ABSTRACT

As technological innovations have progressed, the ability of social enterprises to find creative solutions to social problems in the global economy has increased. Social electronic enterprises (e-enterprises) contribute to the well-being of society by utilizing information and communications technology that has a financial component in addition to social and environmental objectives. Social e-entrepreneurship is an effective dynamic way that organizations can achieve social objectives that facilitate change in the international environment. More recently, innovation in information and communications technology has increased the ability of individuals to establish social e-enterprises. This paper discusses the role of technological innovations in providing opportunities for social e-enterprises to develop based on mobile online services. The influence of mobile online communities in developing social e-enterprises is investigated along with how mobile communication has encouraged individuals and organisations to be involved in social e-enterprises. The changing mobile social software communications devices that have allowed individuals to build social e-enterprises using technological innovations from the internet are stated. Recommendations for the continued development of social e-enterprises that utilize emerging technological innovations are included in the paper with suggestions for future research.

Keywords: E-Enterprise, Mobile Communication, Online Communities, Social Entrepreneurs, Social Entrepreneurship, Social Software, Social Value, Technological Innovation

DOI: 10.4018/jeco.2013070104
INTRODUCTION

Aspiring social enterprises direct their vision to being involved in social issues that can offer transformational changes for communities (Samaras, 2007). Social enterprises fill the gap in the operation of the market economy by offering a new way to do business with a social purpose (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006). Social enterprises are organisations that develop innovative solutions to create a positive social impact (Wang, 2011). These organisations combine profit principles with social purposes to incorporate social, economic and environmental objectives (Ratten & Welpe, 2011).

Social enterprises are important in adapting business and governments to better meet social needs (Brooks, 2009). Social enterprises have a social cause mission that values ethical behaviour and tend to behave in a collaborative manner with many founded by volunteers that help achieve solutions for social problems. The process of social entrepreneurship includes defining, discovering and exploiting opportunities through the creation of new ventures that have social advantages (Samaras, 2007). The importance of social enterprises to society has increased in recent years as global economic crises have necessitated challenges in the gap between developed and developing countries. Business enterprises have been encouraged to innovate in order to incorporate social responsibility roles within their economic performance (Hameed et al., 2012).

Social enterprises are sometimes referred to as charity or not-for-profit organizations as they help fill the need in society to look after those less fortunate (Brooks, 2009). Often not-for-profit organizations engage in social entrepreneurship because of their ability to find innovative approaches to society problems (Austin et al., 2006). The underlying motive for many not-for-profits is social value creation rather than just financial gain is the key feature of social entrepreneurship (Brooks, 2009). In addition, the maintenance of business success is often the by-product of new venture creation made possible by innovative capabilities of social entrepreneurs.

Social entrepreneurship involves any form of entrepreneurial activity by an individual, organization or group that has a social purpose embedded as its overarching business goal (Brooks, 2009). This includes organizations applying commercial strategies that maximize human and environmental well-being in addition to shareholder well-being. Some social enterprises have obtained a competitive advantage in the marketplace by placing social welfare as a key tenet of their organizations mission (Crawford, 2008). An example of this is Tom’s Shoes a footwear and clothing company that has a motto of ‘one-for-one’ in which they donate a pair of shoes for every pair sold to a child in a developing country.

The key tenets of social entrepreneurship are creating social value, innovation and economic activity within society. Social entrepreneurship is defined as the process of creating social value through collaboration that normally has only an economic role (Samaras, 2007). The key characteristics of being that it benefits society rather than just maximising financial return (Cheng, 2011). The widespread usage of online technology has lead to the development of social e-entrepreneurship, which occurs when social issues are incorporated in an online context. Social e-enterprise includes the establishment of ventures that can be new or existing to leverage communication about social issues (Humphreys, 2010).

An online presence is important to social entrepreneurs as it helps in the building of social networks with key stakeholders (Brooks, 2009). Technology can enable better knowledge management practices by enabling communication to occur through social networks (Hameed, Counsell, & Swift, 2012). Mobile social networks include the establishment of connections with people through both informal and formal communication that encourages new idea generation (Varnali, Toker, & Yilmaz,
8 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/article/the-development-of-social-e-enterprises-mobile-communication-and-social-networks/84047

Related Content

A SWOT Analysis for B2C E-Commerce: The Case of Amazon.com
www.irma-international.org/article/swot-analysis-b2c-commerce/1489/

Study of CSF in China's B2C E-Commerce Based on Expert Evaluation
Xinsheng Ke and Qi Sun (2014). *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations* (pp. 31-45).
www.irma-international.org/article/study-of-csf-in-chinas-b2c-e-commerce-based-on-expert-evaluation/111972/

Key Success Requirements for Online Brand Management
www.irma-international.org/chapter/key-success-requirements-online-brand/7056/

Evolution of Trust in Business-to-Business E-Commerce
www.irma-international.org/chapter/evolution-trust-business-business-commerce/9452/

A Longitudinal Investigation on Greek University Students’ Perceptions Towards Online Shopping
www.irma-international.org/article/longitudinal-investigation-greek-university-students/78556/