
Mobile Internet, SMEs and changing global commerce platform - A case study of an instant mobile media advertising and retail service experience among SMEs

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Abstract

This paper examines how mobile Internet, social media and instant mobile advertising tools can support marketing and retail of small and medium sized entrepreneurs. Especially emerging markets have potential for utilizing social media and mobile services, as the adoption of mobile services such as mobile banking has been very rapid. We co-designed an instant, mobile advertising tool for small entrepreneurs in collaboration with advertising experts. The case study with 66 small companies and customers shows, that small enterprises acknowledged social media as a useful domain in their future sales promotion activities and some of the enterprises had already utilized social media in their business. The best features of the instant advertisement tool were advertising in real-time and in communicative way. Also, for the small and medium size companies' instant advertising is a cost-effective way to announce about their products and services extensively.

However, small and medium sized entrepreneurs emphasized also possible questions and problems related to an active usage of social media such as lack of time for engagement with customers and the possibility to receive unwanted bad reputation because of intended criticism and false comments. From customer side negative criticism or inappropriate comments were not considered as a remarkable problem. Customers perceived a trend towards omni-channel retail platforms positively as ideally meeting the customers' integrated experience: need for shopping, entertainment and social interactions any time anywhere with their smart phones. At the global level, a number of actions can be considered to help to increase use of social media and mobile advertising services for small and medium sized companies to gain more customers and find international markets.
