

Chapter 14

Theories behind Mobile Marketing Research

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ABSTRACT

The future of mobile communication is expected to rely on mobile services and revenue generated through mobile marketing. Marketing activities supported by mobile devices allow companies to directly communicate with their consumers without location or time barriers. It is becoming vital for today's marketers to understand the processes behind the factors affecting consumers' intention to use and adopt mobile marketing. One can often argue that the mobile marketing adoption is difficult to understand due to a lack of relevant research. However, much research has already been conducted on the adoption of mobile services and technology acceptance that likely can support mobile marketing research. Thus it is essential for mobile marketing researchers to get a thorough understanding of the theory behind mobile service adoption and technology acceptance. Theories in this area have been developed gradually and built up on each other. This chapter covers some of the theories and related models and shows how those could be used in mobile services and mobile marketing research.

INTRODUCTION

The application of technology acceptance models to mobile services originates from an organizational context (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Rogers (1983) defines adoption as “a decision to make a full use of an innovation” which, in our case, means actual use of mobile services. The mobile

service market is a consumer market that focuses on enjoyment and new possibilities for leisure use (Rogers 1983). The most popular mobile services are simply designed for better user experience and exploit technological advancement that promotes service use (Teo and Pok, 2003). Mobile marketing can use the acceptance models for a wide variety of mobile services. It can enable mass-market reach through widely used mobile services. To understand the factors affecting mobile marketing, it is

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necessary to get a comprehensive understanding of the theories behind technology acceptance and service adoption.

In 1975 Schultz and Slevin carried out an exploratory factor analysis to measure the typical concerns of ordinary management information system users. They identified seven explanatory dimensions. The performance dimension and “perceived effect of the model on the manager’s job performance” were found to be the most highly correlated with the self-predicted use of a decision model. Robey (1979) found that several specific user attitudes or perceptions are positively related to system use. According to his model, “user perceptions or attitudes are formed concerning the value of rewards received from performance, the likelihood that rewards result from performance, and the likelihood that performance results from the use”.

The majority of technology acceptance studies are rooted in behavioral intention. The studies contend that a user’s choice to adopt a new technology can be sufficiently explained and predicted by their behavioral intention. The challenge is to classify which factors determine an individual’s intention to adopt a new technology or service. Venkatesh et al (2003) explains that theoretical models on user acceptance of information technology such as mobile marketing, utilize “intention to use” and “actual use” as the main dependant variables. Research has established that the intention to use information technology is a predictor of behavior (e.g. Sheppard et al. 1988; Ajzen 1991).

Understanding the drivers of adoption can give an idea to service providers on how to shape, tailor or better customize particular services to deliver superior customer experience. Understanding of motives for adoption of technology or services for customer can augment the customer’s awareness of his own motives for the use of mobile services, which helps choosing better and more intentionally technology or services. This chapter presents a set of technology acceptance and service adoption models that have been incrementally developed

on each other and used in many previous mobile services and mobile marketing research work. It has been suggested that including moderating variables on intention to use mobile services will contribute to important advances in marketing theories (Dabholkar and Bagozzi 2002). In summary, this chapter is organized to first give a background for theories behind mobile services adoption and technology acceptance. The next section provides a review on some recent mobile marketing researches and also application of mobile services adoption and technology acceptance theories in the field. The chapter is closed by discussion and conclusion section and also some proposal for future work.

BACKGROUND

Fishbein’s Multi-Attribute Model

The Fishbein multi-attribute model (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980) is a complex and influential conceptualization of the relationships among consumer’s belief, attitudes, intentions and behavior. This model recommends that a person’s attitude to any service is based on an individual’s belief about the service and the evaluation of the service. Fishbein’s support for this comes from behavioral learning theory (Kassarjian and Robertson 1991) that says “an attitude toward an object is more or less automatically learned as one learns about a new product, and that learning occurs in the form of beliefs about product attributes.” In general, this means that if a person expects a positive outcome from a service, he will have a favorable attitude towards it and if the person expects a negative outcome from a service, he will maintain a negative attitude towards it (Harrison et al 1997). Based on this model, attitude towards a service can change when either evaluative aspect or strength of belief associated with an attribute or consequence changes, or when attributes are added or removed.

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