GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE

Special Issue on m-Commerce and Social Networking:
The Current and Future of e-Commerce

Hongjiang Xu, Butler University, Indianapolis, IN, USA

The past three decades have witnessed a sea change in how goods and services have been provided to the consuming public. The rapid development of computing technology, both in terms of hardware and software, rewrote the fundamentals of commercial enterprise, beginning with the home computer and its revolutionary leap as a portal to the nascent internet, followed by the portability of the laptop and currently, widespread usage of smartphones and tablets. Like the axiomatic 'arms race for speed' between the cheetah and gazelle on the savannah, increasing consumer sophistication has driven the evolution of commercial activities from the centuries-old model of 'bricks and mortar' business to E-Commerce and its most current iteration, M-Commerce.

M-commerce includes any business activity conducted over a wireless telecommunications network. Mobile applications have become more popular among businesses and users. For example, location-based M-commerce delivers transactions to individuals in a specific location, at a specific time. Although M-commerce is powerful and helpful in many parts of business,

the new techniques and the acceptance and understanding of this technology for users have a conspicuous impact on business decisions. Mobile social networking members converse and connect with one another using cell phones or other mobile devices. Businesses seek to use M-commerce applications through social networks to reach for their customers. The merging of M-commerce and social networks has created new opportunities from both business and user perspectives.

A striking feature of this phenomenon is its global nature; formerly, international businesses frequently had a presence only in the most economically advance regions of the world. The birth and growth of the internet, alongside the miniaturization of computing devices and the exponential growth in computing power, allowed whole nations to leapfrog obsolescent, wired technologies, bringing the vast majority of the world's population, both those in industrialized nations as well as those in developing countries, into a planet-wide market of consumers, creating a new playing field in which well-funded and long-established

corporations found themselves competing with brash young start-ups staffed by a handful of talented, eager, and tech savvy entrepreneurs, which in turn, became major international corporations in their own right, with thousands of employees and a substantial impact on the global market.

The interplay between increasingly sophisticated consumers and businesses with a web presence desiring to provide goods and services gives rise to the need to understand what motivates consumers' decision making vis-à-vis M-Commerce. Increasingly, consumers' choices of what mobile transactions should be made, and which providers of goods and services merit their custom, are informed by their use of social media. A business may find that its success, or even its very survival, is predicated on understanding these forces driving consumers.

In this JECO special issue on M-Commerce and social networking, the very global nature of the phenomenon that has come about through these technological advancements is reflected in the geographical diversity of the research reported.

In the first paper, *Enhancing Mobile Advertising Effectiveness in Turkey through Peer Influence*, Gozem Guceri-Ucar examines the impact of peers on Turkish consumers using M-Commerce. Businesses, recognizing the importance of social media, have targeted specific marketing campaigns in an effort to draw consumers into their mobile commerce capabilities. It appears that involvement in the campaign does not foreshadow participation. However, peer influence can significantly change the landscape, moving the consumer from simple involvement to active participation in the mobile marketing campaign.

The following paper, *Requirements for Personalized m-Commerce: What Drives Consumers' Use of Social Networks?*, by Laura Becker and Key Pousttchi, explores the use of social media to provide tailor-made marketing to consumers who are readily identified as preexisting or likely potential customers, based upon their mobile commerce and social media

behaviors. Specifically, the paper addresses the social media Facebook as it is used by German consumers and businesses. The research shows the indirect impact on consumer decisions and perceptions resulting from such marketing campaigns, and the major differences such activities have on men using social media versus women in the same medium.

The subsequent paper, *The Effect of Perceived Security on Consumers' Intent to Use, Satisfaction and Loyalty to M-commerce in China*, by Hongjiang Xu, addresses the issue of M-commerce security and its impact on consumer perceptions and actions in the world's largest mobile market, China. Advancements in both E-commerce and M-commerce were met with increasingly sophisticated methods to attempt to penetrate the security of those systems. The research shows that consumers perception of the M-commerce security systems provided by a business has a significant impact not only on the consumer's likelihood of using the provider's M-commerce systems, but also has ramifications for that same consumer's loyalty to the company.

The fourth paper, *Does a Good Fit between Mobile Work Support Functions and Mobile Sales-Force Worker Tasks lead to Improved Work Performance?*, by Markus Lembach and Michael Lane, explores M-commerce in the context of German sales force behavior. Specifically, the research sought to find any correlations between mobile work support functions and the intention of sales force workers to use such functions. The results indicate that factors relating to location and time criticality positively impact the users' perception of the utility of the functions.

Finally, the last paper, *Retailer Adoption of Mobile Payment: A Qualitative Study*, by Krassie Petrova and Bo Wang, takes us to New Zealand, looks at the acceptance of M-commerce technology from the perspective of the merchant. The research shows that the perception of their customers' desire for M-commerce options guides small retailers in deciding whether or not to adopt such technology. Further, the convenience and efficiency of

accepting M-commerce payments impacts its adoption by businesses, as those who decide whether or not to adopt such methods must be educated in the benefits compared to more traditional methods of receiving payment.

This special issue increases the understanding of M-commerce applications and social networking and provides opportunities for researcher and practitioners to share their current research efforts and practice of M-commerce development and management. As a follow up to this special issue on M-commerce and social networking, JECO is in the process of assembling a subsequent special issue focusing on the social media aspect of the equation. As the process of technological advancement in both computing/communications devices and their software continues, alongside increasing numbers of consumers participating in social media, and the creation of novel social media platforms, the interplay between the two phenomena will continue to influence each other for the foreseeable future.

Hongjiang Xu
Guest Editor
JECO

Hongjiang Xu is an Assistant Professor in Management Information Systems with College of Business at Butler University. Prior to join Butler, she was an Assistant Professor at Central Michigan University. Her Ph.D. was completed at the University of Southern Queensland in Australia. She has a master of commerce in information systems degree from the University of Queensland in Australia. She is a member of AIS, IRMA, IACIS, and DSI. Her research interests are in the areas of information quality and security, accounting information systems, ERP systems, and electronic commerce.