

THE UPTAKE OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY: ENHANCING OUR UNDERSTANDING

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ABSTRACT

Small retail firms frequently face significant challenges in selecting and implementing information technologies, due to a lack of adequate expertise, and financial and human resources. As a result, they often perceive investments in information technologies as not only costly and resource intensive, but risky undertakings. Consequently, they typically lag their larger counterparts in terms of technology adoption.

Given that small firms represent the vast majority of businesses worldwide, it is necessary to understand the best practices of smaller retailers/retail chains when adopting and using new technologies, as this will enable other firms to enhance their competitiveness. This paper reviews the current adoption of Internet technologies among small family owned retailers, based on the findings from a quantitative study in the U.S., and profiles two firms that have achieved distinction: Ebony Retail Holdings, Ltd. in India and McCaulou's in the U.S.

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