




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[Home](#) > [Vol 10, No 1 \(2002\)](#) > [Slade](#)Font Size:   

# Business On-Line? An Empirical Study of Factors Leading to the Adoption of Internet Technologies by Australian SMEs

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## Abstract

E-commerce technologies such as a Web site, email and the use of Web browsers enable access to large amounts of information, facilitate communication and provide niche companies with an effective mechanism for competing with larger organisations world-wide. However, recent literature has shown Australian SMEs have been slow in the uptake of these technologies. The aim of this research was to determine which factors were important in impacting on small firms' decision making in respect of information technology and e-commerce adoption. Findings indicate that generally, the more a firm was concerned about its competitive position, so such a firm was likely to develop a Web site. Moreover, the 'Industry and Skill Demands' dimension suggested that as the formal education of the owner/manager increased, coupled with the likelihood that the firm was in the transport and storage or communication services industries, and realising the cost of IT adoption was in effect an investment, then such a firm would be inclined to develop a Web site. Firms that were presented with relatively geographically dispersed markets, and realising it was necessary to go through the time consuming process of adopting various IT to reach these markets, were more likely to adopt Web sites. Lastly, owners/managers who reported their knowledge of business uses of computers was poor and who were likely to ask for support in installing and utilizing IT were also more likely to use Web sites than those who did not share these characteristics.

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