Preface

Organizations invest considerable time and money in developing and maintaining an electronic presence on the Internet. Large financial resources go toward the costs of technology, website design and software. However, successful e-commerce endeavors must look beyond the technology to ensure profitability. The Social and Cognitive Impacts of e-Commerce on Modern Organizations addresses the important questions: What motivates consumers to shop online? What determines which products they shop for? How can technology aid customers in decision-making? The chapters in this important new book examine the motivations of online shoppers and provide theoretical and practical examples of how organizations can maximize their electronic commerce endeavors by paying close attention to consumer habits and motives. These chapters, written by experts from around the world, address the most relevant and timely issues in the application and utilization of electronic commerce. Some of the topics covered include: e-government, unsolicited email, Internet alliances, consumer motives and technology trust. From the government of Scotland to small businesses and everything in between, the topics covered span organizations of many types and sizes.

Chapter 1, entitled, “Online Shopping for Positive and Negative Reinforcement Products” by Patricia Sorce, Victor Perotti and Stanley Widrick, Rochester Institute of Technology (USA), describes the emotional factors that influence online shopping. The authors apply operant conditioning theory to the question of which products and services consumers will shop for and buy online. The results of this exploratory study lay the groundwork for future research by introducing negative and positive reinforcement as a predictor of Internet shopping behavior.

Chapter 2, entitled, “Online Shopping Experience – A Conceptualization and Preliminary Results” by Maggie Guo, Texas A&M University (USA), focuses on consumer behavior in online retailing environments, attempts to
give a review of current research on online consumer behavior and suggests a research agenda for the future. The chapter offers a model of the online shopping experience that examines the cognitive and affective aspects of the shopping behavior.

Chapter 3, entitled, “An Expanded E-commerce Process Model Serv- ing E-commerce Entrepreneurs” by David Paper, Eric Pedersen, Utah State University (USA), describes the process that small business owners use to make decisions about electronic commerce ventures. This important chapter expands on the authors’ earlier works and presents a model that describes the e-commerce process of small to medium sized enterprises.

Chapter 4, entitled, “Internet Shopping Model And Customer Percep- tions – A Study Of UK Supermarkets” by Xianzhong Mark Xu, Martyn Roberts, University of Portsmouth (United Kingdom), examines electronic grocery shopping, a subset of B2C e-commerce. This chapter examines the Internet shopping models utilized by UK supermarkets and investigates Internet shoppers’ attitudes and behaviors towards these models.

Chapter 5, entitled, “A Psychographic Approach to Segmenting the Electronic Shopper” by Leo R. Vijayasarathy, Colorado State University (USA), utilizes a psychological paradigm to examine Internet shoppers. This chapter examines different types of shoppers (home, community and apathetic) and evaluates their use of e-commerce. In addition to examining different types of shoppers the study concludes that traditional demographics such as age, gender, and so forth do not affect shopping preferences.

Chapter 6, entitled, “A Negotiation Agent System in E-Commerce” by Chuan-Feng Chiu and Timothy K. Shih, Tamkang University (Taiwan), describes an agent system used to aid buyers in decision-making. The proposed system assists the user in handling complex processes simultaneously and decreases the amount of time needed to compute processes. The authors then examine how this system can improve the Internet shopping experiences of consumers and businesses.

Chapter 7, entitled, “Business Interactions in A Virtual Organisation – Visualising Inter-Organisational Systems Complexity” by Karin Axelsson, Linköping University (Sweden), focuses on the complexity of inter-organisational systems (IOS) and proposes a model to analyze business interaction, the Business Action Theory (BAT) phase model. The paper describes how the proposed model can explain and create visual models of interorganizational business interactions such as business networks and virtual organizations.

Chapter 8, entitled, “Issues and Perceptions Of Unsolicited Commercial Electronic Mail” by Jack T. Marchewka, Chang Liu and Charles G. Petersen, Northern Illinois University (USA), discusses the problems associated with
the enormous amount of unsolicited email sent and received. The chapter focuses on the costs to personal and organizational productivity, the threats of computer viruses and worms, the privacy concerns, the use of email filters, and other various attempts to control unsolicited email. A brief discussion of the call for legislative action to control and limit the flow of unsolicited email is included.

Chapter 9, entitled, “Impact of E-Learning during SARS Outbreak in Hong Kong” by Eric Wong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Hong Kong), examines the use of electronic learning as a contingency measure during the SARS outbreak in 2003. The chapter identifies some of the practical difficulties involved in evaluating the academic performance of two groups of engineering students taking an introductory course - one group enrolled in e-learning and the other through the traditional classroom approach.

Chapter 10, entitled, “E-CRM Analytics and Data Integration” by Hamid R. Nemati, Christopher D. Barko and Ashfaaq Moosa, The University of North Carolina (USA), examines the value of integrating offline and online customer relationship management efforts. The results presented in this chapter suggest that organizations can gain significant competitive advantage through the use of E-CRM.

Chapter 11, entitled, “E-Government Scottish Style: Recent Developments and Some Emerging Issues” by Feng Li, University of Newcastle upon Tyne (United Kingdom), discusses e-government efforts in Scotland. This chapter looks at the discrepancy between e-government theory and practice in Scotland and examines some of the reasons for the gap. The authors look at the attitudes and practices that inhibit successful e-government efforts and offer suggestions for future efforts.

Chapter 12, entitled, “The Impact of the Role of the Government of Egypt on Electronic Commerce Development and Growth” by Sherif Kamel, American University in Cairo (Egypt), and Ahmed Ghoneim and Sherine Ghoneim, Cairo University (Egypt), examines the role of the Egyptian government in introducing, diffusing and institutionalizing electronic commerce. Specifically, this chapter describes the role of the government in regulating e-commerce in Egypt.

Chapter 13, entitled “Linking Technological Compatibility and Operational Capacity Constraints to Communication Technology Adoption” by Elliot Bendoly, Emory University and Fred Kaefer, Loyola University Chicago (USA), investigates the relationship between the willingness of business partners to use various communication technologies and a firm’s operational capacity to accommodate the product/service demands of these potential partners as it relates to electronic data interchange (EDI). The
chapter offers some practical advice for managers considering maximizing their EDI investment.

Chapter 14, entitled, “Pushing Elusive Alliances into the Light- Discovering the Value of Informal Networks on the Internet” by Rian van der Merwe and Leyland Pitt, Curtin University of Technology (Australia), uses the Social Network Theory as a framework to identify what the authors describe as “elusive alliances”. These alliances are informal links and social networks on the Internet that can be valuable because of the social capital embedded in them. The authors discuss ways to capitalize on these networks.

Chapter 15, entitled, “Technology Trust in Internet-Based Interorganizational Electronic Commerce” by Pauline Ratnasingam, Central Missouri State University and Paul Pavlou, University of Southern California (USA), proposes a theoretical model to examine the effect technology trust has on business-to-business electronic commerce. The authors examine the perceived benefits from technology trust and evaluate its effect on organizational success.

Assuring successful e-commerce endeavors demands that organizations pay careful attention not only to establishing a web presence, but also to evaluating the motives and apprehensions of their potential customers. The chapters in the book address some of the key issues for businesses, governments and educational institutions to consider as they implement and refine their e-commerce initiatives. From evaluating consumer technology use to investigating how agent technology can be utilized to assist customers, the chapters in this book provide a timely look at the most current issues in electronic commerce. Academics, students, researchers, and managers will benefit from the practical examples and theoretical guidance offered in this book. As always, your valuable comments and feedback will be greatly appreciated.

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Editor
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