

INTERNET ETHICS

E-BUSINESS ETHICS

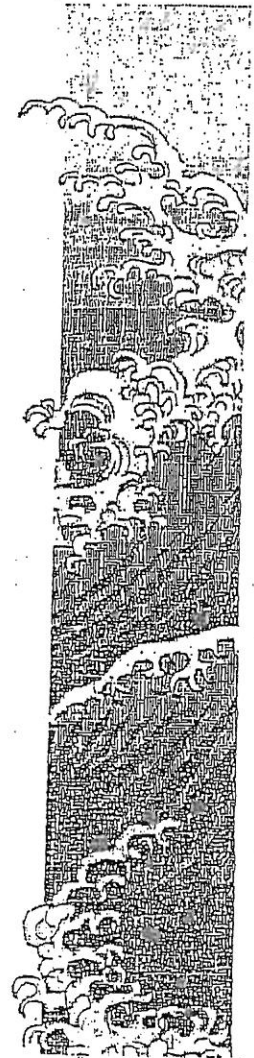
Do we create a “new ethics”, or
“netiquette”, to respond to the
revolutionary change?

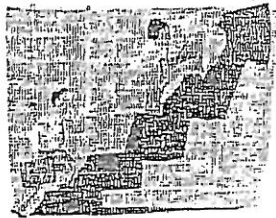
or

Are established models of “good business
practice” simply in need of new focus?

SOME FEATURES OF E-BUSINESS

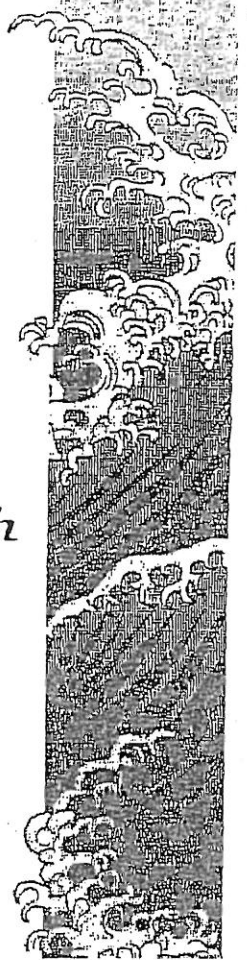
- Reach / Visibility
- Inclusive / Exclusive
- Networking
- Speed
- Skill / Training Needs
- Information Clutter
- Interactive





PROGRESS ?

- ⌘ *Company Reform e.g. Co-op Bank, Body Shop...*
- ⌘ *Professional Associations e.g. CIM, British Computer Society...*
- ⌘ *Government Legislation e.g. Computer Misuse Act, Data Protection Act ...*



-
- ⌘ *Regulatory Agencies e.g. Ofstet, Financial Services Authority, Competition Commission ...*
 - ⌘ *Industry Groups e.g. Consortium of Retail Companies, Federation of Small Businesses ...*
 - ⌘ *Stakeholder Pressures e.g. Consumer Campaigns, Trade Unions, Supply Chain Networks ...*
 - ⌘ *Market Forces, e.g. Reputation as an asset, Friedman's "rules of the game" ...*



Internet Ethics, Ethics in General; How do you use it? Where do you find it?

- Check out Chapter 50 in any typical Functional textbook!!

A quick review which is often never taught because of lack of time

- Look at specific texts e.g. Crane A & Matten D (2007) Business Ethics, Oxford, OUP

A bit heavy for your studies but you could dip into or use their case material.

- Strategy sections of general texts or specific texts

Normally covered in the business objectives and environment sections. Part of a typical PEST or PESTLE analysis

Add an ethical element to your coverage of all areas to give it an extra dimension/perspective. If only to ask the question.. "How would the analysis change if ethical, CSR, Stakeholder approaches were adopted?"

- On the Internet:

Why not use a "made simple" type book?

Jonathan Groucott & Paul Griseri (2004) Mastering e-Business, London, Palgrave

This has the excellent "The Internet is in its infancy..." get out for you to make up an answer.

- Academic articles give you the highest sources

On whether we ought to change our ethics (debating Piracy)

Norman Bowie (2005) Digital Rights and Wrongs: Intellectual Property in the Information Age, Business and Society Review 110:1, pp 77-96

states that we should stick to our traditional ethics and fight piracy.

Lawrence Lessig (2002) The Future of Ideas: The Fate of the Commons in a Connected World, New York, Random House

states that the Internet has revolutionised relationships so radically that we should invent new ethics and new business models. He believes that it has empowered the "weak" consumer to win against previously all powerful monopoly producers.

- Read and use book reviews

What is new or unique about Internet Activities?

(Adapted from Langford, Duncan (2000) Internet Ethics, London, Macmillan)

- Global Scale
- Anonymity
- Interactivity
- Reproducibility
- Uncontrollability

What problems/opportunities do you see for.....?

- Customers
- Marketers/Sellers
- Managing People
- Managing Suppliers
- Producing/Distributing

A Digest of Authors' Concerns

Some of these "concerns" are extrapolated from the authors' comments rather than appearing as specific chapters of bullet points. It is interesting to note whether authors bother to focus on ethics at all, or are concerned with "efficient" systems merely stating general issues to avoid negative reactions.

Problems with E-Commerce

(from Beynon-Davies, P. (2004) E-Business, London, Palgrave)

- Trust
- Reintermediation (brokerage)
- Information rich and poor
- Technological standards
- Cost of computer-related mistakes and errors

An e-commerce customer is "any actor consuming products or services, whether tangible or intangible, using e-commerce".

This includes

- Readers of Web pages
- Online subscribers to mail lists
- Direct purchasers of intangible goods such as software and graphic art
- Indirect purchasers of tangible goods such as books and CDs

Protecting Online Communities and Society

(from Rowley, J. (2002) E-Business, Basingstoke, Palgrave)

Cybercrime

- Hacking
- Fraud
- Infringement of Intellectual property
- Offensive material

Regulation and Taxation

- Jurisdiction

- Regulation

British Advertising Standards Agency (ASA)

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

www.ntia.doc.gov

Advertising

Financial Services

Defamation

Business Communications

- Taxation

Data Protection

(Data Protection Act 1998)

Information should be

- Processed fairly and lawfully
- Accurate and up to date
- Held no longer than necessary
- Secure
- Not transferred to and country outside the EU unless that country ensures adequate level of protection for personal data

Contracts

Intellectual Property

- Copyright
- Patents
- Trademarks, trade names & domain names

Security

- Encryption
- Digital signatures
- Public key infrastructures (PKIs)
- Secure electronic transaction (SET)
- Firewalls

Privacy

Trust

Being a good netizen

Ethical Issues in IT Business and E-Business

(from Richard T. De George (2003) The Ethics of Information Technology and Business, Oxford, Blackwell)

The Myth of Amoral Computing and IT

- Ignorance syndrome
- Complexity syndrome
- Virtual reality syndrome

The Double Click Case

Trust

- Trust and the Web
- Customers, trust and e-business

Privacy, tracking, data mining and one-to-one marketing

E-business, privacy and risk

Business to business

Monopoly

E-Business, Initial Public Offerings (IPOS) and the New Economy

- Creative use of general accepted accounting principles (GAAP)
- Questionable use of stock options and IPOS tactics
- Self interested board of directors
- Loss of objectivity by analysts

Taxation of E-Business

The IT Industry

- Responsibility and software
- Licenses
- Legal Liability

Ethical Issues on the Internet

- Internet and its Governance
- Domain names
- Encryption, security and business
- Anonymity, secrecy and the Internet
- Spamming
- Anonymity, security and responsibility
- Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) 1998
- Web pages
- Pornography versus censorship
- Pornography and children
- The digital divide
- Globalisation
- Expert Systems
- Lack of adequate international background organisations

Security and Reliability for e-Business

(from Papazoglou, M. & Ribbers, P (2006) e-Business, Organisational and Technical Foundations, Chichester, Wiley)

- Reliability and Quality
- Trust
- Risk
- Security
- Availability
- Secure communications
- Digital certification and trusted 3rd parties
- Legal constraints

Ethics in e-Commerce

(from Tassabehji, Rans (2003) Applying e-Commerce in Business, London, Sage)

- Introduce policies
- Revise contracts
- Raise awareness
- Identify tax and legal constraints
- Detect Cybercrime
- Identify liabilities
- Protect rights

Creating a new relationship between Buyers and Sellers

(from Baier-Stein, D.B. & MacAaron, A. (2005) The New Marketing Conversation, Ohio, Thomson)

- Need for new approach
- Need for training
- Change the tone from "Me Me" to "You You"
- Engage with the conversation
- Integrate web and other media
- Multiple personalities
- E-motions

New Rules of the Game

(from Li, Feng (2007) What is E-Business? How the Internet Transforms Organisations, Oxford, Blackwell)

- Kevin Kelly's 12 New Rules for the Networked economy
- Dumb power of ubiquitous computing yields smart results
- Anticipate the cheap
- The most valuable things should be given free
- Grow first-profits later
- Give away power at the top of organisations
- Predict "churning" corporate casualties

Need for new Relationships and processes

(from Chen, Stephen (2004) Strategic management of E-Business, Chichester, Wiley)

The 3-Ds of e-Business Strategy

- Disintermediation/Reintermediation

The destruction of traditional supply chains, cutting out the “middle man” between manufacturer and customer and/or the need for new Internet “middle enablers” to allow the direct links between them

- Disaggregation/re-aggregation

The breakdown of all activities in the value chain which can be subcontracted or managed at a distance e.g. design, production, distribution, customer support etc or Internet/Intranet opportunities to integrate previously dispersed activities in a core management structure e.g. banking incorporates most related activities legal advice, insurance, travel etc as integrated activities

- Digital convergence

Linking value chains across industries. Networking via the convergent technology to achieve mutually agreed, synergistic benefits.



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- ☐ ANTI-DEPRESSIVE
- ☐ ANTI-FUNGUS
- ☐ ANTIBIOTICS
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 - ☐ CAPOTEN / CAPTOPRIL
 - ☐ COZAAR PLUS
- ☐ INFLUENZA
 - ☐ TAMIFLU

- ☐ SKIN CARE
 - ☐ PROTOPIC
 - ☐ ELIDEL
 - ☐ LIPIDIOSE LIPS
 - ☐ DAESES LIFTING SERUM
 - ☐ FACE DESIGNER
- ☐ SLEEPING AID

DIURETICS	CELEBREX	GLUCOBAY	MALARIA	BUSPAR /BESPAR
EPILEPSY	DICLOFENAC	STARLIX	MALARONE	MELATONIN
FIRST AID	ANTI-ACID	DIARRHOEA	MALE SEXUAL	SONATA
HAIR LOSS	NEXIUM	IMODIUM	CIALIS	STOP SMOKING
HANGOVER	OMEPRAZOLE	DIGESTIVE	LEVITRA	ZYBAN / ZYNTABAC
HEMORRIDS	RANITIDINE	PANKREOFLAT	VIAGRA	NICORETTE
HEPATITIS - B	PARJET	DIGISTOMEN	MIGRAINE	NIQUITIN CLEAR PATCH
HERPES	ANTI-ACNE	COMPLEX	IMIGRAN	
HYPERTENSION	ISOTREX GEL	DIURETICS	MAXALT	STOP SNORING
INFLUENZA	ANTI-AGING	FUROSEMIDE	ALMOGRAN	GOOD NIGHT
MALARIA	DHEA / BIOSTERON	ANANAS	MUSCLE PAIN	BREATHE RIGHT
MALE SEXUAL	ANTI-ALLERGIC	EPILEPSY	IBUPROFENO	TANNING
MIGRAINE	SINGULAIR	NEURONTIN	NASAL SPRAY	SELF TANNING
MUSCLE PAIN	TELFAST / ALLEGRA	FIRST AID	NASONEX SPRAY	TOWELETTE
NASAL SPRAY	ZIRTEC	NEXCARE	ACTONEL	SUN
OSTEOPOROSIS	CLARITYN/LORATIDINE	PACK	OSTEOPOROSIS	TRAVEL SICKNESS
PROSTATE	LIVOCAB/LEVOCABASTINE	HAIR LOSS	FOSAMAX	DRAMINE
PSORIASIS	ANTI-CELLULITIS	PIL FOOD	ACTONEL	BIODRAMINE
SCHIZOPHRENIA	SPECIFIC MINCEUR	PRIORIN - N	PROSTATE	TYROIDES
SEXUAL	CELULITE	PROPECIA	PROSCAR	PROPYCIL
LIFESTYLE	CELULIT ISDIN PATCHES	REVALID	PSORIASIS	EUTHYROX /
SKIN CARE	ANTI-DEPRESSIVE	REGAINE /	BONALFA/TACALCITOL	LEVOTHYROXINE
SLEEPING AID	CITALOPRAM	MINOXIDIL	SALVE	VITAMINS
STOP SMOKING	EFFEXOR / VENLAFAXINE	HANGOVER	SCHIZOPHRENIA	PHARMATON
STOP SNORING	FLUOXETINA	RESALIM	RISPERDAL	Q-10 MULTIVITAMIN
TANNING	SEROXAT	HEMORRIDS	SEXUAL LIFESTYLE	GINSENG
TRAVEL	MIRTAZAPINA BAYVIT	HEMORRANE	CONDOMS 12 PCS	MAGNESIUM
	PROZAC / LADOSE	CREME	LUBRICANT	GUARANA
			PLAY RING VIBRATOR	C-VIT CAPS
				SOLARAY VIT C TWO

<u>SICKNESS</u>	<u>ANTI-FUNGUS</u>	<u>HEMOAL</u>	<u>STAGE</u>
<u>TYROIDES</u>	<u>DIFLUCAN</u>	<u>CREME</u>	<u>SOLARAY VIT B COMPI</u>
<u>VITAMINS</u>	<u>FLUSPORAN</u>	<u>HEPATITIS - B</u>	<u>TOTAL CLEANSE LIVER</u>
<u>WEIGHT LOSS</u>	<u>SPORANOX</u>	<u>ZEEFIX</u>	<u>TOTAL CLEANSE KIDNI</u>
<u>WOMANS</u>	<u>ANTIBIOTICS</u>	<u>HERPES</u>	<u>PRIMUVIT</u>
<u>HEALTH</u>	<u>AMOXICILLIN</u>	<u>ZELTRIX/</u>	<u>SESMENOS PLUS</u>
<u>Shopping</u>	<u>AUGMENTIN</u>	<u>VALTRES</u>	<u>PRIMUVIT PLUS</u>
<u>Perfumes</u>	<u>CIPROFLOXACIN</u>	<u>FAMVIR</u>	<u>SOLARAY MAGNESIUM</u>
<u>Cosmetics</u>	<u>METRONIDAZOLE</u>	<u>ZOVIRAX/</u>	<u>REDOXON VITAMIN C</u>
<u>Top 10 Products</u>	<u>ZITROMAX</u>	<u>ACICLOVIR</u>	<u>ZINC</u>
<u>VENTOLIN/AEROLIN</u>	<u>AVELOX/MOXIFLOXACINE</u>		<u>VITAMIN E-500</u>
<u>PROPECIA</u>	<u>KLARICID</u>		<u>WEIGHT LOSS</u>
<u>CLALIS</u>	<u>ASTHMA</u>		<u>LIPOGRASIL</u>
<u>LEVITRA</u>	<u>SERETIDE ACCUHALER</u>		<u>REDUCTIL</u>
<u>VIAGRA</u>	<u>PULMICORT TURBUHALER</u>		<u>XENICAL</u>
<u>SONATA</u>	<u>SERETIDE</u>		<u>TURBO SLIM 24</u>
<u>REDUCTIL</u>	<u>VENTOLIN/AEROLIN</u>		<u>CHITOSAN FORTE</u>
<u>XENICAL</u>	<u>SPIRIVA HANDIHALER</u>		<u>FIT STRIPS</u>
<u>TAMIFLU</u>	<u>BIRTH CONTROL</u>		<u>BODY REDUCER PATCH</u>
<u>ACOMPLIA</u>	<u>DIANE 35</u>		<u>EXTRA</u>
<u>New Products</u>	<u>EVRA</u>		<u>TURBO SLIM MEN</u>
<u>REGAINE /</u>	<u>YASMIN</u>		<u>ACOMPLIA</u>
<u>MINOXIDIL</u>	<u>MINULET</u>		<u>WOMANS HEALTH</u>
<u>VITAMIN E-500</u>			<u>ESTRADIOL/ESTRADEL</u>
<u>ZINC</u>			<u>VANIQA</u>
			<u>ZELMAC</u>
			<u>VIACREME/DONNACRI</u>

Griffiths, Steve

From: UKMedix Newsletter [newsletter@ukmedix.co.uk]
 Sent: 15 November 2006 05:33
 To: Griffiths, Steve
 Subject: November Newsletter from UK Medix



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the parents dont like me

Ive tried so many things for my girlfriends parents to like me but they just dont

many young males using vgra?

I find myself in what feels like a bit of an awkward position, being (from what I can tell) significantly younger than the typical poster on the board.

Where's the oldies?!!!

No offence to the newbies of course but where's all us 'old' gals who I hope are still there chipping away!

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NETIQUETTE ABSTRACTS : 17 November 2006

Title: Ethical Issues in the Music Industry Response to Innovation and Piracy.

Authors: Easley, Robert F.¹ reasley@nd.edu

Source: Journal of Business Ethics; Dec2005, Vol. 62 Issue 2, p163-168, 6p

Document Type: Article

Subject Terms: *BUSINESS ethics
*INTERNET
*MUSIC trade
*PIRACY (Copyright)
*SOUND recording industry
COMPUTER files

Author-Supplied Keywords: disruptive innovation
music piracy
recording industry

NAICS/Industry Codes: 5122 Sound Recording Industries

Abstract: The current conflict between the recording industry and a portion of its customers who are involved in illicit copying of music files arose from innovations involving the compression and electronic distribution of files over the internet. This paper briefly describes some of the challenges faced by the recording industry, and examines some of the ethical issues that arise in various industry and consumer responses to the opportunities and threats presented by these innovations. The paper concludes by highlighting the risks associated with responses that threaten further innovation, ultimately reducing the chances of finding solutions that hold appeal for all parti

Title: A Typology of Communicative Strategies in Online Privacy Policies: Ethics, Power and Informed Consent.

Authors: Pollach, Irene¹ irene.pollach@wu-wien.ac.at

Source: Journal of Business Ethics; Dec2005, Vol. 62 Issue 3, p221-235, 15p

Document Type: Article

Author-Supplied Keywords: cookies
critical linguistics
data handling practices
electronic commerce
information privacy
language
privacy policies

trust
websites

Abstract: The opaque use of data collection methods on the WWW has given rise to privacy concerns among Internet users. Privacy policies on websites may ease these concerns, if they communicate clearly and unequivocally when, how and for what purpose data are collected, used or shared. This paper examines privacy policies from a linguistic angle to determine whether the language of these documents is adequate for communicating data-handling practices in a manner that enables informed consent on the part of the user. The findings highlight that corporate privacy policies obfuscate, enhance and mitigate unethical data handling practices and use persuasive appeals to increase companies' trustworthiness. The communicative strategies identified provide starting points for redesigning existing privacy statements with a view to communicating data handling practices in a more transparent and responsible manner, laying the groundwork for informed consent.
[ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

The "Digital Divide" is Not a Problem in Need of Rectifying.

Authors: Block, Walter¹

Source: Journal of Business Ethics; Sep2004 Part 2, Vol. 53 Issue 4, p393, 14p

Document Type: Article

Subject Terms: *EDUCATION
*INFORMATION resources management
*TECHNOLOGY
Social aspects
ELECTRONIC information resources

Author-Supplied Keywords: computers
digital divide
egalitarianism
Internet
coercion

NAICS/Industry Codes: 61 Educational Services

Abstract: An oft heard complaint is that there is a digital divide: that some racial, ethnic and gender groupings have more than their fair share of access to computers than others. Commentators who articulate this perspective offer as solutions to this problem the subsidization of such technology for those who are supposedly underprivileged in it. The present paper denies that there is any such problem in need of rectification

Larry Scheuermann; Gary Taylor

Journal: Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy

Year: 1997 **Volume:** 7 **Number:** 4 **Page:** 269 -- 273

DOI: 10.1108/10662249710187268

Publisher: Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Abstract: Netiquette is derived by merging the words network and etiquette. More specifically the term netiquette has been described as the conventions of politeness recognized on Usenet and in mailing lists. In the context of the new Internet global culture, attempts are being made to identify common standards of etiquette. Literally hundreds of specific netiquette suggestions are published. Identifies the following most frequently cited specific suggestions for online users: think first; write in upper and lower case; avoid abbreviations; be concise; avoid smileys; don't flame; don't take offense easily; don't evangelize; and know the audience. Netiquette breaches do not always bring retribution. Most breaches of politeness and courtesy may do no more than reflect poorly on the individual user. One who knows the rules of this new culture may well have an advantage over one who does not

Are we losing trust through technology?

Author(s): Michael K Rich

Journal: The Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing

Year: 2002 **Volume:** 17 **Number:** 2 **Page:** 215 -- 222

DOI: 10.1108/08858620210419826

Publisher: Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Abstract: The field of marketing has had a history of individuals and organizations attempting short-term gain through less than ethical means. The advent of the Web and other technological advances has placed powerful resources in the hands of practitioners. Coupled with that power is an acute public awareness of marketing abuses that have adversely hindered subsequent marketing efforts. Marketers need to address basic marketing skills through old-fashioned personal contact and personal relations that probably never will be effectively replaced with modern IT methodology. Additionally, marketing should take a proactive approach to defining marketing responsibilities to the public it serves to overcome the reputation that is established by a few who are unethical in their approach to the craft.

Global e-commerce: a framework for understanding and overcoming the trust barrier

Author(s): Hassan A Aljifri; Alexander Pons; Daniel Collins

Journal: Information Management & Computer Security

Year: 2003 **Volume:** 11 **Number:** 3 **Page:** 130 -- 138

DOI: 10.1108/09685220310480417

Publisher: Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Abstract: As the Internet revolution moves into full swing, those countries that have not embraced e-commerce technology will face new hurdles as they seek to develop their economies. Standing in the path of these countries' attempts to

adapt e-commerce technologies are several key issues that can be broadly defined as trust barriers. Rather than think of the trust issues as barriers one must think of them as assets. Presents a conceptual model and framework that highlight the key factors in business trust relationships within developing countries; information security, technical and industrial infrastructure, education, government, and socio-cultural factors. These factors are considered in the light of different types of e-commerce business transactions taking place within and across borders such as business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-business (C2B), and consumer-to-consumer (C2C).

Computer ethics: the influence of guidelines and universal moral beliefs

Author(s): Dane K Peterson

Journal: Information Technology & People

Year: 2002 **Volume:** 15 **Number:** 4 **Page:** 346 -- 361

DOI: 10.1108/09593840210453124

Publisher: Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Abstract: Examines the influence of computer guidelines and the belief in universal moral rules on ethical intentions regarding the use of computers in the workplace. The results revealed that the interaction between computer guidelines and belief in universal moral rules was significant. Business professionals with a strong belief in universal moral rules exhibited high ethical intentions, regardless of whether or not their organization had clear guidelines concerning the use of company computers. However, for business professionals with a low belief in universal moral rules, the presence of clear computer guidelines had a positive effect on ethical intentions. This investigation provides evidence that computer guidelines are positively related to ethical intentions only for individuals who do not adhere to a belief in universal moral rules.

Perceived risks as barriers to Internet and e-commerce usage

Author(s): Yehoshua Liebermann; Shmuel Stashevsky

Journal: Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal

Year: 2002 **Volume:** 5 **Number:** 4 **Page:** 291 -- 300

DOI: 10.1108/13522750210443245

Publisher: Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Abstract: Previous research suggests that perceived risk is an important ingredient in the consumer decision-making process. The purpose of the present study is to investigate what are the perceived barriers to Internet usage and e-marketing by both users and non-users. By understanding these potential obstacles, more efficient marketing strategies will become available that will

drive Internet use and e-commerce. A detailed perceived risks map has been developed using a qualitative research paradigm. We suggest a model with the factors affecting the Internet's perceived risk elements. The factors are demographic traits and usage behavior characteristics. The model is tested against a sample of 465 employed adults.

A model of trust in online relationship banking

Author(s): Avinandan Mukherjee; Prithwiraj Nath

Journal: The International Journal of Bank Marketing

Year: 2003 **Volume:** 21 **Number:** 1 **Page:** 5 -- 15

DOI: 10.1108/02652320310457767

Publisher: Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Abstract: The role of trust encompasses the exchanges and interactions of a retail bank with its customers on various dimensions of online banking. Specifically lays stress on the bank-to-customer exchanges taking place through the technological interface. Hypothesizes shared value, communication and opportunistic behaviour as antecedents to trust. Trust and commitment also have a causal relationship. Proposes and empirically tests five hypotheses with a sample of 510 Internet users of various profiles in India. Develops a structural equation model (Lisrel) and establishes all hypotheses. Observes that shared value is most critical to developing trust as well as relationship commitment. Communication has a moderate influence on trust, while opportunistic behaviour has significant negative effect. Also finds higher perceived trust to enhance significantly customers' commitment in online banking transaction. An important contribution concerns how trust is developed and sustained over different levels of customer relationship in online banking. The future commitment of the customers to online banking depends on perceived trust.

Protecting personal privacy on the Internet

Author(s): S.E. Kruck; Danny Gottovi; Farideh Moghadami; Ralph Broom; Karen A Forcht

Journal: Information Management & Computer Security

Year: 2002 **Volume:** 10 **Number:** 2 **Page:** 77 -- 84

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Abstract: The rapid advance of technology has permitted the creation of vast amounts of information, both on and off the Internet. The public is only just beginning to realize how this information, especially personal information, may be used in ways that may not be acceptable. Laws across different countries are often conflicting, making it difficult to control how personal information is being used and how individual privacy is being violated. The solution to this problem lies somewhere between government, industry, and the individual. This paper discusses the current state of personal privacy in each of these three areas.

Ethical implications

As with other aspects, the ethical issues are not so much specific to e-business, but the internet environment puts existing ethical concepts into a different perspective.

Clearly, one over-riding ethical issue is the scale of potential access on the internet. The famous website loaded in 1999 by a Turkish man entitled 'A (chaste) kiss for my friends', which was apparently put up for no purpose other than to express friendship, went round the world, receiving literally thousands of hits, and being written up in national newspapers around the planet. This is a rare example of well publicised positive ethical uses of the web. Far more common, regrettably, are the less ethically acceptable ones. Typical of these is the case of an employee of a British bank, who was dismissed after he produced a web page detailing the sexual history of a female colleague - it ended up being seen by over half a million people.

One of the biggest issues with the scale of potential access is the behaviour of hackers and those who develop viruses. This is sufficiently large an issue that we shall defer it to the next chapter. There is an image in the popular press that all hackers are destructive - as we shall see later, it is not always as simple as that (though there are lots of cases where it is as simple as that as well).

Many of the unethical or dubious practices of physical marketing can be observed on the web. Advertisements that promise fantastic deals, but when you visit the site you find that the promise is rather greater than the reality. One twist with an internet advertisement is that once you visit a site, it can have software which will place a 'cookie' in your system - a small piece of coding, usually there make it easier to upload that site in the future (but clearly open to abuses, such as making that site a default location, or much more dangerously sending details of your hard drive back to a third party).

'Spam' email is another, and growing, menace on the internet. Spam is the computer-based version of junk mail - someone has gained your email address, possibly through your visiting a site, possibly via a database generated via a commercial transaction (in many cases buried in the small print is a request for your assent to a company releasing your details to other organisations, usually assent is presumed to be given *unless* you state otherwise). Then you receive unsolicited emails advertising goods, sometimes with an annoying frequency. The volume of this category of email is threatening to create internet gridlock in the coming years unless an effective means of controlling it is developed - this is likely to be as much technical as legislative.

It is inappropriate to summarise the key points of this chapter, as there is too much detail. But there are certain key themes:

- The web is still in its infancy, and there are many areas where technological or other innovations may change the face of the web substantially
- The tension between liberality and control will continue to be the determining factor in the development of the web, with potentially a gradual but not overwhelming increase in control by governments and corporations
- In social and political terms, the growth of the web is both extending and placing major strains on the lifestyle that western fostered nations developed in the second half of the twentieth century
- The potential of the web to revolutionise social relationships and develop a new sense of community is vast.

Social implications

Perhaps the least easy area in which to identify trends is the social sphere. Some trends have already become clear – for example, the rapid rise in usage of email has revived the art of letter writing. The explosion, amongst the young, of the related practice of text messaging via mobile telephones is another manifestation (of a completely different style) of the convenience of instant written communication, and its sometime advantages over spoken communications.

Texting provides an interesting confirmation of the predictions of McLuhan, that electronic media will create their own forms of communication, rather than simply be alternative vehicles of existing forms. So, texting has developed its own language, based on the need to be quick and economical with characters. Because this is essentially a youth phenomenon, it has also evolved in a manner consistent with modern youth cultures.

Box 3.1 Text language example

One example of text language is as follows:

d u w 2 g on a d8 w m = Do you want to go on a date with me?

In some cases, common words have been truncated to their initials. In others, there have been phonographic substitutions – '8' for the sound 'ate'. In other cases (not represented here), there may be specific codes – 'lol' meaning 'laugh out loud', and used as an appreciative response if someone says something funny.

The range of social implications, potential as well as actual, is so vast that it would be impossible to list even a small number of them. We shall therefore confine our discussion to a few examples.

The death of confinement

One major potential social effect of the internet is the liberation of immobile members of society. People with severe physical difficulties often find it very difficult to travel or even to visit local facilities, despite the fact that many countries these days have legislation requiring public facilities to be adapted to be convenient for the disabled. Few forms of public transport are convenient for someone who is confined to a wheelchair, for example. Few amenities, such as restaurants or cinemas, are well adapted to accommodate those who are differently abled from the walking majority. In the past, such individuals were

marginalised and excluded from the vast proportion of social activity, because it involved travelling around – even a walk down to a local pub or a church hall could have proved an insurmountable obstacle for someone who needed to be taken in a wheelchair. Of course, there still is a great deal of that kind of exclusion, but as well as a growing sense that this has not been a positive feature for society in general – as well as being terribly isolating for the people concerned – the internet has proved a boon for the disabled. Where once meeting and communicating with people who shared the same interests required movement, now it can be effected electronically. This has been particularly important for the elderly, amongst whom there is a larger proportion of those with mobility difficulties. Indeed, the over-65s have been the fastest growing group of internet users as the twenty-first century starts. Internet shopping, online communities and interest groups, and chat rooms are all facilitators of a growing inclusion of those whom previously society had excluded.

A society that never sleeps

With the development of international user communities, there has been a significant spur to the so called '24/7' society – operating 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This is an example of a trend which is already in evidence and, in some ways, has required a physical presence (so that in major urban areas, such as western capital cities, some shops stay open '24/7' and others have continually lengthened their hours of opening so that there is a much smaller window of non-trading time than in previous decades). But as well as the physical element, the internet has accelerated this process. It is possible to trade shares, to carry out bank transactions, to buy goods, to interact in chat rooms or connect to people via other communications platforms – all at any time of the day. A not uncommon pattern of work that has started to emerge – especially with the self-employed or those who do a certain amount of their work at home – is to start doing some work very early in the morning, maybe stop for a more extended breakfast, work during 'normal' office hours and then later in the evening, maybe after having had an evening meal and relaxed with family or friends, do a

last thing check on email. It is not necessarily healthy, of course, but it is happening, and more and more so.

The other side to the '24/7' society is that the people who service this have also to live 24/7. So, low paid supermarket employees may end up having to work all night shifts, without the financial rewards received by their customers, the 24/7 professionals. The impact of night work on a family is significant, and can create great tensions in a marriage. The growth of the 'never sleeping' city is likely to bring greater stresses and strains upon the social fabric of urban populations.

One last example of social impact is that as well as bringing people together, the internet can have a negative personal side. Already we read of 'internet widows' – partnerships and marriages where one person gets so engrossed in surfing or chatting that they use up all their spare time and neglect their partner – and of young people becoming obsessed with chatting to their friends via the web (though for anyone who has lived in a household with adolescents, or remembers their own adolescence, this seems simply to have replaced the phone with the web rather than present any radically new phenomenon).

phenomenon of web dating – where people have close relationships with people conducted solely via the internet. In the 'privacy' of a closed chat room, such relationships can involve as much intimacy in terms of verbal disclosure as a physical relationship – though, of course, the physical element is what makes it very different! Some may write these off as the sad activities of lonely people – that may often be true, though probably less so than one might at first expect. Be that as it may, the judgement as to whether it is sad, or fun, or fantasy, or flirtatious or just plain desperate, is not really the main point here – which is simply that it happens. In some cases, people have made the very unfortunate mistake of thinking that a 'virtual lover' will be just as good in the flesh. People have made marriage vows over the web, only to find that the person they married is not the kind of person they expected – wrong personality, wrong colour hair, wrong age, sometimes wrong gender!

The main conclusion to draw from this discussion is that the web is not just a commercial enterprise. It is a communications network, and its social uses are as many and as varied as human ingenuity.

Societal

When the internet and world wide web were first introduced, there was concern that language would be a major barrier to the development of e-business. As Singh *et al.* (2001) state, Europe, for instance, does not have a uniform language or homogeneous cultural platform. With such diverse languages, Singh *et al.* (2001) suggest that companies operating within a B2B or B2C environment must be culturally sensitive to both language and local approaches to business. In other words, that whilst we are using a uniform electronic platform, we must not forget emotional elements that drive an individual's culture. Neither the internet nor the world wide web can be seen as an imperialist activity as one culture attempts to impose its will upon another. Several e-retailers have become culturally sensitive and developed sites specific to a particular country or region of the world. Equally, it provides them with the opportunity to deliver both products and services that match the demands and needs of that country or region. Such activity relates back to Ohmae (1990) and his view of 'Thinking globally and acting locally'. Even within our exceedingly globalised world, this remains a truism for any organisation, no matter what its operating platform may be.

Another factor that should be considered is risk avoidance. The Dutch social scientist Hofstede (1984, 1994) produced an analytical framework of national cultures. It is divided into four areas: Individualism, Power distance, Uncertainty avoidance and Masculinity (also considered as the level of competitiveness). In relation to the internet, Uncertainty avoidance is particularly apt. In essence, this is how different cultures perceive risk and the amount of risk that they should take. For example, in Hofstede's research, the USA displayed a culture that was prepared to take a greater level of risk compared to that of France. The net, perhaps by its very nature, is inherently risky. Take, for example, the possibility of online fraud. Thus, some cultures may be less enthusiastic in embracing web technologies and interfaces. That then begs the question as to how they will handle new, more pervasive technologies?

Society will be affected by the introduction of new technologies (see *pervasive computing* in the Technological section below). However, to what degree remains the unanswered question? Although the new technologies will most likely provide greater choice, flexibility, accessibility and 24-hour convenience (Stone, 2001), this does not necessarily mean that there will be overwhelming and immediate changes in societal behaviour. Any study of diffusion theory suggests that there are those that readily embrace new technologies and those that either are 'slow' (a relative term) or who do not embrace the product at all, no matter how much time elapses (see Rogers, 1990).

Of course, one of the issues with *pervasive computing* is that it is 'pervasive'; permeating all aspects of our lives. It is already there, whether we like it or not. The key is encouraging people to use the systems that are linked to the pervasive computing. One approach is the use of *permission marketing*, where the

consumer or customer states the level of involvement they will have. Equally, they can set the parameters by which their personal details can be used beyond any governmental data protection system (see Chapter 5 for *permission marketing*).

As intimated earlier, the world is not one homogenous group. Societies vary not just because of culture and established norms. They also vary due to the economic circumstances in which they find themselves. Whilst societies rarely remain static, some are more readily able to react to the changing technological world than others. If developing nations wish to be involved within the growing Information Revolution, then the developed nations must support them. In this context, 'support' does not mean dictated to. Developing nations must be free to choose the level of support that they require, and that suits their developing needs.

Successful e-businesses and related industries will be those that understand geodemographics and the lifestyle activities of their key audiences. Equally, companies should not take for granted that the world's most powerful economies are the ones that will adapt easily and most readily to mobile commerce. Research suggests that France, Italy and Finland currently outperform the USA and the UK in moving towards mobile technologies (Stone, 2001).

Whilst wireless technologies will be able to provide various benefits, they will not exist alone. In many cases, both companies and individuals will opt for *blended* solutions – that is, solutions that are a mixture of contemporary and traditional technologies. An example of this is the e-learning environment. Although there are many courses that are purely internet based, there are many that are a mixture of on-screen components and 'traditional' paper-based materials. With the development of enhanced mobile communication, the focus may shift within the next 15 years or so. Equally, it is the secondary school children of today, for whom the mobile phone and computer are 'second nature', who will be in the best position to harness the advantages offered by mobile communication.

As Kreitzman (1999) suggests in his book *The 24 Hour Society*, the 24-hour freedoms are much more than the time shops are open. In Britain, slowly at first, we have become increasingly used to major supermarkets being open 24 hours, especially those situated near major city centres such as London. If you like, the new '24 hours' is beyond the physicality of the 'bricks and mortar' store. It is even beyond the fixed linkage to a telephone line (digital or broadband). The increasing development of mobile systems will enhance freedom of movement. Whilst Kreitzman's last paragraph in his book sums up the issues of a 'physical' 24-hour society, it can also be read as the basis for the wireless world. Whilst it will free many people, as Kreitzman (1999) suggests, it will require thought and understanding not only in terms of how we adapt to potentially radical changes but how others do:

The 24 Hour Society is not an automatic panacea to our time problems. It requires thoughtful participation if it is to help in redefining temporal relationships. But most important of all, it enables us to have a more egalitarian society in terms of who works when, frees us from the vicissitudes of living under clock

time without losing the economic benefits, and a prospect of cities in the 21st Century in which people can work, relax and play (Kreitzman, 1999).

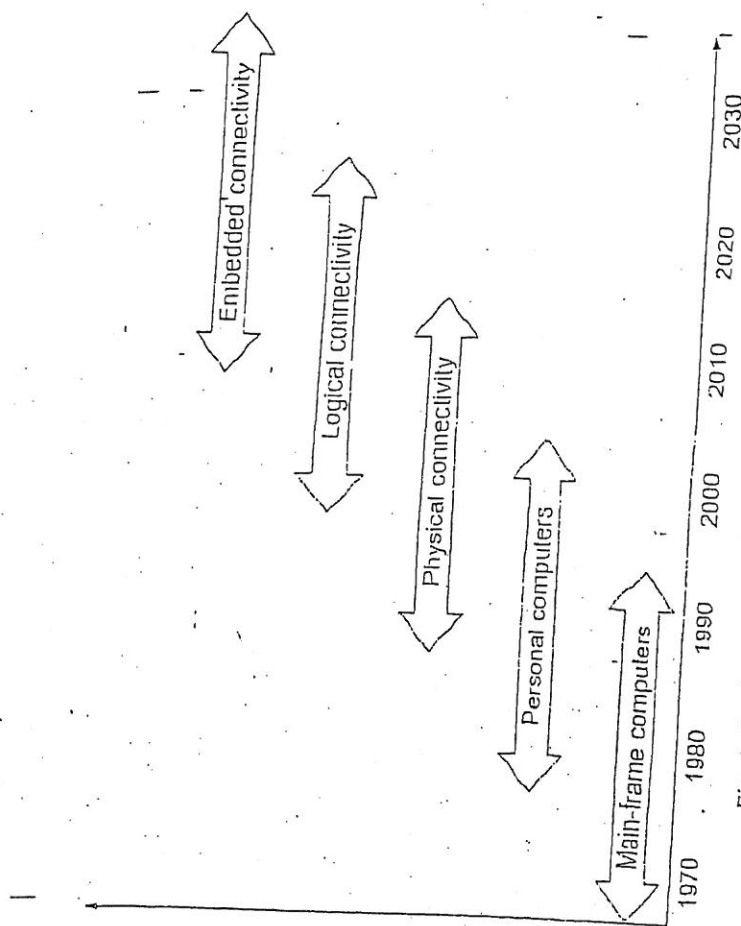


Figure 1 From mainframes to embedded connectivity
Source: Gartner (2002)