

Abstract

This research project was carried out in order to study the factors that influence the user-acceptance of fee-based online content. The study also looked at the factors that affect the continued use of a service and aimed to see if there is any difference in user attitude based on their past experience with paid online content.

The subject of paid online content is an increasingly relevant one today, not only because of the way the newspaper and magazine publishing industry is affected, but also because of the increasing number of ways that various kinds of content are being delivered using the internet.

The results of our research project showed that the main factors affecting a user's intention to pay for online content are satisfaction with the content service, the perceived consequences as a result of accessing an online content service, the user's normative beliefs or social factors and the value that the user places on the online content service as compared to free alternatives.

The perceived ease of use however, was not found to be a determinant of a user's intention to pay for content online.

Further, by splitting the sample into groups based on their past experience with online paid content and then comparing results between them, we have seen that even though the kind of content consumed does not affect their agreement on various constructs and their intention to pay, their past experience in dealing with an online content service does.

The research and management implications of our results, the relevance of the results to providers of online content in today's market place, research limitations and recommendations for future research are also discussed in this paper.

Declaration of Originality

I declare that my work entitled "An empirical study of the factors affecting the user-acceptance of fee-based online content" for the Masters in Business Administration degree embodies the results of an original research programme and consists of an ordered and critical exposition of existing knowledge in a well-defined field.

I have included explicit references to the citation of the work of others or to my own work which is not part of the submission for this degree.

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