

## Foreword

In the last decade Electronic Commerce has grown from basic trading models and the supply chain to more sophisticated applications focussing on customers, business partners, governments, virtual communities, standards, redress and reverse logistics. The principles of E-Commerce have been adopted and extended to other sectors such as E-Government, E-Research, E-Management, E-Health, E-Tourism, E-Banking, and E-Learning using the ubiquitous and universally accepted technology, the Internet. E-Commerce applications in the private sector has seen an era of rapid development and adoption, the crash and a renewed expansion due to the demands and benefits of the digital world, cost savings, mobility, ubiquity and extensive use of technology as well as globalisation.

A unique characteristic of E-Commerce is a 24/7 shop front to the global community. This feature has not only extended business worldwide, it is resulting in an appreciation of cultural and language issues in different parts of the world, universal payment methods and the need for international standards in disparate jurisdictions. E-Commerce has not only revolutionised the trading trends of the world it has transformed the back-end processes supporting businesses, modes of communication with partners and stakeholders, marketing techniques, information and records management methods and information and knowledge sharing within and outside organisations.

The increased adoption of E-Commerce worldwide is clear evidence of its diffusion in both developed and developing countries. However, E-Commerce entails technology-based transactions because of which a large percentage of the world's population is unable to take advantage of the benefits of E-Commerce. The digital divide due to access and ownership, income and education, rural population, developing nations, culture and age is even today, a barrier to E-Commerce.

This book, "Proliferation of the Internet Economy: E-Commerce for the Global Adoption, Resistance and Cultural Evolution", includes chapters addressing pertinent issues of E-Commerce development, adoption, proliferation in the global markets and the implications of digital divide supported with theories, frameworks, methodologies and implications for managers. It is definitely a valuable resource

with rich information on issues on the evolution of E-Commerce, adoption patterns, issues for further expansion and strategies for overcoming barriers. The first part of the book provides a general introduction to E-Commerce concepts and its global nature, the second part of the book is related to diffusion and adoption of E-Commerce depicting its proliferation in global markets and the third part of the book includes theoretical explanations of issues related to E-Commerce in developed and developing countries highlighting future implications for overcoming cultural and digital divide barriers.

I am honoured to have been asked to write the *Forward* to this book and am very pleased to recommend this book to readers who require an understanding of the developments in E-Commerce, its adoption and diffusion patterns, its adaptation in terms of the global context and barriers of the digital divide. It is high quality learning and reference resource on the proliferation of E-Commerce since its inception.

*Professor Mohini Singh*  
*RMIT University*  
*Australia*  
*August 2008*