Preface

With rapid growth of the Internet and globalization of market, the retail sector has become an increasingly competitive and dynamic in nature. Business and marketing activities are affected by the infusion of Internet technologies and are revolutionizing constantly all aspects of marketing. E-marketing and E-commerce are the two important terms in the new Internet-based business domain. E-tailing a sub domain is defined as retailing conducted online. The e-tailing industry is expanding rapidly with strong early life cycle growth. Globally over the past five years, online retail has grown at a 17% Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR), with growth particularly strong in Latin America (27%) and Asia Pacific (25%).

Despite the recent economic slowdown, the e-tailing sector enjoys continued growth due to increasing worldwide internet penetration, in fact posing a threat to Brick and Mortar stores. The retail industry is in the midst of a revolution. In this ever increasing digital world, the retail store as we know is changing. Globalisation, evolving technology, big data, e-commerce and sustainability are just some of the forces driving the change. Retailers are increasingly leveraging their presence across channels of catalogue, web, stores and kiosks, to increase their share of the customer’s wallet and expand across consumer segments. The bricks-and-mortar format has begun to look different from the store of five years ago and distribution channels are no longer singular or even multi – they are fusing. Terms such as cross-channel and omni-channel are now synonymous with this change and integral to driving the retail landscape of the future.

Globally, an “achievement-oriented society” has consolidated and the customer has become smart and hybrid in nature. Manufacturers are able to predict customers’ wishes with remarkable accuracy as a result of the automated evaluation of purchasing and search patterns. The increased Internet connectivity of domestic appliances and building technology also provides a clearer insight into consumer behavior. This leads to highly personalized consumer profiles, which companies can utilize in order to make precise product recommendations and transmit individualized promotional messages.

Globally, the merger of stationary retailing and e-commerce has made major advances. So-called Everywhere Commerce is now widespread. The retail sector targets customers through a variety of channels. Showrooms with a range of delivery options are a common sight in cities.

Shopping is possible at any time and the goods are delivered to the designated address immediately. Recent studies on consumer shopping behaviour indicate that multichannel shoppers show a significantly higher value and frequency of purchase than single channel shoppers.
ABOUT THE BOOK

This book has been woven with global economy as its loom and e-tailing as its thread. This is the result of collective work among a numbers of researchers in the United State of America, Italy, China, Muscat, South Africa, Bangkok, Malaysia and India. This is a unique effort that gives an in-depth and global insight in to the way e-commerce, e-tailing and online marketing has evolved over a period of time. The book provides not only strong managerial insight but also plenty of empirical research evidence, as well as fresh conceptualizations to comprehend the intricacies of the fast changing world of e-tailing. The diversity of global perspective presented in this book with major emphasis on emerging markets like India and China will help to illuminate the sphere of e-tailing in a way that cannot be found in a text book. We hope the content of the chapter will be useful for Managers, Researchers, Students and Policy Makers.

A key feature of the book is that it taps into the latest research studies from across the globe and in some cases it comes up with the new research findings. This aspect helps to ensure that book is most up to-date possible and has the sharpest edge in discussing best practices in e-retailing.

The book intelligently has been engraved to be equally valuable for individuals, organizations, and society as a whole. It provides new prologues and new perceptions to use e tailing to those familiar with the concept and to beginner with same ease. It aims to aid the marketing strategist emphasizing the use of e-tailing in producing, communicating, and delivering online offerings to the consumer. The book through online marketing intelligence helps in identifying useful models for customer motivations and aspirations for using e-retailing.

BOOK ORGANIZATION

The book has been efficiently organized to give a clear understanding on the subject. It has 6 Sections that are concluding with Case Study at the end. The book covers both developed and developing economies in relation to the growth and trend of e-tailing.

Section 1 has two chapters which enhances the understating of the subject. Chapter 1, the introductory chapter provides background and tools for a strong comprehensive understanding of the concepts pertaining to electronic commerce and electronic business. The author argues that the adoption of e-business has helped companies to gain a competitive edge over their peers in terms of reduced costs, increased revenue streams, and greater customer satisfaction. Chapter 2 basically contributes to identify, analyze, and address global challenges encountered by E-commerce firms in selected Jurisdictions across the globe. It is argued by the author that both principal and agent should be actively engaged in the mediation process - which includes contract formation stages and other phases highlighted within the chapter.

Section 2 has 4 chapters which focus on the E-Tailing Opportunities & Challenges in Emerging Economies. This context is extremely timely for emerging economies where E-Tailing Opportunities are rapidly spreading, has huge potential and scope for organizations willing to change their offering and communication strategy. The section covers two biggest Emerging economies: India and China for discussing the subject.

Chapter 3 provides insights on how E-tailing is catching up quickly with the offline stores and expanding its reach in emerging economies. The Author describes how Education, technology, and growing demand from middle class consumers are the driving forces of e-tailing in emerging nations. Chapter 4 is in a form of case study and discusses how China’s e-tailing market been growing at an astonishing
rate and discusses the importance of cultural and social factors that differentiate China’s e-tailing success from other global players. The author believes that e-tailing might become one of the most effective ways for foreign retailers to enter the Chinese retail market. Chapter 5 & Chapter 6 focus on the Indian market and provide stepwise penetration of e-commerce and e-retailing in the Indian market. The various modes of commerce and net penetration impact have been demonstrated in the chapters. The authors have suggested that by understanding the utility of e-commerce technology, learning lessons from evolutionary past and knowing absolved present position, this additive knowledge can be extrapolated by electronic retailers to capture golden opportunity in near future.

Section 3 has 2 Chapters which focus on the Virtual communities: The people power in E-Retailing. Virtual communities collect individuals to come together for making relationships, sharing common goals and interests, as well as getting social supports.

Chapter 7 explains how virtual communities influences user motivation, adoption and usage pattern. Members in virtual communities mutually discuss products or brands from multiple dimensions, such as prices, effectiveness, reputation, usage experiences, or potential problems thus impacting buying and disposing of products and services.

Chapter 8 empirically explains how online opinion leaders influence the purchase intentions in e-retailing. The author believes that Opinion leaders still play an important role in buying decisions, although this role needs to be interpreted in relation to the changes in market dynamics and consumer behavior introduced by Web 2.0. The author argues that aspects of trust, remains the central elements in the marketing methods used by e-retailers.

Section 4 has 2 chapters discussing the issues of Hybrid Consumer Behavior in Digital World. Consumers benefit from access to a wider variety of goods and sellers, greater convenience, improved possibilities to compare products and prices, and in some instances, lower prices. In addition, all users potentially benefit from better access to content and information, lower transaction costs, reduced environmental costs and wider benefits such as improved learning, innovation, and creativity. These variables frequently disrupt and change the behavior of consumer decision making.

Chapter 9 critically views how changing dynamics of retail has led to the omni channel model where physical stores and online merge seamlessly to offer a comprehensive shopping experience to attract consumers. Thus, the business model needs to be powerful as also viable and sustainable. The author argues that E-Tailer needs to adhere to the “Basic Retail Model” as also have a well-defined revenue model so that a balance can be strike between revenue generation and super offerings to attract and retain the hybrid consumer. Chapter 10 discusses significantly the young consumer towards e-tailing. The Author suggests that different researches should be conducted to understand the e-behavior and pattern of e-purchasing behavior of youth as they promise to be the most potential segment.

Section 5 contains 5 chapters which elaborates how to communicate and deliver the additional value in the online offering to the customers above what they already receive from their present suppliers via various channel i.e. Communicating and Delivering Value Online. Chapter 11 comprehends on global strategic approaches to social media campaigns to leverage UGC (User Generated Content) across all social media channels across various countries. The Author mentions that to capitalize on the efficiency of social media and its global reach, e-Retailers should use a global strategy instead of looking at social media contrasts in an individual country approach. Chapter 12 identifies the significant role of Media cannot be denied in the overall marketing of online retailing. Most of the social Medias are maximizing the utility of online retailers in current Market.
Preface

Chapter 13 discusses the relevance of Omni channel retailing in order to satisfy and retain the customers of online retail. The author suggests that to adopt Omni channel, it is necessary to understand the psychology of digital shoppers, customer touch points, and actionable channels preferred by the customers. Chapter 14 analyses and compares the various logistic e-retailing logistics management companies in China. It discusses how the success of e-retailing depends on the successful logistics of the company. The author suggests that E-commerce companies or logistics companies should focus on 3 networks: physical logistics network, virtual network and customer marketing network.

Chapter 15 aims at discussing the concept of Internet Taxation, E-Retailing laws and regulations in Global Context. The Author also discusses broad outlines relating to taxability of E-Retailing transactions from VAT and CST angle under different scenarios and arguments in favor and against of taxing the e tailing transactions.

Section 6 is a case study of an online enterprise which failed in its operation. The case study mentions how a business model is absolutely important to the success of any e-tailing business. The author suggests that building the trust with online customers, since the company is living in the virtual web and making a personal ‘connection’ can do wonders. Investing significantly in customer service and winning their ‘trust’ is the key to the success of any e-tailing firm.

Shailja Dixit
Amity University, India

Amit Kumar Sinha
Amity University, India