Consumer Acceptance of Electronic Reading Devices

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the acceptance of electronic reading devices among newspaper subscribers. The theoretical framework is based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which was modified to suit the context. The empirical data was collected from 1084 newspaper subscribers. First, principal component analysis was used to examine the consumers’ attitudes towards electronic reading devices. Based on the analysis, five distinct factors in relation to consumers’ willingness to adopt electronic reading devices were found: ‘Eco-consciousness’, ‘Social prestige’, ‘Ease of use’, ‘Enjoyment value’ and ‘Extra features’. Second, based on the results of the factor analysis, consumers were grouped into four groups using cluster analysis. These groups were: Enjoyment seeking consumers, Eco-consciousness consumers, Serious and practical consumers, and Social consumers. Finally, the authors examined how these consumer groups differ in their intention to use electronic reading devices, and found several interesting differences.

Keywords: Electronic Reading Devices, Information Technology, Newspaper Industry, Segmentation, Tablet Computers, Technology Acceptance

INTRODUCTION

Mobile devices have become an integral part of our life as a personal communication medium and as a tool to express oneself (Karjaluoto et al., 2005; Liang & Wei, 2004). Mobile devices and the ecosystem that has emerged have attracted considerable research attention in recent years. Among the research areas are mobile phone acceptance (Karjaluoto et al., 2005), mobile advertising and marketing (Barnes, 2002; Scharl et al., 2005) and mobile services (Westerlund et al., 2009; Vatanparast, 2010; Phan & Daim, 2011). In a more fine grained fashion, studies have also been conducted regarding user experience of portable reading devices (Pattuelli & Rabina, 2010; Clark et al., 2008) and reading processes (Scholnik, 2001).

DOI: 10.4018/jitr.2013010102
Consumer research has still devoted limited attention to the underlying reasons for the adoption of mobile devices. Exception being Karjaluoto et al. (2005), who found that price is major factor for buying a mobile phone. Still, the nascent area of electronic reading devices lacks research on the underlying reasons for electronic reading device acceptance. It is however noted that there has been qualitative interview based research on the consumer attitudes towards book digitization and usage of electronic reading devices (Chen & Granitz, 2011) but a large scale study depicting the reasons for the adoption of these devices is still lacking.

As the market of table devices and various electronic reading devices is increasing rapidly and digital media is increasingly consummated via these devices it is pertinent to understand the adoption of these devices. In here we use broad term electronic reading device (encompassing Samsung Galaxy Tab, Microsoft Surface, Kindle Fire and other similar sized color screen devices) but survey focused to most used device in Finland that is Apple iPad.

Hence, this research aims to address this by focusing on the individual level attitudes toward electronic reading devices. Therefore, our research question can be stated as:

What are the key factors driving consumer acceptance of electronic reading devices?

This article is organized as follows: first literature review is conducted which is followed by the presentation of research design. Then analysis and results are provided. Finally conclusions are drawn.

LITERATURE REVIEW

First we provide an overview of electronic media devices and the publishing industry to lay a common ground for understanding of adoption of such devices in the context of newspaper markets. Then we continue to the acceptance of technology discussion.

Publishing Industry and Electronic Media Devices

Electronic reading devices such as Amazon’s Kindle fire, Samsung Galaxy Tab, Microsoft Surface and Apple’s iPad are an interesting area for research as they create numerous new opportunities for both publishers and consumers. The devices are primarily designed for the purposes of reading digital content such as newspapers and magazines, and some have the capacity for surfing the Internet and using other kinds of applications. We collectively label these devices as electronic reading devices as their common denominator is the capacity to provide consumers readable content such as newspapers and magazines. This also sets us apart from other handheld devices such as smart phones and PDAs as their intrinsic function is different. These devices provide opportunities for consumers to enjoy enhanced electronic reading experiences (Burk 2001), similar haptic and hedonic experiences that for example Apple iPhone provides (Arruda-Filho, Cabusas & Dholakia, 2010), as well as other experiential benefits (Chen & Granitz, 2010).

The mobile device market, specifically the niche of tablet computers or electronic reading devices, is a typical technology push driven market, where products are created ahead of the recognition of consumer needs (e.g. Gerstheimer & Lupp, 2004) and therefore the mobile device development is based on consumers’ possible future needs. Therefore, the companies that best hunch the technologies and services of the future will be the leaders in that area (see e.g., Hamel & Prahalad, 1991; Kumar, 1997; Nagel, 2003). Understanding the acceptance of electronic reading devices is therefore an important phenomenon for device manufacturers in addition to those industries that apply the underlying mobile technology (application developers, application software developers and others).

Consequently, if companies are able to facilitate the acceptance of electronic reading devices, it creates lucrative opportunities for digital service development, as new types of
Explaining Experts’ Perceptions of Knowledge Management Effectiveness
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