



Chapter I

A Concept for the Evaluation of E-Commerce-Ability

Ulrike Baumöl, Thomas Stiffel and Robert Winter
University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

ABSTRACT

This chapter develops a concept to evaluate the e-commerce-ability of a corporation and applies the framework to basic roles of the e-commerce environment. The concept comprises two components. A four-dimensional framework is proposed which can be used to represent the degree of external coordination; the degree of alignment of business toward organizational and cultural rules of the networked economy; the degree of orientation toward customer needs; and the degree of systematic and integral use of information and communication technology (ICT). Based on this framework, an evaluation approach is presented that supports a maturity analysis.

INTRODUCTION

While many companies are still implementing or improving their Internet-facilitated e-commerce activities, a new wave of technology-driven innovation has arrived: Mobile (M-commerce). Enabled by the progress in wireless technology and the increasing number of mobile devices, expectations are high again. We deduced from our current research that electronic forms of buying/selling (i.e., e-commerce including m-commerce) can only be successful if the corporation is structured

according to specific requirements. That means that e-commerce and m-commerce projects are at failure risk if realized solely based on the Internet as a new distribution channel without changing the internal view on customer processes and without restructuring certain elements such as internal processes and structures and inter-business networking.

However, corporations that want to implement successful e-commerce activities first of all need to have a framework for reflecting and analyzing their current status before measures can be defined to achieve e-commerce-ability.

The first step of such a systematic approach has to include not only a framework of dimensions which allows the reflection and analysis of patterns of e-commerce business models or roles, respectively, but also a set of parameters which represents measurable success. We therefore developed a concept consisting of two “pillars”:

1. A four-dimensional framework is proposed that can be used to represent the degree of external coordination; the degree of alignment of business toward organizational and cultural rules of the networked economy; the degree of orientation toward customer needs; and the degree of systematic and integral use of information and communication technology (ICT). Each of the framework’s dimensions is described by a set of characteristics which are used as a metric to render the creation and, moreover, the comparison of the patterns possible. Our hypothesis is that there are success patterns which depend on the specific roles existing in an e-commerce environment.
2. Based on this framework, an evaluation approach is presented that supports the analysis of the corporation based on value-driven quantitative and qualitative parameters reflecting economic success. The concept can be put to use by visualizing the pattern of the respective corporation to be analyzed; comparing it with the success pattern of the role; analyzing the status regarding the important value drivers; identifying the gap; and, finally, defining measures to close the gap.

But before we can start to develop the concept of e-commerce-ability, we have to take a closer look at the terms and models that represent a basis for this chapter. On the one hand, we reflect the understanding of the terms e-commerce and m-commerce. On the other, hand we have to look at existing e-commerce maturity concepts and decide whether they can be used for developing our e-commerce-ability concept.

DEFINITIONS OF E-COMMERCE

The understanding of e-commerce is widespread. A common definition is difficult to give because of many inconsistent approaches (Wigand, 1997). Therefore, a discussion of an appropriate definition is necessary.

16 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/concept-evaluation-commerce-ability/25771

Related Content

Context-Aware Query Processing in Ad-Hoc Environments of Peers

Nikolaos Folinas, Panos Vassiliadis, Evaggelia Pitoura, Evangelos Papapetrouand Apostolos Zarras (2010). *E-Commerce Trends for Organizational Advancement: New Applications and Methods* (pp. 66-87).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/context-aware-query-processing-hoc/39655

Growth and Firm Size Distribution: An Empirical Study of Listed E-Commerce Companies in China

Wei Zhang, Yan-Chun Zhu, Jian-Bo Wenand Yi-Jie Zhuang (2016). *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations* (pp. 61-73).

www.irma-international.org/article/growth-and-firm-size-distribution/156534

Understanding the Development of Free E-Commerce/E-Business Software: A Resource-Based View

Walt Scacchi (2008). *Electronic Commerce: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 497-513).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/understanding-development-free-commerce-business/9487

Users' In-Game Purchase Intention: The Effects of Flow Experience and Satisfaction

Mahendar Goliand Vishnu Vandana Vemuri (2021). *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations* (pp. 1-19).

www.irma-international.org/article/users-in-game-purchase-intention/288310

E-Questionnaire for Innovative Adaptive-Learning Scheme

Tzouveli Paraskeviand Stefanos Kollias (2006). *Encyclopedia of E-Commerce, E-Government, and Mobile Commerce* (pp. 445-450).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/questionnaire-innovative-adaptive-learning-scheme/12577