

Chapter XVIII

M–Commerce in the U.S. and China Retail Industry: Business Models, Critical Success Factors (CSFs), and Case Studies

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this chapter is to investigate the current trends and future endeavors of mobile commerce (m-commerce) in the retail industry in an effort to establish a greater understanding and awareness of the technology, problems, business models, applications, and critical success factors (CSFs) it provides to consumer subscribers and business users. A case study is used to illustrate CSFs for successfully implementing m-commerce in organizations.

INTRODUCTION

The retail segment is expected to stimulate the future growth of m-commerce with the potential to purchase goods and services, exchange financial transactions, and establish home delivery in a matter of minutes with the touch of a button and no geographical limitations. This unique business opportunity, with all of its accomplishments, potential, and uncertainties is the central focus of this assessment.

In the emerging wireless arena, it is predicted that everyday consumers will take advantage of the improving mobile technology and mobile e-commerce developments in the retail industry with transactions such as “buying books from Amazon while waiting in the doctors’ office, trading stocks from the golf course or ordering CD’s of songs on the radio while stewing in traffic” (Davidson, 2002). “Looking at the current expansion in wireless applications, increasing numbers of mobile device subscribers imply that vast opportunities of potential revenue come from the m-commerce retail industry” (Varshney & Vetter, 2001).

It is amazing that the hype in conducting virtual business stemmed from the turning point the Internet has brought to our lives. “First, we have the World Wide Web that brought us informative information, then the introduction of electronic commerce, where consumers have

the convenience of staying home to shop and pay bills. Now, the wireless era has appeared with improved mobile technology and hence the increasing importance of mobile e-commerce, which is also known as m-commerce or wireless e-commerce” (Mennecke & Strader, 2001).

The advent of m-commerce and wireless Internet are thought to be the new wave in the communication industry, which holds a promising future for m-commerce in the retail industry. With the power in the palm of their hands, it is inevitable that mobile users will surpass the notion that mobile devices are solely for one-to-one communication and open doors to a new way of conducting retail business transactions. Figure 1 shows e-commerce/retail as one of the most popular wireless data applications.

This chapter is organized in a manner that will initially depict the credibility and relevance of the research provided throughout the paper, and will be followed by a background information section. The literature review is based on intense m-commerce and wireless company information that was prevalent in peer-reviewed journals, accredited articles, and esteemed conferences in the information technology community.

The background section includes a description of m-commerce and its functionality in the technology market. A framework is presented outlining m-commerce from both the users and

Figure 1. Uptake of wireless data applications, 2000-2005 (in millions) (Source: allNetDevices (www.epaynews.com/statistics/mcommstats.html))

Applications	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Messaging	100	230	399	611	916	1268
E-Commerce/Retail	12	36	107	195	318	469
Financial services	50	123	225	357	529	798
Intranet (corporate)	5	20	49	81	129	206
Internet, WAP	4	20	85	183	344	614
Entertainment	61	143	246	372	554	775
Navigation	47	146	239	345	488	785

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