

# FROM INTERNET USE TO INTERNET ADOPTION: IS GENERAL INNOVATIVENESS ENOUGH?

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## ABSTRACT

The projected sales potential for Internet commerce (Shi and Salesky 1994) indicates that marketers should understand those consumer characteristics that will influence consumer adoption of this shopping medium. The future commercial success of this medium depends in part upon whether current users of the Internet (e.g., those who access information or communicate electronically) also use this medium for product purchase. Consumer innovativeness could presumably help marketers identify early adopters of their products. These early adopters not only contribute to a new product's initial commercial success, but they also serve as important communicators about the new product to later adopters. Knowledge of the role of consumer innovativeness is especially important to assist a marketer evaluate the feasibility of expending valuable marketing dollars on pursuing a superficially attractive market (e.g., consumers with high levels of general innovativeness) which may not, in reality, respond by adopting Internet commerce.

The empirical study reported here investigates the extent to which open-processing innovativeness and domain-specific innovativeness explain the conditions

under which consumers move from general Internet usage to the next step which is the usage of the Internet for commerce. A survey (n = 403) was used to collect information about consumer general innovativeness and domain-specific innovativeness along with their self-reported Internet-usage behavior.

We find a significant positive relationship between general Internet usage and Internet commerce. This supports previous studies linking prior product category usage to a new product's subsequent adoption (e.g., Dickerson and Gentry 1983; Robertson 1971; Taylor 1977). Importantly, however, our results show that this relationship is not moderated by open-processing innovativeness, whereas the relationship is moderated by the domain-specific innovativeness of consumers.

These findings support our earlier premise that marketers of products over the Internet would do well to understand the innovative characteristics of current purchasers of products over the Internet. While the general innovativeness construct is often assumed to be an indicator of early adopters of products, domain-(or Internet related) specific innovativeness is seen to be a better indicator of an individual's propensity to adopt the Internet for commercial usage.

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