



Chapter 11

**Electronic Commerce Acceptance:
A Study Comparing the United
States and the United Kingdom**

Donna W. McCloskey
Widener University, USA

David Whiteley
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

INTRODUCTION

The popularization of the Internet and the rise of Internet electronic commerce (e-commerce) has been one of the major social and business developments of the last few years. Much is made of the rapid development of, for instance, amazon.com and there seems to be an assumption that what has started to happen in the retail book trade will continue and spread with similar effect to all other sectors of the retail market.

Estimates vary as to the size of the business-to-consumer e-commerce market. The International Data Corporation (IDC) estimates that the total purchases made over the web were \$10 billion in 1997 and will be more than \$220 billion in 2001 (Oliveira, Amorim and Vilao, 1999). These large figures are put in a wider context by KPMG (1999) which reports that, "Direct sales are 5% of retail sales in the UK and 4% in the US. Of this total, 16% of US home sales and 1% of UK home sales are electronic." Forrester Research (Tagliabue, 1999) whose 1999 research showed online shopping accounted for \$1.2 billion of Europe's \$1.9 trillion in retail sales (0.06%) compared to \$8 billion of \$2.6 trillion (0.3%) in total sales in the U.S or by Galagher (1999) who writes that "Estimates of the value of

Previously Published in *Managing Information Technology in a Global Economy* edited by Mehdi Khosrow-Pour, Copyright © 2001, Idea Group Publishing.

This chapter appears in the book, *Strategies for eCommerce Success* by Bijan Fazlollahi. Copyright © 2002, IRM Press, an imprint of Idea Group Inc.

global internet commerce range from 1.3% to 3.3% of global gross domestic product by 2001. This is equivalent in size to the combined economies of Australia and the Netherlands.” These quotes indicate not only the usual story that the volume of electronic commerce is large and is greater in the U.S. than in Europe, and is growing rapidly but also that, as a proportion of overall retail activity, it is still small. (They also illustrate the large disparities between the statistics provided by various organizations). It is suggested that current growth trends can not be just projected into the future without serious examination of the factors that make some people shop online for some goods and services and, conversely, the factors that have to date failed to persuade so many consumers to become active participants in the ‘e-commerce revolution.’

The main constraint to the growth of e-Commerce is typically given as the problem of security. Hoffman, Novak and Peralta (1999) found that there is fundamental lack of trust between consumers and web merchants. “Consumers simply do not trust most Web providers enough to engage in ‘relationships exchanges’ involving money and personal information with them.” The underlying suggestion is that with the appropriate technical fixes, all will be right and the boom will continue. This concentration on the issue of e-Commerce security however ignores the many other factors that detract from the convenience of online shopping. These factors include visibility, delivery and after sales (Whiteley, 2000) and the rather old fashion notion that some people might actually like going shopping, selecting their own purchases and taking it home with them - there and then.

This chapter reports on a survey carried out in both the U.S. and the UK aimed at discovering what people bought online, why they did or did not use Internet e-Commerce, any differences in activity and attitude between the U.S. and UK and what might persuade people to take part in online shopping in the future. The results of this survey are reported in the rest of this chapter.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

This study sought to examine whether there were differences in e-commerce usage and attitudes for US and UK consumers. Identical questionnaires were distributed to undergraduate students, in selected classes, at universities in the US and the UK.

Measures

Respondents were asked a number of demographic questions, including gender, age and annual budget for consumer products. Internet access and usage at work and home was addressed with a number of questions. Additionally, respondents were asked to rate eleven statements concerning electronic commerce on a five-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

9 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/chapter/electronic-commerce-acceptance/29848

Related Content

Building E-Commerce From the Ground Up: A Study of the Retail Industry
David Gordon and James E. Skibo (2000). *Electronic Commerce: Opportunity and Challenges* (pp. 21-40).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/building-commerce-ground/9624

Web Initiatives and E-Commerce Strategy

Ron Craig (2008). *Electronic Commerce: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 117-124).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/web-initiatives-commerce-strategy/9458

Process-Aware E-Government Services Management: Reconciling Citizen, Business and Technology Dynamics

A. Taleb-Bendiab, K. Liu, P. Miseldine, S. Furlong and W. Rong (2007). *International Journal of Cases on Electronic Commerce* (pp. 45-54).

www.irma-international.org/article/process-aware-government-services-management/1519

Framing ERP Success from an Information Systems Failure Perspective: A Measurement Endeavor

Pierluigi Zerbino, Davide Aloini, Riccardo Dulmin and Valeria Mininno (2017). *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations* (pp. 31-47).

www.irma-international.org/article/framing-erp-success-from-an-information-systems-failure-perspective/179624

A Study of the Effect of AI-Generated Image Recommendation Services on Purchasing Intentions for Online Shopping

Wu Tsaiyi, Youssef Tliche, Nadia El Nemr, Diana El Nemrand Hamdi Radhoui (2025). *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations* (pp. 1-30).

www.irma-international.org/article/a-study-of-the-effect-of-ai-generated-image-recommendation-services-on-purchasing-intentions-for-online-shopping/373765