GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE

Electronic, Mobile, and Social Technologies: Their Future in the Service Industry

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This special issue of the International Journal of E-Services and Mobile Applications is devoted to the subject of Electronic/Mobile/Social Technologies and their future in the Service Industry. The wide deployments and convergences of Electronic, Mobile, and Social (EMS) information communication technologies increasingly determine competitiveness in the service industry. At the same time, significant increases in the number of EMS service and consumer demands create multichannel environments for EMS commerce that have changed consumer behavior. There is a need to apply robust research findings in the appropriate management, organizational, and behavioral research related to services innovation, quality, pricing, promotion, design and delivery with resulting consumer behavioral outcomes to forecast the future of the service industry. Overall, EMS services and consumer behavioral outcomes in different technological settings is becoming a subject of interest for both practitioners and academic researchers. In this special issue, we invited manuscripts from researchers and practitioners on subjects related to EMS information communication technologies and consumer behavior. The guest editors of this Special Issue were JungKun Park, University of Houston, and Brian N. Rutherford, Kennesaw State University, USA. The deadline for submission was August 31, 2011. A total of thirty-four manuscripts were submitted. Of these, four manuscripts made it through three or more review cycles using more than twenty reviewers.

The first article titled, “Attitude Toward Product Messages on Social Media: An Examination of Online Shopping Perspectives Among Young Consumers” is written by Christina Chung and Kristine Austria from Ramapo College of New Jersey, USA. This paper investigates consumers’ motivations behind social media usage and attitudes toward product messages on social media and ultimately, how the product messages affect consumer online shopping behavior. A conceptual model is proposed based on the Uses and Gratifications theory which emphasizes the concepts of hedonic shopping value and impulsive shopping behavioral outcomes. The primary findings explain that social media interaction and information needs are strongly related to attitudes toward product messages on social media, but is not related to entertainment need. Positive attitudes toward product messages on social media increase online shoppers’ hedonic value and stimulates impulsive shopping behavior. The results imply that understanding what
kind of information consumers want to obtain from social media sites and how they want to interact on social media are crucial for online business success.

The second article is “Adoption Process for VoIP: The UTAUT Model” written by Eduardo Esteva-Armida, Tecnológico de Monterrey Guadalajara Campus, Mexico and Alberto Rubio-Sanchez, University of Incarnate Word, USA. The main purpose of this research paper is to test the appropriateness of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model in the context of end-user consumption of voice over Internet phone services. The study shows which factors have the greatest impact on the adoption process of VoIP technology in the US market in addition to the interactions of the main variables in the model (Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, and Behavioral Intention to Adopt) using Partial Least Squares (PLS). The model also investigates demographic factors including four moderator variables (Gender, Age, Experience, and Voluntariness of Use). The results support most of the relationships identified in the original UTAUT model in the Internet phone service settings. More specifically, Performance Expectancy appears to have the strongest influence on the Intention of a consumer to adopt a new technology.

The third paper titled “The Influence of UGC on Consumers’ Information Process on Service Failure” is written by Te-Lin Chung, Iowa State University, USA. The manuscript explores the influence of user-generated content (UGC) over social media on consumers’ post-purchase information process when a service failure occurs. Fairness theory is employed as a theoretical background of the study, which regards counterfactual thinking and judgments of blame as two key constructs in processing negative experiences. In a scenario-based experimental study, the presence of UGC in three ways: positive, negative, or not presented, and two transaction media: online or offline, were manipulated in an experimental settings. The results indicated that negative UGC, compared to positive UGC or no UGC, has a significant influence on count factual thinking about others, on judgments of blame, and intentions to complain. The findings contribute to current literature on UGC and social media study in service environments with the aspect of service failure that is rarely discussed. It also adds value to the literature on fairness theory, which has primarily focused on offline contexts.

The last paper titled “What Drives Online Compulsive Buying: The Role of Consumer Skill, Knowledge, and Facilitating Conditions” is authored by Eun-Jung Lee, Kent State University, USA, Seung Sin Lee, Konkuk University, South Korea, and JungKun Park, University of Houston, USA. This paper examines the influence of perceived skill and knowledge, facilitating conditions, attitude toward online shopping, and actual online purchasing behavior on the tendency to engage in compulsive buying online with the moderating effect of self-esteem. The results of this study show that consumers’ online skill and facilitating conditions have a positive impact on attitude toward online buying. However, there was no direct relationship between online skill and actual online buying. As expected, active online shopping coupled with low esteem may potentially lead to a tendency to engage in compulsive online shopping. Consumers with high self-esteem have more consistency between attitude toward online buying and actual online buying.

This special issue of IJESMA is a unique occasion to address multiple perspectives on the subject of electronic/mobile/social technologies and their future in the service industry. Four quality manuscripts are provided to address both managerial and academic relevant topics. These manuscripts will aid in better understanding consumers use and factors that influence consumer’s use of technologies within the service industry.

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JungKun Park is an Associate Professor of E-commerce at the College of Technology (HDCS), University of Houston (USA). He received his Master’s Degree in Economics in University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Doctoral Degree in Retailing and Consumer Behaviour at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. His research appeared in many academic journals. Dr. Park’s major research area is technology and consumers in retailing covering electronic, mobile and ubiquitous commerce consumer behaviour.