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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

E-Commerce is growing at an incredible pace; many organizations and individuals are looking to the web as the future, definitive source for information, goods, services and communication. As the amount of business transacted over the web grows, the value of goods, services and information exchanged over the Internet seems to double or triple each year. Often organizations small and large, non-profit and for – profit, privately and publicly held – all are being pushed to the web by both customers and competitors. In some cases, traditional brick – and motor businesses are entering into E-business. All indicates that e-commerce will continue to grow in the future.

E-Commerce is the first trueborn global market and approaches the ideals of perfect competition that is: low transaction costs, low entry barriers, and easy customer access to information', says Ira Magazine, special advisor on IT related issues to the US President. However, there are traps which countries could fall into that would severely hamper their prospect of using the full potential of e-Commerce

Although India's Internet players are rushing to promote e-commerce as a creative business mode for the new economy, few of them can break through the last-mile barriers against on-line purchasing. "The difficulties really exist, but we can not take an inactive attitude of waiting and seeing," said chief executive officer of a leading MNC in India.
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The important findings of the study based on the analysis are presented below:

The analysis reveals that 92.59 per cent of the companies have Intranet, 59.26 per cent are with Extranet, 40.74 per cent of the companies have website with built in search tools. 37.04 per cent are having software to provide predefined answers to customers’ queries. 85.19 per cent of the companies are having dedicated IT systems for managing orders. 77.78 per cent of the companies are having online payment systems, while 48.15 per cent of the companies are having link with suppliers’ business system.

It is concluded from the data analysis that 85.19 per cent of the companies are using Internet for banking and financial services. Only 55.56 per cent are using to provide after sales service. 81.48 per cent of them are using Internet for travel bookings. 88.89 per cent are using Internet for internal communications.

It is clear from the analysis regarding the uses of Internet for interacting with public authorities, 70.37 per cent are using Internet for obtaining information, 81.48 per cent are using for downloading forms, 55.56 per cent are using for returning filled in forms, 40.74 per cent use it for online payments to public authorities.

With regard to security facilities currently used in the enterprises, 96.30 per cent of the companies are using virus checking or protection software. Firewalls are used by
92.59 per cent of the companies, 70.37 per cent are using secured servers. 59.26 per cent are having off-site data back up facility.

Regarding the Information and Computer Technology (ICT) related security problems in the companies in the last one year, 29.63 per cent of the Companies faced the problem, remaining 70.37 per cent never faced any security problems in the last one year.

The data analysis reveals that 33.33 per cent of the companies place advertisement in the Internet as part of the E-Commerce initiative, 48.15 per cent of the companies makes use of E-Commerce for marketing research. 29.63 per cent of the companies are utilizing E-Commerce for channel management. 70.37 per cent are receiving orders and 51.85 per cent are announcing sales promotion schemes through E-Commerce. 55.56 per cent are using E-Commerce to identify new customers, while 48.15 per cent are visiting competitors' website as part of the E-Commerce applications in area of marketing.

The data analysis on Sales Applications of E-Commerce reveals that 74.07 per cent are using E-Commerce for sending catalogs, 66.67 per cent are sending brochures, 62.96 per cent utilize E-Commerce application for dealing with product queries. 33.33 per cent of the companies undertake sales campaigns as part of E-Commerce initiative in Sales.

Regarding E-Commerce Customer Service Applications, help desk is used by 44.44 per cent of the companies, 66.67 per cent are using to provide technical support.
Warranty support is extended by 37.04 per cent of the companies, while product/service delivery is undertaken by 59.26 per cent of the companies. 66.67 per cent of the companies are handling customer complaints in the area of Customer Service Applications of the E-Commerce.

The data analysis on Buying/Procurement Applications of E-Commerce reveals that 55.56 per cent of companies use E-Commerce for comparing the prices of different vendors. 44.44 per cent of using for order tracking. Just 22.22 per cent use for developing alternative sources of supply, 48.15 per cent of the companies uses E-Commerce to make payment to vendors.

It is inferred from the General E-Commerce applications that E-Mail is used by all respondents. 81.48 per cent of the companies use E-Commerce for data transfer. Online data services of the Internet are used by 70.37 per cent of the companies. It is observed that majority of the companies use the various General E-Commerce Applications such as E-Mail, travel bookings, data transfer, online data services and internal communications.

The data analysis on E-Commerce benefits reveals that 48.15 per cent of Companies feel their image in the market enhanced due to implementation of E-Commerce Applications. 37.04 per cent of the companies benefited reduction in business costs. 55.56 per cent of them benefited by speeding up of business processes, 37.04 per
cent of the companies are able to improve in the quality of services, and 29.63 per cent of the respondents have revealed that E-Commerce helps to keep pace with the competition.

On the problems in the E-Commerce Implementation, majority of the Companies faced the problem of receiving unsolicited E-Mails. 18.52 per cent faced security breach issues to a considerable extent. Cost of user support and lack of user support are problems to a considerable extent by the some companies.

The data analysis regarding various concerns for E-Commerce issues reveals that 85.19 per cent of the respondents are concerned with security/ fraud issues. 55.56 per cent are concerned with invasion of privacy issues. 37.04 per cent feel that there is lack of personal contact in E-Commerce. Staff using E-Mail for personal purpose is the concern by 37.04 per cent of the respondents.

The data analysis reveals that security problems concerning sales is the most important factor limiting sales via Internet which is followed by other factors such as logistics issues, uncertainties in the legal framework and mindset of users. 74.07 per cent of the respondents feel that security problems concerning sales are the most important factor limiting sales via Internet. 59.26 per cent of the respondents feel that mindset of the end users is the most important factor in this regard.
With regard to the data analysis on development of E-Commerce solutions in the Companies, 40.74 per cent of them developed E-Commerce solution by a combination of In house and outsourcing methods. 25.93 per cent of the companies developed E-Commerce solutions completely through outsourcing methods. The remaining companies in the sample have developed the E-Commerce solution through In house professionals.

Majority of the respondents agree that E-Commerce is beneficial for marketing of products and services in the global market, 81.48 per cent of the respondents reveal that E-Commerce is another alternative channel for selling products/ services. E-Commerce results in reduction of the cost of procurement are the opinion of the majority of the respondents. 77.78 per cent of the respondents consider that E-Commerce revolution will take place when the mindset of the people is changed. It is the feeling of the 70.37 per cent of the respondents that logistics and security are the limiting factors for the E-Commerce growth. 33.37 per cent of the respondents agree that E-Commerce is picking up faster in small towns. Majority of the respondents believe that E-Commerce offers more convenience and flexibility. 70.37 per cent of the respondents agree that B2B segment of E-Commerce is having excellent growth compared to B2C segment.

The data analysis reveals that 77.78 per cent of the companies consider E-Commerce reduces cost of procurement. Majority of the companies have the option that E-Commerce revolution will take place when the mindset of the people is changed. 70.37 per cent of the respondents feel that logistics and security are the limiting factors for E-
Commerce growth, 33.33 per cent of the companies are of the view that E-Commerce is picking up faster is small towns. Majority of the companies feel E-Commerce offers more convenience and flexibility for business transactions.

FURTHER SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

1. The applications of E-Commerce in other cities in India and abroad can be studied to understand to what extent the E-Commerce is utilized in business operations.

2. The E-Commerce applications in B2B and B2C segments can be studied separately and compared to identify the segment which is witnessing faster growth.

3. The willingness and interest of the top management in the companies can be studied for the E-Commerce applications in various dimensions of the business operations for enhancing the efficiency.

4. A research can be conducted to study the behavior of online consumers to understand them for providing products and services to meet their needs.

5. The current growth and trends of online shopping in India can be studied to provide information to the industries.
CONCLUSION

E-Commerce is emerging as an alternative channel for marketing the products and services. The B2B segment is growing faster than the B2C segment. The logistics and security are the limiting factors for the growth of E-Commerce. The E-Commerce revolution is possible when the mindset of the people is changed. It is observed that in recent times there is a tremendous growth of E-Commerce in smaller towns. The customers are able to get convenience and flexibility when they opt for buying through Internet. The infrastructure in the companies for E-Commerce operations both hardware and software are existing. Many companies have converted their information site into the commercial site for the purpose of E-Commerce.

The logistics and security issues are solved, it will ensure faster growth of E-Commerce. The applications of E-Commerce in Marketing, Customer Service, Buying/Procurement, Sales are in place in most of the companies. But these functions are not carried out to the expected level using the Internet though it offers cost reduction. The companies have to understand the potential of E-Commerce to carry out several activities effectively in the organizations to offer quality products/services to the customers at an affordable price to expand the business and enhance the bottom line to satisfy all the stakeholders of the company.
SUGGESTIONS:

➢ There is a need to generate greater awareness about E-Commerce and its benefits. An appropriate communication strategy needs to be formulated to spread e-commerce awareness among the enterprises by underscoring the benefits and dispelling the misconceptions. The apex industry bodies like CII should coordinate with the government to educate the people in the decision making positions in the organizations. Creating the awareness is the major driving force towards development, adoption and growth of E-Commerce.

➢ Business Process Redesigning should be done with the consultation and cooperation of the employees for successful transformation from traditional to E-Commerce business. The company for successful implementation of E-Commerce must put efforts to re-design most of the existing business processes and strengthen them to suit the new way of business. This becomes particularly difficult as a result of strong resistance to change by the employees.

➢ E-Commerce implementation requires the various systems, which make up a business as well as those of its supply chain partners are integrated. The real power of the E-Commerce is when systems are integrated. The internal system for reordering replacement supplies, invoicing and payment system, suppliers’,
business systems, customers' business systems and also integration with production, logistics and service operations essential for E-Commerce operations.

➢ The companies in the E-Commerce can build excellent customer relationship by adopting strategies such as personalization, creating an easy to use customer service applications and making the site easy to use. These strategies will build customer loyalty which is most needed to sustain sales in any modern organization.

➢ Successful E-Commerce adoption need customers' orders are fulfilled as promised. This can be done by increasing focus and investment in supply chain and logistic technologies. Effective coordination with other IT systems and using reliable logistics company as business partner the product can be delivered as promised to build customer confidence and customer loyalty.

➢ E-Commerce applications in the organizations result direct interaction with the customers by reducing the role of intermediaries. The employees who interact with the customers should build relationship for increasing customer loyalty. The exact role of the intermediaries in the supply chain is to be defined when there is transformation form the traditional to E-commerce operations.
Getting the visitors to the site is only half the battle; whether they buy something is what determines the success of the site particularly in the B2C segment of the E-Commerce. The site should have good design developed by a leading consultant to attract the attention of the visitors with facilities for easy navigation between web pages. All information of the product of the company need to be shown attractively in the web site by using advanced shopping cart software. The well secured online payment system and tie up with the established logistics company will boost the confidence of the customers and motivate them to buy the products and service online.

Besides developing E-Commerce infrastructure in the country through effective telecom network, the government should take appropriate steps to create legal and administrative framework through making modifications in the Information Technology Act which will combine the e-commerce transactions, computer misuses and frauds.