Chapter IX

Key Indicators for Successful Internet Commerce: A South African Study

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ABSTRACT

The advent of e-commerce has brought about new implications on research directions in the business arena. Is it not sufficient to just study the formation of electronic markets in e-commerce. It is also necessary to have insight into the electronic markets’ innermost workings. This chapter, therefore, highlights the factors that give these new organizational forms (e-commerce enterprises) sustainable competitive advantages. The chapter is present in three main sections: A study of variety of reports of practitioners and researchers from the international arena, provide a background of prior knowledge in the filed. The analysis of this knowledge base is conceptualized into a framework of key factors affecting e-commerce success. Finally, the results of an empirical study of South African e-businesses are reported on. The authors provide some insight on the application of the conceptual framework as applied in the South African situation.
INTRODUCTION

The world of Internet commerce has been rapidly evolving since its advent in the 1990s. This has had implications on research directions in the field of electronic commerce (e-commerce). No longer is it sufficient to study the formation of electronic markets in e-commerce. It is also necessary to have insight into the electronic markets’ innermost workings. This chapter, therefore, highlights the factors that give these new organizational forms (e-commerce enterprises) sustainable competitive advantage, thus allowing them to create value in the Internet marketplace, and increase their ability to maximize profits.

The following sections review various factors relating to e-commerce successes and failures. The analysis of these factors provides, enabling directions in successful adaptations and new interpretations of long-standing issues that senior managers face with new directions of Internet commerce.

The chapter is presented in three main sections. First, a study of a variety of reports of practitioners and researchers from the international arena, provide a background of prior knowledge in the field. Then the analysis of this knowledge base is conceptualized into a framework of key factors affecting e-commerce success. Finally, the results of an empirical study of South African e-businesses are reported. The authors provide some insight on the application of the conceptual framework as applied in the South African situation.

Figure 1: Types of E-Commerce

![Diagram of Types of E-Commerce]

Source: Adapted from Chan et al., 2001
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