

Chapter 62

Success in the Web 2.0 Ecosystem: Exploring the State and Determinants in Indian Businesses

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ABSTRACT

As Web 2.0 based systems and applications get adopted by organizations, it is imperative that they bring along both benefits and challenges. As users and beneficiaries of the new means of communication, all of us need to be sensitive to the different factors that could and do affect the success of major Web 2.0 applications and initiatives. This study tries to explore the determinants of success in converting a traditional business organization into an Enterprise 2.0 through defining the “external variables” in the Technology Acceptance Model of Davis (1989). This was done using a survey questionnaire in a wide variety of Indian business organizations. It attempts to verify the relationship of success in the Web 2.0 world with the awareness of IT tools and data analysis capabilities present in the organization, the approach taken by the organization and the departments that take the lead in the implementation of Web 2.0 initiatives. The paper concludes with suggestions and implications for organizations.

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has become truly global and the geographical boundaries which limited businesses are vaporizing bringing along with it both opportunities and challenges. In the new interconnected and dynamically developing international business environment managers need to learn new techniques and tricks to keep pace with the expectations of customers and challenges posed by the new competition. The paper intends to discover the awareness, implementation and usage of Web tools in Indian organizations and its consequences.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-3422-8.ch062

The last decade has seen a revolution in terms of how business gets done due to the growing impact of the Internet in terms of the interactions in the supply chain of organizations and the techniques of communication employed between buyers and sellers. It started initially with Web 1.0 to tell the world about the products available and raw materials sought in the markets and free availability of higher quality and quantity of this information led to a higher level of competition and thus better products at more competitive prices for the end consumer.

The current phase is that of Web 2.0 or also called the Social web which is promoting demand driven supply networks and impacting the lead times in a big way. More and more organizations are in a position to implement techniques such as JIT and supplier managed inventory and collaborative planning, forecasting and replenishment (CPFR) techniques leading to squeezing out inventory from the supply chains and reducing the impact of the bull whip effect which was the trademark of the inefficient information sharing of the previous decade.

In the last decade the landscape of information and communication has changed drastically the organizational technological capabilities in terms of changing user demands and needs. The users need to move into the two way social web or Web 2.0 as a means of people interaction. In the last decade we have seen not just an evolution but a revolution in the way employees, customers and applications communicate and collaborate. These technological advancements bring along new opportunities as well as threats and organizations have responded with new agility and vigor as well as with new continued evolution of methods and processes. As Almeida (2012) points out “Successful organizations will be those that determine where and how to embrace these emergent tools to add new value and agility to their organizations. Success will require careful, on-going efforts to safeguard assets, including infrastructure, data, and employees, along with measured and educated adoption of new cyber technologies.”

There are various ways in which businesses have benefited from introduction of Web 2.0 technologies in the recent decade. Amongst them are various online communities and their interactions, content intermediaries and social impacts on shopping behavior. Lee (2011) captures the essence of this beautifully. He also bridges the transformation of traditional businesses into Web 2.0 based businesses very succinctly.

Considering the proliferation of different social networking platforms and applications based on them issues of security of information and privacy of individuals will also grow in parallel. It needs to be understood that it is not the new technology which brings these problems along, but the implicit gains that the people behind them perceive that triggers a majority of these impediments in the growth of the new media. To enhance the use of Web 2.0 tools, the current study intends to focus on levels of success organizations have attained in their implementation and propose relevant factors that could facilitate its achievement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Internet has opened up a new era in sharing. There has also been number of studies and writings about sharing via the Internet. This includes a series of books, articles, and web discussions on the topic.

However, many of these apparent cases of sharing are better characterized as pseudo-sharing – commodity exchanges wrapped in a vocabulary of sharing. Belk (2013) in his paper reviews subsequent research and theorizing as well as controversies that have emerged surrounding sharing and what is best regarded as pseudo-sharing – a wolf-in sheep’s-clothing phenomenon whereby commodity exchange and potential exploitation of consumer co-creators present themselves in the guise of sharing. Their

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