

MCS Final Project

Model E-Commerce Web Site



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E-Commerce Web Site Model

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Dean

DEDICATION

Dedicated to
Our Loving Family

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PREFACE

Business is widely recognized the critical importance of Information Technology. As business invests in the commercialization of the World Wide Web, firms are beginning to experience dramatic shifts in standard business practices caused by the emergence of a global electronic marketplace. This has given rise to the enormous need to clear concept of e-commerce, and also to understand the implications of these shifts for strategic initiatives, marketing and advertising, financial markets, information systems strategy, human resource management and supply chain management.

Still many people may feel like they do not understand e-commerce. To have a better understanding of e-commerce, it would be better to look at the basic concept of plain commerce. E-commerce is basically doing commerce electronically through Internet using computer and communication technology.

The factors that are the main drivers behind the e-commerce are Lower transaction cost – if an e-commerce site is properly implemented, automating processes on web can significantly reduce the order taking and customer service cost. Lower price – It may be possible to offer products at lower prices due to low transaction cost, or to offer products that could not be offered before.

The term electronic commerce is heard frequently in cooperate boardrooms, in management meetings, on the news, in newspapers (both hard copy and online). Electric commerce is one of the most common business terms in use as we embark on 21st century. So what exactly is electronic commerce and will the term still be important in the years to come, or will it be just another overused and discarded buzzword?

The documentation of our project includes 2 parts; Part A is related to Essentials of E-commerce and Part B is related to E-commerce web site model. Part A is consists of multiple chapters.

Chapter 1 is basic chapter. In it we have discusses the basic concept of E-commerce and the basic definition of E-commerce. In chapter 2 we have brief introduction and features of E-commerce. Chapter 3 continues with the designing of E-commerce web site.

Part B is consists of 4 chapters. Chapter 1 has silent features of model web site and some details of tools used. Chapter 2 has installation manual, hardware and software requirements to browse the site. Chapter 3 consists of Technical Reference. It has data structures and details of tables. Last chapter has User reference, all the screen designs and details of web site.

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PART A

ESSENTIALS OF E-COMMERCE

CHAPTER 1

BASIC CONCEPTS OF E-COMMERCE

BASIC CONCEPT OF E-COMMERCE

E-commerce is expected to grow exponentially. Although market forecasts are overly optimistic, virtual auctions, bids, and catalogs present opportunities for companies to erect barriers against their competition.

As business invests in the commercialization of the World Wide Web, firms are beginning to experience dramatic shifts in standard business practices caused by the emergence of a global electronic marketplace. This has given rise to the enormous need to clear concept of e-commerce, and also to understand the implications of these shifts for strategic initiatives, marketing and advertising, financial markets, information systems strategy, human resource management and supply chain management.

Still many people may feel like they do not understand e-commerce. To have a better understanding of e-commerce, it would be better to look at the basic concept of plain commerce.

THE SIMPLE DEFINITION OF COMMERCE IS:

“The exchange of buying and selling of commodities on a large scale involving transportation from place to place”

Commerce is quite simply, the exchange of goods and services, usually for money. When you buy something at a supermarket, sell your car, or if you are employed with a manufacturing company you are participating in commerce in different roles. These roles are:

Buyers - people who want to purchase a good or service against money.

Sellers – people who offer goods or services

Producers – these are the people who create products and services that sellers offer to buyers. A producer is always a seller also. The producer sells the products directly to the consumer or to wholesaler or retailer.

Things get little complicated when one gets down to the actual elements of commerce and commercial transactions, and deals with the details. Following points cover all of the elements of a typical commerce activity:

First of all there must be a product or service to sell.

One must also have a place from which to sell a product or service. This place could be a store or shop or office, a combination of an ad or a catalog and a phone number or a mailbox.

Marketing – there needs to be a way to get people to come to the place, otherwise, one will never sell anything.

There needs to be a way to accept and process orders.

Procedure to accept the money could be cash, checks or credit cards. Business-to-business transactions often use purchase order. Some products and services are delivered continuously and billed later such as utilities.

System delivers the products and services, often known as fulfillment. This could be through point of sale, mail or other means.

Sometimes customers do not like what they buy so there needs to be a procedure to receive the returns.

Many products these days are so complicated that they require customer service and technical support departments to help customers use them. Products like cell phone service may also require an on-going customer service.

E-commerce is basically doing commerce electronically through Internet using computer and communication technology. All the above-mentioned elements exist in any traditional mail order company. These elements are also found in e-commerce but with slight change:

A product

A place to sell – in this case a web site displays the products

A way to get people to come to your web site

Some sort of on-line forms to accept orders

Either a secure merchant account connected to a bank to handle credit card payment or traditional billing techniques, on-line or through mail.

A fulfillment facility i.e. shipment of goods to customers. It can be file download mechanism over the web in case of software or information

Procedure to handle warrantees claims or returns

Customer service – often through email, on-line forms FAQ's etc.

In addition there could be a function to show the order status to the customer.

The biggest product categories include computer products, books, music, financial services, entertainment, home electronics, apparel, gifts and flowers, toys, travel services, tickets and information. One should visit web sites that are rated in top ten e-commerce sites such as www.amazon.com, www.1-800-flowers.com, www.dell.com

The factors that are the main drivers behind the e-commerce are:

Lower transaction cost – if an e-commerce site is properly implemented, automating processes on web can significantly reduce the order taking and customer service cost.

Lower price – It may be possible to offer products at lower prices due to low transaction cost, or to offer products that could not be offered before.

Integration into business cycle - a web site that is well integrated in to the business cycle can offer customers more information than previously available. For example, using FedEx on-line package tracking system, customer can check the whereabouts and delivery status of the consignment.

Flexibility - Customers don't need to go to anywhere and can shop from home at their leisure. The features that web site offers give customers ability to:

Configure products and see actual prices

Place customized orders
Search large catalogs

Compare prices offered by various vendors

Large Catalogs – A huge database of products of a company can be accessed on a web but it is difficult to fit it into paper catalog. For example Amazon sells 3,000,000 books.

Improved customer service – It is possible to interact with customers using automated tools at virtually no cost. Email is used to get customer feed back and to respond customer queries.

There are enormous challenges facing e-commerce sites in Pakistan. These are mainly due to lack of any system for handling payments, complex postal system, and non-existence of any regulatory environment. Therefore it is difficult to find true e-commerce site, but there are lot of good sites covering some elements of e-commerce i.e. product information, order forms and customer service. Few sites to visit are www.pakshopping.com, www.parkerpk.com, www.primebankpk.com.

CHAPTER 2

E-COMMERCE DEFINITIONS



INTRODUCTION

The term electronic commerce is heard frequently in corporate boardrooms, in management meetings, on the news, in newspapers (both hard copy and online). Electronic commerce is one of the most common business terms in use as we embark on 21st century. So what exactly is electronic commerce and will the term still be important in the years to come, or will it be just another overused and discarded buzzword?

DEFINITION OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

We define Electronic commerce as:

The use of electronic transmission mediums to engage in the exchange, including buying and selling, of products and services requiring transportation, either physically or digitally, from location to locations.

Electronic commerce involves all sizes of transaction bases. As one would expect, e-commerce requires the digital transmission of transaction information. While transactions are conducted via electronic devices, they may be transported using either traditional physical shipping channels, such as a ground delivery service, or digital mechanisms, such as the download of a product from the Internet.

The Internet and the WWW provide the enabling mechanisms to foster the growth of e-commerce.

ELECTRONIC BUSINESS

The term electronic commerce is restrictive, however, and does not fully encompass the true nature of the many types of information exchanges occurring via telecommunication devices. The term electronic business also includes the exchange of information not directly related to the actual buying and selling of goods. Increasingly, businesses are using electronic mechanisms to distribute information and provide customer support. These activities are not "commerce" activities; they are "business" activities. Thus, the term electronic business is broader and may eventually replace the term electronic commerce. Although the term electronic commerce is used throughout this text, many of the activities described are more accurately classified as electronic business.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

In order for businesses to invest resources to exchange in electronic commerce, the benefits must exceed the costs. So what benefits can businesses potentially gain from engaging in electronic commerce?

Internet and web-based electronic commerce is more affordable than traditional EDI

Internet and web-based electronic commerce can reach a more geographically dispersed customer base

Internet and web-based electronic commerce allows more business partners to be reached than with traditional EDI

Procurement processing costs can be lowered

Cost of purchase can be lowered

Reductions in inventories

Lower cycle times

Lower sales and marketing costs

CRYPTOGRAPHY ISSUES

Cryptography is a method of mathematical encoding used to transform messages into an unreadable format in an effort to maintain confidentiality of data. The important point to understand is that the encryption process transforms a clear text message into a non-decipherable form known as cipher text.

PRIVACY ISSUES

Privacy is a basic American value, in the information age and in every age. It must be protected. We need an electronic bill of rights for this electronic age. The vast amount of data that can be collected on the internet and because of its global nature, private citizens worldwide have expressed concerns over their rights to privacy. Shoppers browsing through various stores in a physical shopping mall, stopping to glance at a specific item in specific store, do not have to worry that their every move is recorded

EDI, ELECTRONIC COMMERCE AND THE INTERNET

EDI refers to the exchange of electronic business documents, i.e. purchasing orders, invoices, Etc., between applications. The exchange involves no paper, human intervention, and takes place in a matter of seconds. EDI documents are formatted using published standards. These standards were developed by large businesses during the 1970's and are now under the control of ANSI X12 subcommittee, which sets EDI standards in north America. EDI requires a network connection between the two companies exchanging business documents, called trading partners. Traditionally, this has required a dedicated leased line or a connection to a value-added network connection.

CHAPTER 3

CAPACITY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

