



E-COMMERCE OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SUPPLIES: FAMILY PLANNING IN THE DIGITAL AGE



Reproductive Health
SUPPLIES COALITION



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Institute for
Reproductive Health
Georgetown University

WHAT WE'LL DISCUSS

RHSC Welcome

Approach & Partners

The Big Picture

The Stories

What's Next?



Reproductive Health **SUPPLIES COALITION**

RHSC

Membership organization with 364 partners committed to increasing access to a full range of affordable, quality reproductive health supplies in low- and middle-income countries.

Innovation Fund

The Coalition's small grants mechanism for financing innovative ideas to increase access to RH supplies.

New and Underused RH Technologies Caucus

“Underused”: Reproductive health technologies that are not routinely available in the public, private, or social marketing sectors, as well as those technologies not routinely procured by the major procurers.

NURHT PRIORITY PRODUCTS

Contraceptive Implants
CycleBeads®
Diaphragm
Emergency contraceptive pills
Female condom
Levonorgestrel Intrauterine System
Magnesium sulfate
Manual vacuum aspiration
Mifepristone and misoprostol for medical abortion
Misoprostol for maternal health
Oxytocin
Pregnancy tests for family planning
Progesterone vaginal ring



APPROACH & PARTNERS

4 countries. 3 new/underused methods. Expert partners.

INDIA



KENYA



U.S.A.



MEXICO



EMERGENCY
CONTRACEPTION



CYCLEBEADS



FEMALE CONDOMS



Rutgers

For sexual and
reproductive health
and rights


A global & local perspective.

WHY E-COMMERCE & RH SUPPLIES?

You can buy anything online, and people do.

DuneCraft Bring Learning to Life!

Home | Shop Online | Contact Us | Wholesale | Resources | Press Room



UnREAL Upchuck
Create Mouse and Starling Skeletons From Puke!

Kids and puke go hand in hand! This brand new box set combines the thrill of dissecting owl puke and rebuilding skeletons with the hypoallergenic and sanitary means that only modern manufacturing can provide. The sanitary and synthetic pellets will provide hours of fun. Complete kit comes with two kinds of pellets, bone sorting chart, dissection tray, and magnifier.

Actual Product Dimensions:
4.9" x 2" x 7.7"

Each Complete Kit Includes:

- Mouse Pellet
- Starling Pellet

Item # UU-0311

Owl Vomit?



10 count

UFO-02 Detector

By [Images SI](#)

★★★★☆ (41 customer reviews) | Like (19)

Price: **\$74.95**

Usually ships within 6 to 10 days.
Ships from and sold by [Images SI Inc.](#)

Ordering for Christmas? Based on the shipping schedule details.

Great Deals
Holiday Deals in Business, Industrial & Find great deals for your business or organization. [Shop now.](#)

Click for larger image and other views

Specifications for this item

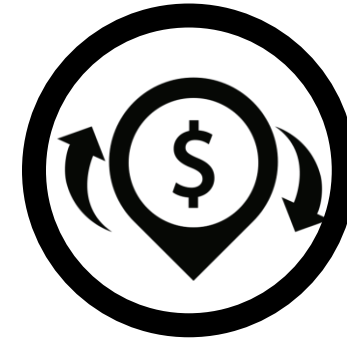
UFO Detector?

WHY E-COMMERCE & RH SUPPLIES?

You can buy anything online, and people do.



> **46%** of the world went online in 2015, many of them to shop.



In 2014, business-to-consumer online sales reached

~**\$1.5 trillion.**

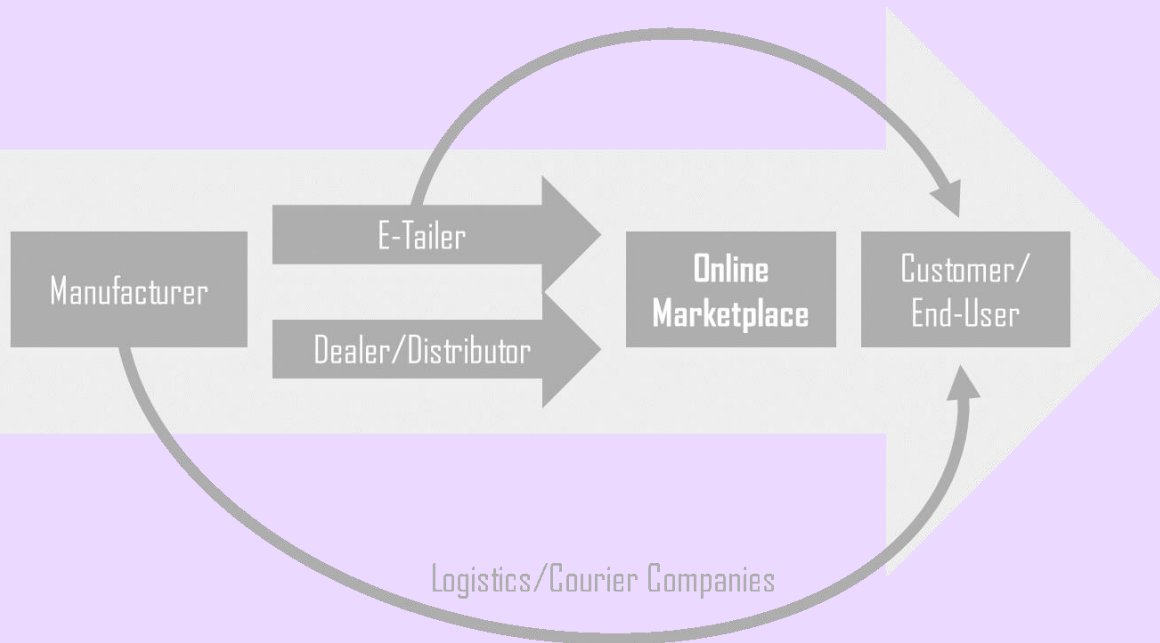
A trend this **BIG** impacts every market, including RH supplies and information.



THE BIG PICTURE

THE COUNTRIES

E-Commerce is here, but unevenly.

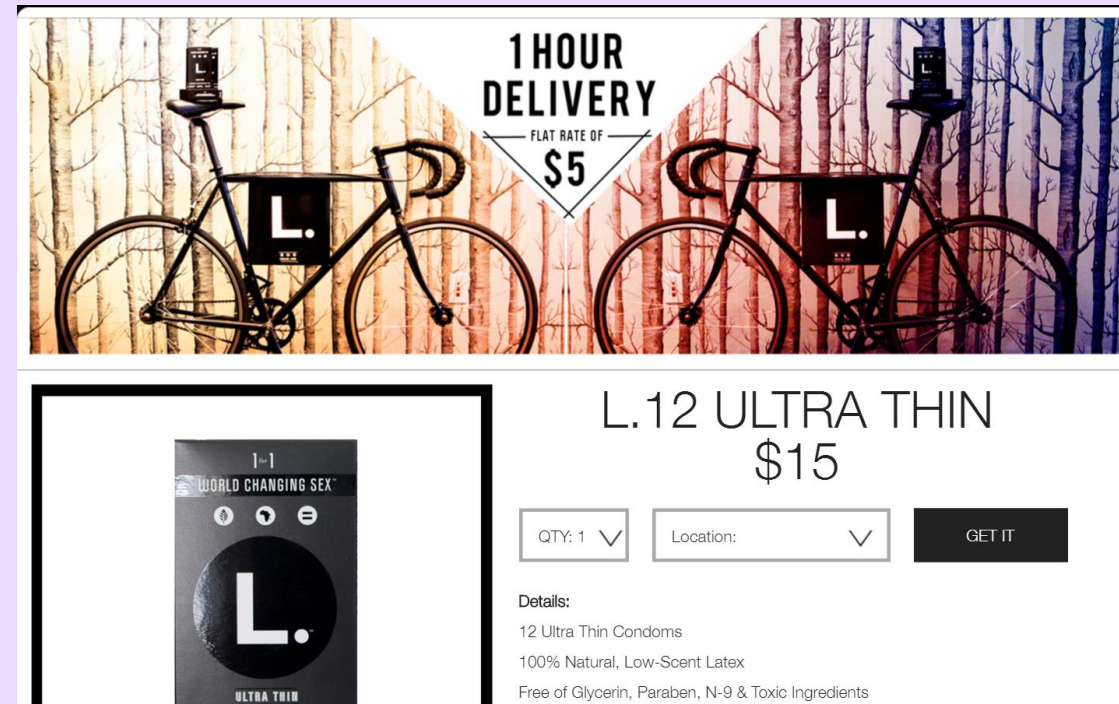


- ✓ Everywhere we looked, at least some RH supplies were available online.
- ✓ Availability of methods and brands varied greatly by country, from narrow (Kenya) to broad (India and the US).
- ✓ Factors that impact availability were bigger than the RH supplies market and not easily addressed.

THE METHODS

Different RH supplies means different experiences.

- ✓ **Male condoms** appear to be available online almost universally.
- ✓ **Methods face limitations** depending on their characteristics.
 - Hormonal methods limited by prescription requirements in some countries.
 - Underused methods limited by lack of awareness.
 - Some methods currently require the assistance of a health professional in most settings.
 - Information-based methods moving to digital platforms.



1 HOUR DELIVERY
FLAT RATE OF \$5

L.12 ULTRA THIN
\$15

QTY: 1 Location:

Details:
12 Ultra Thin Condoms
100% Natural, Low-Scent Latex
Free of Glycerin, Paraben, N-9 & Toxic Ingredients

1-1
WORLD CHANGING SEX
L.
ULTRA THIN



FINDINGS

- ✓ **Infrastructure** ties it all together.
- ✓ **Regulation** shapes markets.
- ✓ **Information provision** is an entry point.
- ✓ **Customer profiles and preferences** are paramount.
- ✓ **New and underused methods** face unique barriers.

INFRASTRUCTURE TIES IT ALL TOGETHER.

E-commerce needs support in the physical and digital world.
Everything must come together before a package reaches the customer!

PHYSICAL

Mailing addresses

Delivery services

Internet access

Electricity

Warehouses

Sellers

Imports or in-country manufacturing

DIGITAL

Payment systems

Search capabilities

Local websites

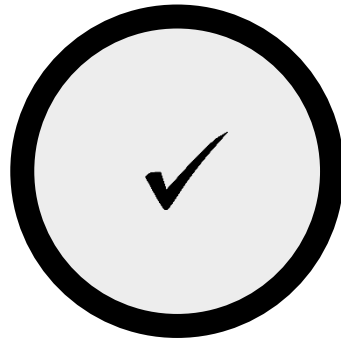
REGULATION SHAPES MARKETS.

What methods are available and to whom?



OVER-REGULATION

Sellers can't provide RH supplies online.



UNDER-REGULATION

Customers won't buy RH supplies online.



UNCLEAR REGULATION

No one will buy or sell, for fear of breaking the law.

INFORMATION PROVISION IS AN ENTRY POINT.

Through the internet, customers can learn about RH options.

PROS

Spreads awareness of less known methods

Gives information about side effects
or tutorials on how to use

Peer to peer sharing

CONS

Assessing the accuracy of information
online can be difficult

Not all questions are Google-able



CUSTOMER PROFILES/ PREFERENCES ARE PARAMOUNT.

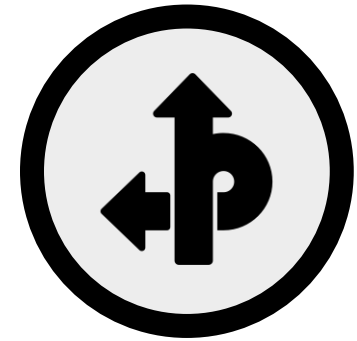
Customers are complex, motivated by:



CONVENIENCE




ANONYMITY



**INCREASED
METHOD CHOICE**

If they're worried that family will see a compromising package at the door or that delivery won't be in time to be useful, **they'll stay away.**

 **NEW & UNDERUSED METHODS
FACE UNIQUE BARRIERS.**

E-commerce may increase access to or awareness of these methods,
but it won't bring an immediate transformation.



THE STORIES

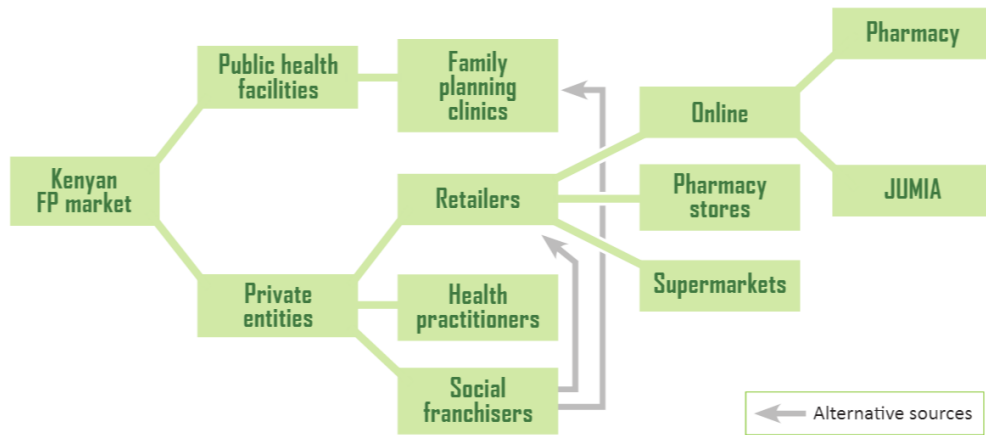


- ✓ Rapidly growing e-commerce market, particularly for health and personal care products
- ✓ Opportunities for new products and players in the RH & FP market
- ✓ Shifting delivery channels that expand customer access to RH & FP goods and services
- ✓ New infrastructure and demographic trends that expand customer access to information

UNITED STATES CASE STUDY


“American e-commerce already includes RH supplies and services but has the **potential to expand sales both to new customers and at greater volumes to existing customers.**”





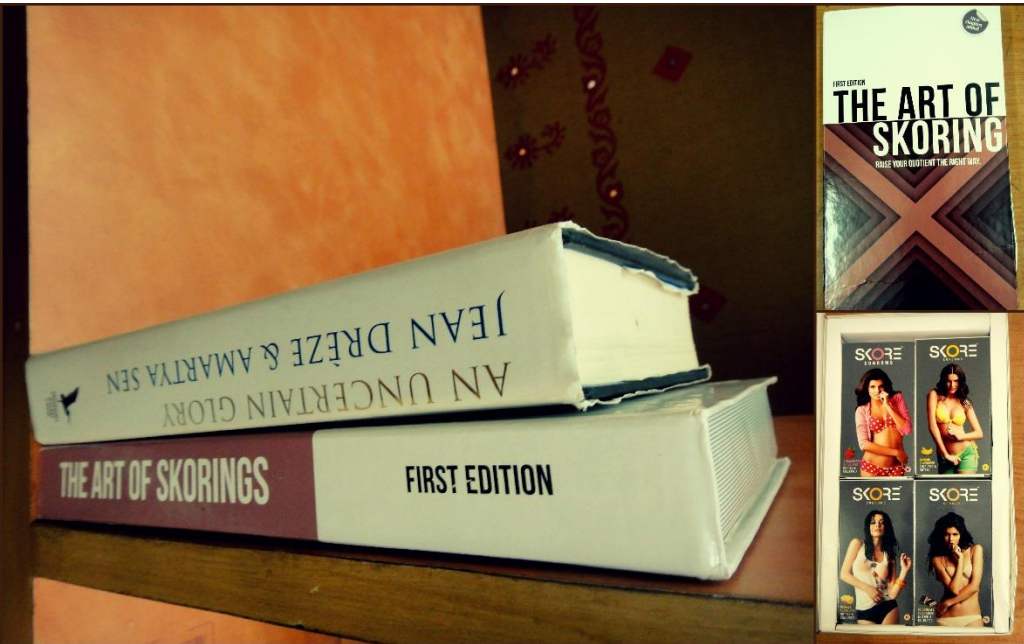
- ✓ E-commerce users are **young, busy, “techno-savvy” with disposable income**
- ✓ **Urbanites more likely to use the internet** and like internet-friendly short-term spacing methods
- ✓ **Infrastructure and trust in technologies** (include logistics, payment platforms and networks with existing providers) **still low but growing**
- ✓ **Growth could be driven by poor physical access to supplies** and online payment like M-PESA
- ✓ **Kenyans want e-commerce to provide information and counselling on FP** and other RH products when they use a new method

KENYA CASE STUDY



"Stores are too expensive because the supply is low and the cost per square foot is too high compared to the cost of goods. Access to retail in certain areas is bad. So **there is a huge case for consumables being brought online,** especially if they are all being sold in one area of the country."

PETER NDIANG'UI, COUNTRY MANAGER, DLX KENYA




- ✓ **Need:** Privacy! Many Indians are concerned about lack of privacy in delivery or billing.

Solutions: Packaging! E-commerce companies ship in discreet packaging.

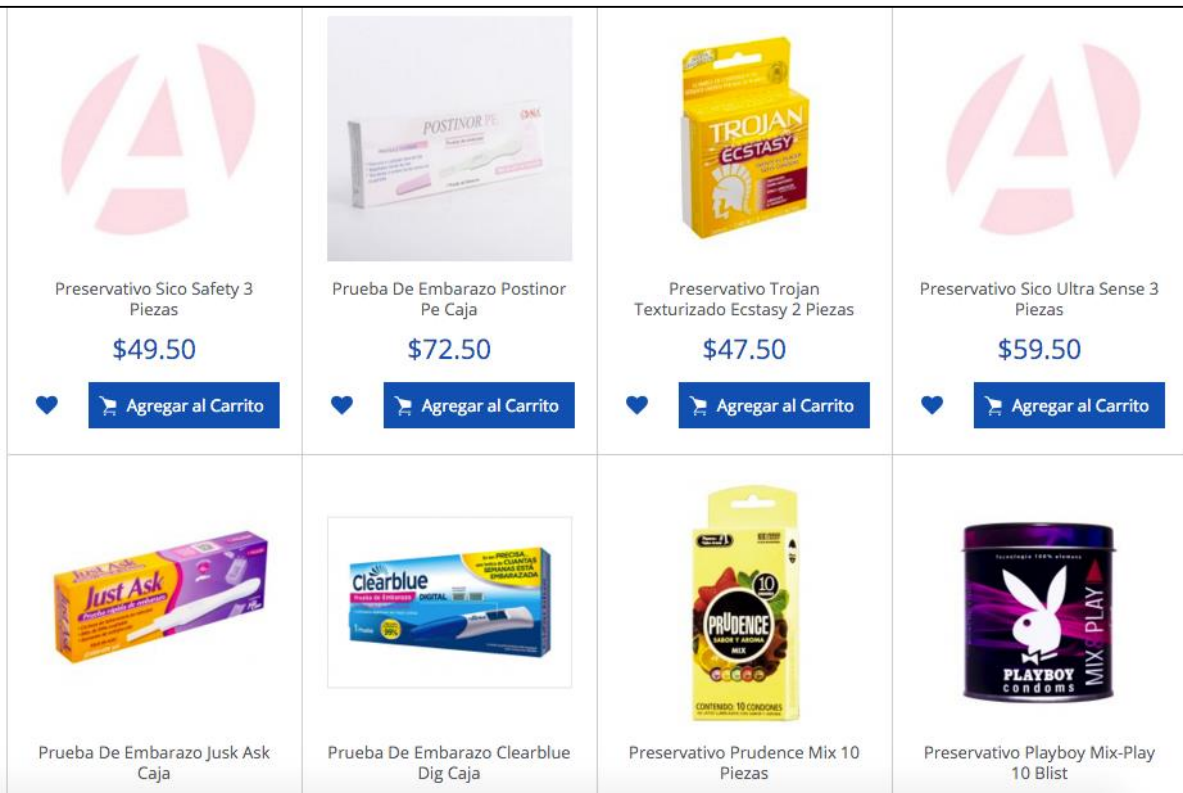
- ✓ **Need:** Alternative payment methods! Card and online payments are increasing, but many Indians still need other methods

Solutions: Cash on delivery! Products can be purchased online and paid for at the doorstep.

INDIA CASE STUDY

A group of four women are seated together, looking at their mobile devices. They are dressed in traditional Indian clothing, including sarees and blouses. The woman in the foreground is wearing a blue patterned blouse and a blue shawl. The woman next to her is wearing a red patterned blouse and a red shawl. The woman in the background is wearing a black blouse and a black shawl. The woman on the far left is wearing a green blouse and a green shawl. They are all smiling and appear to be engaged in a conversation about the products on their devices. The background features a white lattice pattern.


"I just like to see and feel the product before I buy."



✓ E-commerce is rapidly expanding. But persistent, **poorly-designed search protocols and inadequate access to product information online** prevents customers from finding RH supplies and information.

✓ **Access to the internet continues to grow** – and internet-enabled devices. Online purchases with [debit cards, credit cards, and PayPal] on the rise.

MEXICO CASE STUDY



"Until companies develop platforms with a more user-friendly search process and purchasing interface, and with more complete information on contraception, it will be difficult for this market to grow."



- ✓ E-commerce likely to **gain importance as means for distribution** that runs parallel to (does not replace!) offline sales and programming.
- ✓ **Hindering factors refer to customer behavior and preferences:**
 - Gender (in)equality is underlying for all hindering factors
 - General lack of awareness hinders potential for e-commerce growth for female condoms
 - Face-to-face contact crucial for first-time users
- ✓ We give some examples to (partly) deal with these hindering factors.

FEMALE CONDOMS CASE STUDY

"Can't believe I waited so long to try this. It's fantastic! Easy to use, adds to the sensation in my humble opinion, easy for him and doesn't interrupt the process like (male) condoms do. And feeling much less untidy afterwards is another big bonus. **Just wish they were sold in stores. Women should have equal ease of access to products intended for them anyway.**"





See Size Options

Plan B One-step Emergency Contraceptive 1 Tablet

★★★★★ 121

\$38.50

Prime

FREE Shipping on eligible orders



My Way Emergency Contraceptive 1 Tablet

*Compare to...

★★★★★ 5

\$31.80

FREE Shipping on eligible orders



AfterPill Emergency Contraceptive Pill - 1 Pack

★★★★★ 16

\$25.00

- ✓ **Full over-the-counter, non-prescription access**
 - Routine e-commerce (usually brick-and-mortar stores that have an online presence)
 - “Marketplace” access (Amazon, Craigslist)
 - Specialized sites (Women Help Women, Afterpill.com)
- ✓ **Behind-the-counter or prescription access requiring screening**
 - Prescription by clinician: Ella via Kwikmed
 - Online checklist: Mr. Ed, many European sites
- ✓ **No legally registered product**
 - Online information in the Philippines (telephone to order)
 - British site serving Malta
 - Women Help Women

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION CASE STUDY

"Access is not just availability. It is also affordability. That is why we think an **e-commerce platform can reduce barriers.**"

FOUNDER OF AFTERPILL.COM



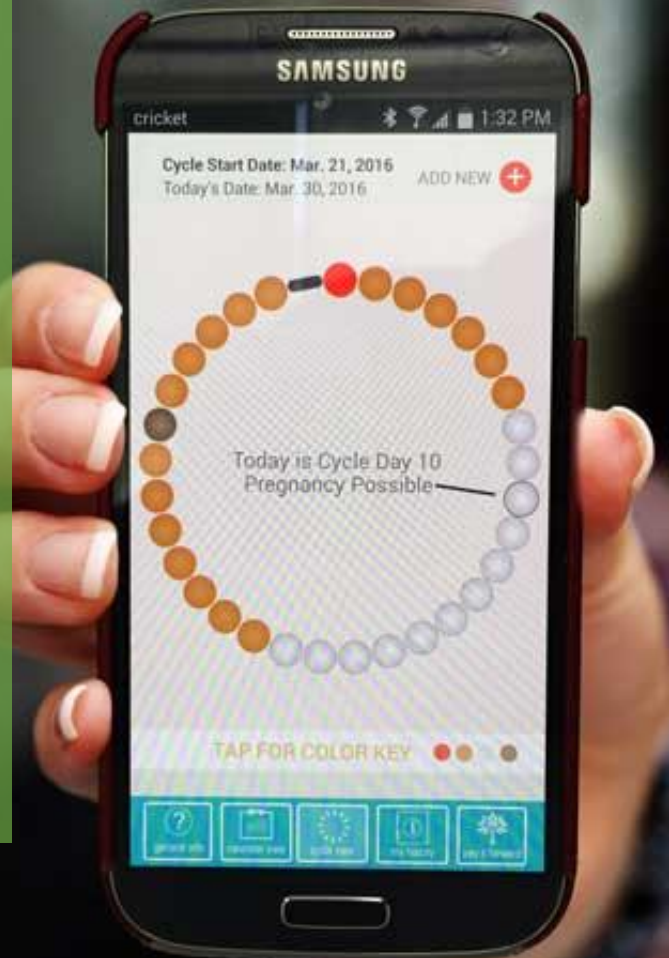


- ✓ E-commerce is an **important distribution channel** for CycleBeads.
- ✓ A **unique challenge** for CycleBeads as a one-time low-cost purchase, is the **revenue model**.
- ✓ **Mobile technology is a potential game changer** – affecting how this method is accessed and used.
- ✓ “70% of the world’s population will use a smartphone by 2020.” Ericsson Mobility Report 2015

CYCLEBEADS[®] CASE STUDY

"Young women are **coming into my office looking at their phones.** CycleBeads app fits right into their lifestyles."

MEDSTAR HEALTH PROVIDER, USA





WHAT'S NEXT?

WE STILL HAVE QUESTIONS.

How do people like to get information online?

What encourages correct use of FP?

How can e-commerce spread information on underused methods?

Will electronic payment options expand e-commerce?

Can delivery systems become more reliable, private and secure?

Who is most likely to need or use e-commerce?

What methods will benefit most?

Are our findings valid in other countries?

How will these trends impact traditional health systems?

...WHAT ARE YOURS?



CONCLUSIONS

- ✓ E-commerce for RH supplies landscape varies considerably within and among countries.
- ✓ Underused methods are, similarly, a diverse group.
- ✓ Factors to consider: Infrastructure, Regulations, Customer
- ✓ The availability and accessibility of information is critical.

E-COMMERCE: not the way, but a way.



E-COMMERCE AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SUPPLIES: FAMILY PLANNING IN THE DIGITAL AGE



E-COMMERCE OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SUPPLIES IN INDIA



E-COMMERCE OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SUPPLIES IN KENYA



E-COMMERCE OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SUPPLIES IN MEXICO



DOWNLOAD CASE STUDY SERIES + OVERVIEW NOW:
<http://irh.org/e-commerce-for-rh-supplies-case-studies>

E-COMMERCE OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SUPPLIES IN THE UNITED STATES

E-COMMERCE AND EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

E-COMMERCE AND FEMALE CONDOMS

Credit: Peter Wijnant (on assignment from Rutgers)

E-COMMERCE AND CYCLEBEADS®





Innovation is constant.

