one-sided view of the legal debate surrounding whether commercial websites fall under ADA Title III's definition of “public accommodations.” While they mention court cases where judges ruled against including commercial websites under ADA Title III's definition of “public accommodations,” they do not explore counterarguments or provide evidence for why some courts have ruled in favor of including them.

Furthermore, while the authors argue that commercial websites should be accessible to all consumers, regardless of their disabilities, they do not address potential risks associated with making changes to website design or functionality. For example, making changes to accommodate people with visual impairments could potentially make websites less user-friendly for other consumers.

Overall, while this article provides valuable insights into the experiences of consumers with visual impairments when shopping online and highlights important issues related to accessibility on commercial websites, it would benefit from exploring other types of disabilities and access issues and presenting a more balanced view of the legal debate surrounding ADA Title III's definition of “public accommodations.”

# Topics for further research:

* Accessibility issues for people with other types of disabilities in online shopping
* Legal arguments for and against including commercial websites under ADA Title III's definition of public accommodations
* Risks associated with making changes to website design or functionality to accommodate people with disabilities
* Best practices for designing accessible commercial websites
* User experience design for people with disabilities in online shopping
* Technology solutions for improving accessibility on commercial websites

# Report location:

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