The nature and extent of internet-enabled e-business adoption by Australian wineries, and factors affecting this adoption

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Abstract

This research investigates the nature and extent of e-business adoption by Australian wineries in order to describe the activity and increase understanding of the factors influencing the behaviour.

Pilot study interviews grounded the research and provided industry-based direction for the survey. A census survey of the 2003 population of Australian wineries, excluding micro-wineries, used a self-administered mail questionnaire. Response rate varied by winery size, from 15% of small wineries up to 46% of very large wineries. Data was collected in five e-business process domains: e-mail, external web sites, and winery B2C web sites, extranets, and intranets; on perceptions of influence of four factors in each process domain: 1) relative advantage, 2) resource capacity, 3) supply chain activity, and 4) government activity; and on barriers to further adoption.

Analysis of the survey responses supported the proposition that the nature and extent of adoption varies significantly by winery size. In general, small wineries find less benefit than larger wineries. Customer type and level of customer power also vary by winery size with winery B2C web strategies differing as a result. The proposition that the factors influencing e-business adoption vary between different types of e-business was also supported. This finding indicates that customised frameworks for particular e-business process domains will have increased relevance, and generalisations regarding the level of influence individual factors have on e-business adoption per se are inappropriate.

Influence from the activities of supply chain and government organisations, the subject of the third and fourth propositions, was also found. The impact level of these external environment factors increased with winery size. In particular it is the powerful business customers and the Australian Government that drive some of the e-business adoption by wineries.

Criticism of low levels of adoption by Australian small and medium sized enterprises in government funded reports appears harsh when applied to small and medium wineries after findings demonstrate that they derive less benefit from e-business than larger wineries. Reduction of the most common barriers to increasing adoption - the high cost and low quality of network connections in regional locations – remains the responsibility of government.
CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION

I certify that the ideas, results, analyses and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

____________________________  _______________________
Signature of Candidate          Date

ENDORSEMENT

____________________________  _______________________
Signature of Supervisor         Date
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