



[Home](#) > [Vol 12, No 1 \(2004\)](#) > [Sait](#)Font Size:   

E-Commerce in Saudi Arabia: adoption and perspectives

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Abstract

Among one of the most far-reaching influences of the Internet, especially from the perspective of business and market models, is the concept and application of eCommerce. Today, this erstwhile 'experimental' commerce model has become a standard platform for streamlining business flows and broadening product outreach. This is validated by the significant emphasis by a number of countries in developing robust eCommerce architectures tailored to suit their economical-social systems. An interesting case study in this perspective is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, especially given its emphasis on local, regional and religious traditions. Presently, with a tremendous growth rate in Internet connectivity, the Kingdom is actively moving towards large-scale adoption of eCommerce systems. In 2001, a two year project was initiated to study the present influence of Internet on social, educational and business systems within the Kingdom. One of the major aspects was the analysis of user responses collected over the two-year period through a number of surveys, which were designed based on two prominent behavioural models: Theory of Planned Behaviour and Roger's Theory of Diffusion of Innovations. The consequent analysis of the results was supported and in some cases verified with linear regression models. This paper reports on the consequent findings, which identify factors that may significantly affect the adoption of eCommerce in the Kingdom.

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