

CONSUMER PROTECTION IN CYBERSPACE: AN OVERVIEW

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***A**bstract—With the advancement in networking facilities in recent years, the cyber world has evolved tremendously. The cyber world has now become a huge platform for trade and commerce. As consumers are getting several advantages of competitive prices, various choices, easier delivery services etc., more and more consumers are shifting towards online transactions. In this scenario, reoccurring problems such as the product not being delivered or the product not confirming the actual description have become usual affairs making consumer protection in cyberspace an important concern.*

In this scenario, the e-Commerce and e-Business paradigms have prevailed all over the world, definitely changing the way of running businesses. The recent development of the Internet and the consolidation of several markets have forced companies to search for new ways of promotion through cyberspace. The said change, development and consolidation have witnessed the emergence of a new group of consumers known as e-consumers.

E-consumers are the types of consumers that are found in cyberspace, who use online portals for purchasing goods and services. With the significant growth of the online business, almost everyone has become an e-consumer to purchase whatever they want to with a matter of clicks.

However, consumers have a few concerns in the new electronic market space in relation to security, standards and services. The Internet has presented a set of new challenges for lawmakers

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and regulators in determining whether existing laws and regulations are sufficient or not in dealing with the online marketplace.

Coordinated efforts between governments, international and multinational organizations will be required to create an online marketplace in which consumers can have confidence in both their transactions and opportunities for redress. If we really want to seize the opportunities offered by the complex online world, industry experts and government must come up together and work in a cooperative spirit.

Keywords: E-Consumers; Consumer Protection; E-Commerce; E-Consumer Support; Consumer Problems.

I. INTRODUCTION

With the advancement in networking facilities in recent years, the cyber world has evolved tremendously. The cyber world has now become a huge platform for trade and commerce. As consumers are getting several advantages of competitive prices, various choices, easier delivery services etc., more and more consumers are shifting towards online transactions. In this scenario, the e-Commerce and e-Business paradigms have prevailed all over the world, definitely changing the way of running businesses. The said change has led to the emergence of a new group of consumers known as e-consumers. In the wake of this development, apart from issues like online identity theft, phishing, data privacy, salami attacks, etc., recurring issues like product delivery issues or products that don't match the actual description are becoming the new norm. Due to many flaws in our laws that address these issues, the buyer is frequently left without any recourse in such circumstances. As technology continues to evolve, it is imperative for consumers to stay informed and engaged in order to protect their interests and rights in cyberspace.

II. E-CONSUMERS

The Internet has become an integral part of everyday life. In recent years the e-Commerce and e-Business paradigms have prevailed all over the world, definitely changing the way of running businesses. The development of the Internet and the consolidation of several markets in recent years have forced companies to search for ways of promotion through cyberspace. The said

change, development and consolidation have witnessed the emergence of a new group of consumers known as e-consumers.

E-consumers are the types of consumers that are found in cyberspace, who use online portals for purchasing goods and services. With the significant growth of the online business, almost everyone has become an e-consumer to purchase whatever they want to with a matter of clicks.

The way we shop now is vastly different from how we did twenty or so years ago. The futuristic aspects of shopping today can be viewed as the foundation for where the future of shopping is headed.

In order to understand the behaviour of e-consumer, the following comparison has been drawn between offline shopping and online shopping:

Table1: Comparison between offline shopping and online shopping

Feature	Offline Shopping	Online Shopping
Number of choices	There are limited numbers of choices when it comes to offline shopping. The numbers of varieties are limited.	The kind of variety that a customer gets online is hard to match any product purchased offline.
Time Requirement	It takes a lot of time to go shopping at a store. Distance from home or workplace to the store is time-consuming.	It is convenient to sit in one place and shop for the product of our choice without moving from place to place. It saves time.
Authenticity	Offline shopping is more authentic than online shopping. While shopping we can look and touch the merchandise and know what it's like.	While shopping online, we do not touch or feel the product in a physical sense. Hence there is always a risk involved in buying an online product.
Taste and preference	While shopping offline, we have the flexibility and the choice to try out outfits. Hence it caters more to the changing taste and preferences of the customers.	But while buying any product from a website we don't have this facility.
Pricing	Offline retailers must bear lots of expenses like store rent, bills etc. so the prices are higher.	Online retailers get an inherent advantage in pricing as they don't have to bear expenses like store rent, bills etc. They pass on their savings to their customers and generally offer a lower price than the offline market.
Instant gratification	Customer buying offline gets their products as soon as they pay for them.	But in online shopping customer have to wait for their product to get their product.

While online shopping is popular and the numbers have steadily continued to increase over time, this does not mean that traditional stores like shopping malls, groceries, and convenience stores are becoming obsolete. On the contrary, both mediums are still thriving.

Many stores like Target and Walmart exist both as a brick-and-mortar-storefronts as well as an online shop. Each of these places can be visited and shopped via their online websites or we can take a trip to the nearest store and walk around the actual establishment.¹

III. E-CONSUMER SUPPORT AND SERVICES

E-commerce has become a bustling business in India today. It is the cutting edge in all areas of business today². Much growth in the industry has been triggered by the young demographic profile, increasing internet usage and Smartphone penetration.

Sales and purchases online have become very popular with consumers. Online shoppers in India are expected to reach 220 million by 2025. Online retailers now deliver 15,000-20,000 pin codes out of nearly 100,000 pin codes in the country.³

Shopping online offers certain advantages due to which the online consumer base is expanding. The advantages include:

- i. Access to a truly global marketplace with the availability of sources from around the world.
- ii. Access to products, services, and information at any time of day or night.
- iii. The convenience and speed of shopping without leaving home.
- iv. Easier price comparisons and often discounted prices for goods purchased directly online.
- v. An interactive opportunity to learn more about products and how to use them.

Most online shopping outlets try to make the electronic shopping experience as familiar and easy for consumers as possible. Physical goods such as stationary, clothing, and household products are often described with detailed product information, pricing and size information, and are represented with photographs of the product. When ready to make a purchase, the customer has only to decide whether to complete the transaction online or not. To purchase online, a customer selects the product, enters basic information like name,

¹ *Retail v. E-Commerce: The Future of Shopping*, PRISYNC (2018), <https://prisync.com/blog/future-retail-vs-ecommerce/> (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

² Documento_completo.pdf-PDFA.pdf, http://sedici.unlp.edu.ar/bitstream/handle/10915/67476/Documento_completo.pdf-PDFA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

³ INDIAN E-COMMERCE INDUSTRY ANALYSIS IBEF, INDIA BRAND EQUITY FOUNDATION, <https://www.ibef.org/industry/ecommerce-presentation> (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

address and payment details, presses the enter key on the computer, and the transaction is completed.⁴

The advantage of collecting product information and making comparisons between the different product offerings from different providers is a key aspect of the online shopping experience. To promote such an experience, there are dedicated sites like Mysimon.com and DealPilot.com which enable buyers to compare products, prices and availability before making any kind of decision.

There are auction sites like eBay which provide a platform for buyers to rank sellers on the basis of their business dealings. Bad reviews against a particular seller would mean no further business dealings with that seller.

Customers today demand more. The kind of support and service which a consumer gets actually determines the reputation of the Company. In order to increase trust in their brand and bolster customer satisfaction, Online companies deliver consumer service and support through different avenues like E-mail support, Newsgroups, chat rooms, message boards, blogs, FAQs, consumer service information, Feedback forms and Help desk support.

IV. CAVEAT EMPTOR

Caveat emptor is a Latin term that means “let the buyer beware.”⁵ This term means that the buyer assumes the risk that a product may fail to meet expectations or have defects. In other words, the principle of caveat emptor serves as a warning that consumers have no recourse with the seller if the product does not meet their expectations. In the digital medium, it is generally expected from the consumer to read the privacy policy and terms of service conditions posted on the service provider’s website as such policy statements constitute online contracts between the consumer and the service provider.

V. PRIVACY POLICY

A Privacy Policy is a legal agreement that explains what kinds of personal information we gather from website visitors, how we use this information, and how we keep it safe.

Examples of personal information might include⁶:

- i. First and last names

⁴ <https://library.unt.edu/gpo/oca/cb12.htm> (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

⁵ <https://corporatelinefinanceinstitute.com/resources/risk-management/caveat-emptor-buyer-beware/> (last visited on Apr. 16, 2023).

⁶ *Privacy Policies are Legally Required*, PRIVACY POLICIES, <https://www.privacypolicies.com/blog/privacy-policies-legally-required/> (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

- ii. Date of birth
- iii. Physical addresses
- iv. Email addresses
- v. Billing and shipping addresses
- vi. Phone numbers
- vii. Bank details
- viii. Social Security numbers
- ix. Details of physical appearance (height, weight, hair color)
- x. Any other information stored online that may identify an individual

The content of Privacy Policies varies from one business to another. How a website collects and manages information, and how it interacts with third parties is unique to every company. Perhaps the most important reason why we need a Privacy Policy is because it is required by law. There are a number of countries which have data privacy laws. They require that personal information must be protected and processed with due care.

One of the finest examples of a far-reaching and influential law in this regard is the California Online Privacy Protection Act⁷ (CalOPPA) which dictates that if we collect any personal information from any California-based users, such as email addresses, GPS location, phone numbers, or mailing addresses, we are required to have a legal statement available for users to review that discloses the privacy practices of our business.

Not complying with such laws may invite huge fines and legal actions. Players like SnapChat, Delta Airlines⁸ and Google have suffered due to mistakes in their Privacy Policies.

Having a Privacy Policy automatically increases the goodwill of the company in the market. There are studies which have proven that if we are transparent with visitors, many more of them will do what we want them to do. This means it is much more likely that we would make more money with, rather without, a Privacy Policy.

VI. TERMS OF SERVICE

For any online business which sells goods or services, a strong Terms of service agreement is just as important as choosing the theme of a particular

⁷ <https://oag.ca.gov/privacy/ccpa> (last visited on Apr. 16, 2023).

⁸ <https://www.gadgets360.com/apps/news/delta-airlines-sued-over-mobile-app-privacy-policy-302323> (last visited on Apr. 16, 2023).

site. Terms of service agreement is a page on a website that clearly stipulates the rights and responsibilities of anyone using the site. It sets forth terms, conditions, requirements, and clauses relating to the use of a website or mobile app, e.g., copyright protection, account deactivation in cases of abuses, and various disclaimers. Doing so, it forms a contract between the site and the user.

Terms of service may not be required by law but considering the fact that a court can look at website terms to determine contractual terms between website owners and the customers, it's always a smart thing to include. These terms can limit our liability and protect our rights to the content contained in our website.

The terms of service usually outline information such as⁹:

- i. Who owns and operates the site?
- ii. Limited Liability for content made by both you and your visitors.
- iii. Copyright notice and trademark
- iv. What a site will provide customers, such as products and services.
- v. Expectations the site has regarding customer use of their site.
- vi. Potential consequences for misuse of the website
- vii. Use of third-party information
- viii. Set governing laws, which are laws in your company operating state/province and country

Such legal pages are necessary for protecting both website owners and their users. It can provide a great deal of protection if it is ever needed.

VII. PROBLEMS FACED BY CONSUMERS

Many features and conveniences make electronic commerce attractive to consumers. However, consumers also have several concerns about the electronic marketplace.

Some problems faced by consumers are as under¹⁰:

Confidence in the Source: The growth and appeal of the Internet have evolved as a result of the ease with which individuals and companies have been able to enter the electronic marketplace. However, because virtually

⁹ LYNTON, *The Importance of Your Website's Terms and Conditions*, <https://www.lyntonweb.com/inbound-marketing-blog/the-importance-of-your-websites-terms-and-conditions> (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

¹⁰ <https://library.unt.edu/gpo/oca/cb12.htm> (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

anyone can create an Internet site and offer products and services, consumers shopping online may find suppliers who are well-known, along with unfamiliar ones from countries around the world.

Consumers should only transact or reveal personal information to sources they feel comfortable exchanging information with. Consumers should also be aware that business practices may differ in different countries.

Security of Information: How safe is it to provide credit card information over the Internet? Will someone else be able to steal and use the credit card information provided? Is ordering through the Internet as safe as ordering by phone or mail?

Internet retailers, however, are using technology and standards for safeguarding sensitive information that consumers provide as part of an electronic transaction. Before completing online transactions, consumers should take time to become familiar with methods the retailer uses for protecting their information.

Privacy: Consumers are also concerned about who is going to see the information that is provided and about the use of the information once the transaction is completed. Will others have access to their personal information? Will lists of personal information be sold to providers of similar or related products? The privacy rights of individuals must be balanced with the benefits derived from the free flow of information. But, a certain amount of personal privacy must be assured to increase consumer confidence in the use of the system.

Customer Service Standards: What if a product is delivered inaccurately or doesn't arrive at all? What if the product is defective? What if you need more information about product use? Improved customer service is perhaps one of the biggest advantages for on-line shoppers. Manufacturers are able to provide more product information, and on-screen instructions often with visuals and sound to assist consumers. Inventories can be checked, shipments traced, and pricing errors corrected quickly and electronically. Making a purchase through the Internet should be no different from making a purchase over the counter. The same guarantees and warranties should apply.

Fraud in Cyberspace: Instances of fraud can be found in any marketplace. The Internet presents new challenges for lawmakers and regulators in determining whether existing laws and regulations are sufficient in the online marketplace. Consumers are vulnerable to online scams and fraud, such as phishing emails, fake websites, and fraudulent online transactions. Scammers can use various tactics to deceive consumers into providing personal information, money, or other sensitive data.

VIII. REMEDIES

E-commerce is now preferred in India for a variety of reasons that include affordability, range of products and services and convenience involved in the transaction. At the same time, there are concerns about the delivery of defective products or services, data privacy and identity theft. In this context, consumer protection issues have gained a considerable amount of attention. Remedies available to consumers are mentioned as under:

A. Legal Remedies

From time to time Government has made efforts for providing protection to consumers. In this regards legal provisions have been framed in the relevant law. Some legal remedies are as following:

The Information Technology Act, 2000: In India, the Information Technology Act, 2000 (IT Act) is the primary legislation governing e-commerce. The IT Act provides a legal framework for electronic transactions, electronic contracts, and other related issues. Some of the key provisions of the IT Act related to e-commerce include:

1. Legal recognition of electronic documents and digital signatures: The IT Act provides for the legal recognition of electronic documents and digital signatures, which allows for the creation of electronic contracts and agreements.
2. Provision for electronic contracts and agreements: The IT Act allows for the formation and enforcement of electronic contracts and agreements, provided that the parties have consented to the use of electronic means for communication and the terms of the contract are valid under Indian law.
3. Rules for electronic payments and settlements: The IT Act provides guidelines for electronic payments and settlements, which includes the use of digital signatures, electronic funds transfers, and other electronic payment methods.
4. Regulations for intermediaries, such as e-commerce platforms: The IT Act provides for the regulation of intermediaries, such as e-commerce platforms, which are responsible for facilitating electronic transactions between buyers and sellers.
5. Guidelines for the collection, storage, and use of personal data: The IT Act provides guidelines for the collection, storage, and use of personal data, which includes obtaining consent from the data subject, ensuring the security of the data, and providing remedies for data breaches.

Overall, the IT Act provides a comprehensive legal framework for e-commerce in India and provides certainty and clarity in the legal treatment of electronic transactions. It is important for e-commerce entities to comply with the provisions of the IT Act to avoid any legal liabilities.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019: The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was enacted to provide for better protection of the interests of consumers and for the purpose of making provision for the establishment of consumer protection councils and other authorities for the settlement of consumer disputes, etc. Although the said Act served the purpose to some extent it had certain constraints.

The emergence of global supply chains, the rise in international trade and the rapid development of e-commerce led to new delivery systems for goods and services, which provided new options and opportunities for consumers. Equally, this has rendered the consumer vulnerable to new forms of unfair trade and unethical business practices. Misleading advertisements, telemarketing, multi-level marketing, direct selling and e-commerce pose new challenges to consumer protection and require appropriate and swift executive interventions to prevent consumer detriment.

Therefore, it became inevitable to amend the Act to address the new challenges to consumer protection. The new Consumer Protection Act (CPA 2019) is aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of consumers in India, and it has provisions that specifically address e-commerce.

Under the CPA, e-commerce entities are defined as “any person who owns, operates, or manages digital or electronic facility or platform for electronic commerce.”¹¹ These entities are required to provide certain information to consumers, including the name and contact details of the seller, the price of the product or service, the payment and delivery options, and the return policy.

The CPA also mandates that e-commerce entities must not engage in unfair trade practices¹², such as falsely representing the quality or characteristics of a product, misleading consumers about the price, or refusing to take back or replace defective products. E-commerce entities are also required to provide a grievance redressal mechanism to consumers, including a toll-free number and email address.¹³

In addition, the CPA provides for the establishment of a Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), which has the power to investigate and take action against e-commerce entities that violate consumer rights. The CCPA

¹¹ R. 3(1)(b) Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020.

¹² R. 4(3) Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020.

¹³ R. 4(4) Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020.

can impose fines, order recalls of products, and even cancel the registration of e-commerce entities that engage in unfair trade practices.¹⁴

Overall, the CPA 2019 provides a comprehensive framework for protecting the rights of consumers in the e-commerce sector. E-commerce entities must comply with the provisions of the CPA, failing which they could face severe penalties and legal action. The 2019 Act also provides for the filing of Complaints before the District Forums electronically in accordance with the rules prescribed by the Government. Prima facie, the Consumer Protection Act, of 2019 appears to be much more consumer-friendly than the 1986 Act as it takes into consideration the current age of digitization.¹⁵

Indian Contract Act, 1872: There is no consumer without a contract. It is a contract which creates the rights and obligations for a consumer. We can define a consumer to be a person who enters into a contract to buy goods or avail services. The Indian Contract Act, 1872 contains important provisions relevant to consumer interests, though, in remedial aspects the scope of the Act is limited because of the privity of the contract. Hence, the third party cannot generally seek remedy under the Act which leads to the exclusion of many consumers from the purview of the Act. In spite of such limitations, the Act is important from the consumer perspective. The judicial approach in the context of consumer protection is reflected by the English cases, like *Carlill v. Carbolic Smoke Ball Co.*¹⁶ In this case, the plaintiff, relying on the advertisement about “Carbollic Smoke Ball” a preventive remedy against influenza, purchased a ‘smoke ball’ and used the same in accordance with the directions of the defendants.

But he still caught influenza and was held entitled to claim the “reward” offered by the company for any such happening. Applying the principle of a fundamental breach of contract, the courts have been protecting the weaker parties with unequal bargaining power, even superseding the exemption clauses. Non-contractual liabilities have also been given due place by courts. In *White v. John Warwick and Co. Ltd.*¹⁷, the plaintiff hired a cycle from the defendants under an agreement that “nothing in this agreement shall render the owners liable for any personal injury”. When the plaintiff was riding the cycle, its saddle tilted forward, and he was thrown on the ground and got injured. In an action by the plaintiff, the court held the defendants liable tortuously for negligence even if the contractual liability was excluded by the exemption clause.

¹⁴ S.10 Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

¹⁵ <https://www.scconline.com/blog/post/2020/12/24/consumer-protection-act-2019-a-primer/> (last visited Apr. 16, 2023).

¹⁶ (1893) 1 QB 256; EWCA Civ 1.

¹⁷ (1953) 1 WLR 1285;(1953) 2 All ER 1021.

Section 27 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872, declaring agreements in restraint of trade as void, also serves consumer interest by promoting competition and restricting monopolistic tendencies. Consumers can also claim the protection of their interests under sections 73 and 74 of the Act, dealing with compensation for loss or damage by breach of contract, or may have recourse to alternative remedies available under the Specific Relief Act, 1963.

B. TORTUOUS REMEDIES¹⁸

Despite various legislations related to consumer protection the common law remedies under the law of torts are still available to consumers in India. Under the law of torts, consumers are entitled to damages for loss caused by any defective, unfit or dangerous product, and the liability may arise whether the respondent is negligent or has defrauded the plaintiff or has committed a willful act. In cases of fraud, the tort of deceit enables a consumer to recover damages for fraud practised on him by the defendant.

This is particularly important in such a situation where an injured consumer of goods cannot claim damages under contract law even if they harm him if he is not the purchaser of the goods but some subsequent user. Such a user may be an employee or family member of the primary buyer, or someone else may inadvertently come into contact with the goods, such as a passer-by or a donee. Contractual remedies are not available in these cases because there is no privity of contract between the victim and the retailer or dealer. Nevertheless, tort remedies may be available against parties who owe such ultimate consumers a tortious liability. Such parties may include two or more of the manufacturer, supplier, importer, distributor or retailer.

The foundation of such a tortious remedy can be traced back to *Donoghue v. Stevenson*¹⁹ case, which laid down the principle that a manufacturer owes a duty of care to every possible consumer of his product and that such a consumer can bring an action against the manufacturer even if there is no contract between the two parties.

The plaintiff (consumer) here is entitled to damages for loss caused by any defective, unsuitable or hazardous product and this liability may arise from the following circumstances—where the defendant is negligent; where the defendant has defrauded the plaintiff; or where he has committed a willful act. In the case of fraud, the tort of deceit allows the defendant to recover damages for fraud that the defendant practices on him.

¹⁸ Diva Rai, *Consumer Protection and Tort : Overview and Analysis*, IPLEADERS (2019), <https://blog.ipleaders.in/consumer-protection-and-tort/> (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

¹⁹ 1932 AC 562; 1932 SC (HL) 31.

If the defendant is negligent, the tort of negligence would provide the consumer with a right to seek redress for the damage suffered as a result of the defective and unsafe product. In the case of service deficiency, this tort of negligence is also available.

C. Technical Remedies²⁰

The Internet has linked millions of computers and their users. This linkage has reduced the cost of communication in two significant ways. First, it has enabled people to convey large quantities of information to a widespread audience at a very nominal cost. Second, it has allowed people to perform tasks in communication that formerly required expensive labour.

Websites have become so interactive that they frequently ask users questions and then use the information to direct them in appropriate ways. In this process, users obtain individualized attention directed toward their needs.

It shows that technology can take over some of the functions that humans conventionally have provided in dispensing information. The following are certain examples of how technology intervention can reduce communication costs and alleviate consumer concerns.

Inadequate Information about Products: In deciding how consumers should use their money, they need to have adequate information about the products and services available in the market. Consumers cannot make wise decisions about whether to save or spend their income if they do not know their options. The technology of the Internet has provided a partial remedy for this major consumer protection problem by reducing the cost of making more information about products available to consumers.

Undisclosed Contractual Terms: When businesses sell expensive consumer goods they usually want to express their rights and duties in an elaborate standard form contract. This desire makes sense. Given the money at stake, businesses want to know exactly where they stand before any dispute arises about the quality of the goods. Consumers also are eager to know their legal rights when buying products. But the problem is that consumers often cannot learn of the contractual terms until they have purchased the item and opened the box. Technology has changed the scenario. Today firms that sell or do not sell products on the Internet have put their form contracts online disclosing contractual terms to consumers before they buy a product.

Surprise Contractual Terms: The law traditionally has placed the burden of surprise contractual terms on consumers. Courts have shown little sympathy

²⁰ Iva Rai, *Consumer Protection and Tort: Overview and Analysis*, IPLEADERS (2019), <https://blog.ipleaders.in/consumer-protection-and-tort/> (last visited on Jun. 6, 2022).

for a consumer who argued that he did not read or comprehend a term in a form contract. The Internet, however, may supply a technological solution. In certain instances, the Internet can eliminate surprise contractual terms by using computer resources to clarify to consumers the meaning of form contracts.

Uneven Leverage in Dispute Resolution: Consumers traditionally have had difficulty resolving legal disputes with businesses. In any dispute, economics greatly favours the seller because many businesses (unlike most consumers) employ in-house counsel. As a result, businesses face only marginal costs. In contrast, consumers generally cannot afford to litigate cases that involve small sums because hiring an attorney or pursuing the claim on their own would be too expensive. Here technology has provided assistance.

By posting their complaints on the Internet, consumers have publicized their grievances to thousands of other consumers. This lawful and simple method affords consumers increased leverage in resolving disputes.

IX. CONCLUSION

With the significant growth of the online business, almost everyone has become an e-consumer to purchase whatever they want to with a matter of clicks. In order to provide the best experience to their consumers, online companies are delivering service and support through different avenues, like E-mail support, Newsgroups, chat rooms, message boards, blogs, FAQs, Feedback forms etc., but the consumers often face issues like delivery of defective products or services, data privacy and identity theft.

This was the reason that necessary arrangements were made for resolving issues related to consumer protection in cyberspace. Still much must be done. If we really want to seize the opportunities offered by the complex online world, industry and government must come up together and work in a cooperative spirit.