

Chapter 13

E-Commerce

ABSTRACT

The chapter outlines the importance of being connected over the internet and the opportunities the world wide web (WWW) offers to the foodservice industry. Restaurants, bars, and catering companies can significantly benefit from the exposure a website gives them internationally 24/7/365. Today's business landscape is far more connected worldwide than ever before. Not having a presence on the internet with a website and or an e-commerce business means being left out without exposure and without the possibility of expanding the business. The questions a foodservice operator should ask are not about the need for the internet and a website, but rather how much should be invested in it. Millions of businesses like restaurants worldwide have benefited from their website and presence on the WWW. The opportunities to increase revenue and compete against others have never been greater, from online table reservation systems to selling recipe books and merchandise.

INTRODUCTION

With the evolution of the Internet, the business world has become increasingly involved in the practice of using the so-called “World Wide Web” (WWW) or the “information superhighway”, to deal with unlimited business undertakings. The Internet is a collection of interconnected computer networks that provide free exchanging of information all the time.

Table 1 shows the world internet usage and statistics by continents. As of December 2019, about 57% of the world's population, or 4,574,150,134 people, use the Internet. The largest share of users is in Asia, with 50.3% usage as a ratio to the total world's usage. As such, the Internet has become a powerful channel for business marketing and communication, and new business opportunities - as it is often called as “e-business” or “e-commerce” today (Napier et. al, 2001; Flynn & Anderson, 2003).

This virtual marketplace allows all companies to compete for the same products or services they provide. Under the same wave, online customers can enjoy a more extensive choice of products or services, more competitive prices and discounts, and being able to buy their favorite products or services from the sellers located anywhere on the globe.

E-Commerce

Table 1. World internet usage and population statistics, World Internet Users and 2020 Population Stats

WORLD INTERNET USAGE AND POPULATION STATISTICS 2019 Year-End Estimates						
World Regions	Population (2020 Est.)	Population % of World	Internet Users 31 Dec 2019	Penetration Rate (% Pop.)	Growth 2000-2020	Internet World %
Africa	1,340,598,447	17.2%	526,374,930	39.3%	11,559%	11.5%
Asia	4,294,516,659	55.1%	2,300,469,859	53.6%	1,913%	50.3%
Europe	834,995,197	10.7%	727,814,272	87.2%	592%	15.9%
Latin America / Caribbean	658,345,826	8.5%	453,702,292	68.9%	2,411%	10.0%
Middle East	260,991,690	3.9%	180,498,292	69.2%	5,395%	3.9%
North America	368,869,647	4.7%	348,908,868	94.6%	222%	7.6%
Oceania / Australia	42,690,838	0.5%	28,775,373	67.4%	277%	0.6%
WORLD TOTAL	7,796,615,710	100.0%	4,574,150,134	58.7%	1,167%	100.0%
NOTES: (1) Internet Usage and World Population Statistics estimates are for Dec 31, 2019, as of March 3, 2020. (2) CLICK on each world region name for detailed regional usage information. (3) Demographic (Population) numbers are based on data from the United Nations Population Division . (4) Internet usage information comes from data published by Nielsen Online , by the International Telecommunications Union , by GfK , by local ICT Regulators and other reliable sources. (5) For definitions, navigation help and disclaimers, please refer to the Website Surfing Guide . (6) The information from this website may be cited, giving the due credit and placing a link back to www.internetworldstats.com . Copyright © 2020, Miniwatts Marketing Group. All rights reserved worldwide.						

Source: Internet World Stats: <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>

The Internet also provides communication between consumers and companies and through electronic data interchange (EDI), buyers and sellers can exchange standard business transactions such as invoices or purchase orders with remarkably easy.

What is E-Commerce?

E-commerce involves multiple transactions or payment information transfer across a secure internet connection in exchange for goods and services. Retail e-commerce represents trade, commercialism, mercantilism, and all other business transactions for business, personal or commercial activities that have the sole objective of supplying commodities via an online storefront. E-commerce has been defined as “the buying and selling of products and services by businesses and consumers over the Internet.” E-commerce refers to both online retail and online shopping as well as electronic transactions.

Entrepreneurial firms and research institutes invest in exceptional people with bold ideas, freeing them to go beyond the domain of traditional research labs and venture funds. They use the Internet’s power to transform existing processes, making them better, faster, and more efficient.

The Internet and e-commerce give consumers an opportunity, through the easy online information gathering and convenient online shopping, to be better prepared to purchase the right product or service at the right time. New entrepreneurs from traditional small to medium-sized businesses are the pioneers exploring the forefronts of e-commerce.

E-commerce is governed by the Department of Commerce, created in 1913; it is the federal organization with the United States that promotes and administers domestic and foreign trade. The DOC monitors

13 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/e-commerce/276198

Related Content

Tourism-Driven Mobilities: Scale Development Approach in Postwar Growth Setting in Sri Lanka
Ruan Ranasinghe and Li Cheng (2020). *International Journal of Asian Business and Information Management* (pp. 119-134).

www.irma-international.org/article/tourism-driven-mobilities/255700

Corporate Criminal Liability Conundrum: A Comparative Analysis

Saurabh Chandra and Bhumika Muchan (2024). *Cases on Economic Crisis Impact on Multinational Corporations* (pp. 96-126).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/corporate-criminal-liability-conundrum/339672

Multicultural Urban Business Environment: Managing Cross-Cultural Problems Within Globalization

Irina Onyusheva, Lalita Thammashote and Jatuporn Thongaim (2020). *Migration and Urbanization: Local Solutions for Global Economic Challenges* (pp. 219-240).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/multicultural-urban-business-environment/237477

China's Trade and Investment in the Western Balkans Under the Belt and Road Initiative: Focus on North Macedonia

Iskra Stancheva Gigova and Klimentina Poposka (2022). *Opportunities and Challenges for Multinational Enterprises and Foreign Direct Investment in the Belt and Road Initiative* (pp. 234-259).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/chinas-trade-and-investment-in-the-western-balkans-under-the-belt-and-road-initiative/307597

The Dilemma and Resolution: The Patentability of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Xu Xuan and Zhang Xiaowei (2012). *International Journal of Asian Business and Information Management* (pp. 1-8).

www.irma-international.org/article/dilemma-resolution-patentability-traditional-chinese/68982