Chapter 5.29
Repeated Use of E-Gov Web Sites:
A Satisfaction and Confidentiality Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The potential success of e-government depends on its citizens adopting online services and the security of those services. However, despite the development and diffusion of a variety of government services on the Internet, little research has been carried out regarding: (1) the impact of perceived confidentiality of a user's information on his or her intention to use the service; (2) the relationship between intention towards repeated use and satisfaction derived from service performance of government; and (3) the moderating effect of demographic characteristics (gender and race difference) on the relationship between a user's satisfaction, confidentiality and repeated

use intention. This paper develops an integrated framework of intentions towards repeated use with a level of confidential information shared by a user as one factor and e-government satisfaction derived from service performance as another factor. The results suggest that a user's intention to continue using government Web sites is related to the user's satisfaction, perceived performance of the Web site and the requirement for confidential information. This research also confirms that gender difference does moderate the relationship between users' satisfaction levels and repeated use intention. Race difference has an effect on the strength of the relationship between the user's perceived confidentiality and repeated use intention.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, we have seen tremendous growth in the use of the Internet. As the use of the Web by the private sector has grown, the public sector has followed closely behind. According to United Nations (UN) estimates, more than 173 countries have developed government Web sites. More than 17 nations are now well beyond Web publishing and have begun to implement interactive transaction capabilities. The development and increasing use of information technology (IT) in the government (e-government) can result in more efficient processes by improving the quality and speed of government services toward citizens.

Many citizens who previously would visit or call government offices, often only to wait in line or on hold, increasingly choose to contact the government online to request information, register complaints or communicate their opinions on current issues. A July 2003 survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project mentions that nearly 97 million adult Americans, or 77% of Internet users, took advantage of online government services in 2003, which included going to government. Users can seek information using Web sites and can contact government officials through e-mail. Internet facilities can be very cost effective for providers of high-volume, standardized services, and may also improve service and convenience levels to their users.

E-government can be defined broadly as the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to improve the activities of government organizations. According to Prattipati (2003), there are three main domains of e-government: Improving government processes (e-administration), connecting citizens (e-citizens and e-services), and building external interactions (e-society). According to the World Bank definition, e-government refers to the use of ICT to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of government by providing better service delivery to citizens, providing better

services to businesses, and empowering through information and efficient government purchasing (2005). E-government can leverage the capabilities and power of IT to deliver services provided by governments at local, municipal, state, and national levels. But implementing e-government can be a major effort (Grant & Chau, 2005) making it necessary to understand the factors that influence the use of e-government.

Government cannot realize the potential benefits of e-government unless people use them. Despite the development and diffusion of a variety of government services on the Internet, little research has been carried out focusing on factors affecting repeated use. We contribute to current research by attempting to fill this gap.

Since the emergence of the Internet, a great deal of research has been conducted in the areas of marketing and information systems (electronic commerce), among others, that study the success factors that lead to the continued adoption of commercial Web sites by customers. Theories and lessons learned from these studies can effectively be adopted in e-government to see what factors may lead citizens to use government services through the Web. This paper focuses on citizen-centric applications and investigates whether the perceived performance of the government Web site and satisfaction of the user influences the intention of repeated use of the government Web sites. We also identify perceived confidentiality as one of the factors influencing users' intention to use government Web sites repeatedly.

This paper is organized as follows: First, we provide a brief background explaining the theories and constructs considered in this study. We consider not only the SERVPERF theory, explaining the constructs "satisfaction" and "performance," but also "confidentiality," which is a crucial element of information security. Next, we discuss the methodology used to empirically test the research model. Finally, we discuss the results of the empirical analysis and conclude

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